Dr Lisa Fontes: An expert on Coercive Control

A new law has now come into effect in England and Wales making coercive control punishable by up to five years in prison. This legislation is a bold move, and strengthens the UK’s stance against domestic violence.

Dr. Fontes is the premiere expert on coercive control. A professor, researcher, and popular conference speaker, she teaches has counselled domestic violence survivors for more than 25 years. Her new book, *Invisible Chains: Overcoming Coercive Control in Your Intimate Relationship*, is the first of its kind, and sheds important light on this difficult subject.

"The new domestic violence law in the UK appears to offer new ways to protect women against the control, manipulation, sexual coercion, and isolation that so often forms the everyday basis of couple violence and deprives women of their liberty." Says Dr. Fontes. “The physical violence usually occurs much less frequently in a relationship of domination.”

Many people are unclear on the definition of coercive control because it can be so hard to recognize, but it is generally defined as a pattern of emotional abuse that includes methods of degrading, isolating, micromanaging, manipulating, and stalking. Dr Fontes says that "coercive control is a special kind of torment because it often feels like love."

If you are working on a story about coercive control, please let me know. Dr. Fontes is available for interviews. I would also be happy to send you a review copy of *Invisible Chains*.

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About the Author:
Lisa Aronson Fontes, PhD, has a doctorate in counselling psychology and has worked in the areas of child abuse, violence against women, and difficult family issues for over 25 years. A professor, researcher, and popular conference speaker, she teaches at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She survived a relationship that included coercive control and stalking.

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