

## Appendix E: Theories of Abuse and Neglect

THEORY	OVERVIEW	SOURCES
Caregiver stress	Views elder abuse as a consequence of a caregiver not being able to manage his or her caregiving responsibilities for a dependent older adult. The older adult is viewed as dependent on the caregiver who becomes abusive due to the difficulty of caregiving, the perceived burden of the caregiver role, and the duration of caregiving.	Burnight, K., & Mosqueda, L. <i>Theoretical model development in elder mistreatment</i> . (Report No. 234488). Retrieved from: <a href="https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=256445">https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=256445</a>
Ecological theory	Attempts to identify potential causes of elder abuse by considering cultural and societal variables such as: the macrosystem (age and gender inequality, societal aggression norms); the exosystem (economic environment, integration into the community); the microsystem (individual and family characteristics); and ontogenetic (physiology, affect, and behavior).	Burnight, K., & Mosqueda, L. <i>Theoretical model development in elder mistreatment</i> . (Report No. 234488). Retrieved from: <a href="https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=256445">https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=256445</a>
Feminist model	Views spousal abuse of older women as a consequence of family patriarchy and can be seen as spousal abuse that has developed into elder abuse.  Theory suggests that the power imbalance between men and women in society result in women being more vulnerable and open to abuse.	Employment and Social Development Canada. (2011). <i>Elder Abuse Modules</i> . Retrieved from <a href="http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/pancanadian/elder_abuse.shtml">http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/pancanadian/elder_abuse.shtml</a>

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Lifecourse theory	A theory which views life as marked by sequential stages, in which an individual is considered a unique being but is also linked to the lives of friends, family and other close individuals. The theory links life events and social conditions that have occurred over the older adult's lifetime; experiences that create accumulated advantages or disadvantages. The hallmark of this theory is its proposition that early life experiences are related to abuse later in life.	McDonald, L. & Thomas, C. (2013). Elder abuse through a life course lens. <i>International Psychogeriatrics</i> , 25(8), 1235–1243.
Power and control wheel	A visual aide that demonstrates the dynamics of power and control in abusive relationships.  Explains common traits of abusive behaviour that enables the abuser to maintain power and control. These include: coercion and threats; intimidation; emotional abuse; isolation; minimizing, denying and blaming; using children; economic abuse; and male privilege. These traits are further reinforced by one or more acts of physical violence.	National Center on Domestic and Sexual Abuse. (n.d.). <i>Power and Control Wheel</i> . Retrieved from: <a href="http://www.ncdsv.org/images/powercontrolwheelnoshading.pdf">http://www.ncdsv.org/images/powercontrolwheelnoshading.pdf</a>
Situational model	Mistreatment of older adults is an irrational response to stressful situations caused by the physical or cognitive impairment of the older adult. The situational variables associated with abuse include individual, social, and financial factors related to the caregiver and the dependent older adult.	Employment and Social Development Canada. (2011). <i>Elder Abuse Modules</i> . Retrieved from <a href="http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/pancanadian/elder_abuse.shtml">http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/pancanadian/elder_abuse.shtml</a>

THEORY	OVERVIEW	SOURCES
Social exchange theory	<p>Views the relationship between a caregiver and an older adult as an exchange of rewards and punishments.</p> <p>Theory suggests that older adults may remain in an abusive relationship only as long as the rewards (e.g., physical care) exceeds the punishments (e.g., financial abuse).</p>	<p>Employment and Social Development Canada. (2011). <i>Elder Abuse Modules</i>. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/pancanadian/elder_abuse.shtml">http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/pancanadian/elder_abuse.shtml</a></p>
Social learning theory	<p>A theory developed by Bandura (1978) that views violence as a learned behavior passed on through the generations (e.g., if children witness incidents of parent to grandparent mistreatment, they learn that abuse is a component of adult relationships).</p> <p>This theory has been applied to the etiology of elder abuse.</p>	<p>Burnight, K., &amp; Mosqueda, L. <i>Theoretical model development in elder mistreatment</i>. (Report No. 234488). Retrieved from website: <a href="https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=256445">https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=256445</a></p> <p>Bandura, A. (1978). Social learning theory of aggression. <i>Journal of communication</i>, 28(3), 12-29.</p>
Sociocultural context	<p>The model portrays a transactional process occurring over time among the older adult, the caregiver, and other involved parties. The model considers the social network of both the older adult and the caregiver, and individual factors such as demographic characteristics, physical health, personality, mental health, and caregiving attitudes. This model looks at inequality within the relationship and power and exchange dynamics that may perpetuate elder abuse.</p>	<p>Burnight, K., &amp; Mosqueda, L. <i>Theoretical model development in elder mistreatment</i>. (Report No. 234488). Retrieved from: <a href="https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=256445">https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=256445</a></p>