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FOCIS NEWSLETTER

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Abuse Is Abuse, Even If He Doesn't Hit You.

Melissa Jeltsen Senior Reporter, The Huffington Post, www.huffingtonpost.com

Maybe your partner doesn't hit you, but he calls you names each time he gets upset. Maybe he doesn't hit you, but he takes your paycheck and only gives you enough money to get by and he forces you to have sex whether or not you want to.

These are all examples of abusive relationships that don't include overt physical violence. While domestic violence is often depicted as strictly physical, there are many different types of abuse that don't result in bruises and broken bones. But that doesn't mean they are any less harmful

The hashtag, [#MaybeHeDoesntHitYou](https://twitter.com/hashtag/MaybeHeDoesntHitYou), which was primarily aimed towards women in heterosexual relationships, triggered an outpouring of stories about relationships that were abusive and dangerous, even in the absence of physical assaults.

One framework that can be helpful in understanding the broader umbrella of domestic violence encompassing emotional, physical, verbal, financial, sexual and psychological abuse is "coercive control." The term was popularized by Evan Stark, a forensic social worker and professor emeritus at Rutgers University.

In 2015, the UK drew heavily on Stark's work when it passed a law making "coercive or controlling" domestic abuse a crime punishable by up to five years behind bars, even if there was no physical violence present in the relationship.

"Being subjected to repeated humiliation, intimidation or subordination can be as harmful as physical abuse, with many victims stating that trauma from psychological abuse had a more lasting impact than physical abuse," director of public prosecutions Alison Saunders said at the time.

While the new law poses significant challenges when it comes to prosecution, it has been heralded as a "landmark moment in the UK's approach" to domestic abuse.

In an interview with The Huffington Post, Stark explained dangerous signs of coercive control in intimate partner relationships, and how to identify them.

Abuse Is Abuse, Even If He Doesn't Hit You, cont.

“In coercive control, the basic pattern is established less by the physical violence than by the accompanying tactics which are intimidation, isolation, a pattern of psychological abuse that I call degradation, and most importantly, a pattern of control over how a woman goes about her day-to-day life,” he said.

Intimidation, Intimidation, Intimidation

Stark said abusers commonly use threats to intimidate their partners, even if they don't physically assault them. They may threaten to hurt their partners, their pets or their family. They may threaten to damage their victim's property. They may act out violence on proxy objects, such as smashing plates or punching the wall.

Abusers may also play “gaslighting” games with their victims, where they lie with such intensity and conviction that their victims become confused and begin to doubt their own perspective. The aim, Stark explained, is “to erode, undermine and eventually eviscerate a woman's capacity to effectively resist and escape.”

Stalking is another common form of intimation, and can extend far beyond physical following a person to include online surveillance and harassment. “The levels of psychological stress caused by partner stalking, knowing your space can be intruded upon at any time, are actually higher than the level of distress elicited by physical violence,” Stark said.

Under His Thumb

Regulating a person's day-to-day activities is a critical part of coercive control, according to Stark. Abusers may micromanage how their victims perform even the smallest of tasks, like folding laundry or putting food in the refrigerator, in order to establish authoritarian control and instill complete obedience.

“The more trivial the rule, the more degraded women feel when they obey these rules,” he said.

Abusers will often use their knowledge of their victim's self-conscious areas to their advantage.

Abuse Is Abuse, Even If He Doesn't Hit You, cont.

“They know what is important to you and they pick those areas of your vulnerability, and that becomes the focus of their abusive tirades and their most insidious control strategies,” Stark said.

Victims may also be deprived of daily needs, such as food, money, access to the car or the phone to keep them in a state of subjection. Sexual coercion, such as forced abortions, forced pregnancies and sexual assaults are also present in many abusive relationships, he said.

Invisible Women

Stark said abusers systematically isolate and separate their partners from their support systems. As a result, victims have fewer people to turn to, and rely more and more on their abuser.

An abuser may demand that a woman stops seeing others, or may make it so embarrassing or uncomfortable for her to be in a social setting that she chooses to cut contact with others on her own.

“Every woman who is abused in this situation has what I call ‘safety zones.’ Someone she can talk to, a diary, a place where she goes to consider her options,” Stark said. “These guys go on search and destroy missions to try to close these off.”

Abusers may sabotage their victim's work situation so they lose their job, or force their victims to hand over their paychecks so they aren't financially independent, making it very difficult to leave. “Taking the money is really important because now you're not talking about psychological dependence, you're talking about structural dependence,” Stark said.

Maybe He Doesn't Hit You... Yet

Emotional and psychological abuse can be a precursor to physical violence, Stark explained. “Often, there's a prior pattern of behavior before acts of violence, to isolate her, intimate her and control her,” he said.

In cases that do involve physical violence, Stark said, there may only be more low-level acts, like slapping, shoving, and poking. But, “it's a mistake to call that minor violence,” he said. “The significance of this abuse is frequency, not its severity, and its cumulative effect.”

Ronan Farrow Proved Why Men Need To Speak Up About Sexual Assault

By Emma Gray, Executive Women's Editor, The Huffington Post, www.huffingtonpost.com

Woody Allen is a celebrated filmmaker and actor. He has won four Academy awards, was recently profiled in a cover story for The Hollywood Reporter, has a new movie debuting at the Cannes Film Festival, and has worked with outspoken and brilliant actresses like Diane Keaton, Cate Blanchett, Emma Stone, Rachel McAdams and Marion Cotillard. He is also a man who has been publicly accused of sexual assault, for years, by his daughter, Dylan Farrow.

Journalist, attorney and commentator Ronan Farrow, who also happens to be Dylan's brother, published a biting op-ed in The Hollywood Reporter. He took the media to task for the ways we fail when covering sexual assault. He also made it clear why it is imperative that men speak up in support of sexual assault survivors.

As Ronan pointed out, reporters often fail to ask the tough questions of the celebrity men involved in these "scandals," which effectively gives these men power over the narratives of the alleged assaults. This is why, despite Dylan coming forward with these accusations, and not for the first time, in a NYTimes op-ed in 2014, Allen's career has remained largely unscathed.

"It sends a message to victims that it's not worth the anguish of coming forward," wrote Ronan. "It sends a message about who we are as a society, what we'll overlook, who we'll ignore, who matters and who doesn't."

We live in a society where women are considered untrustworthy narrators of our own lived experiences. So, when a woman comes forward and says "I was sexually assaulted," many people's first instinct is to look for the holes in her story. Ronan knows this all too well having seen the lopsided media treatment of his sister's story and Allen's subsequent written defense. (Guess whose editorial was given more space in the New York Times?)

The overwhelming distrust of women who say they have been sexually assaulted, and the abuse they often take for coming forward, means that they need allies to bolster the strength of their voices. And, unfortunately, male voices are still considered to be more believable than women's.

Ronan Farrow Proved Why Men Need To Speak Up About Sexual Assault cont.

Just ask Kesha, or Stoya. Ask Jian Ghomeshi's alleged victims. or Bill Cosby's alleged victims.

There are many reasons women feel hesitant to come forward with allegations of sexual assault, fear of retribution, fear of being called a liar or a slut (or a million other names only Internet trolls can come up with), and an understandable concern that even if they seek justice they may end up without it. When the man you are accusing of assault is famous, those anxieties are amplified.

It doesn't matter that men are more likely to be victims of sexual assault than to be falsely accused of committing it, and that writing an essay about your trauma is a terrible get-rich-quick scheme, and that sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes. For many people, the default will always be, "she's lying."

By using his voice and platform to elevate Dylan's experiences, Ronan has effectively forced the public to reckon with her words, without her having to utter any new ones. He's helping to un-silence her. If you've forgotten about her story, or have chosen to ignore it, it's that much harder to now.

A cursory Twitter search shows that the response to Ronan's op-ed has largely been positive. Not everyone agrees with him, but there is nary a rape threat or death threat in sight.

This isn't to give Farrow, or any man, a gold star for believing women or speaking out against sexual assault. This should be standard, human behavior. Unfortunately, it's not. It is a sad, sad world we live in where Hannibal Burrese's stand-up comedy did more to sway public opinion of Cosby than his alleged victims' own accusations. But given how hostile our society is towards women who come forward with allegations of rape and assault, there is a real need for vocal, supportive male voices, voices that don't overshadow survivors, but force us all to really, truly listen to them.

Almost A Third of Mass Shooting Deaths in 2015 Were Related To Domestic Violence

Just more evidence that Domestic Violence and guns are a deadly mix.

By Melissa Jeltsen Senior Reporter, The Huffington Post www.huffingtonpost.com

Thirty-one percent of all mass shooting deaths in 2015 were related to domestic violence incidents, according to a New York Times analysis published Sunday.

The New York Times examined violent episodes in which four or more people were killed or wounded by a firearm, including the shooter. In 2015, there were 358 shootings that fit that category, which resulted in 462 dead and 1,330 injured.

While domestic violence incidents were only 39 of the total episodes, they were responsible for 145 deaths. That's around 31 percent of the total killings.

The New York Times deep dive is just the latest report to find a connection between domestic violence and mass shootings.

Last year, The Huffington Post analyzed five years of mass shooting data, compiled by Everytown for Gun Safety, a gun violence prevention organization backed by former New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg.

We looked at a narrower portion of mass shootings than The New York Times did, only counting incidents in which four people were fatally shot, not including the shooter.

We found that a majority of these mass shootings were related to domestic violence. In 57 percent of the incidents, a family member or an intimate partner was among the victims. And strikingly, 64 percent of mass shooting victims were women and children.

As we wrote at the time: The majority of mass shootings in the U.S. take place in private. They occur in the home, and the victims are predominantly women and children.

The untold story of mass shootings in America is one of domestic violence. It is one of men (yes, mostly men) targeting and killing their wives or ex-girlfriends or families. The victims are intimately familiar to the shooters, not random strangers. This kind of violence is not indiscriminate, though friends, neighbors and bystanders are often killed alongside the intended targets. ...

Experts often call domestic homicides the most predictable and preventable of all homicides, because of the many warning signs.

"If we want to dramatically reduce the number of mass shootings, we could pay a lot more attention to domestic violence at an earlier stage," said Kim Gandy, president of the National Network To End Domestic Violence. "Many domestic homicides could be prevented with appropriate intervention and services."

The latest tragic example of a domestic violence mass shooting took place in South Carolina, police say, a man walked into a home armed with a .40-caliber Glock 23 and shot his girlfriend, her mother, her pregnant sister and her 8-year-old niece. Only his girlfriend survived.

HAPPENINGS

ANGER MANAGEMENT GROUP

Wednesdays, 6-7:30pm. Co-ed six week group, start date contingent upon sign-ups. must be a FRTH registered patient. Full attendance required for a certificate. \$40 fee for non-native clients. (No couples & NOT for Court Mandates). Contact Tom @ 532-6811, ex 270

POSITIVE PARENTING & POSITIVE PARENTING OF TEENS

is done on an individual basis as space and time allow. \$30 fee for non-native clients. For info or sign up, Contact Mark @ 532-6811 ex 249.

FOCIS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

Women's Support Group Tuesdays 3 p.m. to 5p.m. Self-validation & processing of abusive relationships. Intake assessments must be done before entry into the group. For info, contact Brittany@ FOCIS PROGRAM, 532-6811 ex 270.

BRAVE AT HEART CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

For anyone who has been touched by Cancer Meetings every 3rd Wednesday starting Feb 17th 2016 6:30 to 7:30 pm Call Ashley, 532-6811 ex.272

GUYS TAKE CHARGE GROUP

Thursday afternoons, 3:30 to 4:30 Guys from 10 to 13 are invited For info or sign-up call Ashley, 532-6811 ex 272

THURSDAY CRAFT GROUP

Explore both Modern & Traditional forms of beadwork. Thursday afternoons from 3:00pm to 5:00pm in the South Conference room, call Mark @ 532-6811 ex 249. for info or sign up.

Mothers Strong Support Group
New Moms Supporting New Moms
Through Baby's Challenging First Year!
Contact Tracy or Diana to sign up
(530) 532-6181

RED ROAD TO WELLBRIETY MEETING

For those that have suffered alcoholism and drug addiction and other forms of self-defeating behaviors, you can walk the 12 steps of the Red Road to recovery.
WEEKLY MEETINGS ON WEDNESDAY @ 6.00 PM
@ FEATHER RIVER TRIBAL HEALTH
530-534-5394
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

LOCAL DV SERVICES

FOCIS PROGRAM SERVICES

Advocacy Services, Restraining Order assistance, court accompaniment, Community education and in-service training, Crisis intervention services, Women's Talking Circles, Resource information & referral service. Feather River Tribal Health 530-534-5394 ext. 270

Catalyst DV Services

24-hour hotline for DV intervention & referrals, Emergency Shelter, Children's Program at HAVEN, Transitional Housing & Household establishment Drop-in centers, Individual counseling, Support groups, Restraining Order assistance & Court Accompaniment, Community Outreach. 24-Hour Hotline 800-895-8476 Oroville Drop-in Center 530-532-6427

SHARP (Self Help and Referral Program)

Self Help center that provides general assistance to people who do not have attorneys. Assistance is provided in the areas of family law, guardianships, evictions, small claims, name changes, and restraining orders. 1675 Montgomery Street Oroville, 530-532-7015



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