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| Reflective Analysis of Coercive Control |



This tool can be used alongside the DASH (Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment) form to identify elements of coercive and/or controlling behaviour in the relationship in order to assess this dynamic more fully.

**Controlling behaviour** **is** A range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

**Coercive behaviour is** An act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. Coercive control involves repeated, ongoing, intentional tactics which are used to limit the liberty of the victim. Those tactics may or may not necessarily be physical. They can be sexual, economic, psychological, legal, institutional, or all of these. By deploying these tactics the abuser can create a world where the victim is constantly monitored or criticised and every move and action checked. Victims often describe coercive control as not being ‘allowed’, or having to ask permission, to do everyday things; and being in constant fear of not meeting the abusers expectations or complying with their demands. The term walking on eggshells is often used.

Controlling and coercive behaviours can occur in any relationship regardless of age, gender, sexuality, and disability. This can include but is not limited to: partner to partner, parent to child, child to parent and friendships. There may also be circumstances where a person is experiencing control and coercion by more than one individual.

**BEFORE COMPLETING THIS ANALYSIS WITH THE PERSON** – please consider the potential risks that this could increase, either by the other person being present or being made aware of the concern. Some discussion with appropriate management may be beneficial, for example within a safeguarding strategy meeting.

This analysis refers to the relationship and interactions between:

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| Person being assessed | Individual(s) causing concern | Relationship(s) to person |
|  |  |  |

Worker completing this analysis:

Date(s) of discussion:

It would be best practice to see the person on their own during this discussion to enable the most open and honest discussion. If the person would like support with the conversation, consider offering them support either from a trusted family member or friend, or consider referring for advocacy support.

This tool is to be used in a reflective manner and there may be additional factors to consider than those listed below and/or some might not be applicable, each case must be considered by its own individual circumstances using professional judgement.

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| **Tool for Identification of Coercive Control** | | | | | | |
| **Restricting Freedom** | **Always** | **To some extent** | | **Never** | | **Comments** |
| The other person isolated me from family and friends |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person told me what to wear |  |  | |  | |  |
| I was not allowed to go out without permission |  |  | |  | |  |
| I was not allowed to use the car |  |  | |  | |  |
| Medical care was denied to me or my dependents |  |  | |  | |  |
| I had to account for my time when I had been out |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person was jealous about who I spoke to when I was out |  |  | |  | |  |
| I was accused of having affairs |  |  | |  | |  |
| I was deprived of basic needs/food/sleep |  |  | |  | |  |
| My phone location was tracked to monitor my whereabouts |  |  | |  | |  |
| My messages, e mails and social media account were monitored |  |  | |  | |  |
| Other> |  |  | |  | |  |
| **Observations that could indicate an absence of controlling behaviours**  *Reflective points could include consideration around:*  What comments did the person make during the discussion? What was their body language when going through the statements?  Are there any additional information/observations about when you have seen the person with the other person?  Are there any views or observations of others that could be considered – either family, friends or other professionals?  If the person is restricted from certain aspects, could there be another explanation – i.e. the restriction is related to the person’s care and support needs. Could there be further exploration around the person’s feelings about the restriction? For example – the person isn’t able to drive their own car due to a sight impairment, but they can ask someone else to drive the car and they are not reliant on the other person. | | | **Observations that could indicate a presence of controlling behaviours**  *Reflective points could include consideration around:*  What comments did the person make during the discussion? What was their body language when going through the statements?  Are there any additional information/observations/environmental aspects about when you have seen the person with the other person?  Are there any views or observations of others that could be considered – either family, friends or other professionals?  Is the person being dismissive of any of the statements, or pausing/taking longer to give an answer? What could this identify? How comfortable was the person engaging in this conversation?  Was there any further discussion around the context of their relationship? | | | |
| **Emotional Abuse** | **Always** | **To some extent** | | **Never** | | **Comments** |
| I was belittled and abused in front of others |  |  | |  | |  |
| I was insulted in front of others |  |  | |  | |  |
| I was insulted about my appearance |  |  | |  | |  |
| I was called names and sworn at |  |  | |  | |  |
| There are rules which I have to follow |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person has withdrawn affection |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person threatened to find me if I left |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person did not let me tend to my dependents |  |  | |  | |  |
| I was told I was stupid or crazy |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person instructed others to abuse me |  |  | |  | |  |
| Other > |  |  | |  | |  |
| **Observations that could indicate an absence of emotional abuse**  *Reflective points could include consideration around:*  What comments did the person make during the discussion? What was their body language when going through the statements?  Are there any additional information/observations/environmental aspects about when you have seen the person with the other person?  Are there any views or observations of others that could be considered – either family, friends or other professionals?  Was there any further discussion around the context of their relationship? | | | **Observations that could indicate a presence of**  **emotional abuse**  *Reflective points could include consideration around:*  What comments did the person make during the discussion? What was their body language when going through the statements?  Are there any additional information/observations/environmental aspects about when you have seen the person with the other person?  Are there any views or observations of others that could be considered – either family, friends or other professionals?  Is the person being dismissive of any of the statements, or pausing/taking longer to give an answer? What could this identify? How comfortable was the person engaging in this conversation?  Was there any further discussion around the context of their relationship? | | | |
| **Intimidation and threats** | **Always** | **To some extent** | | **Never** | | **Comments** |
| I have been physically abused by the other person |  |  | |  | |  |
| Threats of physical abuse to control me have been used |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person changed their mood towards me |  |  | |  | |  |
| Mine or my dependents possessions have been destroyed |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person has made threats to harm/harm has occurred to me or my dependents |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person has threatened to or ruined planned events |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person has threatened to take the dependents away |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other has made threats to kill me in a way which made me believe it |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person has raped me |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person has humiliated sexually |  |  | |  | |  |
| The family pet has been abused by the other person |  |  | |  | |  |
| The car was driven in a reckless manner by the other person |  |  | |  | |  |
| The other person blamed me for making her angry |  |  | |  | |  |
| Other> |  |  | |  | |  |
| **Observations that could indicate an absence of intimidation or threats**  What comments did the person make during the discussion? What was their body language when going through the statements?  Are there any additional information/observations/environmental aspects about when you have seen the person with the other person?  Are there any views or observations of others that could be considered – either family, friends or other professionals?  Was there any further discussion around the context of their relationship? | | | **Observations that could indicate a presence of intimidation or threats**  What comments did the person make during the discussion? What was their body language when going through the statements?  Are there any additional information/observations/environmental aspects about when you have seen the person with the other person?  Are there any views or observations of others that could be considered – either family, friends or other professionals?  Is the person being dismissive of any of the statements, or pausing/taking longer to give an answer? What could this identify? How comfortable was the person engaging in this conversation?  Was there any further discussion around the context of their relationship? | | | |
| **Economic Abuse** | **Always** | | **To some extent** | | **Never** | **Comments** |
| The other person denied me money |  | |  | |  |  |
| I was not allowed to spend money on myself or the children |  | |  | |  |  |
| I had to account for everything I spent |  | |  | |  |  |
| I had to ask for basic necessities |  | |  | |  |  |
| The other person spent money on themselves only |  | |  | |  |  |
| I was kept in the dark as to our finances |  | |  | |  |  |
| The other person went through my wallet for money |  | |  | |  |  |
| Other> |  | |  | |  |  |
| **Observations that could indicate an absence of economic abuse**  What comments did the person make during the discussion? What was their body language when going through the statements?  Are there any additional information/observations/environmental aspects about when you have seen the person with the other person?  Are there any views or observations of others that could be considered – either family, friends or other professionals?  Was there any further discussion around the context of their relationship?  Does the person have capacity regarding their finances – should there be consideration around completing a separate mental capacity assessment? | | | **Observations that could indicate a presence of economic abuse**  What comments did the person make during the discussion? What was their body language when going through the statements?  Are there any additional information/observations/environmental aspects about when you have seen the person with the other person?  Are there any views or observations of others that could be considered – either family, friends or other professionals?  Is the person being dismissive of any of the statements, or pausing/taking longer to give an answer? What could this identify? How comfortable was the person engaging in this conversation?  Was there any further discussion around the context of their relationship? | | | |

**Conclusion**

Considering all of the above points, how do they indicate an absence or presence of elements of control or coercion in this specific relationship being considered?

What are the person’s views of the relationship and do they think that they are subject to control and coercion?

This is a professional judgement, but a clear outcome is required. On the balance of probabilities – what is the likelihood of control and coercion in the relationship and what informs this decision? Within this conclusion you may also wish to consider the below reflective points:

* The impact of you asking the questions as a social care professional – are they likely to be honest? Some people may have concerns or views around social care professionals, has this impacted on the person’s responses?
* Did the person appear to be open and honest generally? Any non-verbal communication or observations that can inform this?
* Has the person been consistent across multiple visits/phone calls? Is the person giving consistent information between different professionals?
* What are your impressions/intuitions – what are your reflections on what might have informed this?
* How does the person’s own views of the relationship inform your judgement?
* By the end of the discussion, do you feel that the person could recognise controlling/coercive behaviours? Would they be able to take action regarding this – what would they do? Has the person discussed whether any of the behaviours have happened in any other personal relationships (partners or friends), and could they say what they did on that occasion?

**Actions to consider following this analysis:**

* Discuss with the person whether they would like to report the concerns to the police – coercive control is a criminal offence (see further information here: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/controlling-or-coercive-behaviour-intimate-or-family-relationship>)
* Safeguarding referral – consideration of whether the person can take action to protect themselves
* MARAC referral form to be completed with DASH assessment included available on Box here: <https://centralbedfordshire.box.com/s/ygf4tb9sjx7zmowkyyrmdr3bw9nqvk5h>
* If already open to S42 enquiry – include this information within the safeguarding risk assessment and protection plan
* Escalate concerns to manager/supervisor
* Complete a mental capacity assessment in relation to relationships
* Consideration of signposting to support – e.g. counselling, Freedom Project (to understand more about control and coercion)
* Consider if a legal planning meeting is required