

BIDERMAN'S CHART OF COERCION

Ways in Which a Captor Controls His or Her Victim

ISOLATION



Isolation deprives a victim of all social supports and of his/her ability to resist. The victim develops an intense concern with self. This makes the victim dependent on the interrogator. Types of isolation include: solitary confinement, complete isolation, semi-isolation, and group isolation. Methods of isolation include denying participation in leisure activities, restricting contact with family and friends, excessive jealousy that reduces social interaction or discredits the victim to friends and family, controlling or restricts use of transportation, phone and/or finances, and confining a victim to the home.

MONOPOLIZATION OF PERCEPTION

Monopolization of perception fixes attention upon the immediate predicament and fosters introspection. It eliminates stimuli competing with those controlled by the captor and frustrates all actions which are not consistent with the victim's compliance to the captor's demands. This can come through physical isolation, darkness or bright light, a barren environment, restricted movement, and monotonous food. Methods of M.O.P. include blaming the victim for abuse, often reinforced by social and familial response. Victims then become focused on how they "caused" the abuse and their own weaknesses. The captor will also show unpredictable behavior and maintain contact through constant phone calls, texts or emails.



INDUCED DEBILITY AND EXHAUSTION



Induced debility and exhaustion are used to weaken a victim's mental and physical ability to resist. This can be caused by semi-starvation, exposure to elements, exploitation of wounds, induced illness, sleep deprivation, prolonged interrogation, forced writing, or overexertion. Methods for this often come through assaults to the victim's body image, restrictions on finances for food and other necessities, the withholding of access to medical care, disruption of meals and sleep patterns with physical and verbal assaults, or rape and assaults.

THREATS

Threats cultivate anxiety and despair. They can be threats of death, non-return, endless interrogation, or isolation. They can be against family or pets. They can be vague and even come by way of mysterious changes in how a captor treats his/her victim. Each threat is meant to control and lord power over the victim and can even include threats that involve the captor themselves - such as suicide or abandonment.



BE AWARE OF THESE TACTICS.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

www.americaunchained.org

Source: Amnesty International, Report on Torture, 1973

BIDERMAN'S CHART OF COERCION

(page 2 of 2)

OCCASIONAL INDULGENCES



The purpose of occasional indulgences is to provide positive motivation. These occasional favors, positive attitude, or fluctuations in interrogation help maintain a sliver of hope that things might get better. Forms of occasional indulgences include apologizing for batter, sending flowers or giving a gift, promises of change such as "it will never happen again".

DEMONSTRATING "OMNIPOTENCE"

The idea of demonstrating "omnipotence" means the captor shows the victims that he/she is all-powerful in their relationship. This gives the needed effect of futility in resistance. Tactics can include demonstration of complete control over the victim's fate, confrontation, and pretending that cooperation (by the captor) is being taken for granted. Physical assaults and stalking are examples of such behavior.



DEGRADATION

Degradation of the victim's appearance and surroundings is often a key way to control them. It makes the cost of resistance appear more damaging to self-esteem than capitulation. It also reduces the victim/prisoner to "animal level" concerns. Degradation can include the prevention of personal hygiene, filthy, infested surroundings, demeaning punishments, insults and taunts, and denial of privacy. Methods include public humiliation, forcing participation in demeaning or degrading sexual acts, verbal abuse ("put downs" or name calling), and frequently telling a victim they are "stupid", "worthless", and "unlovable".



ENFORCING TRIVIAL DEMANDS

When a captor enforces trivial demands on his/her victim, it develops a habit of compliance. Minute rules that "exist" in the home or at work will be elevated and punishment will be inevitable. Expectations are rigid and unrealistic. These rules often govern the victim's appearance, housekeeping, timelines, etc. Rules frequently change and mind games are used to wear a victim down.



THESE TACTICS CAN BE USED AGAINST A VICTIM EVEN BEFORE THEY ARE INVOLVED IN "THE LIFE". BE AWARE OF ANY TEENS AND KIDS IN YOUR LIFE WHO MAY HAVE A RELATIONSHIP THAT IS EXEMPLIFYING THESE TACTICS, METHODS, OR BEHAVIORS AND INTERVENE IMMEDIATELY.

IF NEEDED, DO NOT HESITATE TO GET
HELP FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT.

FOR MORE CLASSES AND INFORMATION VISIT US:

www.americaunchained.org