

# EMOTIONAL ABUSE

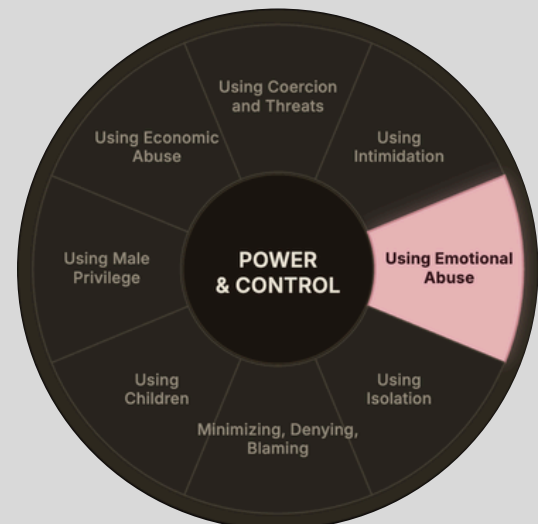
## THE SILENT FORCE WITHIN THE POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL



Emotional abuse is one of the most pervasive yet least recognized forms of domestic abuse. Within the Power and Control Wheel, emotional abuse is woven through nearly every tactic an abuser uses—undermining a woman's confidence, isolating her from support, and slowly eroding her sense of identity. Unlike physical violence, emotional abuse often leaves no visible marks, making it easier for victims to question their own experiences and harder for others to see the danger.

At FOCUS Ministries, we walk closely with women who are living in this painful reality. Many come to us feeling confused, ashamed, and deeply alone. They describe being constantly criticized, blamed for everything, mocked, manipulated, or made to feel “crazy.” They share how their abuser twists Scripture, distorts truth, and uses fear or guilt to maintain control. These wounds run deep, but healing is possible—and it begins with compassionate, Christ-centered support.

### 1 in 3 Women Have Experienced Emotional Abuse



Nearly 1 in 3 women in the U.S. (30.2%) have experienced psychological aggression from an intimate partner. Source: CDC, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2023/2024

**Emotional abuse:** words and actions meant to harm someone emotionally, or to control them.

## A STORY OF HOPE: “MARIA’S” JOURNEY BEHIND THE SMILE

On Sundays, everyone agreed Maria’s husband was the pastor every church hopes for. He remembered names, asked about your mother, and smiled at everyone.

Then the front door closed. At home, there were rules. Maria had to ask permission to leave a room. He decided what she ate. He kept her on psychiatric medication she didn’t need, year after year. And the last rule mattered most: smile on Sundays, and never tell. Who would believe her?

When Maria finally contacted FOCUS Ministries, the first thing she asked was, “Is it okay that I’m calling?”

Our team told her what she had waited years to hear: she did not need anyone’s permission to be there, and what she was living through had a name. It was emotional abuse. Through counseling, prayer, and a FOCUS support group, she met women whose homes looked just like hers. With her own doctor, she began reviewing her care, carefully and on her own terms.

Today, Maria still smiles on Sundays, but now the smile is hers. Last week, she did something most of us do a hundred times a day. She got up and left a room, without asking anyone’s permission.

Maria’s name and identifying details have been changed to protect her privacy.

*Every donation—large or small—directly impacts women like Maria who are searching for safety, truth, and hope. Your giving becomes part of their healing story.*

### Evelyn Colon

Certified Domestic Violence Professional  
FOCUS Ministries, Inc.

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## HOW YOUR SUPPORT MAKES STORIES LIKE MARIA’S POSSIBLE

*Your generosity allows FOCUS Ministries to respond swiftly and compassionately to women experiencing emotional abuse.*

*Because of your support, we are able to:*

- Provide **free counseling and crisis support** for women and families
- Offer **educational workshops** that teach churches and communities how to recognize abuse
- Maintain **safe spaces and support groups** where survivors find understanding and hope
- Equip women with **resources for safety planning and emotional recovery**
- Share **faith-based materials** that remind survivors of their worth and God’s love

**Thank you for standing with FOCUS Ministries as we continue to shine Christ’s light into places of deep hurt and walk alongside women on their journey toward restoration.**

