

## Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coercion

- Has your partner ever used your mental health condition to undermine or humiliate you with other people?
- Does your partner tell you that no one will believe what you say because of your mental health condition?
- Has your partner ever threatened that you will lose custody of your children because of your mental health status?

**Substance abuse coercion:** Abusers may coerce or force their partners into using alcohol or other drugs. In addition, survivors of abuse may use or abuse alcohol or other drugs to help them survive and cope with the abuse and its traumatic effects. Abusers rely on stigma associated with substance abuse to undermine and control their partners. If you answer yes to any of these questions, you might be experiencing substance abuse coercion:

- Has your partner ever made you use alcohol or other drugs, made you use more than you wanted, or threatened to harm you if you didn't?
- Do you ever use alcohol or other drugs to numb the effects of abuse?
- Does your partner control your access to alcohol or other drugs?
- Does your partner justify name calling, criticizing, belittling, and undermining you based on your use of alcohol or other drugs?
- Has your partner told you that you are to blame for abuse or sexual assault because of your use of alcohol or other drugs?
- Has your partner ever forced or coerced you into engaging in illegal activities (e.g., dealing, stealing, trading sex for drugs) or other activities that you felt uncomfortable with in order to obtain alcohol or other drugs?
- Have you ever been afraid to call the police for help because your partner said you would be arrested for being high or your partner said you would lose custody of your children because of your alcohol or drug use?
- Has your partner ever tried to manipulate you by making you go into withdrawal?
- Has your partner ever stopped you from cutting down or quitting alcohol or other drugs when you wanted to?
- Has your partner ever prevented you from attending a recovery meeting, interfered with your substance abuse treatment, or sabotaged your recovery in other ways?

For more information on the intersection of domestic violence, trauma, mental health, and substance abuse, contact the National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health at (312) 726-7020, 312-7264110 (TTY), or [info@nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org](mailto:info@nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org).