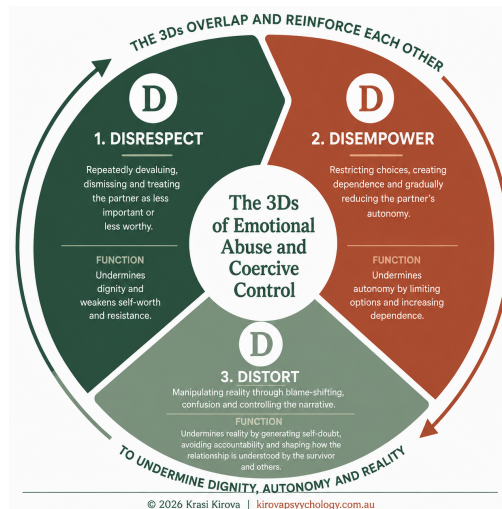


The 3Ds of Emotional Abuse and Coercive Control

A reference guide to the behaviours and dynamics within each domain.



DISRESPECT

What it involves: A pattern of behaviours that communicate the partner is unimportant, less worthy as a person, less capable, or less deserving of respect, care and consideration.

- Frequently engaging in verbal explosions, yelling, and name-calling
- Persistently criticising, belittling, making snide remarks, and expressing contempt
- Chronically dismissing or invalidating the partner's needs, feelings, preferences, and rights
- Consistently displaying an attitude of entitlement or intellectual superiority
- Consistently contributing unequally to household tasks and avoiding or evading shared responsibilities
- Repeatedly minimising the partner's concerns while placing exaggerated importance on one's own
- Consistently prioritising personal wants over family needs and shared responsibilities
- Haranguing – engaging in prolonged, relentless verbal attacks that diminish the partner, exhaust them emotionally, and demand confession, submission, or apology
- Repeatedly exploiting pre-existing insecurities and known vulnerabilities (e.g. history of trauma, strained family relationships, personal fears, or mental health struggles)
- Using prolonged or repeated silent treatments as punishment
- Consistently failing to support the partner's physical or medical needs

DISEMPOWER

What it involves: A pattern of behaviours that remove choices, restrict opportunities, limit access to resources, create fear, and make the partner increasingly reliant on the abusive partner.

- Routinely micro-regulating the partner's everyday life and enforcing a regime of family life based on arbitrary rules that carry negative consequences for non-compliance

- Isolating the partner from family and friends by making social contact increasingly difficult and deliberately undermining their social and family relationships
- Repeatedly monitoring or tracking the partner's daily activities
- Repeatedly using threats, angry outbursts, intimidation, or fear to influence the partner's behaviour
- Shaping partner's behaviour through instilling fear of consequences
- Consistently controlling the partner's appearance and bodily autonomy (e.g. weight, clothing, medical procedures)
- Repeatedly making significant joint decisions without the partner's input
- Exerting financial control by restricting access to money, bank accounts, financial information, passwords, or independent financial decision-making
- Financially exploiting the partner by unfairly benefiting from their income or earning capacity through manipulation, coercion, or chronic irresponsibility, misuse of shared finances, secret spending (e.g. gambling, sex workers etc.)
- Sabotaging the partner's employment, education, or career opportunities by preventing them from working, studying, pursuing career goals, or maintaining employment
- Creating conditions that make the partner increasingly dependent on them
- Consistently withholding essential support or resources, including restricting access to necessary medical interventions
- Using technology-facilitated abuse to monitor, intimidate, harass, or control the partner (e.g. tracking devices, spyware, repeated messaging, monitoring online activity, or unauthorised access to accounts)
- Restricting the partner's access to the home or transportation, including taking away keys or forcing them out of the home, even in the middle of the night
- Creating physical exhaustion by preventing sleep, rest, or medical recovery
- Creating a sense of entrapment (e.g. driving dangerously with the partner and children in the car, or preventing the partner from entering or leaving a room or vehicle)
- Threatening suicide to influence the partner's decision-making
- Pressuring or coercing the partner into unwanted sexual experiences
- Interfering with the partner's reproductive autonomy to promote or prevent pregnancy

DISTORT

What it involves: *Using various strategies that distort reality, create uncertainty, conceal the abuse, shift blame, undermine the partner's trust in themselves, and influence how others perceive the relationship.*

- Repeatedly shifting blame and refusing to take accountability
- Positioning themselves as the vulnerable one or the true victim
- Using manipulative tactics (e.g. gaslighting, lying, inducing guilt, cheating)
- Making controlling behaviours appear reasonable, necessary, or acts of care
- Displaying rapid and unpredictable shifts in mood or personality
- Alternating abuse with periods of relative calm and affection, offering apologies, gestures, and promises to change when the partner threatens to leave
- Gradually escalating abusive behaviour while never returning to the warmth and kindness of the early relationship
- Framing the partner's resistance as selfish or harmful behaviour
- Discrediting, ridiculing, or weaponising the partner's emotional reactions to the abuse (e.g. their distress, confusion or anger)
- Displaying excessive mistrust, jealousy, and baseless accusations
- Convincing the partner that family and friends are harmful influences
- Crafting a false public persona that conceals the private harm (e.g. through social media or positions of care)
- Creating strategic reputation damage by convincing others that the partner is unstable
- Turning family members and children against the partner