

Women's Aid Orkney

SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF
DOMESTIC ABUSE AND
COERCIVE CONTROL



MILLY'S STORY

Coercive Control

- *A slow creeping process*
- *Not a one off event*
- *Encompasses all areas of life*
- *Chips away at you*
- *Covert and understated actions*
- *Can involve others*

What constitutes abusive behaviour under the Domestic Abuse Act 2018?

The Act provides a description as to what constitutes abusive behaviour. It includes behaviour which is violent, threatening or intimidating and behaviour that is designed to have one or more of the following effects on the victim or would be considered by a reasonable person to be likely to have one or more of the following effects:

- Making them dependent on or subordinate to the perpetrator
- Isolating them from their friends, relatives or other sources of support
- Controlling, regulating or monitoring their day to day activities
- Depriving them of, or restricting their freedom of action
- Frightening, humiliating, degrading or punishing

Examples of coercive control might include:

- Controlling or observing victim's daily activities, including: being made to account for their time; restricting access to money; restricting their movements (including being locked in the property).
 - Isolating the victim from family/friends; intercepting messages or phone calls.
- Constant criticism of victim's role as a partner/spouse/parent.
- Threats of suicide/homicide/familicide.
 - Preventing the victim from taking medication/accessing care (especially relevant for victims with disabilities).
 - Using children to control their partner, e.g. threats to take the children.
- Extreme dominance; a sense of 'entitlement' to partner/partner's services, obedience etc. - no matter what.
- Extreme jealousy ("If I can't have you, no one can"), giving the victim cause to believe they will act on this.
- Damage to property, including to pets.
- Threats to expose sensitive information (e.g. sexual activity) or make false allegations to family members, religious or local community including via photos or the internet.
- Involvement of wider family members/community; crimes in the name of 'honour'.
 - Manipulation of information given to professionals.



Our Support



Refuge Accommodation

Free confidential advice & information

Signposting for legal advice/representation

Advocacy

Emotional Support

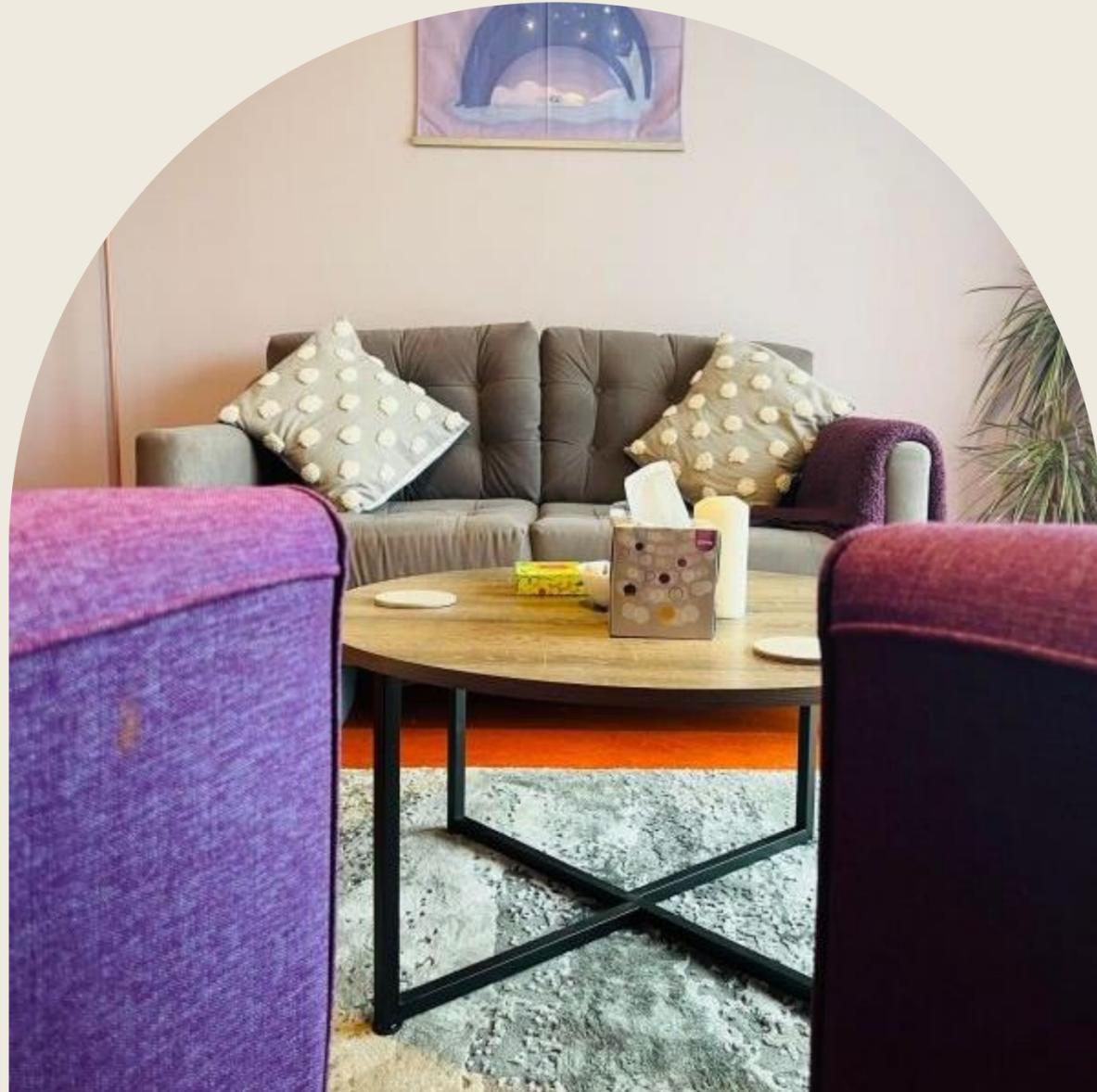
Help with benefits

Practical support with appointments

Safety Planning

Provide a safe and supportive
environment

MILLY'S STORY



How can we as professionals support women and children?

Hear and believe them
Understand that they are the experts in their lives
That they are doing everything in their power to keep safe.

That they are not responsible for the abuse
It is the perpetrators choices and actions which need to be addressed and held to account

Why Doesn't She Just Leave or Report him?

Research has shown that leaving an abusive relationship heightens the risk of violence or retaliation

From the Perpetrator

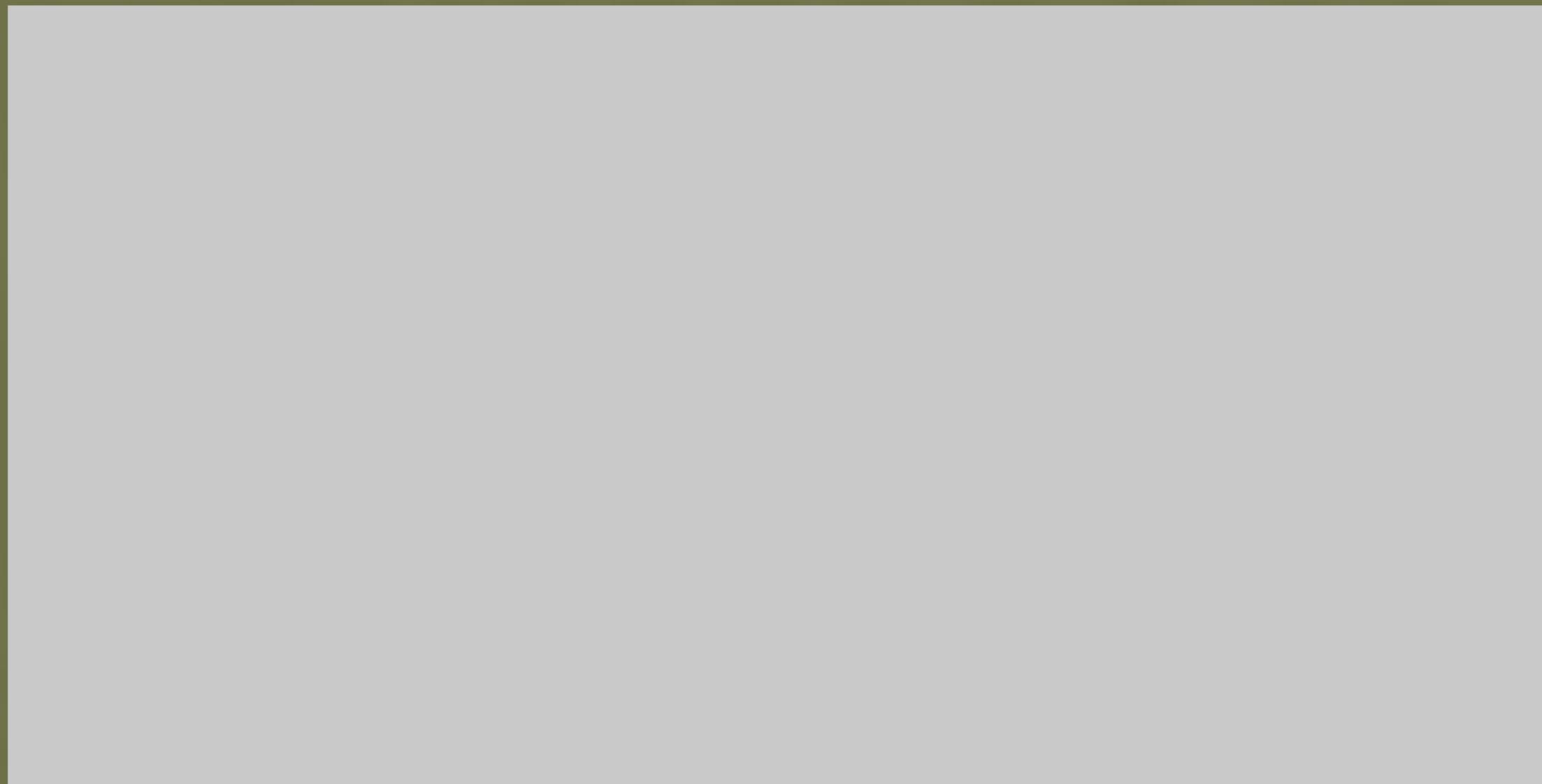
- Fear of retaliation
- Fear that the perpetrator will find out
- Fear the perpetrator will take the children
- Threats that she will lose everything and that she's a bad mum if she says anything
- The perpetrator stops the survivor from disclosing by never letting her be alone to speak freely

From Services and the Community

- Fear of having the children removed
- Fear of being judged or blamed
- Survivor isn't validated for her efforts to protect the children
- Survivor feels services/ community don't understand the situation
- Services may not be able to help.



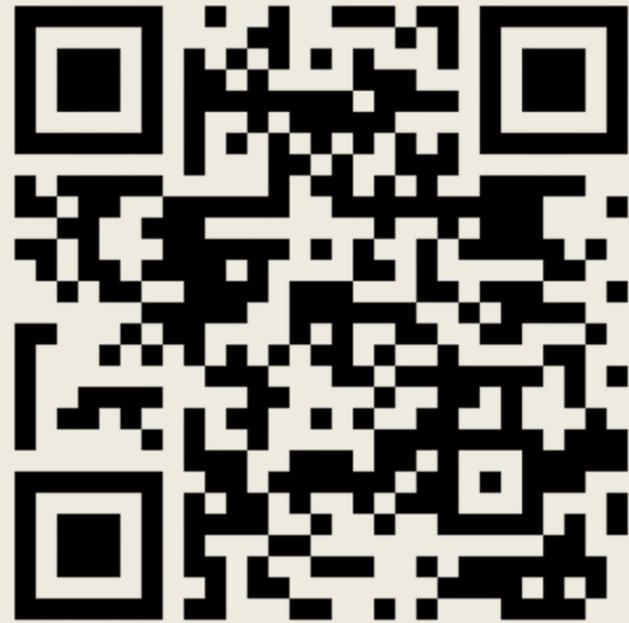
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Thank you



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<https://womensaidorkney.org.uk>