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**INNER
EYE**

PERCEPTION
BEYOND
ORDINARY
SIGHT

Presents 'THE TIMEKEEPER' – An awareness film about Coercive and Controlling Behaviour

What is coercive control?

- Coercive control 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
- Domestic abuse is **NOT** always physical
- Controlling and coercive behaviour is not just a form of domestic abuse it is **at the heart of domestic abuse**
- It is subtle and strategic, designed to make a person dependent by isolating them from support, depriving them of independence and regulating their everyday behaviour whilst exploiting them
- Coercive control works to limit a victims' human rights by depriving them of their liberty and reducing their ability for action

"The victim becomes captive in an unreal world created by the abuser, entrapped in a world of confusion, contradiction and fear." **Professor Evan Stark**

Abusers make victims feel they are walking on eggshells the whole time by design, they distort reality and make the whole world exist within the rules of that relationship. There is no place that control does not exist within the invisible prison of the relationship.

The signs/tactics:

Isolating victims from friends and family/their support system

- Suggesting shared phone and social media accounts for convenience
- Moving you far away from your family so that it's hard to visit them
- Fabricating lies about you to others
- Monitoring your phone calls with your family and cutting the line off if anyone tries to intervene
- Convincing you that your family hates you and does not want to talk to you
- Driving a wedge between you and your family/friends

Monitoring your activity throughout the day

- The omnipresence - monitoring you via online communication tools or spyware, wiring your house with cameras or recording devices, sometimes using two-way surveillance to speak to you at home during the day
- Taking control over aspects of the victim's everyday life, such as where they can go, who they can see, what they can wear and when they can sleep

Denying victims freedom and autonomy

- Not allowing you to go to work or school



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- Restricting your access to transportation
- Stalking your every move when you are out
- Taking your phone and changing all your passwords

Gaslighting

- Gaslighting is an extremely effective form of emotional abuse that causes a you to question your own feelings, instincts and sanity
- Making you doubt your own judgement and question your memory. Confusing your perception of what is really happening to you

Name-calling and putting you down

- Malicious put-downs, name-calling, and frequent criticisms are all forms of bullying behaviour
- Repeatedly putting you down, i.e. saying you are worthless
- Putting you down to other people including other professionals/services
- Making you feel unimportant and deficient
- Making you feel that they validate you and you need them

Limiting your access to money

- Controlling finances as a way of restricting your freedom and ability to leave the relationship
- Placing you on a strict budget that barely covers the essentials, such as food or clothes
- Limiting your access to bank accounts
- Hiding financial resources
- Preventing you from having a credit card
- Rigorously monitoring what you spend

Reinforcing traditional gender roles

- Ensuring there is a distinction between who functions as the man and the woman in the relationship
- Convincing you that you do not need to go back to work after having children
- Making you the homemaker and themselves the bread winner, reinforcing dependency

Turning your kids against you

- Weaponising children
- Telling them you are a bad parent
- Creating a dynamic where you are the one saying no and they are the one saying yes
- Creating rifts
- Including children in the control/abuse

Controlling aspects of your health and body

- Monitoring and controlling how much you eat, sleep, or time you spend in the bathroom
- Calorie counting or adhering to strict exercise regimes and diets
- Determining whether you can access medical services and attending appointments with victims
- Taking control of medication
- Depriving you of basic needs such as food and water



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- Controlling health and beauty products
- Choosing your wardrobe, what you can and cannot wear or even purchasing all your clothes for you

Making jealous accusations

- Complaining about the amount of time you spend with your family and friends, both on and offline
- Minimising and phasing out contact with the outside world
- Making threats and intimidating you

Regulating your sexual relationship

- Making demands about the number of times you have sex each week and the kinds of activities you perform
- Demanding to take sexual pictures or videos of you or refusing to use contraception
- Humiliating, degrading or dehumanising you

Threatening your children or pets

- If physical, emotional or financial threats don't work, abusers will use threats against others to control
- Making violent threats against them
- **Threatening to call social services and say you're neglecting or abusing your children when you are not**
- Intimidating you by threatening to make important decisions about your kids without your consent
- Threatening to kidnap your children or get rid of your pet

What examples of coercive and controlling behaviour were evident in the film?

What do you think will be the implications of this abuse on a victim's behaviour and what could you be looking for in your current role?

What are the implications of this knowledge on your job role/service?

Can you think of cohorts who may be more at risk of this form of abuse and exploitation?

Can you think of any examples of how perpetrators/abusers may try to manipulate your service?

What if the disclosure does not come from the victim?



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What can you do?

Getting out of an abusive relationship can be complex, especially when children are involved. Once a victim chooses to leave an abuser the risk of a violent incident increases. Infact this is the most dangerous time for a victim of abuse. The abuser has lost control and will take action to reassert control.

DO NOT JUDGE

Assess:

- Exercise professional judgement
- Follow your organisations safeguarding and DVA policies
- Assess imminent risk
- Refer to MARAC for high risk + Athena referral and contact the police if necessary
- Consider referral to Athena or as a professional contact for advice

Meet the client where she is:

- Understand the situation the client is in
- They may not be completely aware of implication or significance of their experience
- It is normal for them
- They may not wish to leave or end this relationship
- They will be scared, they will be scared for their children
- They may fixate on something trivial

Explore and address barriers = Social, emotional and physical barriers:

- English as a second language or no English = translator services and ESOL classes
- Physical disability = access requirements
- Hearing or vision impaired = sign language, braille etc
- No recourse to public funds, no legal status = access to support, know their rights

Record:

- Record any and all details disclosed

Support client to make safe contact

- Plan with clients when is a good time to contact Athena and for Athena to contact them
- What number? If their own mobile is a risk, is there a friend's number or somewhere can they go to have a safe conversation
- Safe spaces = can you or your organisation create a safe space for a confidential phone call

Why refer to Athena straight away and what will happen?

- Support victims to develop an individual support and safety plan for them and their children
- Discuss possible practical actions that could be taken to improve their safety
- Help accessing and negotiating services, such as health services and housing
- Advise on reporting abuse to the police and obtaining civil orders



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DO NOT WAIT

- If a victim has consented to support this may be a temporary state based on a recent incident or a realisation (epiphany moment) or just a day they are feeling strong and brave. Act straight away, it could be the only opportunity
- Straight after an incident a victim will be more open and receptive to help and support
- The longer we wait to refer the more unlikely the victim will consent to support
- The victim will become closed off to services if they have disclosed or consented to support but then it takes a long time to respond

DO NOT CLOSE A CASE TO YOUR SERVICE

- Just because a victim has agreed to support or made a decision to leave a perpetrator does not mean this case should close. **THIS IS THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME** for a victim and the risk has not reduced. The support from your organisation should not reduce, it should increase.

	Telephone	Email	Website	Web chat
ATHENA REFUGE	0800 112 4052	lewishamvawg@refuge.org.uk	https://www.refuge.org.uk/our-work/our-services/one-stop-shop-services/athena/	
NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE	0808 2000 247 (Freephone 24 Hour)		https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/	
WOMENS AID		helpline@womensaid.org.uk		https://chat.womensaid.org.uk/ (10am - Noon Mon-Fri) average wait time is 16 minutes)
SIGNHEALTH - DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE	Tel: 0203 947 2600 Text: 07970 350366	da@signhealth.org.uk	https://www.signhealth.org.uk/our-projects/deafhope-projects/	
VICTIM SUPPORT	020 8698 4583 (Lewisham & Bromley only) If you need support outside of our open hours, call our Support line on Freephone 08 08 16 89 111		https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/more-us/contact-us	https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/support-near-you/live-chat