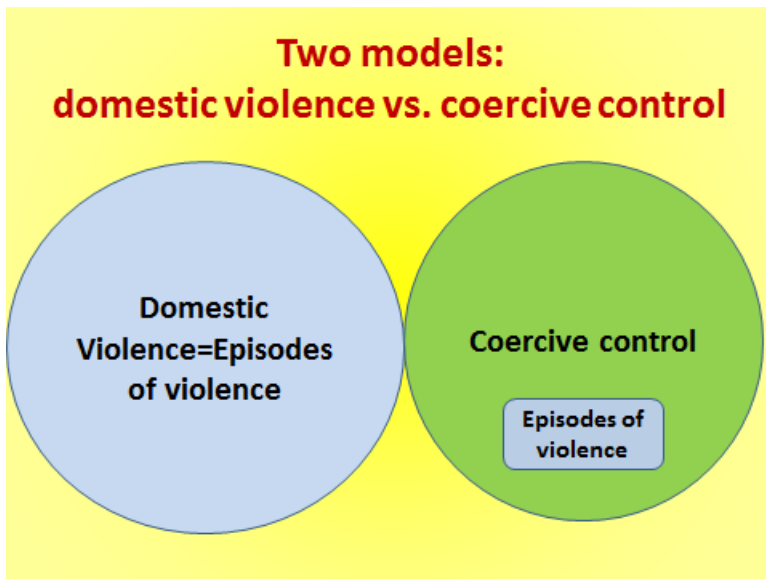


Invisible Chains: Overcoming Coercive Control in Your Intimate Relationship

Lisa Aronson Fontes, PhD

Coercive control is a strategy some people use to dominate their intimate partners. At first, these relationships can feel highly romantic. Over time, the victim feels trapped. Coercive control underlies many relationships of “domestic violence” and is the harm that occurs on a daily basis, between physical assaults.

- Can exist in same sex couples
- People of all genders can be victimized & victimizers
- Men more likely to use coercive control over women (in heterosexual relationships)
- Immigrants, elderly, teens, LGBTQ people and people with disabilities may be especially vulnerable

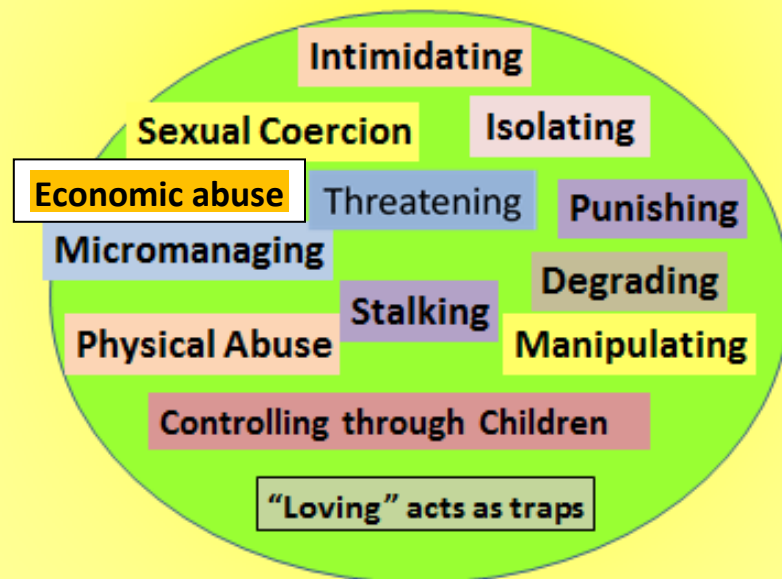


For more information, go to www.LisaFontes.com or contact Lisa Fontes, PhD at: LFontes@Umass.edu

Original drawings by Liz Bannish



Controlling Behaviors: Not Just Bossiness—It's Domination



Relationship between physical violence and coercive control

- Not all controlling partners use it
- Often "mild" but frequent—pushing, slapping, grabbing, shaking, pulling hair, unwanted rough sex
- If we focus exclusively on the most extreme physical violence we miss most assaults

Ways to help:

- Stay in touch
- Provide support
- Encourage professional support (DV advocates, police, counseling, medical checkup)
- Listen well...believe
 - What do you need?
 - What can I do to help?
 - What do you want to do?
 - What is your biggest worry?

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Fontes, L. A. (2015). *Invisible chains: Overcoming coercive control in your intimate relationship*. New York: Guilford Press.

Stark, E. (2007). *Coercive control: How men entrap women in personal life*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Blog: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/invisible-chains>