

THE MEND PROJECT

educate. equip. restore.

All or Nothing:

Using black-and-white thinking to avoid responsibility, dismiss the concerns of the one being harmed, or make the situation seem like there are only two rigid options.

Blame-Shifting:

The one being harmed raises a reasonable complaint, concern, or hurt, and the one causing harm shifts responsibility for the issue back onto them.

Broken Promises:

The one causing harm promises to change or do better, then denies having made these promises, refuses to keep them, says they forgot, or claims they were forced to make a commitment they didn't want.

Catastrophizing:

Blowing things out of proportion in a way that creates misplaced guilt, fear, confusion, or negative dependence for the one being harmed.

Countering:

Doing the opposite when the one being harmed makes a reasonable request or shares a concern.

Cover-ups:

Attempting to prevent others from discovering the truth about harmful behavior or actions. For example, volunteering in the community or giving gifts to cover up destructive behavior behind closed doors.

Crazy Making Behaviors:

Passive-aggressive statements or actions used to counter, resist, or retaliate, causing significant confusion for the one being harmed.

Creating a Cloud of Confusion:

Telling false or grandiose stories to third parties in order to manipulate the outcome, at the expense of the one being harmed.

Deflection:

Defensively refusing to authentically communicate, typically by changing the topic or inventing false arguments.

Denial:

A fundamental refusal to accept personal responsibility by living in a false reality. **DENIAL: Don't Even Know I'm A Liar.**

Disavowal:

Reducing, devaluing, or denying the impact of one's harmful or abusive behavior.

Dismissing:

Diminishing another person's value, concerns, or what they hold dear.

Entitlement:

Unrealistic demands or expectations that one is more deserving of preferential treatment or double standards.

False Accusations:

Stating a negative lie about another person to place them on the defensive and divert focus from destructive behavior.

Faux Confusion/Forgetting:

A form of abusive manipulation where the person causing harm pretends to be confused or conveniently forgets.

Gaslighting:

Repeatedly altering or denying a shared reality in a way that causes the one who was harmed to question their sanity, perceptions, memories, or experiences.

Grandiosity:

Inflating one's own value to mislead others or to diminish another person.



Lying:

Altering or withholding the truth with blatant disregard in order to confuse the one being harmed, avoid responsibility, or shift blame.

Magical Thinking:

Believing harmful actions and patterns will disappear through apologies or promises alone, when meaningful change requires sustained accountability and hard work.

Minimization:

Belittling the perspective of the one being harmed by intentionally devaluing what matters to them, damaging their confidence, creativity, and individuality.

Partial Confessions To Distract From The Real Issue:

Offering half-apologies or partial admissions to the one being harmed, an accountability partner, or a social circle in order to distract from or reduce responsibility for the full problem.

Pathologizing:

Using psychological terminology to mislabel and mischaracterize the one being harmed in order to place them in a downgraded position. For example, "You're psychotic" or "You're unstable."

Playing the Victim:

When confronted about harmful or abusive behavior, the person causing harm takes the position of being offended or wronged.

DARVO: Deny, Attack, Reverse Victim and Offender.

Power Over:

Using control, pressure, intimidation, or other means to gain power over and make the one being harmed feel unimportant, powerless, or less deserving.

Rationalization:

Justifying destructive behaviors or attitudes with seemingly logical reasons or excuses.

Reductionism:

Oversimplifying the situation in a way that diminishes the experience of the one being harmed and reduces the responsibility of the person causing harm.

Refusal To Take Responsibility:

Negating or greatly reducing responsibility for one's actions in order to avoid the hard work required for change.

Retaliation:

Engaging in deliberate "payback" for perceived or imagined harm instead of pursuing repair or problem-solving. This may be expressed through aggressive or passive-aggressive behavior.

Sanitization:

Attempting to normalize harmful or abusive behavior and convince the one being harmed, or others, that the behavior is harmless.

Scapegoating:

Creating scenarios where facts are mischaracterized to confuse others, causing the one being harmed to be viewed as guilty and forced to bear responsibility for the problem. They are harmed twice: first by being made the target of the situation, and second by being made to carry the resulting shame or punishment.

Undermining:

Criticizing or squelching another person's joy, effort, creativity, ideas, or opportunities to diminish their independence or sense of worth.

Weaponized Joking:

Using cruel, insulting, or degrading comments disguised as humor, then blaming the one being harmed for being "too sensitive" when they object.

Withholding:

Refusing communication, attention, affection, or information to punish, control, or distress the one being harmed. This does not apply to a healthy boundary set by the one being harmed to protect their emotional or physical safety or well-being.

