

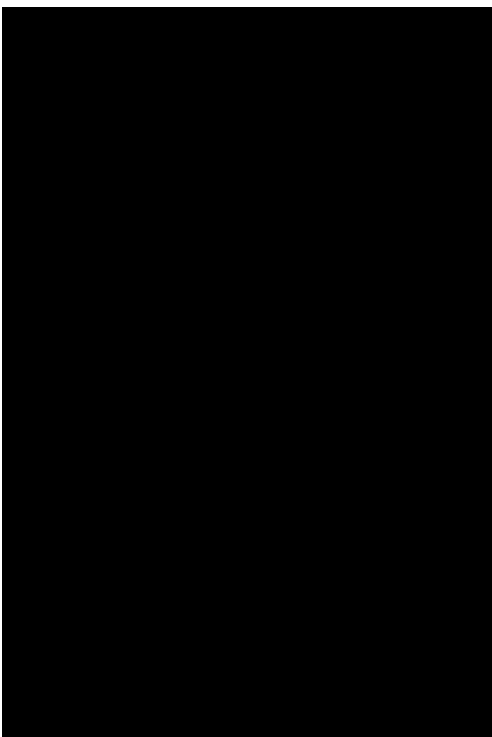
Abused men in same-sex relationships more likely to report health problems and engage in unprotected sex and substance abuse, increasing HIV risk

*NYC, Oct. 18 – An arresting new study in the *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of The New York Academy of Medicine* finds that 32 percent of gay and bisexual men —nearly one in three— are victims of intimate partner abuse.*

Little has previously been researched and documented about the patterns of intimate partner abuse in same-sex male couples. The results provide important new knowledge, and a call to action for health providers treating men who have sex with men (MSM).

"Men in same-sex relationships experience abuse rates similar to those faced by women in heterosexual pairings," said lead author Eric Houston of the University of Illinois at Chicago. "Intimate partner abuse among MSM does not receive the same attention as it does among heterosexual couples. As a result, many MSM who need help may not be recognized unless the healthcare provider is well trained and takes time to assess for abuse."

Men in abusive relationships were more likely to report suffering from serious health problems, and also were more likely to engage in unhealthy behaviors such as substance abuse and unprotected sex, leavi



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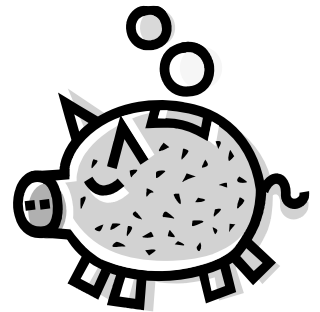
Financial Control Another Form of Domestic Violence

If you are in the midst of a difficult intimate partner situation that includes violence and control, the abusing partner will often make it difficult to leave. The abuser may attempt to keep control over you with threats of violence against you, your family and friends. Additionally, the abuser may use finances to prevent you from leaving. This may include blocking your access to important documents and cash, or overextending your credit so that you cannot financially afford to leave.

It is a good idea to often change passwords for your accounts and to keep a separate bank account or cash in a safe place in case of emergencies. You should also keep telephone numbers, bank account and credit card numbers in a safe and handy location. Be sure not to use your children's or your own birth date or social security number as PIN numbers whenever possible.

Here are some common ways an abusive partner will use finances to block a victim's attempt to free themselves:

- Controlling the money, making all the financial decisions
- Putting everything in one person's name
- Prohibiting personal bank accounts, credit cards
- Adding your name to credit card, then run up debt
- Controlling Medicaid card
- Sabotaging efforts to get/keep job
- Not paying bills or child/spousal support
- Sabotaging attempts at financial independence
- "Oh, honey don't you worry about the check book, savings accounts, credit cards, mortgage, Medicaid Card, etc. I don't mind taking care of that."
- "You're so busy taking care of the children, I don't want you to have the extra burden of worrying about finances."
- Checking receipts
- Finding out from children where assets are, including cash, social security card, etc.



Thought of the Fall Season:
Feel blessings dropping their blossoms all around you.
~ Rumi, 13th Century
Sufi poet

~ ~ ~ QUIZ: Is it abusive if . . .

Directions - Read these scenarios and decide whether you feel abusive behaviors are present. Circle "yes" if they are, "no" if not, and "unsure" if you're undecided. Base your decisions on the information provided only. Try to decide before peeking at our answer key!

- 1) Rosa tells her boyfriend she wants to go to "ladies' night" with her friends every Friday?
Yes / No / Unsure
- 2) LaToya continues to wear short skirts, even though her partner asked her not to?
Yes / No / Unsure
- 3) Juan tells his boyfriend Alex, in front of their friends, that Alex would look better if he lost a few pounds?
Yes / No / Unsure
- 4) Tanisha starts play-fighting with her girlfriend, who tells her to chill. Tanisha keeps playing with her, but is only playing and doesn't cause any bruises or hurt her physically?
Yes / No / Unsure

Our Answer Key:

- 1) **No.** Each person in a relationship maintains the right to have friends and spend time with them. In a good relationship, each partner has friends and interests outside each other.
- 2) **No.** Both people in the relationship have the right to dress as they wish. No one should change their style of dress to suit their partner's wishes.
- 3) **Yes.** Juan is embarrassing his boyfriend in front of their friends, whether intentionally or unintentionally.
- 4) **Yes.** Tanisha did not respect her partner's personal space. A good relationship is one based on friendship and respect. Although no physical harm was done, this was an invasion of personal space and a crossing of personal boundaries.