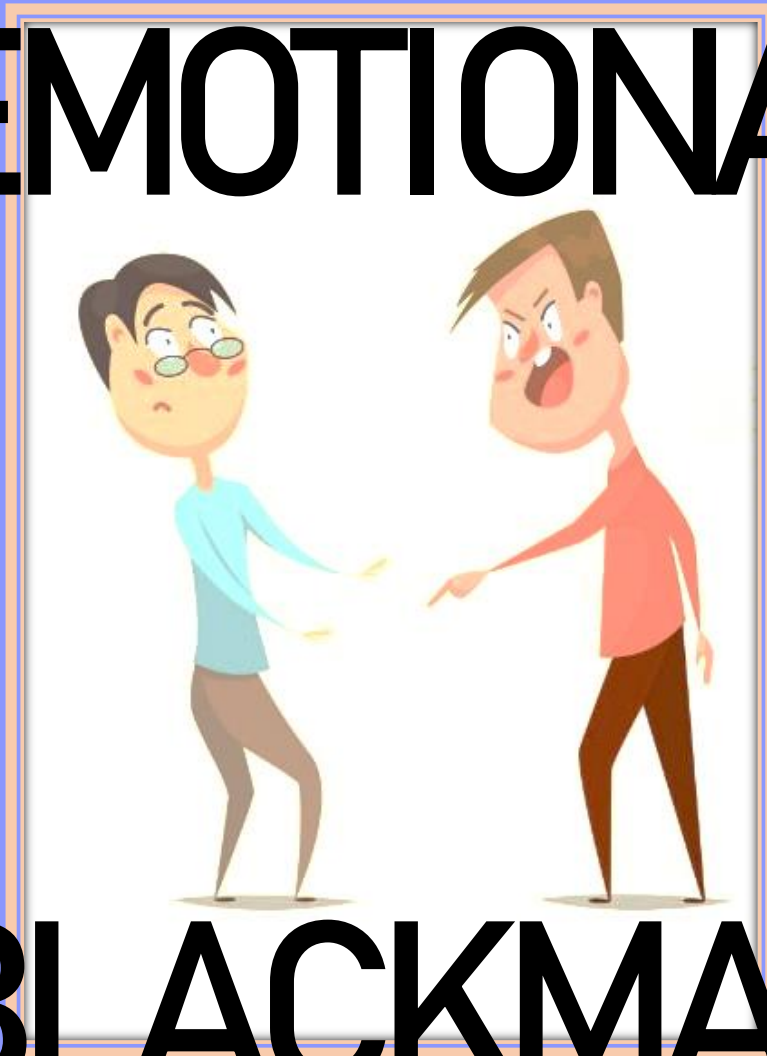


EMOTIONAL



BLACKMAIL

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Student Development
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EMOTIONAL BLACKMAIL

Emotional blackmail is defined as a type of abuse by controlling or manipulating an individual's behaviour through feelings to fulfil their needs and wants. It often occurs in close relationships such as romantic partners, family members, and close friends.

Types of Emotional Blackmail



PUNISHERS

Punishers will use direct threats by stating their wants and needs and the consequence if others don't adhere to their demands. They are also aware of their victim's fear and use it to their advantage. Punishers use aggression, anger or silent treatment as a way of manipulating others.

Example: "If you go out with your friends, I will hurt you."



SELF-PUNISHERS

Self-punishers depend on the guilt and fear of another individual. Self-punishers will state that they will punish themselves if their victims don't adhere to their wants. Self-punishers will manipulate the situation by making it appear that their problems are the victim's fault.

Example: "If you do not cook for me, I will starve myself."



SUFFERERS

Sufferers will depict their suffering as a consequence of their victim's actions. They will convey their guilt if the victim doesn't follow their instruction or as requested. They would express their unhappiness through sighs, tears, or pain. They might provide an overview of their victim's actions which led to their misery.

Example: "If you go out with your friends, I will stay at home feeling sad and lonely."



TANTALISERS

Tantalisers often promise a reward in return for their victim's actions. However, there will always be something new to be done with the promise of a reward.

Example: "If you keep up the good work, I may just promote you as the store's manager."

STAGES OF EMOTIONAL BLACKMAIL

1. Demand

The blackmailer explicitly informs their victim about their wants and needs and threaten them of what would happen if they don't.



2. Resistance

The victim will resist when the demands were unreasonable.



3. Pressure

The blackmailers will pressure the victim to give in to their demands. Blackmailers will use fear and confusion to make victims questioned their initial resistance. Blackmailers are persistent in getting their wants and cares little for the well-being of their victims.



4. Threats

The threat could be direct or indirect. A direct threat would be "If you don't do what I have asked you to, I will hurt you". An indirect threat would be "If you don't hang out with me, maybe someone else will".



5. Compliance

The victims eventually will give up and comply with their blackmailer's demands which leads to self-doubt.



6. Repetition

The blackmailer obtains their wants and would repeat this process when there is a new demand. Blackmailers learnt that it would be easier to use threats to get their needs and wants.



Physical

- Insomnia
- Physical abuse
- Chronic pain, fibromyalgia, and chronic fatigue syndrome

Emotional

- Loneliness
- Isolation
- Fear, guilt and obligation

IMPACTS OF

EMOTIONAL
BLACKMAIL

Psychological

- High level of self-doubt
- Risk of anxiety and depression
- Sense of integrity and self-esteem are affected

Social

- Negative views towards their relationship
- Willingness to keep the peace at the cost of being blackmailed
- Sense of trust in the relationship is not achieved

HOW TO RESPOND TO EMOTIONAL BLACKMAIL?

Identify triggers

- Being aware of the blackmailers' 'hot buttons' would lessen the opportunity for them to use it against you.



Set boundaries

- Set boundaries to prevent yourself from being controlled/manipulated.
- Learn to say 'NO' and 'STOP'.



Engage in a conversation

- Recognise that they are not physically in danger.
- Voice out your feelings towards blackmailers' words and actions.



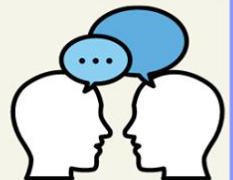
Stand up for yourself

- Recognise the blackmailing behaviours in the relationship.
- Stop and reflect on your plans to confront blackmailers.
- Make decisions based on their values and beliefs.
- Change your basic beliefs and modify your thoughts and actions towards the blackmailers.



Seek Support

- Talk to a trusted friend or family members.
- Seek help from mental health professional when needed.



Thank You