

The Coercive Control Entrapment Timeline (CCET): Mapping risk escalation, control & danger - Perinatal Specific

PHASE
01

The Hook (Low Risk)

Characteristics

- Illusion of an ideal relationship (love bombing)
- Intense connection, rapid commitment
- Early red flags are dismissed or reframed as love/care
- Laying down the subtle groundwork for control/attachment (↑ dependency, discouraging independence)
- Seeking out victims vulnerabilities – personalised approach

Perinatal

- May be seen as a romantic commitment—a “love child”
- May be accelerated by the perpetrator (e.g., pressuring for unprotected sex, sabotaging contraception)
- Often idealised (perfect family)

PHASE
02

The Control Campaign (Moderate Risk)

Characteristics

- Escalation of coercive control –perpetrator micromanages victim
- Gaslighting, isolation, & degradation become regular.
- Increased confusion, fear, and self-doubt for victim
- Intermittent reinforcement (kindness & control)
- Use of abusive tactics/ behaviours
- Instil fear and the consequences (intimidation)
- Erosion of consent & autonomy
- Jealousy manifestation (towards others, pregnancy/ children)

Perinatal

- Pregnancy used to escalate control
- ↑ physical & emotional vulnerability – harder to resist coercion
- Might realise something is wrong but can't articulate or name it
- Pregnancy might not be welcome (termination of pregnancy)
- Hopes pregnancy might change the perpetrator
- Increased visibility as pregnant



The Lock-In (High Risk)

PHASE
03

Characteristics

- Self-regulation (compliance) based on fear/ coercion/consequences – perpetrator has to do less overt work
- Limitation of freedom/autonomy/safety
- Walking on eggshells, feelings of going crazy or confusion
- Victim takes on the perpetrators narrative
- Isolated – others can not recognise change in the victim
- Altered Identity/self
- Resigned to being entrapped and isolated

Perinatal

- Dependency on perpetrator
- Entrapped by pregnancy
- ↓ autonomy/control over childbirth or feeding choices
- Perpetrator weaponises mental health
- Sexual abuse in pregnancy
- Concerned with changing pregnancy body
- Threats to remove baby
- Initial bonds/attachment with a baby affected



PHASE
04

The Breaking Point (Critical Risk)

Characteristics

- Something shifts—tries to leave/escalates control/possible violence
- Increased threats, retaliation, or financial sabotage if attempts to leave the relationship
- High risk of post-separation abuse, harassment, stalking, legal threats, child custody coercion
- Perpetrator threatens suicide to manipulate/control

Perinatal

- Pregnancy weaponised
- Increased risk for homicide during pregnancy or post-birth
- Fear of child removal by authorities/ perpetrator – leading to non-disclosure

PHASE
05

Post-Separation Trap (High Risk)

Characteristics

- Post-separation coercive control (legal/ financial/emotional manipulation)
- Might cycle back through the phases or coerced back to the relationship (trauma bond/economic dependency/ fear)
- Children used as leverage to continue abuse
- May feel more entrapped post-separation than during the relationship

Perinatal

- Legal and/or social care interventions
- Entrapment through co-parenting coercion to regain control
- Ongoing fear, hypervigilance, and trauma responses persist

The Trauma Healing Journey (Variable)

PHASE
06

Characteristics

- Gradual reconstruction of identity, independence, & trust
- Ongoing co-parenting abuse may hinder recovery
- Trauma triggers remain, but autonomy begins to return
- Support from specialist services, peer support, and therapy
- Women begin to recognise coercive control & reclaim control over their lives

