

Types of Abuse

Power and control & The cycle of abuse



Types of Abuse

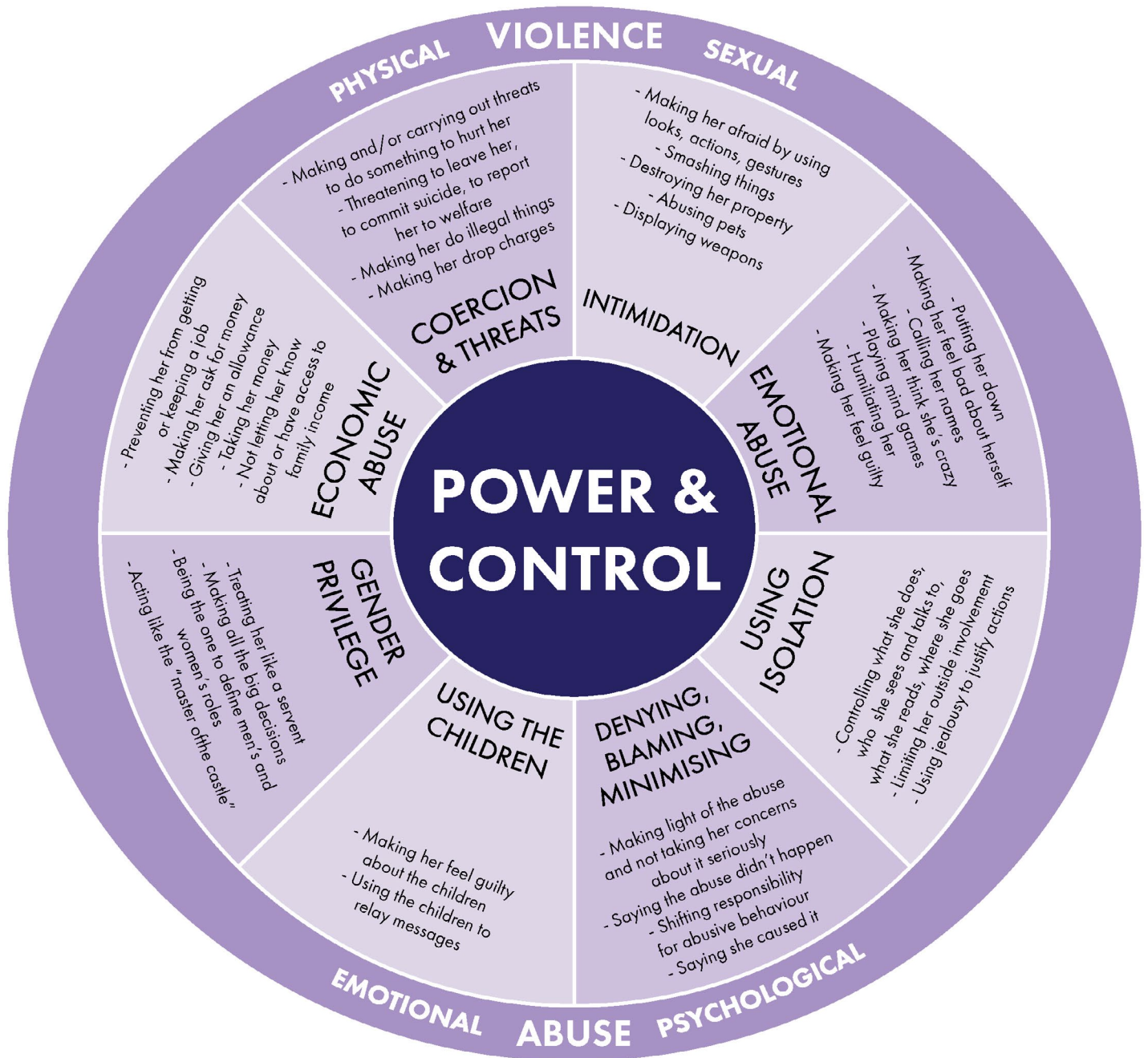
Any relationship (including family relationships) where another person is abusive, violent, intimidating threatening, or is making you feel scared is considered domestic violence. Domestic violence is not part of a loving and caring relationship, is wrong, and is against the law. Awareness of exactly what is domestic violence is the first step to understanding the depth of its grip on the women and children who experience it.

While there are very distinct kinds of abuse, a perpetrator of violence is likely to use some or all of them in conjunction to create isolation feelings of anticipatory fear and anxiety. For example, verbal abuse may escalate to physical or sexual abuse, while the mentally abusive undertones develop stronger holds on the victim. Or, for another example, financial abuse may lead to isolation. Women often describe feelings of constant worry and wondering what the mood of the person will be.

Violence (an intentional behaviour) can often be denied and minimised by men and called 'anger' (an emotion). Although perpetrators of violence will often say that they "lose control", they are in fact very much in control, otherwise they would be violent everywhere, with everyone.



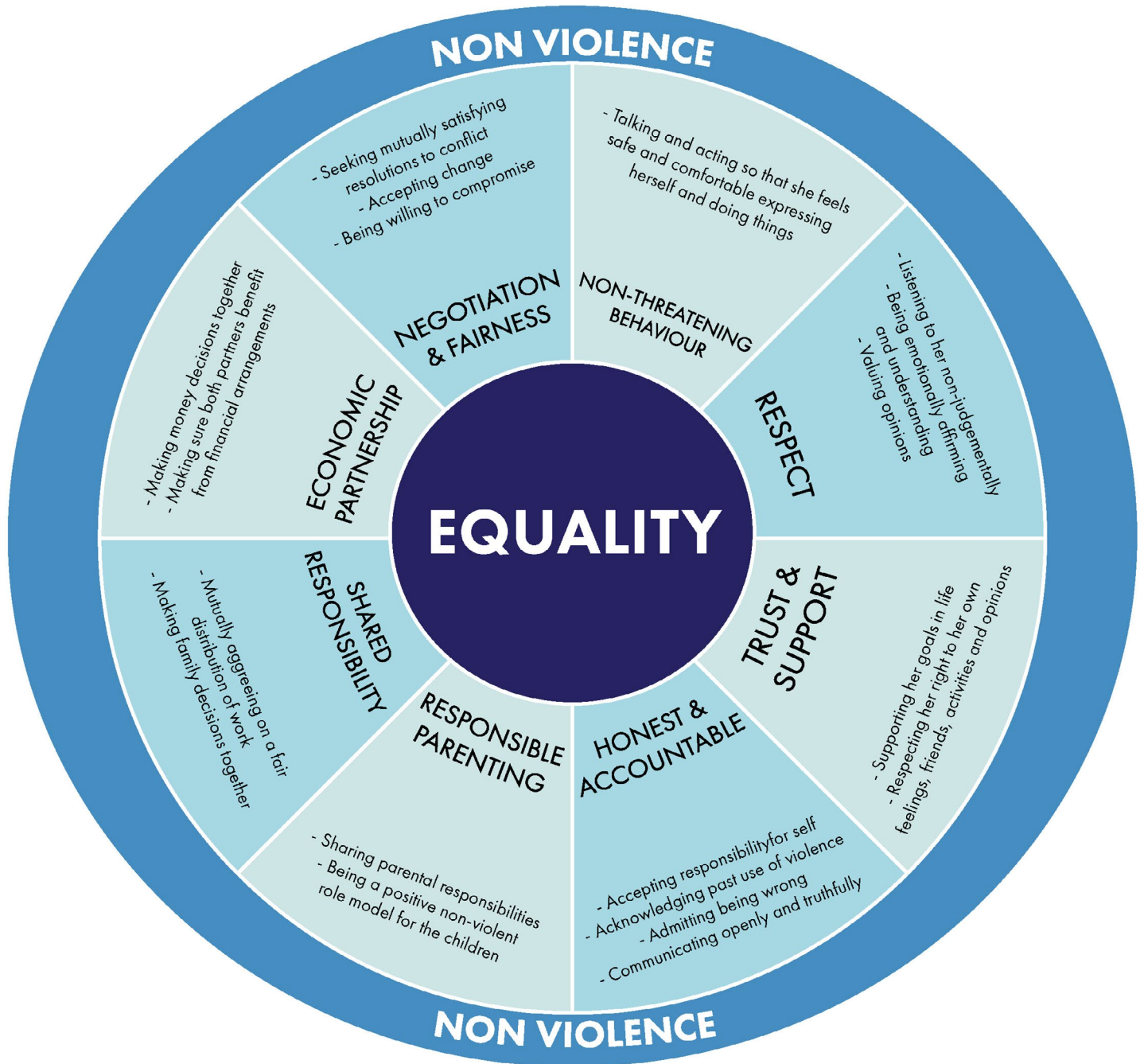
Power & Control Wheel



The wheel above has been adapted from the widely recognised Duluth Model.



Equality Wheel



The wheel above has been adapted from the widely recognised Duluth Model.



The Cycle of Abuse

It has long been recognised that a pattern referred to as 'The Cycle of Violence' exists in abusive/violent relationships. The cycle outlines a set of six phases which describe the repeated behaviours prior to and after the violent incident, intended to dis-empower and confuse women (moving between love and fear), lulling them into the false belief, or hope that it won't happen again. The cycle can vary in relationships and change over time. For example, the honeymoon phase may not exist for some. Other relationship cycles consist of only the build-up and stand-over phases.

Violence tends to follow a cycle of repeating incidents that increase in frequency and intensity over time (this is the most common pattern). After the first incident, however 'minor', the anticipation and fear of future violence/abuse results in growing feeling of anxiety and uncertainty. It is normal to feel this way in response to the threat of domestic and family violence, and support is available.

