

The Amish/Plain Community Power and Control Wheel Addendum

The Amish/Plain Community Power and Control Wheel originated from the need to address the unique characteristics of this community and the ways in which domestic violence is manifested by both abusers and the community as a whole because of their common cultural beliefs and values. Although there are numerous Amish/Plain communities with many nuanced traditions and practices, the wheel represents commonalities among the communities. It is not intended to be comprehensive, but indicative of those traits most frequently seen by abusers within this population.

Amish and other Plain communities are patriarchal in nature. This central characteristic, in addition to the importance of religious faith and a strong sense of community, speaks to the core value system of the population. It is important to note that patriarchy does not equate to abuse, and this population offers inspiring examples of loving and healthy homes. What would be considered harmful to women in “English” (the term used by Plain people for those outside their community) relationships such as restrictive education or employment, are normal and acceptable in Plain communities.

Whereas power and control are the foundation of all domestic violence relationships, there are many situations in the Amish/Plain culture in which abuse is not recognized by victims within relationships or by outside community members because of the accepted practices and beliefs of the culture. For this reason, on *The Amish/Plain Community Power and Control Wheel*, there are numerous sectors that include examples of abusive tactics involving the Church and/or community: Emotional Abuse/ Isolation/ Minimizing, Denying, and Blaming/ Using the Community and Church/ Coercion and Threats. These examples enable the reader to draw distinctions between what are cultural norms and abusive behaviors.

Men and women in the Amish and other Plain communities practice rigid gender roles. Women may work outside of the home, but they are most often homemakers. Deviation from traditional gender roles is not commonly acceptable, and gender identity other than heterosexual is considered a sin. The community, as with all communities, contains a significantly sized LGBTQ population, however it remains a subculture because of the fear of shunning. Because of how some adult men in the community use tactics of abuse found on the wheel to enforce strict gender roles and identity, *The Amish/Plain Community Power and Control Wheel* language is gender neutral so that people of all gender identities from the community will be able to relate to the content. Men and women adult survivors participated in the focus groups that contributed to the wheel’s content. Many young boys are victimized by adult men, so it is important that they can see themselves in the wheel as well.

As opposed to the original Duluth Model *Domestic Violence Power and Control Wheel*, Male Privilege is not a separate sector on *The Amish/Plain Community Power and Control Wheel* because patriarchy is accepted as part of the culture and is so integral to the Plain lifestyle, including in healthy domestic relationships, that it is not necessarily viewed as an abusive tactic and would not resonate as such by victims. For this reason, examples of male privilege are given throughout the wheel in each sector, without labeling it as such.