

SUBSTANCE USE & MENTAL HEALTH COERCION

THE ACTIVE USE OF **SUBSTANCE USE** AND **MENTAL HEALTH** ISSUES AGAINST PARTNER AS A TACTIC OF **CONTROL**

COERCION MIGHT LOOK LIKE



Control of medications: withholding, & coercing to take, including opioids



Sabotaging recovery efforts; treatment interference



Using mental health diagnoses to make false allegations & gaslighting



Coercing partner to engage in illegal acts



Isolating partner from recovery resources



Threatening to use mental health issues to influence custody hearings

FAST FACTS

90% of women hospitalized post-suicide attempt reported current severe domestic violence.

50% of individuals experiencing DV say that their partner threatened to report their mental health to limit things they wanted/needed.

Individuals experiencing any type of DV are nearly **3x** more likely to report symptoms of severe depression.

60% of participants in the Substance Abuse Coercion Study report their partners had tried to interfere with their treatment

Substance use is **2-6x** higher among people who experience domestic violence.

TALKING ABOUT COERCION

Create a safe space.

Discuss the MH or SU Coercion as part of your conversations about DV.

Validate perceptions, acknowledge impact, and discuss coping strategies.

Strategize safe ways to access treatment and services.

Document efforts to protect and care for children.

Provide "warm referrals" to community DV resources.

"Does your partner tell you that you are lazy, stupid, "crazy," or a bad parent because of your **mental health condition**? That no one will believe you because of your mental health condition?"

"What are some of the ways you **cope**? What do you find works the best? What are the **strengths** and **supports** you draw on?"

"Sometimes, people who are being **hurt** by someone in their life or have been hurt in the past, use alcohol or other drugs to help them cope. Do you ever use alcohol or drugs to **numb** the effects of abuse?"

"You deserve to be treated with **dignity** and **respect**."

REFERENCES

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For more resources, visit www.dcadv.org/mental-health.

