



Intersectional Approaches: Gender Based Violence & Mental Health

Agenda

1. Introduction, land acknowledgement, warm up (name and pronoun)
2. Definitions
3. Forms of abuse
4. Barriers
5. Risk Assessment
6. Strengths based/ validating responses
7. Scenario

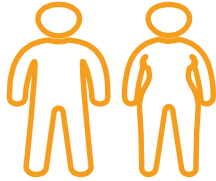
Land Acknowledgment

I would like to recognize that we are gathering today on native land, much of it unceded. As people who are not indigenous to Canada, we acknowledge that we have benefitted and continue to benefit from ongoing practices of colonization in these lands and as a network we stand in solidarity with struggles for justice in the cases of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls and for indigenous sovereignty and self-determination.

Definition of Domestic Violence by OCASI (Ontario Coalition of Agencies Serving Immigrants):

“ ...any use of physical or sexual force, actual or threatened, in an intimate relationship. Intimate relationships include those between opposite-sex and same-sex partners. These relationships vary in duration and legal formality, and include current and former dating, common-law and married couples.

What is Gender Based Violence?



“ Gender-based violence means violence that targets individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of their gender.



Forms of **ABUSE**

- ▶ In groups of 3 write down all the forms of abuse you can think of
- ▶ Give examples of each as they present themselves among your clients

Verbal Abuse

- ▶ Swearing, yelling, name calling, put-downs, deception, degrading comments, threatening to take children away, brainwashing, calling partner crazy, blaming, demanding, interrogating, contradicting, using threatening tone of voice, etc.

Emotional and Psychological Abuse

Ignoring, isolating from friends and family, humiliating, neglecting, criticizing, being intimidating (through looks or body language), playing mind games, disrespecting, embarrassing

Kicking or hitting the dog or cat, threatening to kill the pet, using loud intimidating voice with respect to the pet, etc...

Damage to Property

Abuse of Pets

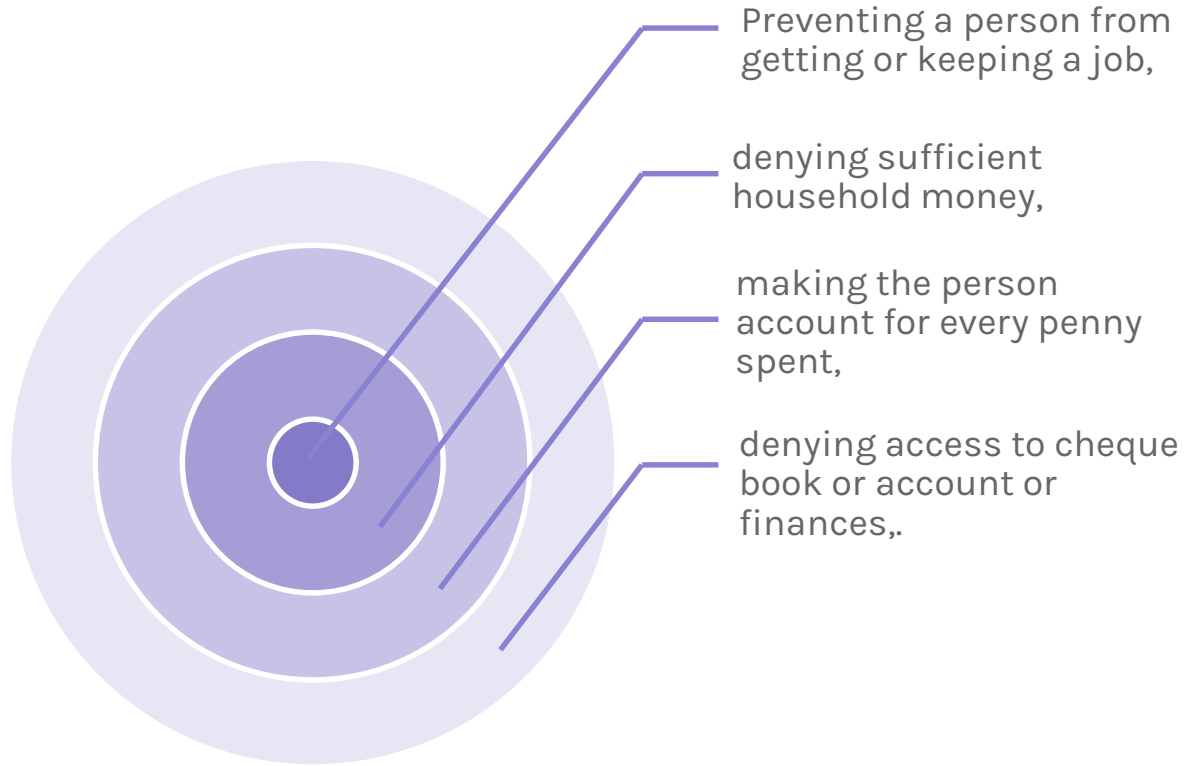
Emotional and Psychological Abuse

harassing, terrorizing, degrading
in public, threatening suicide,
stalking, using silent treatment,
etc.

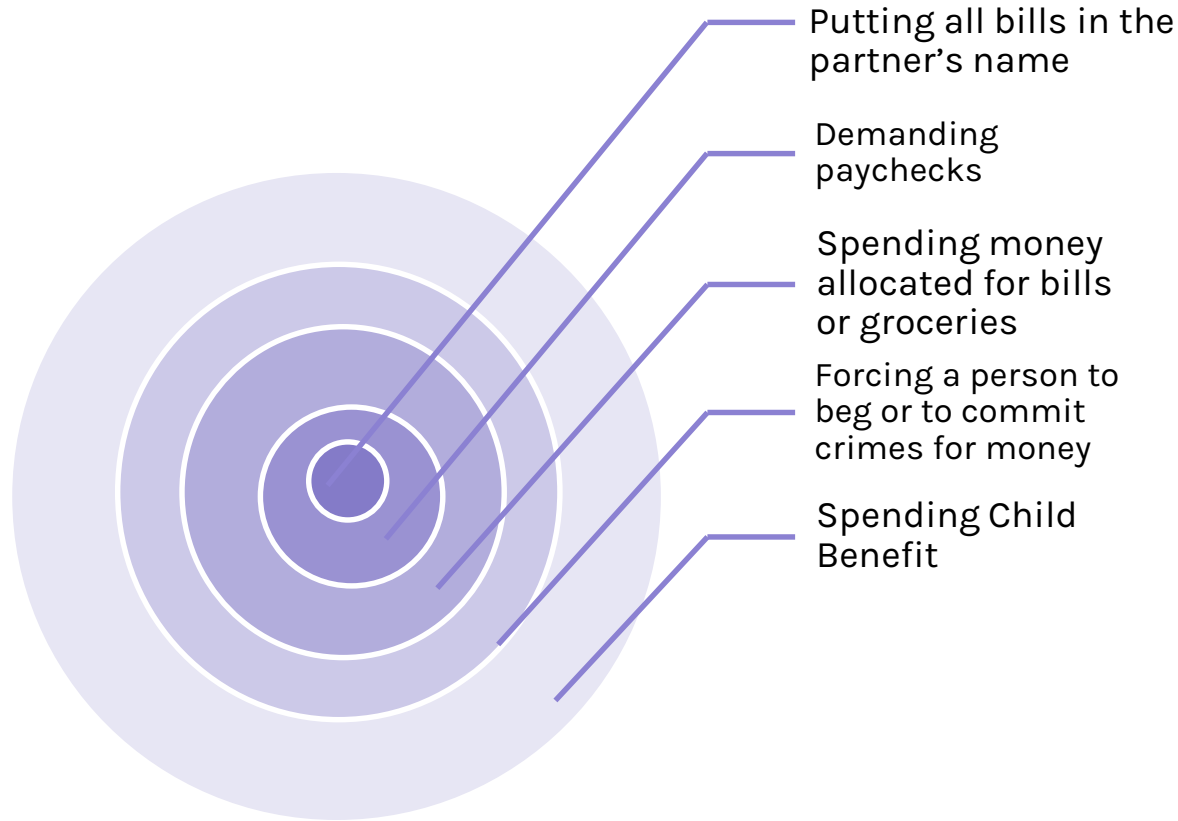
Breaking things in the house that
belong to the children and
partner, throwing gifts given to
partner by family and friends,
cutting up favourite clothing,
throwing partner's things in the
garbage, sabotaging their car,
etc.

- More survivors experience emotional abuse, which is the largest risk factor for suicide among women.
- Survivors report that emotional abuse had a greater impact on them than physical abuse.

Financial or Economic Abuse



Financial or Economic Abuse



Spiritual Abuse

- ▶ Using scripture selectively,
- ▶ Prohibiting attendance to prayer services or celebrate religious holidays,
- ▶ stipulating that a woman must respect and obey her husband,
- ▶ preventing her from practicing her faith, ridiculing her while she prays, etc...

Physical Abuse

- ▶ Pushing, punching, slapping, kicking, biting, hair pulling, pinching, grabbing, scratching, restraining, throwing objects, choking, using weapons, homicide, threatening suicide, etc...

Sexual Abuse

► Unwanted touching, sexual name calling, inappropriate looks, forcing a person to do unwanted sexual acts, pressure to dress in a more suggestive way, unfaithfulness, false accusations, forced sex, withholding sex, hurtful sex, rape

► Marital rape

Sources: Hidden Hurt Domestic Abuse Information. Types of Abuse. <http://www.hiddenhurt.co.uk/Types/faces.htm>

Tubman Family Alliance. Forms of Abuse.

http://www.tubmanfamilyalliance.org/need_help/for_teens/forms_abuse.html

OCASI Training Manual Prevention of Domestic Violence against Immigrant and Refugee Women 18

Barriers to leaving

- ▶ Often people wonder why a person stays in an abusive relationship. This vein of thought tends to judge and blame the survivor, rather than focus on the abuser and the abusive behaviour.
- ▶ This has often resulted in silencing the survivor, because of the judgment of others.
- ▶ There may be embarrassment and shame of what is happening. As a consequence, the survivor often feels there is something wrong with them

Barriers to leaving

- ▶ Also many survivors do not want to have their families members criminalized, incarcerated, hospitalized or risk having them deported or lose their families and communities
- ▶ Rather many survivors want the violence to stop and continue to be with the people they love and have known their whole lives

Intersecting Social Locations



ASSESSMENT

Domestic violence has serious consequences which could, in some cases, mean death. For this reason, proactive assessment and intervention are very important for both addressing and preventing domestic violence.

Proactive assessment and intervention means assessing and evaluating an individual, not after, but **before**, the occurrence of an event, with a view to **preventing** it.

ASSESSMENT

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) provides the following useful guidelines for assessment. Guidelines for Conducting an Effective Assessment:

- ▶ **Allow** the survivor an **opportunity to present** the domestic violence problem (i.e., let them tell their story)
- ▶ **Recognize** that the issue of domestic violence may not arise at the start of the meeting before trust has been built
- ▶ **Be aware** that a survivor may not necessarily mention abuse as the issue.
- ▶ They may present a different problem (e.g., housing, finding a job, etc.)

ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Work with the survivor where they are at, effectively helping with the problem that is being presented can demonstrate that you actually want to listen to what they think are the most pressing issues in their lives
- ▶ Survivors are the experts on their lives, we are there to listen, believe their stories and provide support, information and options

ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Ensure confidentiality
- ▶ Educate the survivor about their rights and what is abuse. Many survivors do not identify verbal and emotional abuse as abuse
- ▶ Provide resources and options.

ASSESSMENT

Assess the immediate safety needs of the survivor:

“Are you in immediate danger?
Where is your partner now? Do
you need medical care? Do you
want or need security, or the
police to be notified
immediately?”

ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Make sure the person understands you will only notify authorities if that is what they want
- ▶ Assess the pattern and history of the abuse.
- ▶ Assess the partner's physical, sexual, or psychological tactics, as well as the economic coercion of the survivor.

ASSESSMENT

“How long has the violence been going on?”

“Has your partner forced or harmed you sexually?”

“Has your partner harmed your family, friends, or pets?”

“Does your partner control your activities, money, or children?”

ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Assess the connection between domestic violence and their support role to the person with the mental health issue
- ▶ Assess the impact of the abuse on the client's physical, psychological, and spiritual well being.
- ▶ What is the degree of the partner's control over the client? "How is your partner's abusive behavior affecting you?"

ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Assess the survivor's current access to advocacy and support groups.
- ▶ Are there culturally appropriate community resources available?
- ▶ What resources (if any) are available now?
- ▶ "What resources have you used, or tried in the past? What happened? Did you find them helpful or appropriate?"

ASSESSMENT

Assess safety:

- ▶ Is there future risk or death or significant injury or harm due to the domestic violence?
- ▶ Ask about the partner's tactics: escalation in frequency or severity of the violence, homicide or suicide threats, use of alcohol or drugs, as well as about the health consequences of past abuse

Source: National Association of Social Workers. Domestic Violence Assessment and Intervention provide by the Family Violence Prevention Fund.
http://www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/events/domestic_violence/assessment.asp

Using a strength based approach

Recognize and encourage the woman's strengths, asking narrative questions, such as:

- ▶ What did you do today?
- ▶ What did you do before you came to Canada?
- ▶ Tell me about your friends
- ▶ Learn about the client's informal and formal supports (e.g., a trusted family member or friend, someone from their faith community)

Strength based approach

- ▶ Discuss whether identified supports are reliable and easily obtainable
- ▶ Provide information about options and resources
- ▶ Make appropriate referrals

Validating responses

Listen and provide validating messages:

- ▶ "I am concerned. This is harmful to you (and it can be harmful to your children)."
- ▶ "You are not alone in figuring this out. There may be some options. I will support your choices."
- ▶ I care. I am glad you told me. I want to work together to keep you as safe and healthy as possible."
- ▶ "Stopping the abuse is the responsibility of your partners, not yours."

THANK YOU

Please provide your feedback! 