



Ploys, Lures, and Hidden Agendas

“Ploys” and “Lures:” the Abuser’s Manipulation Strategies

Ploys (or lures) are used to coerce victimization by leading us into a situation where our options are limited. These “victim set-ups” lay the groundwork so we can be more easily influenced to act against our will, against our own best interests, or in ways that increase our vulnerability and isolation.

Ploys: the Predator’s Script for Abuse

Predators plan their strategies for assault and seek others who will be compliant or can be intimidated. Their goal is to isolate and overpower. Abuse generally succeeds psychologically before it can succeed physically.

“PRETEND VICTIM” PLOYS -- THE “HELP ME” APPROACH



Whiner's Tone

“Whah”

This abuser asks for help, or insists we need his. This approach is to manipulate our sympathy, attention, involvement, or on-going relationship. These ploys carry an implication that we owe them something, we should feel sorry or guilty, or we should help or appreciate them.

SPECIFICS OF THIS PLOY: Obligation--You owe me, you are obligated to help me. Emergency problems—medical, emotional, auto breakdown, transportation needed, etc. Also, guilt trips; social requests: I need change, a ride home, a drink of water, a cigarette, a light, directions, help finding my lost puppy, my keys, my ____ (fill in the blank)

INTIMIDATION PLOYS -- THE “OR ELSE” APPROACH



Bully's Tone

“Nyah Nyah”

This predator relies on coercion and threat, with body language, facial expression, crowding or posture, gesture, verbal implication, inappropriate personal information or requests, or disturbing language.

SPECIFICS OF THIS PLOY: Help offered (you need me); bullying; challenge; goading; taunting or ridicule; guilt; crowding; implied or direct threats; sexual pressure (“if you loved me”); time pressure

AUTHORITY PLOYS -- THE MANIPULATION OF TRUST



Passive Tone

“Duh”

It is natural to trust people who seem familiar or similar to us (age, race, gender, etc.), and those who fill a familiar or authoritative ROLE (my doc, my ex, my friend, my teacher, my husband’s cousin, my co-worker, my neighbor, my date, my friend’s date.)

SPECIFICS OF THIS PLOY: Authority; prior relationship; friend of a friend; flattery (including attention from people with looks, status, wealth); emergency; uniformed authority (“delivery, lady”); professional appearance

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