

Characteristics of Abusive Men

Control	Control is the "overarching behavioural characteristic" of abusive men, achieved with criticism, verbal abuse, financial control, isolation, cruelty, etc. (see <u>Power & Control Wheel</u>). The need to control may deepen over time or escalate if a woman seeks independence (e.g. going to school).
Entitlement	Entitlement is the "overarching attitudinal characteristic" of abusive men, a belief in having special rights without responsibilities, justifying unreasonable expectations (e.g., family life must centre on his needs). He will feel the wronged party when his needs are not met and may justify violence as self-defence.
Selfishness & Self-centredness	An expectation of being the centre of attention, having his needs anticipated. May not support or listen to others.
Superiority	Contempt for woman as stupid, unworthy, a sex object or as a house keeper.
Possessiveness	Seeing a woman and his children as property.
Confusing Love & Abuse	Explaining violence as an expression of his deep love.
Manipulativeness	A tactic of confusion, distortion and lies. May project image of himself as good, and portray the woman as crazy or abusive.
Contradictory Statements & Behaviours	Saying one thing and doing another, such as being publicly critical of men who abuse women.
Externalization of Responsibility	Shifting blame for his actions and their effects to others, especially the woman, or to external factors such as job stress.
Denial, Minimization, & Victim Blaming	Refusing to acknowledge abusive behaviour (e.g. she fell), not acknowledging the seriousness of his behaviour and its effects (e.g., it's just a scratch), blaming the victim (e.g., she drove me to it; she made it up because I have a new girlfriend).
Serial Battering	Some men are abusive in relationship after relationship.

Men can exhibit some or all of these characteristics and never physically assault a woman.

This material was summarized from Lundy Bancroft & Jay Silverman (2002). *The Batterer as Parent: Addressing the Impact of Domestic Violence on Family Dynamics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.