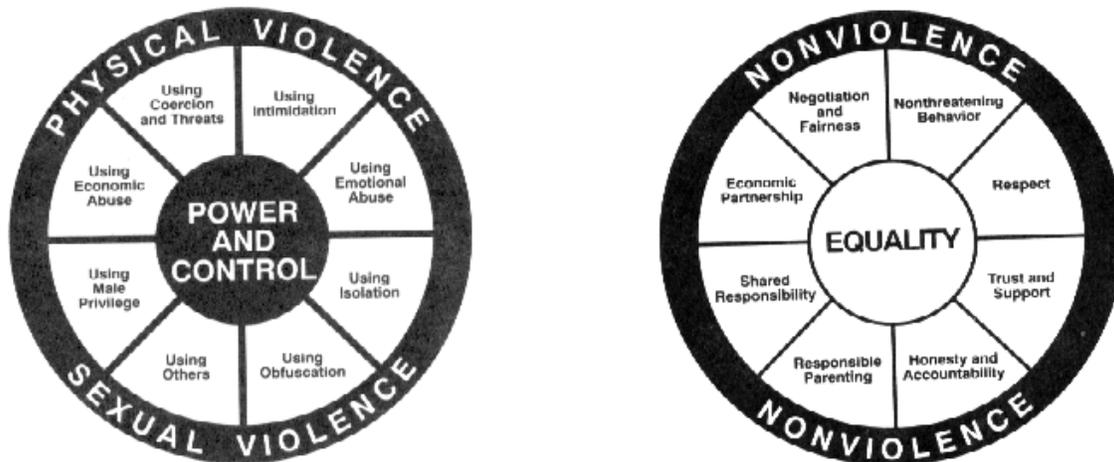


## Healthy vs Abusive Relationships: What's the Difference?

In order to have a healthy relationship, both partners must treat each other as equal and independent human beings. The husband must respect his wife more than his need to control her. While the wife should respect her husband's role as the spiritual leader of the home, the husband should be an example of Christ's love as he takes the position of a servant leader. Both must submit to the Lord and to each other as they learn how to combine the scriptural principles of Ephesians 5 and 1 Corinthians 13. The relationship becomes abusive when the husband or wife usurps control of the other person's thoughts, actions, emotions, freedom, and individuality. Abusers believe they have the right to punish their partner when they disobey or fail to measure up, and often use violence to intimidate them, keep them in line, and regain control.



**Intimidation:** Making partner afraid by using looks, actions, gestures; smashing objects; destroying personal property; harming pets; brandishing weapons; yelling; stalking; slamming doors; punching holes in walls; driving recklessly, etc.

**Emotional Abuse:** Putting partner down; belittling; calling names; making partner think he's/she's crazy; playing mind games, humiliating; using guilt; negatively comparing partner to others; unreasonable demands or expectations

**Isolation:** Controlling who partner sees and talks to, what he/she reads, where he/she goes; limiting outside involvement; verbally attacking partner's family; embarrassing partner in front of others; making jealous accusations; withholding money or vehicle to keep partner a prisoner in his/her own home

**Obfuscation (to confuse):** Denying, blaming, minimizing, withholding, distorting, justifying, shifting responsibility, lying

**Using Others:** Using children to relay messages; threatening to take the children away; physically or sexually abusing children

**Using Male Privilege:** Treating partner like a servant or a child; making all the rules and decisions; misusing role as head of the house

**Economic Abuse:** Controlling the money; giving partner a small allowance, preventing partner from getting a job; making him/her ask for money and demanding a full accounting of what was spent

**Coercion and Threats:** Threatening to hurt or kill; threatening to leave or commit suicide; pressuring partner to drop charges; pressuring partner with gifts, promises, or apologies; threatening to accuse partner of being an unfit parent; pressuring partner to do something illegal.

**Non-threatening Behavior:** Talking and acting so that partner feels safe and comfortable expressing his/her opinion and doing things.

**Respect:** Listening to each other non-judgmentally; being emotionally affirming and understanding; valuing each other's opinions

**Trust and Support:** Supporting each other's goals in life; respecting partner's right to his/her own feelings, friends, activities, and opinions; practicing confidentiality when partner expresses feelings and thoughts

**Honesty and Accountability:** Accepting responsibility for one's actions; acknowledging responsibility for past use of violence; being able to say, "I was wrong," or "I'm sorry;" communicating openly and truthfully

**Responsible Parenting:** Sharing parental responsibilities; being a positive, non-violent role model for the children

**Shared Responsibility:** Mutually agreeing on a fair distribution of work; making family decisions together

**Economic Partnership:** Making money decisions together; making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements

**Negotiation and Fairness:** Seeking mutually satisfying solutions to conflict; accepting change; being willing to compromise; learning to listen to and give thoughtful consideration to partner's opinion and ideas