



Patrick Doherty

ABUSE IN LATER LIFE EDUCATION SERIES FOR ADVOCATES:
**POWER AND CONTROL TACTICS &
THE ROLE OF CAREGIVER STRESS**

Module 8

National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life

2017

Office on Violence Against Women Abuse in Later Life Program

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As a Result of This Training, Participants Will Be Better Able to:

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- Identify the dynamics of power & control and/or entitlement in abuse in later life relationships
- Explore additional scenarios where harm may occur in relationships
- Clarify the relationship between caregiver stress and abuse

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Theories on Why Abuse Happens

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Abuse in Later Life Power & Control Wheel

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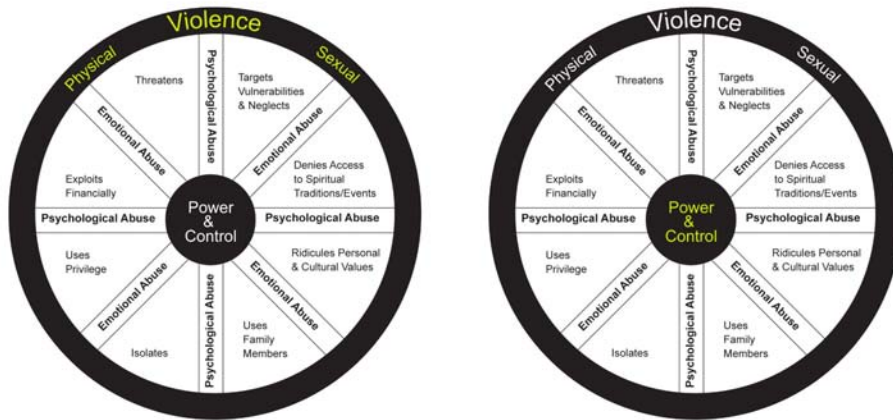


Wheel adapted with permission from Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, MN in 2006.

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Abuse in Later Life Wheel Components

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Tactic: Targets Vulnerabilities & Neglects

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- Takes or moves walker, wheelchair, hearing aids, glasses
- Takes advantage of confusion

Tactic: Threatens

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- Threats to kill or harm
- Threats to commit suicide
- Threats to leave and never see elder again
- Threats to institutionalize

Tactic: Exploits Financially

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- Takes over accounts and bills, spending without permission
- Steals money, titles, and/or possessions
- Abuses a power of attorney

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Tactic: Uses Privilege

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- Manipulates against assumptions of professionals in the community

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Tactic: Isolates

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- Controls what victim does, whom they see, and where they go
- Limits time with friends and family
- Denies access to phone and computer
- Fails to visit or make contact

Tactic: Uses Family Members

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- Magnifying family disagreements
- Denying access to grandchildren
- Misleads family members about extent and nature of illnesses/conditions
- Leaves grandchildren without honoring grandparents wants or needs
- Forces victim to keep secrets

Tactic: Ridicules Personal & Cultural Values

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- Ridiculing religious, personal and cultural values
- Use victims religious or personal belief and values to keep victim trapped in relationship

Tactic: Denies Access to Spiritual Traditions/Events

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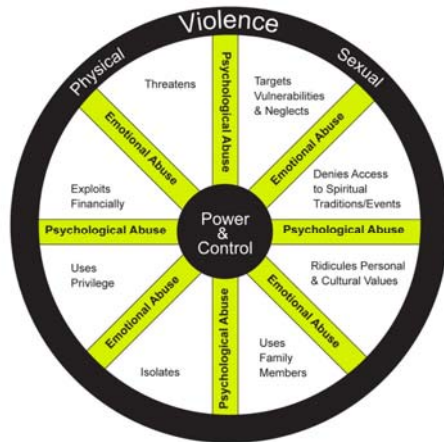


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- Prevents victim from attending important spiritual, cultural, or religious events
- Prevents victim from practicing important spiritual, cultural, or religious traditions

Emotional and Psychological Abuse

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- Emotional Abuse
 - Name calling
 - Verbal attacks and abuse
 - Yelling
- Psychological Abuse
 - Crazy-making behavior to make victim doubt own judgement or thinking
 - Withholds affection

Additional Scenarios of Harm

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- Unintentional injuries
- Well-intended caregivers
- By persons who can't control their behavior due to medical conditions

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Caregiver Stress

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Caregiver Stress

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- Emotions associated with the stress or perceived stress of providing care, but...
- Several studies and articles have debunked the popular notion that elder abuse is primarily caused by caregiver stress (Acierno et al., 2010; Fischer and Regan, 2006).

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Caregiver Stress and Abuse Case Example

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Why It Is Important

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- Victim safety is not addressed
- May be only opportunity to talk with victim
- Victim may not reach out for help again
- The abuser may not be held accountable
- Remedies to reduce stress, anger, or substance abuse do not deal with power and control dynamics

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Summary

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- Power and control, entitlement, or greed are often contributing factors in elder abuse
- Harm may happen in situations that are not abusive and will require different remedies
- Misidentifying a situation as “caregiver stress” rather than abuse can jeopardize victim safety

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Video Presenters

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Thank You

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- Special thanks to Terra Nova Films for the ongoing working partnership with NCALL and the beautiful video production
- www.terranova.org

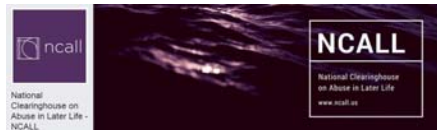


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Staying Connected to NCALL and Other Advocates

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- Sign up for our newsletter: <http://oi.vresp.com/?fid=03fcc93262>
- Join our listserv for advocates serving older survivors: ncall@ncall.us
- Join us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ncall.us
- Join us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/ncall_us



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