DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT: TACTICS OF POWER AND CONTROL

By Joy Wright, Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women’s Network
adapted from Domestic Abuse Intervention Project’s Power and Control Wheel, 2002

- Emotional Abuse
  - Name calling
  - “Crazy making” – making the survivor think the survivor is crazy
  - Put downs in front of family, friends, co-workers, in public
  - Playing mind games
  - Ignoring
  - Making fun of survivor

- Intimidation
  - Making the survivor afraid by using looks, gestures, actions, a loud voice, smashing things, destroying property, abusing pets

- Isolation
  - Keeping survivor from seeing friends or family
  - Turning friends and family against survivor
  - Controlling where survivor goes, what survivor does, and who survivor sees
  - Not allowing the survivor to have privacy and personal space

- Threats
  - Threatening to hurt or kill survivor, children or pets
  - Threatening to throw the survivor out
  - Threatening to take the children
  - Threatening to destroy property, take sentimental items, etc.
  - Threatening to report survivor to immigration, DCFS, welfare, probation, the police, etc., or to “out” the survivor
  - Threatening to take survivor’s wheelchair, medication, etc.
  - Threatening to commit suicide
  - Threatening, “If I can’t have you, no one will.”
  - Following through on threats

- Economic Abuse
  - Controlling all the money
  - Not allowing survivor to keep a job
  - Taking survivor’s paycheck, not allowing access to money
  - Keeping survivor’s name off of property, real estate, life insurance, etc.
  - Spending all the money while family needs go unmet

- Using Children
  - Abusing the children, abusing survivor in front of the children
  - Making the children act as go-betweens
  - Criticizing parenting skills
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- Telling the children negative things about survivor
- Using visitation to harass survivor; seeking custody to control survivor
- Abducting the children
- Reporting survivor to DCFS

- **Sexual Abuse**
  - Coercing or forcing unwanted sex or sexual activities
  - Treating survivor like a sex object
  - Physically attacking sexual parts of body
  - Not taking “no” for an answer
  - Insisting on sex on the abuser’s terms only
  - Denying survivor of sexual pleasure

- **Using Privilege**
  - Using male privilege, heterosexual privilege, white privilege, immigration status, economic privilege, able-bodied privilege, etc., to gain control over the survivor
  - Acting like the “king of the castle”
  - Treating survivor like a servant
  - Abuser believing they have superior intelligence to survivor