

African American Power and Control Wheel Narrative

Amani Community Services is a domestic violence and sexual assault agency providing innovative culturally specific services to African Americans in Iowa. Amani Community Services decided to adapt the original Power and Control wheel to relate to the abuse experienced within the African American community, after realizing that the experiences survivors we served did not relate to the original wheel.

During focus groups conducted in 2019, victims shared tactics that were more specific to her experiences with domestic violence such as manipulating her around tax time for money or gifts, the use of colorism, reporting her to the Department of Human Services, not allowing her to get her hair and nails done which is essential to the African American woman, calling her the B-word and discouraging her from calling the police because of fear of police brutality.

Focus groups met once a week for 8 weeks. A total of five focus groups were conducted about the Power and Control Wheel, with a total of 101 participants. Approximately, 20 women in each group. 55 African American, 37 White, 7 Hispanic, and 2 multi-race, who all identified having African American male partners. Age ranged from 23 women were between 18-24 years old, 76 women were between 25-59 years old, and 2 women were 60 years old and older.

Group facilitator shared the original Power and Control Wheel, along with other Power and Control Wheels. Survivors then were given a blank wheel and were encouraged to write down her own personal experiences not identified on the original wheel. Group discussion followed with survivors sharing their experiences.

Staff reviewed the Power and Control Wheel activity sheets completed during the focus groups and identified common themes. These common themes were then put onto a wheel and showed to African American domestic violence survivors for evaluation. Survivors were excited to have a wheel that they could finally relate too.

Amani Community Services is excited to present to the world the African American/Black Power and Control Wheel.