

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BREAKING THE TRAP: About this resource	5
The author	5
Purpose	5
Using the resource	6
Language	7
Defining coercive control	7
Coercive control and life domains	8
Coercive control and gender	9
Coercive control and oppression	10
Client safety	11
IDENTIFYING COERCIVE CONTROL: A simple screening tool.....	12
TOPIC 1: What drives coercive control?.....	13
What doesn't drive coercive control?	13
Attitudinal style	13
The impact of attitudinal style.....	15
A win/lose mindset	16
WORKSHEET 1: What drives coercive control?	18
TOPIC 2: Strategies of coercive control	19
More about double standards	21
More about double binds	22
More about disrespecting rights and boundaries	24
Rights and boundaries in an equal relationship	26
WORKSHEET 2: Strategies of coercive control	27
TOPIC 3: Tactics of coercive control	28
Conversational control	30
More about emotional abuse	33
More about psychological abuse	34
WORKSHEET 3: Tactics of coercive control	35
TOPIC 4: Stages of coercive control	36
Nine stages	36
Different sources and levels of fear	39
WORKSHEET 4: Stages of coercive control	41

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOPIC 5: Styles of coercive control	42
Ten styles of abuser	42
WORKSHEET 5: Styles of coercive control	46
TOPIC 6: Effects of coercive control	47
A domino effect	47
Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	49
WORKSHEET 6: Effects of coercive control	51
TOPIC 7: Children and coercive control	52
Power parenting	53
Impacts on children	53
Equal and unequal parenting	56
WORKSHEET 7: Children and coercive control	58
TOPIC 8: Post-separation coercive control	59
The post-separation legacy of coercive control	59
Post-separation risks to children	64
BIFF communication model	64
Post-separation double binds and double standards	66
WORKSHEET 8: Post-separation coercive control	67
TOPIC 9: Recovery from coercive control	68
Recovery truths and tips	69
Reclamation	70
Turning the tables	71
Window of tolerance	72
When the controlling relationship continues	73
WORKSHEET 9: Recovery from coercive control	75
WHERE TO FIND HELP	76
REFERENCES	77

BREAKING THE TRAP

About this resource

Breaking the Trap: Working with Clients Experiencing Coercive Control is a resource for practitioners whose clients may be experiencing, or have previously experienced, control or abuse within an intimate partner, family or other relationship. It aims to assist practitioners to support clients in all settings to identify and reclaim themselves from the drivers, tactics and impacts of coercive control.

The author



Breaking the Trap was written and developed by Australian coercive control specialist Dr Torna Pitman. Torna has worked as a social work academic, lecturer and trauma-informed practitioner specialising in family and relationship violence since 2005.

In addition to her leading work on coercive control, Torna is a Senior Educator and Practitioner at Tasmanian family violence organisation Engender Equality.

Purpose

To support practitioners in client-facing roles to apply the theory of coercive control, particularly with clients whose experiences of abuse do not include physical violence.

To share evidence and insights that may help clients identify coercive control for themselves and find ways to respond to it.

To guide professionals in all settings who will, in the course of their work, come into contact with people impacted by coercive control.

To inform any person who is currently experiencing, or may have previously experienced, coercive control. The language and concepts in this resource will help readers clarify their experiences and, if required, to express them in legal documents such as affidavits or statutory declarations.

To supplement the Engender Equality video series on coercive control, available on the Engender Equality website and YouTube channel (see *Where to find help* on page 75).