

Biderman's Chart of Coercion

A tool designed to demonstrate and explain the coercive methods of stress manipulation used to torture prisoners of war. It has been applied to explain the coercive techniques used by perpetrators of domestic abuse.

This list directly reflects the original chart, it has not been changed to fit the domestic abuse context.

Method	Effect and Purpose	Variants
Isolation	Deprives victim of all social support of their ability to resist. Develops an intense concern with self (this could be home environment) Makes victim dependent.	Complete solitary confinement Complete or partial isolation Group Isolation
Monopolisation of Perception	Fixes attention upon immediate predicament. Eliminates information not in compliance with demands. Punishes independence and /or resistance.	Physical isolation Darkness or Bright light Restricted movement Monotonous Food
Humiliation and Degradation	Makes resistance more 'costly' than compliance. 'Animal Level' concerns.	Personal hygiene prevented Demeaning Punishments Insults and taunts Denial of Privacy
Exhaustion	Weakens mental and physical ability to resist.	Semi-Starvation Sleep deprivation Prolonged interrogation Overexertion
Threats	Creates anxiety and despair Outlines cost of non-compliance	Threats to kill Threats of abandonment/non-return Threats against family Vague Threats Mysterious changes of treatment.
Occasional indulgences	Positive motivation for compliance. Hinders adjustment to deprivation	Occasional favours Rewards for partial compliance Promises
Demonstrating Omnipotence	Suggests futility of resistance	Confrontation Showing complete control over victims face
Forcing trivial demands	Develops habit of compliance	Enforcement of 'rules'