



University of Findlay

Office of Counseling Services

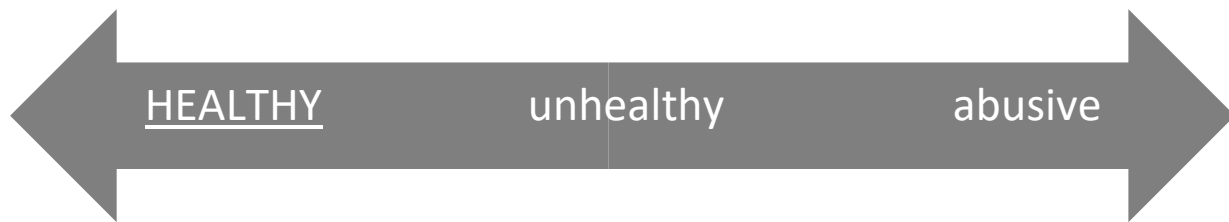
How to Utilize this Packet

Section 1 - Identify and evaluate the healthy and unhealthy characteristics of your relationship.

Section 2 –Learn how to improve communication in a relationship that you would like to continue.

Section 3 - Identify what behaviors are defined as abusive and resources that are available.

Section 1 – Identifying and Evaluating Relationship Characteristics



Relationships often operate on a continuum of healthy, unhealthy, and abusive. When relationships are healthy they need work by both partners to continue to remain healthy. If a relationship is showing signs of being unhealthy, it is still possible to make changes to have a healthier relationship (if both partners are willing to work on the relationship). The first step to changing a relationship is to identify and evaluate the characteristics of the relationship.

Healthy Relationships

Some signs of a healthy relationship:

- You feel calm, centered and focused.
- The intimacy is safe, supportive, respectful, non-punitive and peaceful.
- You feel wanted, unconditionally accepted and loved just for existing and being alive in a healthy intimate relationship.
- Your partner brings out the best qualities in you and allows you to grow.
- You feel part of something and not alone in a relationship.
- You experience forgiving and being forgiven with little revenge or reminding of past offenses.
- You find yourself giving thanks for just being alive in this relationship.
- Provides a sense of directedness with plan and order.
- You are able to be comfortable and do not need to worry about the minute details of the relationship.
- Feelings and the process of the relationship comes before things and money.
- Encourages your personal growth and supports individuality.

Some questions to ask yourself

- Does my relationship sound, look and feel like this description?
- What factors impede my ability to have this kind of relationship?
- Am I able to be emotionally, spiritually, and physically intimate?
- Do I have an openly affectionate relationship with healthy emotionally based communication?
- How important is it to me to have healthy intimacy in my relationship?

Unhealthy Relationships

Some warning signs of unhealthy love

- Feeling consumed in the relationship
- Extremely afraid to let go
- Excessive fear or risk
- Little individual growth
- Few truly intimate experiences
- Playing mind games/power games
- Trying to get something by giving
- Trying to change people
- Needing others to feel secure and happy
- Refusing to commit
- Frequently experiencing negative emotions
- Being afraid of affection and closeness
- Cares with excessive detachment
- Looking to others for self-worth

These warning signs show you when there are areas of your relationship that may not be healthy. However, identifying with multiple areas of unhealthy love may be a sign of an abusive relationship.

Effects of an Unhealthy Relationship

Unhealthy relationships can lead to feelings of guilt, shame, anger, or low self-esteem. They can also contribute to mental health conditions, such as depression or anxiety. People in unhealthy relationships tend to develop substance use disorders more frequently than those that are not in an unhealthy relationship. There is also an increase in negative physical health effects for people that are a part of an unhealthy relationship. Some of these negative effects include increased risk for: a heart problem, high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and a weaker immune system. Overall, unhealthy relationships have been linked to a range of mental, social,

and physical problems, which only reflects the importance that our relationships have in our lives.

What to do if you determine you have an unhealthy relationship

If you are dealing with an unhealthy relationship there are ways to try to make changes to this relationship. The first step is trying to improve communication to address the unhealthy behaviors when they occur. (*Note: You should only do this if it is safe.* If you are in an abusive relationship, this kind of confrontation may not be safe. The third section will help you identify signs of an abusive relationship.)

Finally, if nothing you do or say changes the unhealthy behavior, consider separating yourself or at least distancing yourself from this relationship. This may mean temporary or permanent separation. But doing nothing will only expose you to the unhealthy physical and psychological effects of stress and ongoing conflict.

Section2 – Improving Communication

Guidelines for Arguing with Respect

An argument between intimate partners has the purpose of clearing the air and expressing deep feelings in order to build a more unified life. Keep your goal in mind - the goal of improving your relationship.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Arguing by mutual consent | Don't insist on an argument at a time one of you can't handle this type of strain. A good argument demands two ready participants. |
| 2. Stick to the present | Don't dredge up past mistakes and faults about which you can do nothing. |
| 3. Stick to the subject | Limit this argument to this subject. Don't throw every other problem into it; take them at a different time. |
| 4. Don't hit below the belt | In your lives together, you discover each other's sensitive areas. Don't throw them at each other. |
| 5. Don't quit, work it out | Bring the argument to a mutual conclusion. Otherwise, it will just recur again and again. |
| 6. Don't try to win | If one wins, the other loses and begins to build resentment about this relationship. That destroys rather than builds the relationship. Learn to negotiate and compromise. |
| 7. Respect crying | It is a valid response to how we feel, but don't let crying sidetrack you. It is a valid response for men as well as women. |
| 8. NO VIOLENCE | Any kind of violence violates all the above rules for arguing with respect by mutual consent. No issues is as important as the overall goal of being non-violent. |
| 9. Balance | You have the right to say what you want to say, but you can not do it in an abusive way, using intimidating or harsh language. |
| 10. Listen | In order for communication to be effective, both parties must listen to what the other person is saying and not try to merely convince the other of your position. |

WORDS

"NO" words

words that destroy communication

"You never....."

"I told you so....."

"You always....."

"I don't want to discuss it....."

"When will you ever learn?"

"How many times do I have to tell you....."

WORDS

WORDS

"Yes" words

words that improve communication

"I'm sorry....."

"I need you....."

"Please help me....."

"I did wrong....."

"Thank you."

"I love you."

WORDS

- State your feelings by using the word “I” and naming an emotion: “I feel hopeless when you constantly criticize me.” This is a constructive way to express feelings and furnishes others with information about the effects of their behavior. Saying “I think you should . . .” is an opinion that can make others stop listening or strike back. “I feel that you . . .” disguises opinions as feelings. “You make me feel . . .” is blaming.
- Make requests by asking questions: “Would you tell me something I’ve done well before you criticize me?” Even when people understand how you feel, they still may not know what to do. It is up to you to identify what you would like from them. It helps to list three things others can do to resolve issues. Saying “I would like you to . . .” is a statement and does not require a commitment. “Could you . . . ?” asks if others are able and implies that if they can do something, they should. “Would you . . . ?” gives others the freedom to say “No” while encouraging cooperation.
- Set limits by knowing what you are willing and not willing to do: “I will act hard of hearing when you don’t say something kind before you complain.” If others do not respond to your requests or offer acceptable solutions of their own, it is time to stop talking and act. Actions can be playful, like the one above, or adamant: “If you continue to yell, I will leave for an hour.” Often, it is unnecessary to state your limits out loud. When others can sense that you will take action, they are more responsive. Complaints, criticisms, and orders focus on others and start with the word “You.” Instead, turn useless “you messages” into words that work.

You Message <i>You should . . .</i>	State Feelings <i>I feel . . . when you . . .</i>	Make Requests <i>Would you . . .</i>	Set Limits <i>I will (not) . . .</i>
1. I feel that you have no right to accuse me!	I am sorry you have so much trouble trusting me.	Before making accusations, would you ask me why I’m late?	I will rephrase any accusations for you: “Did you just ask me . . .?”
2. Why don’t you just shut up and listen for once!	I feel annoyed when you give me unwanted advice.	Would you ask for my ideas before giving me advice?	I will cut our conversations short when you give me unwanted advice.
3. You make me feel useless.	I feel powerless when you don’t consult me about family decisions.	Would you get my input before you make family decisions?	I will not cooperate with decisions when I’ve had no input.
4. You’re not even trying to find a job.	I feel used when you don’t tell me what you’re doing to find work.	Would you tell me what you’ve done to find a job?	I’m not willing for you to stay longer than next week.
5. You have no consideration for others.	I feel frustrated when you don’t do what I ask you to do.	Would you put away your clothes during the next commercial?	I will turn off the TV until you have done what I’ve asked.

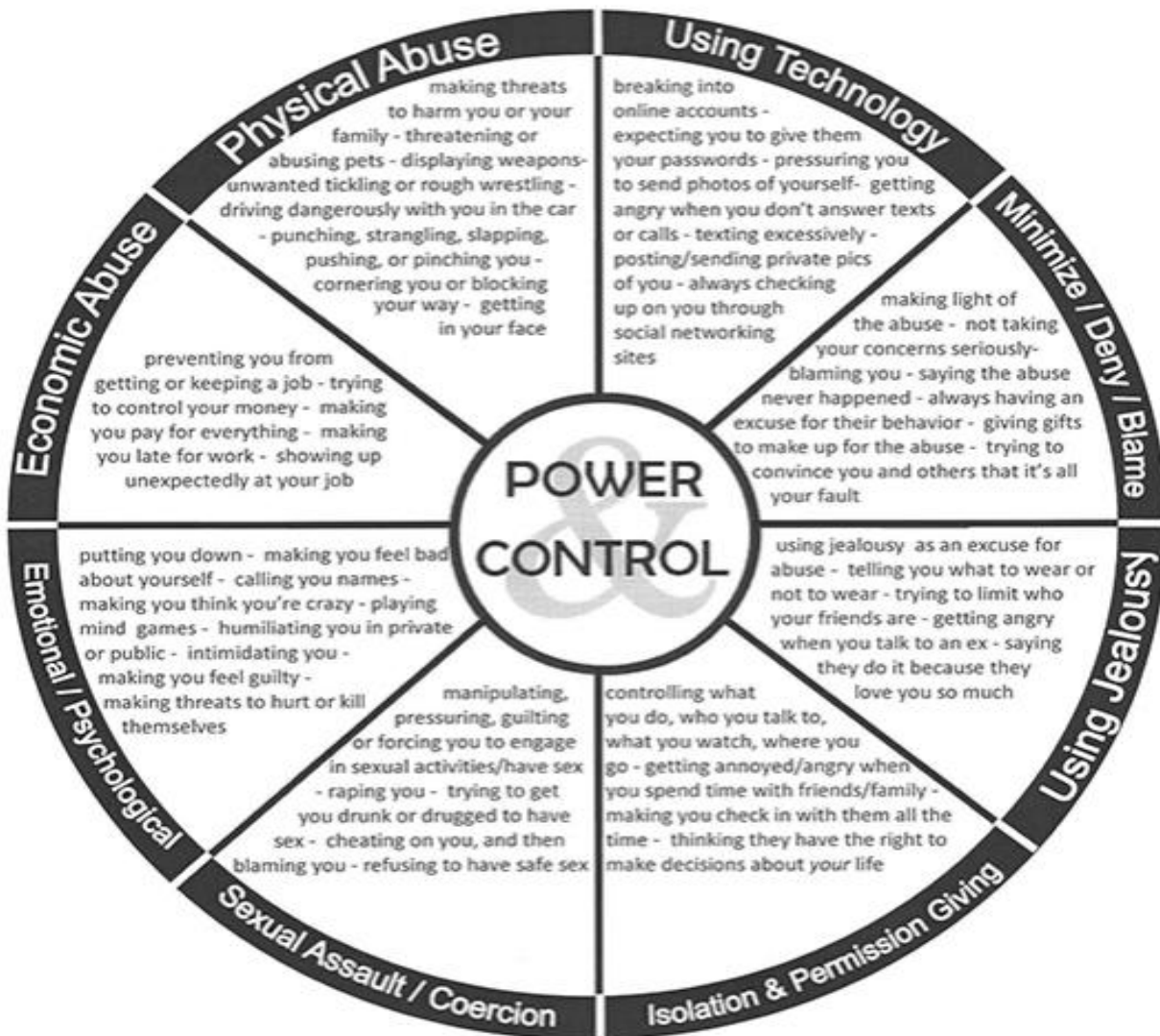
Putting it All Together to Problem Solve in a Relationship

1. Stay Cool
 - Take a deep breath.
 - Count to ten (or twenty).
 - Tell yourself
 - I feel good when I stay in control.
 - I don't need to fight.
2. Cool Off Your Partner
 - Say: "This isn't worth fighting over."
 - Say: "I have nothing against you, and I don't want to fight."
 - If someone insults you, ask "why would you want to say that?"
 - Use your sense of humor to help your partner lighten up.
3. Listen to Your Partner
 - Look him or her in the eye, nod, say: "I see".
 - Restate what is said, then ask, "Is that right?"
 - Don't get too close to the other person. Keep your tone of voice even.
4. Stand Up for Yourself
 - Use "I" statements to state your position and tell how you think and feel.
 - Give reasons for why you feel as you do.
 - Make requests and set limits.
 - Stand tall.
 - Speak with confidence.
5. Show Respect
 - Don't say what is wrong with the other person.
 - Say, "I see where you're coming from."
 - Say, "I understand why you might feel that way."
 - Agree where you can
 - If you have done something wrong, apologize.
6. Solve the Problem
 - Suggest a compromise.
 - Ask the other person to suggest a compromise.
 - Consider other possible solutions.
 - Ask problem-solving question: Why? Why not? What if?
 - Consider the possible consequences of each.

Section 3 - Abusive Relationships

Physical and sexual assaults, or threats to commit them, are the most apparent forms of domestic violence and are usually the actions that allow others to become aware of the problem. However, regular use of other abusive behaviors by the batterer, when reinforced by one or more acts of physical violence, make up a larger system of abuse. Although physical assaults may occur only once or occasionally, they instill threat of future violent attacks and allow the abuser to take control of the woman's life and circumstances.

The Power & Control diagram is a particularly helpful tool in understanding the overall pattern of abusive and violent behaviors, which are used by a batterer to establish and maintain control over his partner. Very often, one or more violent incidents are accompanied by an array of these other types of abuse. They are less easily identified, yet firmly establish a pattern of intimidation and control in the relationship.



WHAT IS ABUSE?

Abuse is any behavior by intent or design, which results in actual or perceived harm towards another.
Below is a list of different kinds of abuse and some examples of each.

Check all that apply in your relationships – past or present.
Indicate whether it was something you have done (x), or it was done to you (√).

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is any use of size, strength, or presence to control or hurt someone.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> pushing | <input type="checkbox"/> kicking | <input type="checkbox"/> holding against your will |
| <input type="checkbox"/> backhanding | <input type="checkbox"/> slapping | <input type="checkbox"/> attack with an object |
| <input type="checkbox"/> biting | <input type="checkbox"/> pushing you out of car | <input type="checkbox"/> twisting arms (joint locks) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> choking | <input type="checkbox"/> pinning against a wall | <input type="checkbox"/> carrying against your will |
| <input type="checkbox"/> standing or sitting on | <input type="checkbox"/> punching with a fist | <input type="checkbox"/> attack with a weapon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> banging your head on the wall | <input type="checkbox"/> abuse of children | <input type="checkbox"/> kneeling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> grabbing | <input type="checkbox"/> burning | <input type="checkbox"/> spanking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> attack with a knife | <input type="checkbox"/> hair pulling | <input type="checkbox"/> trying to hit you with car |
| <input type="checkbox"/> banging head on floor | <input type="checkbox"/> hitting while pregnant | |

PHYSICAL USE OF OBJECTS

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> throwing objects | <input type="checkbox"/> tearing clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> breaking personal items |
| <input type="checkbox"/> breaking car windshield | <input type="checkbox"/> driving recklessly to scare | <input type="checkbox"/> punching wall or door |
| <input type="checkbox"/> slamming doors | <input type="checkbox"/> sweeping things off table or dresser | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> unplugging, breaking, or taking away phone so you can't call police, friends or family | | |

USE OF SIZE OR PRESENCE

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> standing in doorway so you can't leave | <input type="checkbox"/> taking money, checkbook, credit or bank cards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> standing behind car so you can't leave | <input type="checkbox"/> taking car keys so you can't leave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clenching fist as if to hit | |

SEXUAL ABUSE

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> withholding sex | <input type="checkbox"/> pouting if denied sex | <input type="checkbox"/> forcing sex |
| <input type="checkbox"/> forcing you to act out fantasies | <input type="checkbox"/> not using birth control | <input type="checkbox"/> forcing sex with others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> forcing you to watch pornography | | |

VERBAL ABUSE

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> yelling | <input type="checkbox"/> threats to use violence | <input type="checkbox"/> insults |
| <input type="checkbox"/> threats to kill | <input type="checkbox"/> accusations of "screwing around" | <input type="checkbox"/> name calling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> being sarcastic | <input type="checkbox"/> threat to hurt kids | |

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> threatening suicide | <input type="checkbox"/> insulting your friends and/or family | <input type="checkbox"/> following |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not allowing you to use the phone | <input type="checkbox"/> blowing money on drugs or alcohol | <input type="checkbox"/> asking what you were doing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not allowing you to have money | <input type="checkbox"/> accusing you of having affairs | <input type="checkbox"/> manipulating with lies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> asking who you were with | <input type="checkbox"/> intense jealousy | <input type="checkbox"/> coming home high or drunk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> saying no one else would have | <input type="checkbox"/> not keeping a job | <input type="checkbox"/> criticizing your looks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> asking "Who's baby is it?" | <input type="checkbox"/> preventing you from going to school | <input type="checkbox"/> threatening to harm self |
| <input type="checkbox"/> questioning money use | <input type="checkbox"/> preventing you from working | <input type="checkbox"/> checking up on you |
| <input type="checkbox"/> threatening divorce | <input type="checkbox"/> preventing you from seeing family | <input type="checkbox"/> having affairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> laughing at | <input type="checkbox"/> checking mileage on the car | |

Resources

Confidential Resources

- Counseling Services - 419-434-4526
- Cosiano Health Center - 419-434-4550
- Campus Ministry Counseling- 419-434-5624
- Open Arms Domestic Violence & Rape Crisis Services - 419-422-4766 all hours
- Ohio Domestic Violence Network - <http://www.odvn.org/>

Non-Confidential Resources

- University of Findlay Campus Police & Campus Security - 419-434-4779
- Title IX Coordinator (Skylar Mettert - 419-434-4733 or metterts@findlay.edu)
- University of Findlay Athletic Department - 419-434-4663
- Findlay Police Department - 911 (Emergency), 419-424-7150 (24-hour Non-Emergency)
- Hancock County Sheriff's Office - 911 (Emergency), 419-424-7097
- Any University of Findlay employee

The Relationship Bill Of Rights

Without shame, blame or guilt:

1. I have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
2. I have a right to follow my own values and standards
3. I have the right to say no and not feel guilty.
4. I have the right to experience and express my feelings.
5. I have the right to feel safe.
6. I have the right to take time for myself.
7. I have the right to change my mind.
8. I have the right to ask for what I want.
9. I have the right to ask for information.
10. I have the right to make mistakes.
11. I have the right to choose the level of intimacy I want.
12. I have the right to be me and feel good about myself.
13. I have the right to leave conversations with people who make me feel put down or humiliated.
14. I have the right to act only in ways that will promote my dignity and self-respect.
15. I have the right to feel scared and say "I'm afraid".
16. I have the right not to be responsible for others' behavior, actions, feelings, or problems.
17. I have the right to expect honesty from others.
18. I have the right to all of my feelings.
19. I have the right to make decisions based on my feelings, my judgments, or any reason that I choose.
20. I have the right to change and grow.
21. I have the right to be happy.
22. I have the right to make friends and be myself around people.
23. I have the right to be angry at someone I love.
24. I have the right to both experience and let go of fear, guilt, and shame.
25. I have the right to end the relationship.