

# Abuse in Later Life Power & Control Wheel



In 2006, NCALL adapted the Power and Control Wheel, developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, MN. Resource updated, April 2011.

## **Tactics Used by Abusers**

During 2005, NCALL staff asked facilitators of older abused women's support groups to have participants review the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project's Power and Control Wheel. Over 50 survivors from eight states responded. NCALL created this Abuse in Later Life Wheel from their input.

In addition to the tactics on the wheel, many offenders justify or minimize the abuse and deny that they are abusive. Perpetrators of abuse in later life may make comments like "she's just too difficult to care for" or "he abused me as a child" to blame the victim, or try to minimize the abuse by stating the victim bruises easily or injuries are the incidental result of providing care. The list below provides additional examples of some of the behaviors victims might experience under each tactic included on the wheel.

### **Physical Abuse**

- Hits, chokes, burns, pinches, throws things, restrains

### **Sexual Abuse**

- Sexually harms during care giving
- Forces sex acts
- Forces elder to watch pornography

### **Psychological Abuse**

- Engages in crazy-making behavior
- Publicly humiliates

### **Emotional Abuse**

- Yells, insults, calls names
- Degrades, blames

### **Targets Vulnerabilities & Neglects**

- Takes or denies access to items needed for daily living
- Refuses transportation
- Denies food, heat, care, or medication
- Does not follow medical recommendations
- Refuses to dress or dresses inappropriately

### **Denies Access to Spiritual & Traditional Events**

- Refuses transportation or access
- Destroys spiritual or traditional items of importance

### **Ridicules Personal & Cultural Values**

- Disrespectful of cultural practices
- Ignores values when making decisions

### **Uses Family Members**

- Misleads family members regarding condition of elder
- Excludes or denies access to family

### **Isolates**

- Controls what elder does, who they see and what they do
- Denies access to phone or mail

### **Uses Privilege**

- Speaks for elder at financial and medical appointments
- Makes all major decisions

### **Exploits Financially**

- Steals money, titles, or possessions
- Abuses a power of attorney or guardianship

### **Threatens**

- Threatens to leave or commit suicide
- Threatens to institutionalize
- Abuses or kills pet or prized livestock
- Displays or threatens with weapons