



UNDERSTANDING COERCIVE CONTROL

Home should feel safe.
For too many women, home is where fear begins.

Coercive control is one of the most common forms of domestic abuse experienced by the women Jewish Women's Aid supports. 88% of our clients have experienced coercive and controlling behaviour.

Coercive control isn't one argument or one isolated incident. It is an ongoing pattern of behaviour used to control another person's everyday life.

It can develop gradually. Individual behaviours may seem caring, reasonable or insignificant at first. But over time, they can take away a person's confidence, independence and ability to make their own choices.

88%

of the women who came to Jewish Women's Aid last year were experiencing coercive control.



"I thought I was just trying to be a better partner. Looking back, I realised I had slowly stopped making my own decisions, stopped seeing my friends and family, and stopped trusting myself. I didn't know it had a name."

HANNAH, JWA CLIENT
AND DOMESTIC ABUSE SURVIVOR



**JEWISH
WOMEN'S
AID**



UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNS

COERCIVE CONTROL CAN LOOK DIFFERENT IN EVERY RELATIONSHIP. IT MAY INCLUDE:



LIVING IN FEAR

Walking on eggshells, constantly worrying about saying the wrong thing, or changing your behaviour to avoid their reaction.



GASLIGHTING

Being told things didn't happen the way you remember, that you're "too sensitive" or "overreacting", or being blamed for their behaviour – until you begin to doubt your own judgement.



ISOLATION

Being discouraged from seeing friends or family, made to feel guilty about spending time with other people, or finding that making plans repeatedly causes tension.



CONTROL OVER EVERYDAY CHOICES

Someone deciding where you go or who you see, expecting to know where you are at all times, repeatedly criticising your decisions, or making you feel you need permission for everyday things.



FINANCIAL CONTROL

Having your spending controlled, access to bank accounts restricted, debts or bills put in your name, or being prevented from working or becoming financially independent.



MONITORING AND INVASION OF PRIVACY

Someone reading your messages, checking your phone, demanding passwords, or monitoring your location or online activity.



IT MAY NOT ALWAYS LOOK LIKE ABUSE FROM THE OUTSIDE.

WHAT MATTERS IS THE PATTERN OF BEHAVIOUR AND THE CONTROL IT CREATES.

“WHY DOESN'T SHE JUST LEAVE?”

Coercive control can gradually erode someone's confidence, independence and support networks. A woman may be financially controlled, worried about her children or frightened that the abuse will escalate.

For many women, leaving can be the most dangerous time.

Instead of asking why someone stays, we need to understand the behaviour of the person choosing to abuse and control them.



WORRIED ABOUT YOURSELF?

If any of these signs feel familiar, you don't have to be certain that what you are experiencing is abuse before reaching out.

Jewish Women's Aid is the only specialist organisation in the UK supporting Jewish women and children affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We provide culturally specific, specialist support through advocacy, counselling, therapeutic and practical support, access to legal advice, and support for children and young people.

We will listen, believe you and help you explore your options at your own pace.

Reach out to JWA for confidential, specialist support.

WORRIED ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE?

You can also contact JWA for information and guidance about how best to support them.

EVERYONE DESERVES TO FEEL SAFE AT HOME.

☎ 0808 801 0500 ✉ advice@jwa.org.uk 💬 jwa.org.uk/webchat