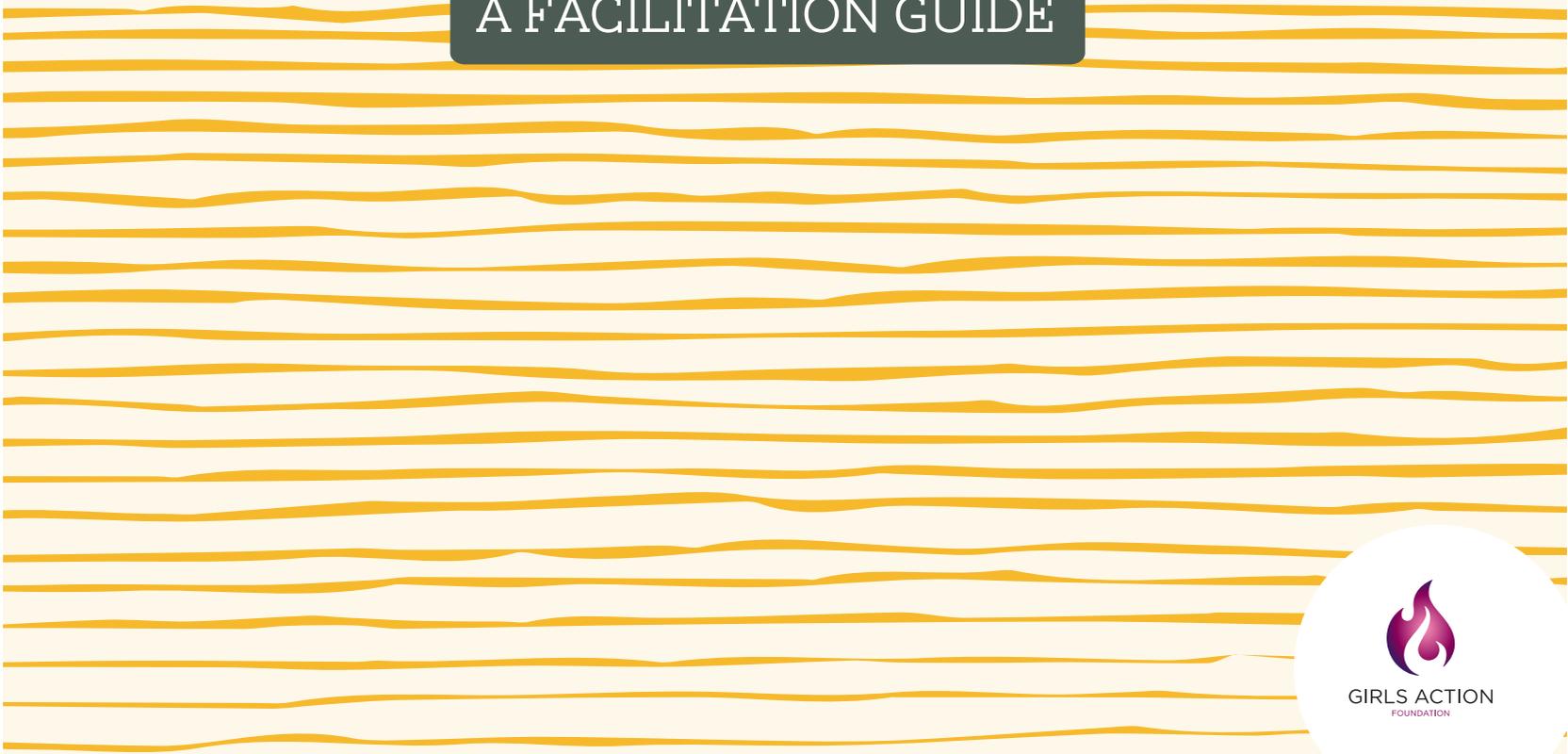


FROM THE

# GROUND UP

**Community-Based Tools To  
Address Violence And Seek Justice**

A FACILITATION GUIDE



GIRLS ACTION  
FOUNDATION



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

2013–2015

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# Our Story: About Girls Action Foundation

**Girls Action Foundation** works to improve girls' and young women's access to resources and opportunities. Our initiatives create opportunities for them to discover their power and gain the confidence to take action in their communities. At Girls Action we are committed to building a movement of active, engaged individuals and organizations across Canada. Through this movement, we envision a new generation committed to creating a more just society for all.

Girls Action was founded in 1995 as a grassroots organization that delivered programming to girls and young women in the Ottawa area. As a result of growing needs and frequent requests for more programming Girls Action's reach has expanded. Local girls programs continue to be delivered in Montreal, in addition we have a national young women's leadership program and host a National Network of more than 300 organizations that offer girls' programs in communities across Canada.

Girls Action initiatives are designed to meet the following objectives:

- Build girls' and young women's **self-awareness and self-esteem**
- Increase girls' and young women's awareness of and ability to **address issues of violence**
- Foster the development of girls' and young women's **critical thinking and communication skills**
- Improve girls' and young women's awareness of and ability to **access resources and mentorship** in their communities
- Increase girls' and young women's experience and skills in **community action and leadership**

# The Girls Action Foundation Approach: Principles

Our unique approach is based on five overarching principles.

## **1. Popular Education / Critical Education**

Girls Action recognizes people as experts on their own lives, validating diverse experiences of violence. Peer support systems bring people together to talk, listen and share strategies and resources for coping and overcoming violence and oppression in their lives.

## **2. Integrated Feminist Analysis**

Girls Action takes into account the multiple and intersecting impacts of violence on different groups of people because of their race, class, ability, sexuality, gender identity, religion, culture, refugee or immigrant status, or other status. Learning from others and re-examining our own views has the power to make conditions and structures of violence more visible. By placing value on gendered experiences of violence we can begin to build collaborative relationships of support and mobilize for social change.

## **3. Gender-Specific Spaces**

In the past, we have found that creating spaces specifically for girls allows them to feel free to talk amongst themselves, to share their experiences, to learn from one another, and to form solid relationships. At the same time, spaces that welcome diverse expressions of gender are an important part of creating a sense of solidarity in order to break the silence and isolation around their experiences of violence.

## **4. Critically Asset-Based**

Girls Action considers individuals and groups to be active, not passive, and they are encouraged to develop their own knowledge and experiences. With support and resources, they can develop their self-esteem and empowerment, and become agents of social change. An asset-based approach celebrates the initiatives and successes of people who are engaged in speaking up, speaking out, and taking action on issues of violence.

## **5. Social Action and Change**

Girls Action supports girls' and young women's initiatives to enact change in their own lives, their schools, their communities, their government, and their worlds. We recognize that people who are socialized as women have different lived realities and experiences of violence, which must be addressed holistically, in its complexity.

## About the *Building Bridges to Justice* project

Dating and intimate relationships can be a significant part of many young women's lives. The *Building Bridges to Justice* project emerged from our national network. This community of practice is made up of facilitators and programmers who work directly with girls and young women. Consistently from coast-to-coast, violence is one of the biggest issues faced by the young women they work with and for. The violence they are facing is systemic and daily and can take many forms (including psychological, financial, and physical). Dating violence or intimate partner violence was one of the specific forms of violence that many network members had observed young women facing. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a lived experience for many young women, either because they face violence themselves or witness their friends or peers experiencing it.

Through consultations with young women and other network members it has been identified that young people often face barriers: they do not know *how to* access justice or other systems of support, and available services and resources are often not *adapted to* young women's needs and realities. Network Members indicated that community-based outreach and programming is a part of the solution to providing tools and systems of support to young women. Inclusive and supportive spaces can make a huge difference in the lives of young women confronting intimate partner violence. In response, the *Building Bridges to Justice* project was designed to address the needs of young women aged 16 to 24 as research shows that this age group is the most at risk for experiencing intimate partner violence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from The Learning Network. (2013, October). Violence Against Young Women.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Legal Education Partner**

#### **West Coast LEAF**

West Coast LEAF is the first and only organization in British Columbia dedicated to promoting women's equality through the law. West Coast LEAF and their sister organization LEAF have helped bring about some of the most important victories for women in Canada: safe access to reproductive rights; fair workplace standards; fair separation agreements; "no means no" in sexual assault; the right to be free of sexual harassment from landlords, and more.

They have been working since 1985 to end discrimination against women. They do this through equality rights litigation, law reform, and public legal education.

## **Community Partners**

In 2014, four community partners from across Canada with experience in local violence prevention began working with Girls Action Foundation on the *Building Bridges to Justice* project. During the subsequent months they conducted outreach and consultation with young women and community stakeholders, piloted and evaluated the Workshop Guide with a group of young women, researched local tools and resources for young women experiencing IPV, helped connect young women with justice system and related supports in the community, and supported youth in organizing community actions to raise their voices against violence.

*Here is a snapshot of their organizations:*

### **Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association (Antigonish, NS)**

The Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association (AWRC & SASA) is an independent, feminist, community-based organization. They provide information, support services and programs for women of all ages and backgrounds in an environment that is sensitive to women's needs.

### **The Laurel Centre (Winnipeg, MB)**

The Laurel Centre enables the provision of counselling services for women and youth who have experienced childhood or adolescent sexual victimization and want to resolve long term effects of the abuse. The Youth Counselling Program is the culmination of both individual and group therapy that targets the specific age group of 16-24 years. The Case Management Program provides individual support to young women ages 16-24 who were or are experiencing intimate partner violence.

### **Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (Victoria, BC)**

The Victoria Sexual Assault Centre is a feminist organization committed to ending sexualized violence through healing, education and prevention. They are dedicated to supporting women and trans individuals who are survivors of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse, through advocacy, counselling, and empowerment.

### **Wemindji Gathering Centre (Wemindji, QC)**

The Wemindji Gathering Centre provides community activities and programs enhancing the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of the community, as identified by the community. The Gathering Centre, which offers a variety of programs, including girl-specific groups, is located in the semi-isolated Cree community of Wemindji on the Quebec side of James Bay.

## How to use this resource

This workshop guide was developed for young women and program facilitators to hold discussions about **how to respond to violence, to increase knowledge of rights, services and community resources**. The activities in the guide are intended for facilitators with expertise in violence prevention programs and providing support for survivors of IPV.

The workshop guide is designed to be **adaptable to your group's specific needs and context**. We recommend reading each chapter's introduction before planning your program to help you select which activities are most suitable for your group.

The activities are organized around particular themes:

- **Building Trust (p. 13):** participants are provided with an experience that promotes trust, safety, and support.
- **Examining Power (p. 25):** participants explore notions of power and privilege as it relates to themselves and their daily lives.
- **Naming Violence (p. 39):** participants identify and examine concepts of violence.
- **Questioning Gender (p. 51):** participants explore values, attitudes and beliefs that either hinder or help in the development of their identities.
- **Exploring Relationships (p. 67):** participants consider different ways to navigate intimate relationships, such as friends, family and romantic and/or sexual relationships.
- **Accessing Justice (p. 87):** participants explore the concepts and issues around consent and justice in their lives, their communities and as defined by Canadian law.

# Considerations for facilitators

## Violence and Trauma

Young women are exposed to all kinds of violence ranging from systemic, relational, to internalized violence—these can leave them feeling vulnerable, confused, and powerless.

When discussing intense topics, such as intimate partner violence, participants may be reminded of, and want to share, experiences that were hurtful or harmful. Your responsibility as a facilitator will be to notice and respond to the importance of what they are sharing, and to call in, or refer participants to, additional resources when necessary and when legally required. These resources might include parents, siblings, teachers, social workers, or counsellors.

**The following tips are intended to help cope with the feelings that violence brings up, and to help the participants maintain a sense of safety:**

**Let The Participants Talk:** If someone begins to speak about experiences that appear significant and distressing to them or to other group members, you will need to decide whether it is appropriate to continue the conversation with the group or whether to continue the conversation with them alone.

**Create and Review Safety Plans:** Understanding the procedures that have been developed to keep them safe is sometimes enough to give them an extra measure of security.

**Don't Make Impossible Promises:** While you want to help them feel safe, avoid promising what can't be delivered.

**Work with Community Members:** When possible, work with other community members such as parents, social workers, school teachers, counsellors, and psychologists.

**Help Put Things in Perspective:** By unpacking potential causes of violence, participants are supported to talk about how their experiences are related to repetitions of social, systemic, and collective forms of violence.

## Creating Safe(r) Spaces

In our experience, a “safe(r) space” is one where people are able to express themselves, make mistakes, take healthy risks, and constructively challenge one another. It is important to recognize that everyone has different ways of creating and maintaining a feeling of safety. Providing the space to challenge oneself and step outside of one’s comfort zone can lead to facilitating learning and growth. Having the courage to grow also requires having a safe place to process and reflect on challenging experiences.

Creating a “safe(r) space” is also about collectively establishing and respecting personal boundaries with wisdom and fairness, to keep the experience safe for the participants and facilitators.

### Suggestions for establishing boundaries:

- You are modelling how to be **inclusive and accepting** to everyone in the group.
- Make it clear ahead of time that you hope to be someone they can trust, but also **take responsibility as a facilitator**.
- Try to leave some **unstructured time** during each session so that participants will be able to **approach you** individually if they want to.
- Be clear that everything discussed in the group stays in the group and honour that **statement by making confidentiality secondary only to safety**.
- **Respond positively** when someone **doesn’t know what something means** and **recognize the courage** needed to make oneself vulnerable in that situation.
- You may need to **refer to external resources** like a counsellor or a health clinic.

## **Role of Facilitators**

As a program facilitator, you play a very special role! Reflecting on your identity, as well as considering the identities of the program participants can contribute to building a safe(r) space.

Consider the specific needs of your participants when selecting activities and resources for the group. A process of negotiation between facilitators and participants takes into account: needs, comfort levels, concerns around personal safety, and the appropriateness of topics and language given their past experiences of trauma.

As the facilitator, mentor, and role model, you can model self-acceptance, self-reflexivity and accountability. Understanding your social location is helpful to being an effective facilitator and working across differences. Facilitation across differences aims to unpack assumptions or discriminations that underlie situations and conversations we often take for granted.





# Building TRUST

## LEGEND

---



Large Group



Small Group



Pairs



Individual  
Reflection



Game



Arts Based



Discussion



Role Playing



Media

## FORMAT

## TECHNIQUE

Activity	 Large group	 Small groups	 Pairs	 Individual reflection	 Game	 Arts-based	 Discussion	 Role Play	 Media
<b>TRUST</b>									
Spool of String	●				●				
Two Truths and a Lie	●				●				
Group Agreement	●					●	●		
Community Sketch	●					●			
Compliment Circle	●				●				
"Me" Quilt		●		●		●			

# Building TRUST



“

**The activities allowed me to feel comfortable enough to share my story with the rest of the group.**

– PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

**Thanks for making a safe place to share my opinion, and ask for advice. <3**

– PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

**They had a discussion about making the group safe, maintaining respect in the group / at school, confidentiality, informed consent and duty to report.**

– COMMUNITY PARTNER

”

These activities are designed to build trust, safety, and support. They are opportunities for the group to get to know each other, so they can relax and begin to share. These activities are concrete examples to help create a space where participants and the facilitator feel a sense of mutual trust and respect.

Developing a strong foundation of trust can set the tone for future discussions, which may be intense and difficult. When violence and trauma are brought up, let participants talk.

People have different ways of creating and maintaining safety. So it can be useful to identify common expectations and boundaries around issues such as non-verbal communication, accessibility and self-expression.

One strategy by our community partners at the Laurel Centre is a thumbs up / thumbs down rule. They encourage participants to let the facilitators know how they are doing in taking care. If someone leaves the room they indicate if they are OK with a thumbs up or if they need a facilitator to check in with them they show a thumbs down.

Take your time, call for breaks, and use energizers to lighten the mood when needed. Building trust will allow individuals to share and feel comfortable doing so, creating and maintaining trust are central for participants having voice in the group and program.

---

# Spool of String<sup>2</sup>

## Summary:

---

In this icebreaker activity participants share information about themselves.

### Format:



Large Group

### Technique:



Game

Discussion

## Materials:

---

Spool of string, Pair of scissors

## Activity Breakdown:

---

1. Ask participants to sit together in a circle.
2. Pass around the spool of string and scissors.
3. Ask participants to cut as much string as they think they need for themselves and then pass it on to the next person.
4. Once everyone has a piece of string, ask them to wrap it around their pointer finger.
5. Explain that they will say their names and something about themselves for as long as it takes them to unravel the string from their finger. It's more fun if you wait to tell everyone about this until AFTER they have their piece of string.
6. As the facilitator, you can lead with a demonstration of how the game works and then continue around the circle in one direction.

Debrief: Once all the participants have shared in the circle, debrief the session with asking them what they learned about each other.

---

### Facilitation tips:

Suggestions for what to share:

- Favourite music
- How many places they have lived
- How many siblings they have

---

### Adaptability:

This activity can also be used to close your program. Instead of sharing something new about themselves, participants are asked to share something they are taking away from the program.

# Two truths and a lie<sup>3</sup>

## Summary:

In this guessing game participants break the ice by sharing “facts” about themselves.

## Format:



Large Group

## Technique(s):



Game

## Materials:

None

## Activity Breakdown:

1. Ask everyone to sit in a circle.
2. Each participant will prepare three statements about themselves, two of which are true and one of which is a lie.
3. The object of the game is to figure out which statement is a lie. Explain the game so that everyone has the time to think of their “facts”
4. Ask participants to come up with two truths about themselves and one lie. Go around the room and ask participants to share.
5. Have a general discussion about the facts (optional step).
6. The others have to guess what the lie is. Everyone will know how someone else voted.
7. Ask participants to share which statement was a lie. They may explain the circumstances for the truths. Everyone else may talk about how they figured out their vote.

Debrief: Ask participants what they learned from each other, aside from the facts & lies (for example, non-verbal communication). Explain that they will say their names and something about themselves for as long as it takes them to unravel the string from their finger. It’s more fun if you wait to tell everyone about this until AFTER they have their piece of string.

## Facilitation tips:

- Participants should tell their three statements in any order.
- Remind the group to vote before the “lie” is revealed.
- Participants can tell lies that are facts about someone else, or something they wished had happened.

## Adaptability:

A variation of the game is called “Two Truths and a Dream Wish.” Instead of a lie, participants say something that is not true–yet something that they wish to be true.

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from: METRAC. (2008). Two Truths and a Lie. *Don't Make Me Repeat Myself: A Peer Educator's Advocacy Training Manual for Youth on Gender-Based Violence*, p.2.

---

# Creating a Safe Space: Group Agreement<sup>4</sup>

## Summary:

---

In this activity participants will collectively develop group guidelines.

### Format:



Large Group

### Technique:



Arts-based



Discussion

## Materials:

---

Flip chart, Markers

## Activity Breakdown:

---

1. Ask the group to form a circle, with a flip chart paper in the middle.
2. Invite each participant to trace an outline of their hand.
3. Ask the group:
  - “What are some guidelines we can come up with as a group that would make this space a more comfortable or a safe(r) place to share our thoughts and feelings?”
  - “What do we bring to the group?”
  - “What do we want to get out of the group?”
  - “What do we need to participate?”
  - “What do we each need to feel respected within the group?”
4. Emphasize that we can revisit and add to the agreement. Facilitators might include:
  - **Confidentiality:** This is a space to share experiences and insights without judgment. Please don’t repeat what is said in the group without getting permission from your peers first.
  - **Put-ups, not put-downs:** We are here to support each other. Don’t attack or make fun of other participants in the group. If you disagree, constructively criticize the idea, not the participant.
  - **There are no stupid questions:** If there is anything you’re not sure about (i.e. a word, phrase, or an idea), just ask.
  - **Right to pass:** You don’t have to say anything if you don’t want to.
  - **Respect/listening:** Try to have one person speak at a time.
  - **Express yourself:** Showing emotion (sadness, anger, happiness etc.) is a valid and constructive form of self-expression.
  - **Relax and have fun!** We’re here to learn together and share together.
5. Once everyone has contributed, ask them to sign the inside of their hand.

---

## Facilitation tips:

- The agreement can be a tool to intervene when the group is becoming a less safe space.
- If possible, the agreement can be made visible when the group meets.
- You can add to the agreement whenever the group meets.

# Getting Started: Community Sketch<sup>5</sup>

## Summary:

In this trust-building activity participants will collectively draw a picture of their communities in response to related questions about community dynamics.

### Format:



Large Group

### Technique:



Arts-based

## Materials:

Flip chart, Markers

## Activity Breakdown:

1. Hand out chart paper and markers and explain that they are going to work together to draw a picture of their community or communities.
2. Ask the group, "What is the main place, or main places, where you all come together?"
  - Examine the locations and ask questions: e.g., school, community centre, place of worship, housing complex, park, basketball court, shopping mall, parking lot.
  - For each location they come up with, ask participants to draw the building and label it.
3. Ask the group, "Who are the main players in the community? Are there certain community leaders?"
  - Do some people have connections that others do not? Are there any cliques?"
  - Examine what they say and ask questions (e.g. a group that always dominate the b-ball court, half the kids who are part of an after school community centre, the members of the student council who are well respected).
  - For each set of main players the group acknowledges, draw an accompanying symbol on the map close to where the main players spend a lot of time.
4. Ask the group, "What are some of the things that you all have in common?"
  - Examine what they say and ask questions (e.g. same age, linguistic community, similar recreation or hobbies, most come from single parent homes, most own cars, most are going to university, most have immigrant parents).
  - For each similarity, draw a floating circle and write the similarity in it.
5. Ask the group, "What are some of the differences?"
  - Examine what they say and ask questions (e.g. religious communities, music tastes).
  - For each difference, draw a jagged edge square and write the difference in it.
6. After the discussion is finished, write "community rules" on the top of a posted piece of chart paper. Ask participants to tell you what they think their informal community rules are, related to issues such as:
  - Where people can go
  - What people can do
  - Who people can associate with
  - What is fun and what is boring

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from: METRAC. (2008). Getting Started: Community Sketch. *Don't Make Me Repeat Myself: A Peer Educator's Advocacy Training Manual for Youth on Gender-Based Violence*, p.3.

7. Ask questions about what they come up with.
  - *Is there a lot of disagreement about the rules?*
  - *Is it fair to say that community rules are not clear and that they can change a lot?*
  - *What are the consequences of breaking one of these rules?*
  - *Are the rules fair? Who decides them?*
  - *Are some people's voices listened to more carefully when it comes to these rules?*

Debrief:

1. Sum up the activity using the picture the group drew. For example:
  - Main place, or main places, where you all come together
  - Commonalities and differences (i.e. language, activities)
  - Roles (leaders), groups, rules (informal)
  - Feelings, safety
2. Finish the activity with the observation that: **while you all live in the same community, you all see it a little differently and use its spaces differently.**

.....

**Facilitation tips:**

- Be careful to encourage non-oppressive thinking, while acknowledging community dynamics.
  - If participants don't feel comfortable talking about their own communities you can shift the conversation to wider communities (i.e. national and/or global).
- .....

**Adaptability:**

- This activity can be adapted to pair the community sketch with visualization. Instead of creating the sketch as a group, each person creates their own sketch and shares with the group.

# Compliment Circle<sup>6</sup>

## Summary:

In this trust-building activity participants will both give and receive compliments.

## Format:



Large Group

## Technique:



Game

## Materials:

None

## Activity Breakdown:

1. Ask the group to form a circle.
2. Tell the participants that they are about to participate in a Compliment Circle.
3. Ask a participant to volunteer to be the first “Receiver”- the one to be admired and complimented.
4. Explain that in the Compliment Circle, one by one, each participant will go around and tell the Receiver what they admire and respect about them.
5. This will continue until everyone in the circle has been the Receiver

Debrief questions to ask the group:

- How did you feel as the Receiver before you were given feedback from the other participants?
- How did you feel as the Receiver after you were admired and given compliments?
- How did it feel to think about and admire someone else?
- How did it feel to let them know what you admire about them?
- How does personal strength encourage you to take action?

## Facilitation tips:

- Ensure that mutual trust and respect has developed between participants.
- Be aware that this activity can create vulnerability for both the receiver and giver.
- If there is bullying in the group, you may want to consider how this activity could have a negative effect. For example, using the space to hurt one another rather than compliment.
- This activity is grounded in the experiences of the participants and their perceptions of *what is a compliment*. It may positively reinforce or adapt to the experiences of the participants, if it is genuine and grounded in their own experiences.

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from: Girls Action Foundation. (2009). Compliment Circle. *Amplify Toolkit*, p.281-282.

**Adaptability:**

- This activity could be used in the context of a zine. For example, writing down the compliments such as: “Here’s what we like about each other,” “Positive things participants have to say about each other,” etc.
- If participants don’t feel comfortable saying their compliment(s) out-loud they can write them on a card, or express them through a drawing, either anonymously or not.

# Creating a “Me” Quilt<sup>7</sup>

## Summary:

In this activity participants will create and share an art piece based on their achievements, interests and values.

### Format:



Small Groups

Individual Reflection

### Technique:



Arts-based

## Materials:

Coloured paper, Large Bristol board, Art supplies (glue, markers, string, star stickers, scissors, etc.), Option to ask the participants to come prepared with material from home, such as photos, certificates of achievements, drawings, poetry, and other documents symbolic of their experiences.

## Activity Breakdown:

### Part 1: Individual Art Work

1. Place art supplies on the floor or table.
2. Ask participants to sit around the art supplies on the floor or table.
3. Explain to participants that they will create a “Me” Quilt using the art supplies and paper provided. With the option to use the things they brought from home.
4. The Bristol board will be used as the foundation for their “Me” Quilt by gluing the 4 pieces of coloured paper onto it.
5. Ask the participants to consider dividing their 4 coloured papers into the following 4 categories when they create their “Me” Quilts:
  - Qualities and characteristics that make up who I am as an individual (things I tell people about myself)
  - My hobbies and talents
  - My accomplishments (things that I do well and that I am proud of)
  - My values and beliefs (things that are important to me)

### Part 2: Individual Art Work

1. Divide the participants into two groups.
2. Explain that each group will have a chance to display their “Me” Quilts in turn.
3. Ask Group A to exhibit their “Me” Quilts by leaning them up against the wall or on a chair.
4. Ask Group B to go around and view the “Me” Quilts of Group A.
5. Group A participants have a chance to answer questions about their “Me” Quilts as Group B participants go around.
6. Reverse the roles of each group and do it again.
 

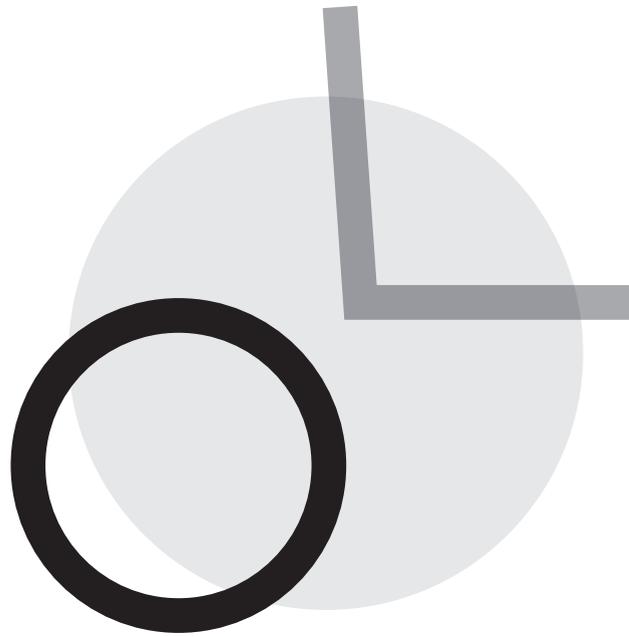
Debrief questions to ask the group:

  - What did you learn from doing this activity for yourself?
  - What did you learn when you shared your “Me” Quilt with other participants?
  - What did you learn when other participants shared their “Me” Quilt with you?

<sup>7</sup> Adapted from: Girls Action Foundation. (2009). Creating a “Me” Quilt. *Amplify Toolkit*, p.292-293.

**Facilitation Tips:**

- Ask the participants to come prepared with material from home, such as photos, certificates of achievements, drawings, poetry, and other documents symbolic of their experiences.
- If it's helpful, prepare a flip chart in advance to illustrate the activity and hang it on the wall.
- Take about 30 minutes to do Part 1 of the activity, and 15 minutes for Part 2.
- Help encourage participants to think about their personal perceptions of their strengths. If you are seeing participants mimicking media expectations of their strengths, encourage the participants to think critically about why they are drawn to in the image, what it means for them etc.
- Be careful not to condemn popular culture outright, simply be critical of it where needed.
- You might ask participants to take action by inviting them to share their images to a wider audience.



# Examining POWER

## LEGEND

---



Large Group



Small Group



Pairs



Individual  
Reflection



Game



Arts Based



Discussion



Role Playing



Media

## FORMAT

## TECHNIQUE

Activity	 Large group	 Small groups	 Pairs	 Individual reflection	 Game	 Arts-based	 Discussion	 Role Play	 Media
POWER									
Where is the "P" between you and me	●	●				●	●		
Power Flower	●					●	●		
Privilege Pendulum	●		●		●		●		

# Examining POWER



“

We feel it is important to recognize and nurture a key precondition for accessing justice: a sense of agency or personal power.

– COMMUNITY PARTNER

Agency is required to be able to access explicit justice-focused action.

– FACILITATOR

”

These activities are designed to focus on participants’ **self-reflection and social awareness**, and to build a sense of **personal and interpersonal strength, knowledge and skills**. Participants will be better able to make the link between systemic oppression and individual power and privilege.

Facilitators are able to put things in perspective for the group by relating participants’ experiences to social, systemic, and collective forms of violence. Know your limits and perform safety check-ins with yourself and the group. By establishing boundaries, you are modelling how to be inclusive and accepting to everyone in the group. It is important to keep the emotional pulse of the room when facilitating these conversations and reflections.

**Privilege** in society indicates an advantage or benefit that is not available to everyone equally or at all. Those who have less access to power and privilege are at a higher risk of violence, especially people who are of colour, Indigenous, newcomers, living with a disability, poor, working class, LGBTQ and/or two-spirited.<sup>8</sup>

**Violence, abuse and control** are directly tied to interlocking systems of oppression. When a person is being abusive towards their intimate partner, they are exploiting differences in power and privilege such as age, gender, race, sexuality, ability and social status in ways that can create unhealthy dynamics in relationships.

Encouraging the development of **agency** can work to combat negative power coming from society, their communities, their relationships or themselves. Reflections on difference can challenge oppressive practices and lead to taking action individually, collectively and in solidarity against oppressive practices.

<sup>8</sup> METRAC. (2011, March). *Youth Surviving and Thriving: Many Paths to Healing*, p.3.

---

# Where is the “P” between you and me?’

## Summary:

---

In this activity participants will lead a group discussion and create an art piece that explores different sources, structures and effects of power.

### Format:



Large Group | Small Groups

### Technique:



Discussion | Arts-based

## Materials:

---

*Defining Power: Reference Sheet*, Art supplies: coloured paper, pencils, tape, glue, stars, ribbon, butcher paper or flip chart paper, markers, etc.

## Activity Breakdown:

---

### Part 1: Brainstorm

1. Lead the participants in a brainstorm about WHAT IS POWER?
  - Write the word POWER at the centre of a flip chart paper.
  - Ask participants to call out the words that come to mind when they think of the word.
  - As participants call out the terms, write them exactly as they are said on the flip chart, around the word POWER.
2. On a new flip chart write down SOURCES OF POWER.
  - Ask participants to identify what these can be.
  - Flip chart their responses.
3. Ask participants to identify POSITIVE SOURCES OF POWER and consider some of the positive aspects of power.
  - Flip chart their responses.
4. On two separate flip charts write EMPOWER and DISEMPOWER.
  - Ask the participants for their understanding of these concepts and clarify if necessary.
5. On a new flip chart, write down EMPOWERED and DISEMPOWERED as two separate columns.
  - Explore how some sources of power can both empower and disempower.
6. Examples can be taken from the *Defining Power: Reference Sheet* to help guide the discussion.

### Part 2: Creative interpretation

1. In preparation of their small group work, lead a large group discussion using the suggested questions below.
2. Remind participants that they can refer back to the flip charts.
3. Flip chart their responses to these questions:
  - Looking at the lists created in Part 1, what are some structures in society that empower people or disempower them?
  - Talk this through and ask why? (Chart this in two separate columns if it is easier to follow.)
  - Ask the participants where they feel empowered and disempowered in society.

4. Randomly divide participants into two small groups:
  - Group A - Empowered
  - Group B - Disempowered
5. Ask each group to create a skit, a drawing, or a poster to represent their concept of power, either empowered or disempowered, using the terms and results of their discussion from Part 1.
6. Once each group has had their turn, ask participants for the reflections:
  - What is the main message of the group's drawing or skit or poster?
  - How does it portray the concepts of empowered and disempowered?
7. Depending on the age and maturity of the group, lead a discussion using the following suggested questions:
  - Are we limited by our position in society? Why?
  - In what ways can we create change?
  - How do limitations have consequences in society? For example, what happens between people as a result of these limitations?
  - Do differences really matter? Please explain.
  - Can you give some examples of people who are empowered in society?
  - How are these people empowered?
  - How are these people using their power to change society?
8. Summarize the results of this discussion with the group.

**Debrief:**

- It is important to debrief this activity afterwards to ensure that participants do not leave feeling powerless.
- One way is to ask them to write a note on a piece of paper describing how they know they would like to create peaceful and positive change to the social system of power.
- Ask them to hand in the note either anonymously or signed, which you will then post on the "wall of change."
- If there is time, this can be used to launch a discussion about creating change in your community or this discussion can be saved for the next session.

**Facilitation Tips:**

- Encourage the participants to look to their own lives for examples of empowerment and disempowerment.
- This activity is best with groups that have strong group dynamics, in secure environments where participants feel comfortable with each other.
- Given the fact that this activity may lead to sensitive and difficult discussions, a group larger than 12 should ideally have two facilitators.
- Try to explore how a source of power can be at once both negative and positive and why.
- Support participants to think through and draw their own conclusions about sources of power.
- The *Defining Power: Reference Sheet* can be distributed to older participants or used as a facilitator resource to guide the discussions.

**Adaptability:**

If the participants are having a hard time discussing personal sources of power you can redirect the conversation by asking the group to make connections between larger societal or global issues that can limit or challenge personal power/agency.

---

# Reference Sheet: Defining Power<sup>10</sup>

## Sources of Power

- Control
- Money and wealth
- Position
- Knowledge and information
- Might and force
- Abuse of power
- Capacity to inspire fear or joy
- Humour
- Togetherness or solidarity
- Information
- Living justly
- Organization and Planning action
- Our own knowledge
- Our own experience
- Commitment
- Numbers (e.g. population)

---

## Common Responses for “Situations that Result in Feeling Empowered”

- Overcoming fear or a feeling of ignorance by doing an action
- Recognition by others of something I did or said
- Finding a solution in a creative way that seemed unsolvable
- Being able to overcome a difficulty on my own or with very little assistance
- Succeeding at something or doing something really well
- Caring for or helping someone
- Joining a group with other people that share my excitement or challenge

---

## Expressions of Different Forms of Power

In reality, power is both dynamic and multidimensional, changing according to context, circumstance, and interest. Its expressions and forms can range from domination and resistance, to collaboration and transformation.

1. **Power Over...** is the most commonly recognized form of power, and has many negative associations for people, such as: repression, oppression, force, coercion, discrimination, corruption, and abuse. Power within this context is seen as a win-lose relationship.
2. **Power With...** has to do with finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength. Power is seen as building on mutual strength, solidarity, and collaboration. This kind of power can help bridge different interests to transform or reduce social conflict.

3. **Power To...** refers to the unique potential of every person to shape their own life and the world. When based on mutual support, it opens up the possibilities to create action and be a part of an active community.
4. **Power Within...** has to do with a personal sense of self-worth and self-knowledge. It includes the ability to recognize individual differences while respecting others. Power has the capacity to imagine and have hope. It confirms a common human desire for dignity and fulfilment.

---

### **Expression of Power over Difference**

Some forms of violence come from intolerance of difference in our society. Differences between people, whether visible or invisible, make up our identities. Our identity is what defines social, political, economic, and cultural groups. Factors that make up our identity are:

- Where we come from
- The language that we speak
- The colour of our skin
- The religion that we practice
- The gender(s) we are attracted to
- The gender(s) we identify as
- The amount of money that we have
- The age that we are
- The ethnic/cultural traditions that we practise

Power is also present in society-at-large. It can be empowering or disempowering depending on the situation and the people involved. Power at the societal level (power in society) comes in the form of structures:

- Government institutions
- Justice system
- Legal system, the rule of law
- Economic system
- Education system
- Religious institutions
- Family institutions

---

# Power Flower<sup>11</sup>

## Summary:

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This workshop balances art- and discussion-based activities in order to address the issue of power structures within our society.

### Format:



Large Group

### Technique:



Arts-based | Discussion

## Materials:

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Large paper, a variety of coloured markers, prepare the *Power Flower:Reference Sheet* drawn on large paper, individual handouts of the *Power Flower:Reference Sheet* for each participant

## Activity Breakdown:

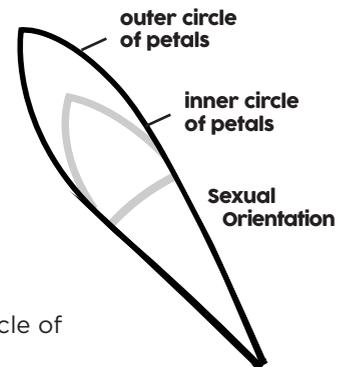
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1. Introduce the *Power Flower*. Explain that each flower “petal” represents—or names—an aspect of social identity. The blank petal(s) exist to encourage people to add an aspect that may be missing.

2. Explain and write these points on a large paper / on the board for reference, in a visible place:

- The outer circle of petals describes the **dominant social identity** in society.
- The inner petals describe the **non-dominant social identity** in society.

(E.g. The dominant social identity in society for sexual orientation could be Straight, the non-dominant social identity could be Queer)



3. Ask the participants to individually or with a partner fill in the outer and inner circle of petals with a marker or pen on their individual hand-outs.

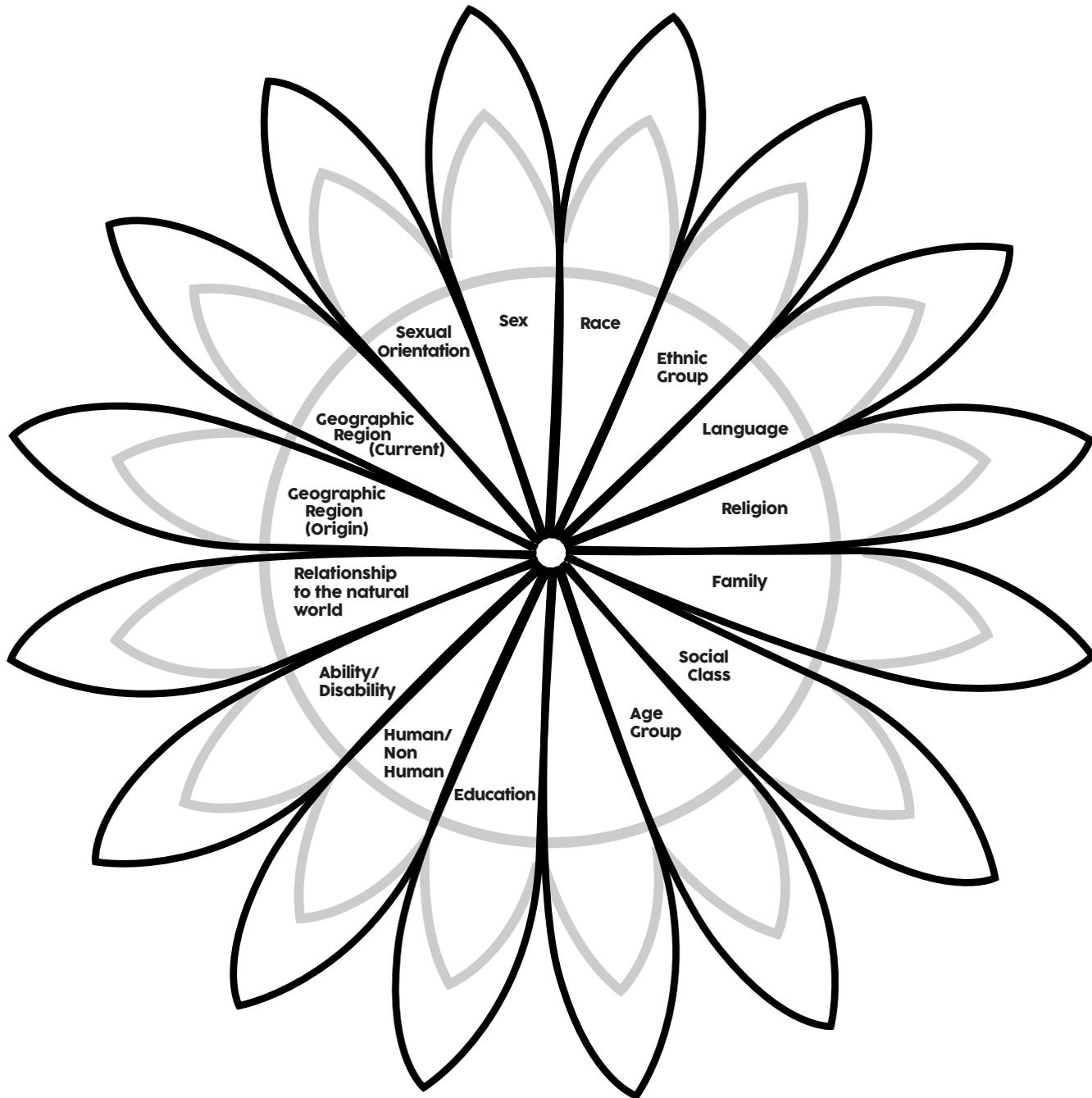
4. After everyone has finished invite the participants to share how they filled in the *Power Flower* and fill in the big version of the flower on the large paper based on the groups' suggestions.

5. **Optional:** If you feel comfortable with an anti-oppression framework and with the dynamic, trust and respect in the room to have constructive dialogue, consider facilitating a debrief discussion on the following questions..

- a. How are the aspects of participants identities reflected within the flower? How does that make people feel?
- b. Who are the public decision-makers in society? Where do they fit into the *Power Flower*?
- c. Reflect on the relationships between and among different forms of oppression.
- d. What is the process at work in society that establishes dominance of a particular identity, and at the same time, subordinates other identities?

*\*These discussion questions can bring up the personal/political and may be triggering for some participants.*

## Reference Sheet: Power Flower<sup>12</sup>



<sup>12</sup> Arnold, R. (1991). Drawing Out Knowledge and Experience and Looking for Patterns. In *Educating for a change*. Toronto: Between the Lines Press.

---

# The Privilege Pendulum<sup>13</sup>

## Summary:

---

In this activity participants will play a game that visualizes the concept of privilege, followed by a discussion in which participants will reflect on their position of privilege.

### Format:



Large Group | Small Groups

### Technique:



Game

Discussion

## Materials:

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*Pendulum Statements: Reference Sheet*, Masking tape, Paper, Markers

## Activity Breakdown:

---

### Preparation:

1. Create a sign titled "Privilege Line."
2. Divide the room into two by making a line out of masking tape on the floor.
3. At the centre of the line of masking tape, stick the sign titled "Privilege Line."

### Workshop:

1. Before beginning this activity, let participants know that this activity is focused on the concept of privilege.
2. Tell the participants that you have divided the room into two.
3. Show them the line of masking tape on the floor marked with the sign "Privilege Line."
4. Ask participants to stand on the line facing you.
5. Tell participants that you will call out a statement. Refer to the *Pendulum Statements: Reference Sheet* for examples.
6. If this statement relates to them, they should respond according to the instructions (for example, step forward or back).
7. Once all of the statements have been called out and the participants have now dispersed on opposite sides of the line, tell them to remain where they are and look at their position in the room or space in relation to the positions of the other participants.
8. Ask participants to pick someone from an opposite position (from the opposite side of the line dividing them) with whom they can process the exercise.
9. Tell participants to reflect on and discuss with their partners:
  - How they felt about their position.
  - How they felt about the position of others.
  - One realization that has come from this activity.
10. Once all of the pairs have finished discussing the questions, ask the participants to form a circle.

**Debrief:**

1. Lead a large group discussion to debrief the activity using the suggested questions provided below. Do not wait until another session to debrief the activity; it should be done at the same time.
  - What are your thoughts and feelings about this exercise?
  - As a whole, were you surprised by anything in the activity? Why?
  - Would your placement have been different if the exercise included questions about disability or religion?
  - Was there a time that you were told you step back that you felt like stepping forward? Why?
  - Along the same lines, can you think of ways that you find strength or confidence in the situation where you might have been “behind the privilege line.” For example, speaking a language other than French or English at home allows you to exchange with more people.
2. Thank the group for participating.
3. Ask if there are any questions or desire to follow-up on a particular issue.

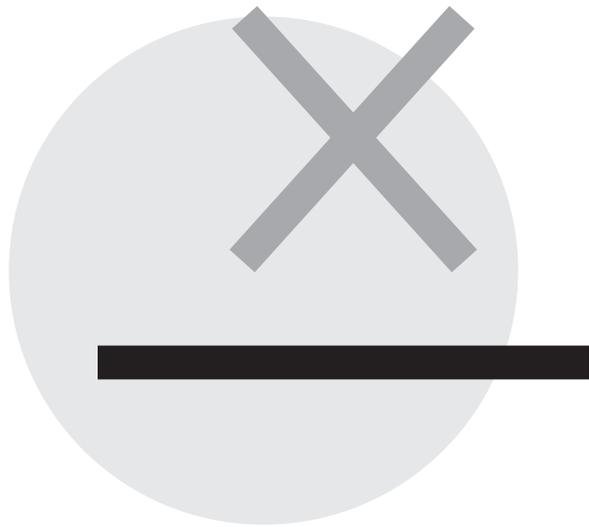
**Facilitation Tips:**

- This activity should be done only with a group that has a strong and trusting group dynamic, as otherwise it can negatively affect participants’ self-esteem.
- Remind participants that they are individuals with different identities based on where they come from, and with that, they all have the equal right and responsibility to dignity and respect for themselves and to others. It may be best to review the group agreement at this stage.
- This activity is likely to bring up topics that will need further discussion. Try to ensure that there aren’t topics that are left unaddressed.
- Be available for individual check-ins if possible.
- Be prepared to bring the level of the conversation up from individual experiences of privilege to the systemic roots of those privileges.
- The goal for this workshop is not for some participants to come out of it feeling powerless! It could be useful to have a discussion about the creative and positive ways we can resist these kinds of oppression, whether we are privileged or not.

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## Reference Sheet: Pendulum statements<sup>14</sup>

- If your ancestors were forced to come to Canada, and did not come by choice, take one step back.
- If you were born in Canada, but your parents were not, take one step back.
- If you and your parents were born in Canada step forward.
- If you were ever called names because of your race, class, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- If your parents are professionals, doctors, lawyers, etc., take one step forward.
- If you ever tried to change your appearance, mannerisms, or behaviour to avoid being judged or ridiculed, take one step back.
- If you studied the culture of your ancestors in elementary school, take one step forward.
- If you only speak a language other than French and/or English at home, take one step back.
- If you were encouraged to read a lot growing up, take one step forward.
- If you ever had to skip a meal or were hungry because there was not enough money to buy food when you were growing up, take one step back.
- If you speak French and/or English at home and another language, take one step forward.
- If your parents brought you to art galleries or plays, take one step forward.
- If one of your parents is unemployed or has been laid off, not by choice, take one step back.
- If you attended a private school or summer camp, take one step forward.
- If your family has ever had to move because they could not afford the rent, take one step back.
- If you were ever discouraged from participating in a sports or social club because of your sex/gender, age, or ethnicity, take one step back.
- If you were ever encouraged to attend a college by your parents, take one step forward.
- If your parents have taken you on a vacation outside of the province or country, take one step forward.
- If one of your parents did not complete high school, take one step back.
- If your family owned your own house, take one step forward.
- If you saw members of your race, ethnic group, gender, or sexual orientation were portrayed on television in degrading roles, take one step back.
- If you were ever accused of cheating or lying because of your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- If you had to rely primarily on public transportation, take one step back.
- If you were ever stopped or questioned by the police because of your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- If you were ever afraid of violence because of your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- If you were generally able to avoid places that were dangerous, take one step forward.
- If you ever felt uncomfortable about a joke related to your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- If your parents told you that you could be anything you wanted to be, take one step forward.



# Naming VIOLENCE

## LEGEND

---



Large Group



Small Group



Pairs



Individual  
Reflection



Game



Arts Based



Discussion



Role Playing



Media

## FORMAT

## TECHNIQUE

Activity	 Large group	 Small groups	 Pairs	 Individual reflection	 Game	 Arts-based	 Discussion	 Role Play	 Media
VIOLENCE									
What Violence Is	●	●		●			●		
Human Rights in our Lives	●		●				●		

# Naming VIOLENCE



“

Emotional, psychological and financial violence are hard to prove, but they are real.

– SERVICE PROVIDER

In our community there are 3 generations that attended residential school and the legacy left behind lives in out of control drinking, drugs and unresolved issues of grief. This makes for a perfect setting for violence of every kind.

– COMMUNITY PARTNER, CREE COMMUNITY, NORTHERN QUEBEC.

”

These activities are designed to encourage participants to **examine and name violence and abuse**, to connect their personal experiences with others in the group, as well as the greater society. Discussions around intimate partner violence are often framed as ‘men as perpetrators’ and ‘women as victims’ of violence. These activities address the many forms and directions that violence can take on

When introducing triggering topics such as violence and abuse, it can be useful to broaden the conversation by discussing forms of discrimination at the community or larger societal level. Supporting participants by allowing them to talk about violence in their everyday lives is an important step to coping with intense feelings of **shame and stigma**. When experiences of violence and trauma are brought up, you may need to refer to external resources. Try to leave unstructured time during your meetings, so that you can follow-up with program participants and share the resources that you have on hand.

Violence is pervasive in society; it is normalized in our lives so that we may not recognize it. Given the pervasiveness of violence in our world today, people can internalize this and be unable to recognize violence and their rights as a result. Violence happens to people from all different backgrounds regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, education, geographic location, age or status, etc. Recognizing and naming violence and individuals rights in relationships is a necessary step towards preventing and ending violence.<sup>15</sup>

When we discuss violence, it is also important to understand the **legal protections** that are in place to keep us safe, including in both human rights and criminal law. It is a source of empowerment to know what our rights are, and where they come from, such that we may stand up for them. While legal frameworks are far from perfect and have limitations, they provide a strong foundation for conversations with young women about their legal right to be safe from violence, and to understand some of the ways they can uphold this.

<sup>15</sup> Girls Action Foundation. (2012). *Girls Action on Violence Prevention*.

**Internalized violence** is when survivors blame themselves and feel that they deserve the violence done to them. This is directly linked to depression, anxiety, shame, fear and decreased self-confidence, as well as potentially harmful coping strategies like eating disorders, self-harm, drug and alcohol abuse.

**Relational violence** is a pattern of abusive and coercive behaviour used to maintain power and control over any form of intimate partner, present or former. This may include relationships such as marriage, separation, divorce, common-law marriage, living together, dating relationships and it can be between people of any gender, and includes monogamous and polyamorous relationships. Relational violence is often multiple and overlapping and can take many forms.<sup>16</sup>

**Systemic violence** can be policies, programs and practices that permit and promote discrimination based on race, gender, sexuality, age, or socioeconomic status.<sup>17</sup>

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In Canada, we are protected from many forms of discrimination (what are called “protected grounds”) by the government or government-bodies under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. We also have human rights codes in place to protect us from discrimination from actors such as employers, landlords, and shopkeepers. The specific provisions of a human rights code varies by province (though there is also a federal human rights code that binds federally regulated bodies, like airlines).<sup>18</sup>

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**Physical Abuse:** Any intentional use of physical force with the intent to cause fear or injury, like hitting, shoving, biting, strangling, kicking or using a weapon.

**Stalking:** Being repeatedly watched, followed or harassed.

**Sexual Abuse:** Any action that impacts a person’s ability to control their sexual activity or the circumstances in which sexual activity occurs, including restricting access to birth control or condoms.

**Digital Abuse:** The use of technology such as texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner. Often this behaviour is a form of verbal or emotional abuse perpetrated through technology.

**Emotional Abuse / Verbal Abuse:** Non-physical behaviours such as threats, insults, constant monitoring or “checking in,” excessive texting, humiliation, intimidation or isolation.

**Financial Abuse:** Using money or access to accounts to exert power and control over a partner.

---

**Emotional or financial abuse** can be very difficult to prove in court and often have to escalate to a very high level to be considered illegal and protected under the *Criminal Code*. Some provinces do have provisions in place that aim to protect women against emotional and financial abuse. It is important to understand the context of your specific province or territory when addressing this form of abuse.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Krebs, C., Breiding, M., Browne, A., & Warner, T. (2011). The Association Between Different Types of Intimate Partner Violence Experienced by Women. *Journal of Family Violence*, 26(6), 487-500.

<sup>17</sup> Girls Action Foundation. (2012). *Girls Action on Violence Prevention*.

<sup>18</sup> West Coast LEAF. (2015). *No Means No Curriculum*.

<sup>19</sup> West Coast LEAF. (2015). *No Means No Curriculum*.

# What violence is<sup>20</sup>

## Summary:

In this activity participants will identify and explore concepts of violence, power, control and equality.

## Materials:

Flip chart, Markers, Pad of paper, Pencils/pens, Post-its, *What Violence Is... Definitions: Reference Sheet*, *Understanding Violence: Reference Sheet*

## Activity Breakdown:

### Preparation:

1. Make copies of the questionnaire entitled *Understanding Violence: Reference Sheet*
2. Create a flipchart version of the questions on the *Understanding Violence: Reference Sheet*.
3. Create a flipchart version of the *What Violence Is... Definitions: Reference Sheet*.
4. Create a flip chart with two columns, one titled "Equality," and the other titled "Power and Control."

### Workshop:

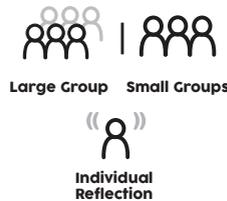
#### Part 1:

1. Post the flip chart version of the questions from *Understanding Violence: Reference Sheet* on the wall.
2. Divide participants into small groups and hand out one copy of the *Understanding Violence: Reference Sheet* and *What Violence Is... Definitions: Reference Sheet* to each small group.
3. Ask participants to reflect on the questions individually and with the members of their group.
4. Ask each small group to write down their responses on the flip chart paper provided to them.
5. Tell them to post their group's responses on the wall.
6. Explain to them that they can use the reference materials to help them answer the questions.

#### Part 2:

1. Post the flip chart paper with "Equality" and "Power and Control" columns on the wall.
2. Ask the group to call out words that describe each of these categories, using the responses they discussed in Part 1.
3. Ask participants to reflect on how "Equality" and "Power and Control" are portrayed in their communities. Ask if they want to call out any new words.
4. Write these words on meta-cards or Post-it's and put them in the appropriate column. You can use two different colours of meta-cards to further highlight the differences.

### Format:



### Technique:



Discussion

<sup>20</sup> Adapted from: The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence. (2000, March). *Making the Peace: An Approach to Preventing Relationship Violence Among Youth*, p.42-47.

5. When you have a complete list for each category, ask the group if there is anything missing or anything in the wrong place. Ask participants to come up to add or redirect words they think are necessary.
6. Also, as the facilitator, if you think there are words still unidentified by the participants, suggest these, and ask where they think they should go and why.
7. On a separate flip chart paper, write down the word and ask the group to come up with a definition, using the information they provided.

---

**Prompts for Critical Reflection:**

- What is violence usually considered to be? For example, is it always visible and physical?
- What else could it include?
- Can anyone be violent? For example, is it specific to gender, age, race, ethnicity... or not?
- Who else shares our definition of peace? For example, does the United Nations, do your parent(s), would your classmates? Why or why not?
- Is there anything that you disagreed with on the *What Violence Is... Definitions: Reference Sheet*? Was there something that you think is not true? Are there examples on the handout that are very true? Is there anything you would add?

**Debrief:**

- In a circle, ask each participant for a final thought about one idea on how they can create more of what we have defined as "Equality"?
- Thank the group for sharing their responses.
- Ask the group how they can promote peace in their class, school, and community.
- Close the discussion by asking participants if they have any questions or remaining thoughts.

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**Facilitation Tips:**

NOTE: When having discussions about violence, it is often difficult to separate one's own experiences from the conceptual exercise. You want to make sure that the violence participants' face does not go unnoticed. Plan for the event that someone in your group would like to talk further about something they are living or something they have witnessed. This can be done with a counsellor in the organization you work with, or by having a counsellor present.

- If you find participants are hesitant to write, remind them that they don't have to be perfect writers for this exercise, the point is more about the ideas that come out of it.
- Be sensitive to the fact that there are other ways to strengthen analytical skills. Be prepared with alternatives to writing: an exercise where one person writes while others reflect, a collective mapping exercise, a drawing that can be explained verbally.
- Encourage participants to think of their realities when answering questions like: "What is your understanding of...?"
- Encourage participants to add to the questionnaire their own words related to violence or violence prevention.
- You may find it helpful for participants to share their ideas of rights before presenting additional tools and information.

**Adaptability:**

- You can choose to answer the questions from the *Understanding Violence: Reference Sheet* as a large group discussion.
- If you have concerns around safety and/or readiness of the group then you can adapt the activity to focus on managing responses to violence (e.g. mental illness) rather than on experiences of violence.

---

## Reference Sheet: Understanding violence

1. What is your understanding of the term “power”?
2. What is your understanding of the term “control”?
3. What is your understanding of the term “violence”?
4. What is your understanding of the term “non-violence”?
5. What is your understanding of the term “equality”?

---

## Reference Sheet: What violence is... Definitions<sup>21</sup>

There are many types of abuse and they are all difficult to experience. This Reference Sheet explores the different ways abuse can occur so you can better identify them. Remember, each type of abuse is serious and no one deserves to experience any form of it.

**Physical Abuse:** Any intentional use of physical force with the intent to cause fear or injury, like hitting, shoving, biting, strangling, kicking or using a weapon.

**Sexual Abuse:** Any action that impacts a person’s ability to control their sexual activity or the circumstances in which sexual activity occurs, including restricting access to birth control or condoms.

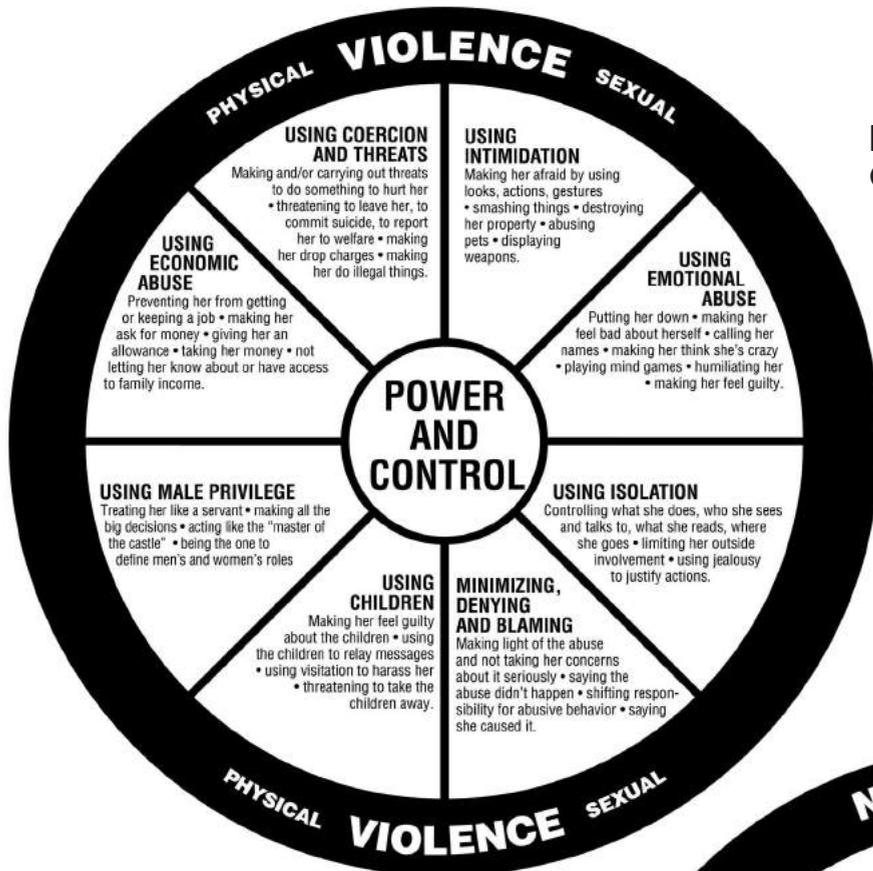
**Digital Abuse:** The use of technology such as texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner. Often this behaviour is a form of verbal or emotional abuse perpetrated through technology.

**Stalking:** Being repeatedly watched, followed or harassed.

**Emotional Abuse / Verbal Abuse:** Non-physical behaviours such as threats, insults, constant monitoring or “checking in,” excessive texting, humiliation, intimidation or isolation.

**Financial Abuse:** Using money or access to accounts to exert power and control over a partner.

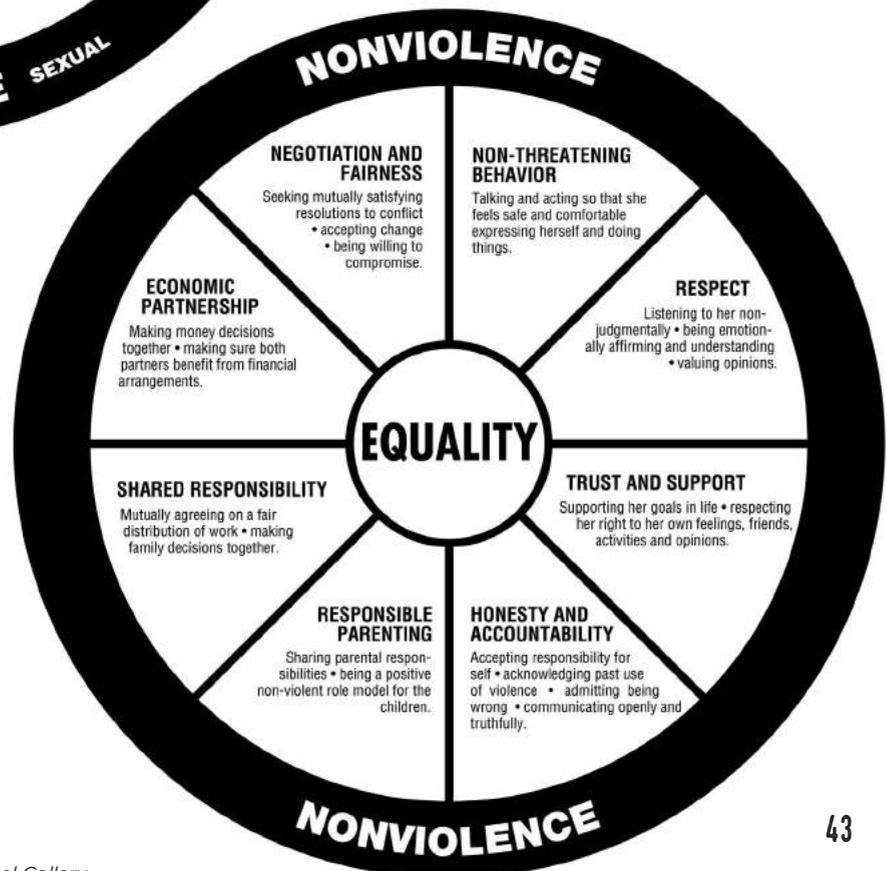
# Reference Sheet: Power & Equality Wheels



Power and Control Wheel<sup>22</sup>

NAMING VIOLENCE

Equality Wheel



<sup>22</sup> Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs. (n.d.). *Wheel Gallery*.

---

# Three Questions: Talking About Human Rights In Our Lives<sup>23</sup>

## Summary:

---

In this activity participants will discuss and reflect on the ways that human dignity is denied and upheld.

### Format:



Large Group

Pairs

### Technique:



Discussion

## Materials:

---

Flip chart paper, Markers, Masking Tape, Pens

## Activity Breakdown:

---

### Preparation:

1. Be familiar with concepts like human dignity and human dignity violations.
2. Write the three questions on flip chart paper and hang it in a place that is visible to the group.

Questions could include:

- Name a time when your human dignity was violated.
- Name a time when you denied someone else his/her human dignity.
- Name a time when your human dignity was upheld, or you upheld the human dignity of someone else.

### Workshop:

1. Ask participants to find a partner, preferably someone they know. If there are an odd number of participants, form a group of three.
2. Ask participants to consider the three questions on the flip chart and then share their answers with their partners.
3. After everyone has had a chance to share with their partners, bring the large group back together in a circle.
4. Ask each person to introduce themselves and then share answers to one of the questions with the large group.
5. Offer the option for participants to pass.
6. For groups with more time, you may want to go around the circle three times, focusing on a different question each time.

7. When people have finished, process the activity with the large group, by asking:
  - What did you notice during this exercise?
  - Did anything surprise you?
  - Are there particular groups of people whose human dignity are denied or upheld more than others? Why do you think this is?
  - What would make it possible to better protect human dignity in your life and in the lives of others?
8. After the group has discussed these questions, review the following questions:
  - How do we violate or uphold other people's human dignity?
  - How is our relative power or privilege (race, class, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, age, educational level, disability, etc.) related to our denial or affirmation of human dignity?
9. Are human rights ethically and morally based in upholding each person's human dignity?

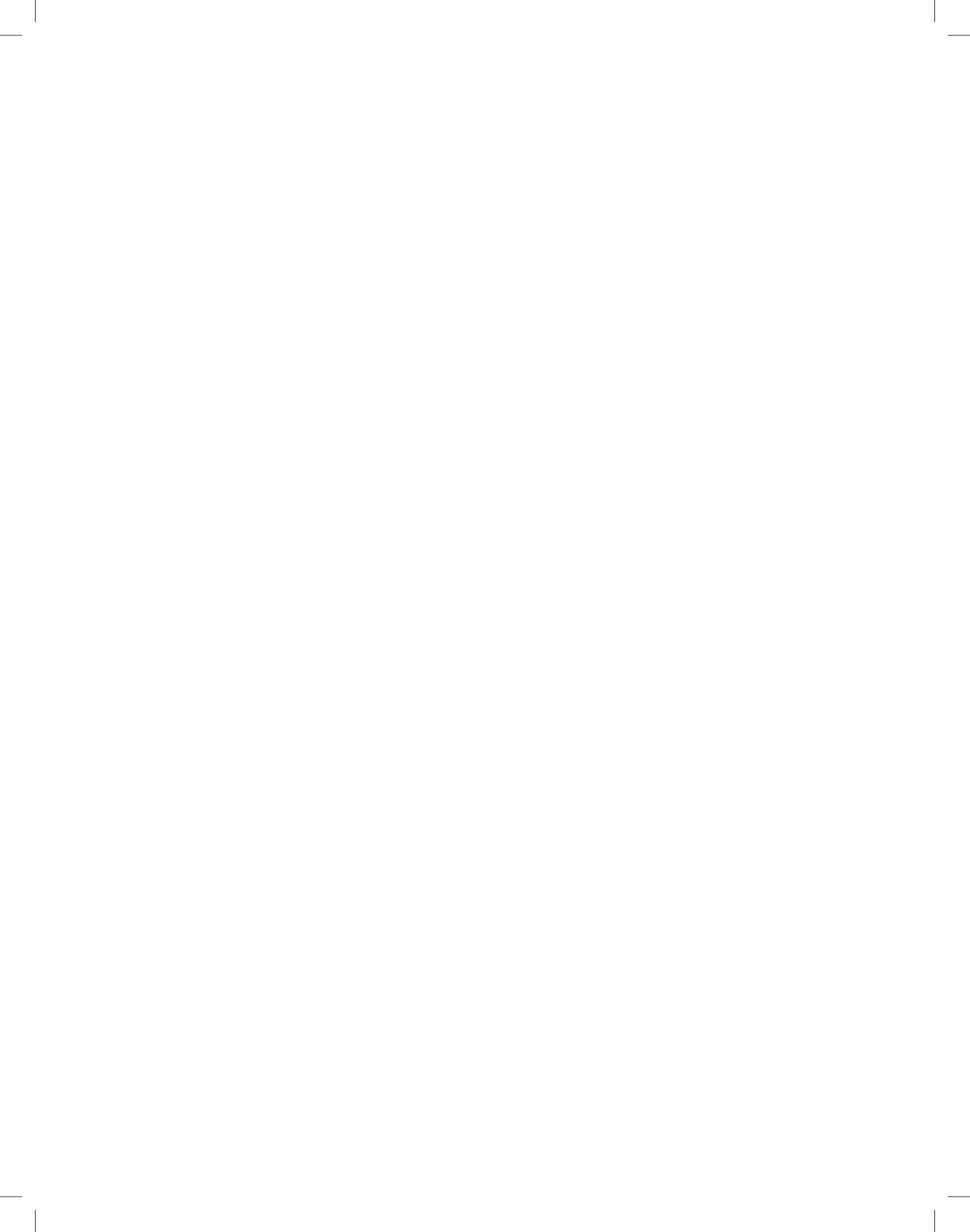
Debrief:

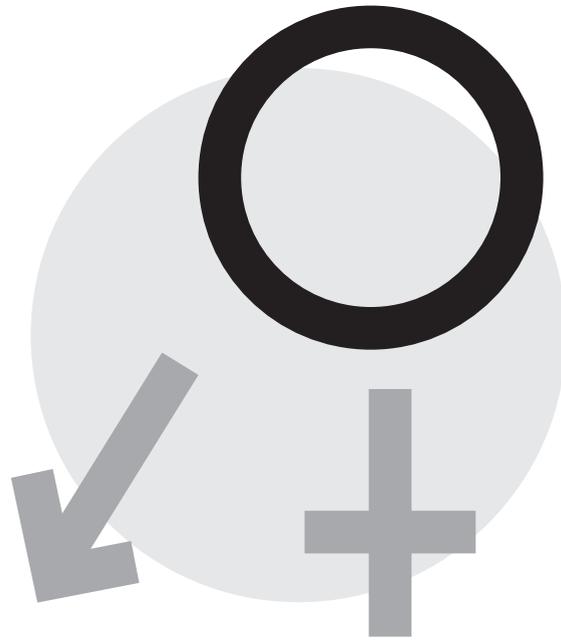
- Ask the group if they want to spend more time on any issue or topic raised in the workshop.
- Do they have lingering questions?
- Share resources related to human dignity. Is there any additional information that the group would like?
- Is the group motivated to take action against human dignity violations? Why? How do they want to take action?

.....

**Facilitation Tips:**

- Talking about human rights violations may be challenging for participants, especially in a climate without trust. This activity is only to be done with a group that is VERY well formed and has a huge amount of trust.
- To set a tone of mutual trust and respect before this activity you can conduct an icebreaker activity, emphasizing ground rules before the exercise, and giving participants the option to pass.
- The facilitator can begin with an introduction exercise that explores the concept of human dignity. For example, what images or words would participants use to describe dignity or human dignity?
- The facilitator needs to have a strong idea of what human dignity means, as well as what a human dignity violation is. It is a good idea to have examples prepared.
- Stress the importance of confidentiality.
- Encourage participants to draw from all their experiences, including "small" incidents. What matters is not the perceived gravity of a violation, but the way it made a participant feel.





# Questioning GENDER

## LEGEND

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Large Group



Small Group



Pairs



Individual  
Reflection



Game



Arts Based



Discussion



Role Playing



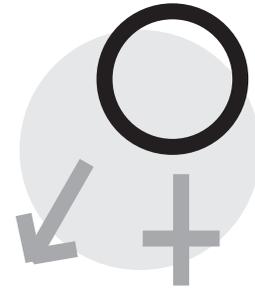
Media

## FORMAT

## TECHNIQUE

Activity	 Large group	 Small groups	 Pairs	 Individual reflection	 Game	 Arts-based	 Discussion	 Role Play	 Media
<b>GENDER</b>									
<b>Genderbread Person</b>	●	●				●	●		
<b>Gender Stereotyping</b>	●	●					●	●	●
<b>What We Hear, what We Think</b>	●						●		●
<b>Man/Woman Box</b>	●						●		●

# Questioning GENDER



“

We wanted to ensure that everyone felt empowered to think critically about their gender and experiences.

– COMMUNITY PARTNER

Being ‘at risk’ requires young women’s intersecting realities to be explored and addressed to increase personal agency so we can move forward as a group, tapping into each member’s power to collectively respond to violence.

– COMMUNITY PARTNER

”

These activities are designed to open up discussions of **identity politics** and explore values, attitudes and beliefs around sex and gender. They introduce the idea of gender as a spectrum and begin to break down the gender binary and its surrounding expectations. Participants will deconstruct and build upon their own self-perceptions, as well as work to challenge limiting roles and stereotypes.

**Popular media** is saturated with **gender stereotypes**. Portrayals of young women in the media and the public sphere are often very different from real life. It is important to analyze these societal messages around gender to deconstruct stereotypes but also to reinforce broader definitions of gender identity.

People often encounter challenges to their positive self-perceptions, self-esteem, and body-image from the media, friends, family, and other social environments because of their **gender presentation**, sexuality, race and other signifiers of difference.

Before beginning these activities, we recommend having a **pronoun check-in**, where participants are given the option to share their preferred gender pronouns (e.g. She, He, They or Ze). This is vital for establishing a safe(r) space, where different expressions of gender are respected and valued.

---

# The Genderbread Person<sup>24</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will reflect and discuss identity along continuums of sex, gender and sexuality.

### Format:



Large Group | Small Groups

### Technique:



Discussion | Arts-based

## Materials:

---

Paper, markers (anything to write with), *Genderbread Person: Reference Sheet*

## Activity Breakdown:

---

### Preparation:

- Prepare discussion questions on a flip chart
- Print out copies of the *Genderbread Person: Reference Sheet*

### Workshop:

1. In small groups (or individually, in pairs) invite participants to reflect on and share stories in response to the following questions:
  - What is your earliest memory of gender?
  - When did you know / find out?
  - How do you know what gender you are?
2. Write the words “Sex”, “Sexual orientation,” and “Gender” onto flip chart papers.
3. Invite the participants as a group to brainstorm:
  - What are some words we use to talk about gender? (e.g. binary: masculine, feminine, boy, girl, man, woman; fluid: transgender, genderqueer, androgynous, gender non-conforming)
  - What are some words we use to talk about assigned sex? (e.g. anatomy, genitals, boy, girl, intersex).
  - What are some words we use to talk about sexual orientation? (e.g. queer, straight, bisexual, gay, lesbian etc.)
  - Keep track of the words/themes that are generated by the group on each flip chart paper. Try to establish at least a vague consensus on a definition for each of the three categories.
4. Using the flip chart, draw an outline of the Genderbread Person. Explain that people can identify themselves along continuums of sex, gender, and sexuality. As you work through the different terms, reading out their definitions ask the group where they would place “sex, orientation, identity and expression” on the genderbread person’s body.

**Sex** refers to hormones, chromosomes, genitals—biological anatomy—it is a classification that one is assigned at birth based upon one’s anatomy (e.g. when a doctor says “it’s a boy/girl!” in reference to genitals). A person’s assigned sex may or may not be the same as their present anatomical sex which may or may not be the same as their gender identity.

**Gender Identity** refers to how an individual thinks about them self (e.g. woman, man, genderqueer, gender neutral, etc.).

**Gender Expression or presentation** refers to how an individual expresses their gender in terms of dress and/or behaviours that can be characterized in ways including (but not limited to) feminine, masculine, gender queer.

**Sexual Orientation** refers to attraction, physical/romantic. In the genderbread person sexual orientation is located at the heart although you can feel it in many different parts of your body!

5. Hand out the Genderbread Person: Reference Sheet. Emphasize that sex, gender and sexual orientation are different and not necessarily connected: **sex does not equal gender**. It is important to note if a person chooses to identify with a term, it is theirs to claim, regardless of whether they fit into the definitions given in this workshop.
6. Ask the group:
  - How many people have thought of sex and gender as different elements of a person before?
  - How many people grew up thinking about gender in this way?

Remind the group that gender exists on a spectrum. And that people can express their gender in lots of different ways (i.e. if there are 20 people in the room, we would say that there are actually 20 different genders since we’re all expressing and understanding gender in a unique way).

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## Reference Sheet: Genderbread Person<sup>25</sup>

**Each of these parts are like different ingredients of your personal genderbread recipe. Everyone will have a different mix, but everyone is just as whole.**

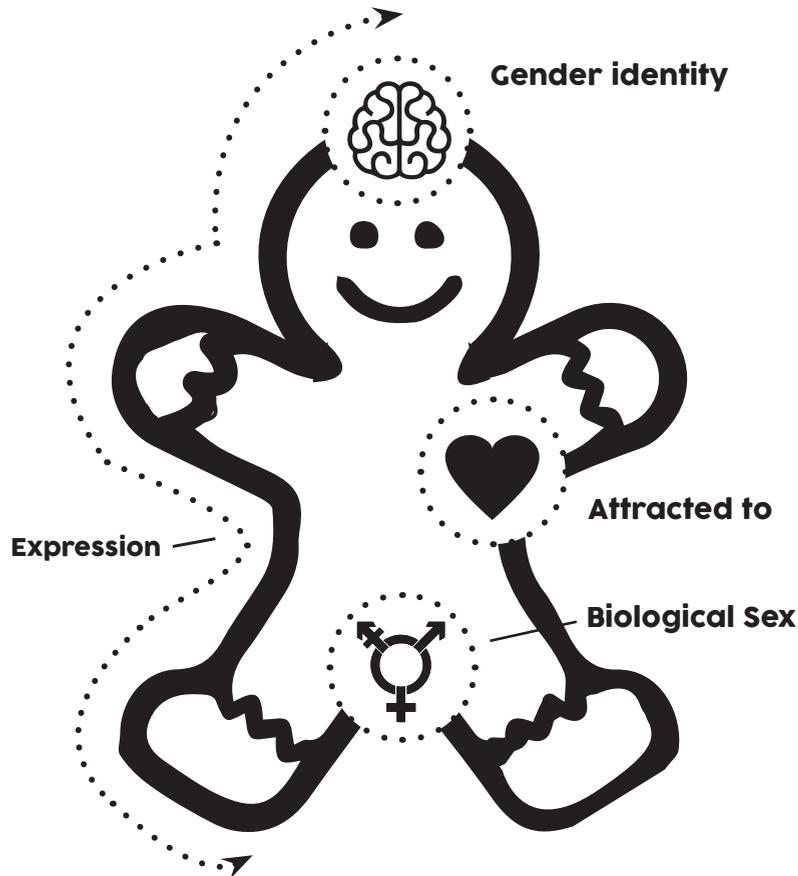
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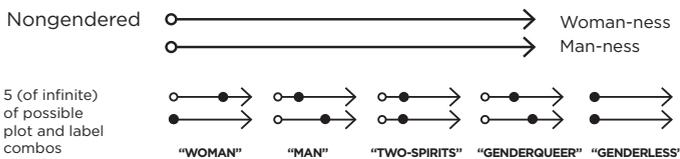
**Sexual Orientation** refers to attraction, physical/romantic. In the genderbread person sexual orientation is located at the heart although you can feel it in many different parts of your body!

# The Genderbread Person 2.0

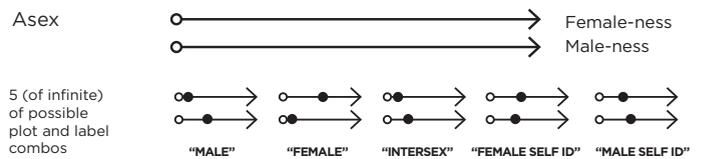


Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*, gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases, it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This little tasty guide is meant to be an appetizer for understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more.

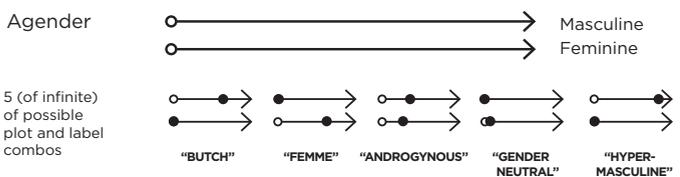
## Gender identity



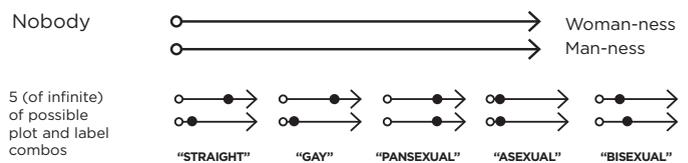
## Biological Sex



## Gender Expression



## Attracted to



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# Gender Stereotyping<sup>26</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will present a role-play based on chosen scenarios and have a discussion in relation to the media and gender stereotypes.

## Materials:

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Flip chart, Markers, *Gender Stereotyping: Reference Sheet*, Images of people in action

## Activity Breakdown:

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### Preparation:

1. This activity is divided into 3 parts.
2. Prepare the flip charts.
3. For Part 3, have the images ready to show to the class.

### Workshop:

#### Part 1: Prepare the Role-Play

1. Divide participants into small groups.
2. Provide each group with one of the following scenarios to role-play.
  - A television or magazine advertisement
  - A YouTube video, GIF or meme
  - A parent handling their child's first intimate relationship
  - A couple going to the movies, a performance or a sports game
3. Explain that they will create a role-play for the scenario provided and present it to their small group.
4. Ask them to prepare a role-play of a maximum of five minutes in length.

#### Part 2: Present the Role-Play

1. Ask a group to volunteer to be the first to present.
2. Ask the groups to start by presenting the title of their role-play, as well as introducing each group member by name before beginning.
3. Following each role-play, take a few minutes to ask participants to comment on what they have seen or to ask questions to the small group.

#### Part 3: Images, Media and Gender Stereotyping

1. Ask the small groups to reconvene in a u-shape or horseshoe-shape for a large group discussion.
2. At the front of the room, place the flip charts with the titles "How Men Act" and "How Women Act."
3. Begin to show the images, one at a time. Do not provide any explanations of the images.
4. Ask the participants to identify how men and women are portrayed in the images.

### Format:



Large Group

### Technique:



Discussion Role-Play



Media

5. Record their answers on the flip chart paper, under the appropriate title: **“How Men Act”** or **“How Women Act.”** Possible responses for flip charts could be: How Men Act (macho, brave, powerful, smart, strong, mean, don’t cry); How Women Act (sweet, polite, smart, neat, sexy, needy, quite).
6. Ask participants to think back to their role-play. Can they link their characters’ behaviour to what they have identified under each title as specific to “men” or to “women”? Add any new responses participants have to the appropriate title.
7. Lead a large group discussion about “manly” or “womanly” behaviour. Use the suggested questions below:
  - Are these categories completely true? Can you think of ways that people don’t fit into these stereotypes?
  - Where do we learn these gender roles? (Discussion leads: Who teaches us stereotypes? People on TV/Radio/Internet/school?)
  - What examples can you share? (e.g. TV, movie, YouTube video etc.)
  - Where do women learn these messages? (Discussion leads: mothers/aunts? How do other people influence our learning about gender?)
  - When people don’t fit within these gender stereotypes, what names/put-downs are directed at them?
  - How do these names or put-downs reinforce the stereotypes?
  - How does it feel when you are called any of these names?
  - What do you think the person using these names or put-downs is feeling?
  - How do stereotypes limit us?

#### Part 4: Brainstorm

1. Ask the group what they can do to break stereotypes and change stereotypes that are limiting.
2. Explore scenarios that participants encounter regarding stereotypes at home, school, when they engage with media.
3. Explore interactions with friends, family members, teachers, etc.
4. Ask participants to think about how they can:
  - Make different choices in their own lives that can change and raise awareness about stereotypes and influence others to do the same. Refer back to the scenarios you just explored if needed.
  - Influence broader society, like taking action in the school, in the community, and governments. Explore options for engaging and talking with the media or organizing something at school.

#### Debrief:

- How did this activity make participants feel?
- Were there any parts of this activity that participants would like to discuss more?
- Having thought about gender stereotypes, what are the next steps?
- How do participants think they can use this type of knowledge?
- How do these names or put-downs reinforce the stereotypes?
- How does it feel when you are called any of these names?
- What do you think the person using these names or put-downs is feeling?
- How do stereotypes limit us?

**Facilitation Tips:**

- Make sure each participant understands what it is to role-play. You can tell them that it is a skit or small play about the scenario/theme provided to them.
- This exercise may lead to some participants feeling defensive. It is important to recognize that stereotypes are never true for everyone that they are applied to.
- Take mental note of themes and issues that arise during the role-play. These emergent themes may direct the content of future workshops.
- Throughout this workshop, it is important to keep in mind the way that gender interacts with race, class, ability, sexual orientation, and many other factors, and to bring that up throughout the discussion.

---

**Adaptability:**

This activity can also work as an icebreaker. It is an interactive way to approach a conversation on gender stereotyping.

---

# Reference Sheet: Gender Stereotyping<sup>27</sup>

## Who We Are

Human beings experience a full range of emotions.

## Stereotypes: Who We Are Told to Be

A **stereotype** is an exaggerated or distorted belief about members of a particular group. Certain characteristics are emphasized, which can take over individual strength and difference. This belief can also take away individuals interests, skills and personal agency. Stereotypes can be harmful because they limit our potential, can be unrealistic, and lead to vulnerability through an over reliance on social expectations for self-worth. Stereotypes are not wrong per se, but they can take away from inner strength and uniqueness.

## The Negative Effects of Stereotypes

The concepts of “acting like a man” or being “womanly” relates to attitudes, as well as physical expectations, many of which are unrealistic. When we unconsciously try to live up to these standards, it can be physically and emotionally harmful.

For instance, a self-identified male with a very slight build who wants to be muscular is fighting against himself if he tries to change his physique to match that of the stereotypical male.

Another example is a self-identified woman who is smart and opinionated may be told to be quiet or speak less because it is not “womanly.” She may then focus on her looks as a way to conform to what images in magazines say she should look like.

Stereotypes are damaging because they limit a person’s potential. For example, gender stereotypes about self-identified women say that they should look “feminine,” have long hair, shave their legs etc. This can limit how people choose to express their gender.

Believing in stereotypes can influence the way we act. Stereotypes have the potential to lead to violence when someone wants to “correct” a stereotype that is being broken, or when people feel that they have to live up to certain expectations. For example is someone yells mean things at a self-identified woman because she has short hair, chooses not to wear make-up, and is wearing pants and work boots.

Stereotypes are also physical: images of people in magazines, in movies, and on TV, etc. show a “perfect” face, the “perfect” body or the “ideal” build. These images tend to influence the way individuals feel about themselves. Instead of valuing the self and appreciating individual characteristics, the value is placed on wanting to appear or act like someone else.

## What Does this Have to Do with Violence?

Disliking one’s self can become a subtle form of violence, as actions and beliefs become negative reinforcements and perpetuate the idea of not being good enough, pretty enough, thin enough, etc. Expectations are created that others should also fit into these stereotypes, and we try to fit our friends into these boxes. This can cause lots of problems in relationships.

---

# What we hear, what we think: Looking at Messaging in Pop Music<sup>28</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will collectively discuss messages in songs or videos about gender or other aspects of identity.

### Format:



Large Group

### Technique:



Discussion



Media

## Materials:

---

Music videos and/or songs ready to be listened to, Print-outs of song lyrics for each participant

## Activity Breakdown:

---

### Preparation:

1. Ask the participants before the workshop what music they listen to. This can help you choose which videos and songs to prepare.
2. Prepare videos and songs to show during the workshop.
3. Choose one or two songs with “negative” images of women or other groups in society, and one or two songs with “positive” images. Many songs contain both.
4. It is also helpful to prepare discussion questions prior to the workshop.

### Workshop:

1. Begin by making it clear that it is OK to listen to any music genre or to watch any music video of their choice.
2. Explain that the purpose of the activity is to take the opportunity to listen more closely to the messages that we are receiving.
3. Show the first music video or play the first song.
4. Distribute sheets with the lyrics of the song.
5. Have participants read the lyrics aloud to the group. Each participant can read one or two lines, or pass if they do not want to read.
6. Ask participants to say if any words are shocking to them. Ask why.
7. Facilitate a discussion on the messages communicated in this song.
  - Discussion questions can include:
    - What is the song about?
    - What are the images or messages that are being communicated by the song or music video about gender and other aspects of identity?
    - Is there respect between the people portrayed? Is the respect one-sided or is it give and take?
    - If the lyrics suggest violent solutions to problems, why does it seem to be OK within the song?
    - Would you like to be the person portrayed in the song? Why or why not?
    - Ask what is the possible impact if there are harmful words?

- Are there any songs that make you feel great? That make you feel good about yourself, or that make you want to do your best?
- Repeat by showing the remaining videos or laying the remaining songs.
- End with a video or song with positive images of women.

Debrief:

Questions to ask the group:

- How did this workshop make you feel?
- Is there anything you would like to know more about?
- Did you learn anything new?
- Do you have questions?

---

**Facilitation tips:**

- Try taking a variety of songs with different messages that are generated from the participants in the group. Messages that can be interpreted as positive and negative and may be both at the same time. Possible issues raised could be dating, relationships, inequalities in society, racism, sexism and poverty.
- It is important to consider how different aspects of identity portrayed in the music videos intersect and have the ability to create compounded challenges.
- You may want to introduce new artists to the participants who have strong, positive messages.
- Acknowledge that we may like the beat or sound of some songs, even when the lyrics or visual messages are harmful.
- Acknowledge that some songs are very complex and may send mixed messages.

---

# Woman/Man Box<sup>29</sup>

## Summary:

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In this group activity participants will break down gender stereotypes, expectations and power imbalances.

## Format:



Large Group

## Technique:



Arts-based Discussion



Media

## Materials:

---

Chart paper, Markers, Popular magazine images

## Activity Breakdown:

---

1. Hand out popular magazine images related to gender, invite the participants to look through the magazines for diverse gender expressions (masculine, feminine, genderqueer, androgynous). Give participants a few minutes to look over each one. Ask what sorts of gender expressions they see represented most frequently in popular magazines, what gender expressions are not represented?
2. On a piece of chart paper, write “womanbox” at the top and a large box beneath, leaving enough space for words to be written around it. Ask the group to name characteristics of what an “ideal woman” according to societal expectations must have in relation to the magazine images. Participants might name words such as caring, quiet, attracted to men, sexy, skinny, young, flawless, feminine etc. Write the words inside the box.
3. Explain that people might expect us to behave and act in certain ways depending on what our bodies look like and which “box” they assume we should fit into. Ask “What emotional and physical things can happen to people who step out of the “womanbox”? Those consequences could be: bad reputation, catcalls/whistles, sexual harassment, job discrimination, aggression, insecurity/ low self-esteem, eating disorders, depression, physical and/or mental strain, scared to be yourself, lack of trust.
4. Explain that people who step out of the “womanbox” often get called names to push them back into the box, to make them act the way society says “good women” should act. Ask the group what are some of the names people get called if they step out of the “woman box”? Write answers around the woman-box: e.g. promiscuous, ugly, dirty, lesbian, fat, butch, etc.
5. Do the same for the “manbox”—record words for an “ideal man” according to societal expectations e.g. silent, wage earner, masculine, attracted to women, tough, big, rich, strong, and athletic. Ask the group to think of words about people whose gender expressions fall outside of the “manbox” e.g. gay, wimp, nerd, weak, and pussy.
6. Ask the group, “When people who fall outside of the “manbox” hear these names, what are they being told about gay men? How does the fear of being labelled like that keep people in the box?”

7. What happens to people physically and emotionally? How do folks get treated physically to make sure they act like “ideal men”? Make note of the physical and emotional consequences of not fitting into this box. Write answers around the man-box. These consequences could be: fights, getting beat up, bullying, ignored/exclusion, shunned, ostracized, forced to play sports, sexualized abuse, harassment.
8. Ask the group, “Who and what do you think influences people to fit into the limited binaries of the “woman/man box”? Write answers underneath both boxes which could include: parents, friends, lovers, institutions, media, coaches, teachers, grandparents.
9. Notice how the media represents and maintains gender stereotypes and roles that a lot of the names about the “ideal woman” have to do with them being or not being sexual, and the names given to people who step out of the “manbox” relate to them being “too feminine.” Notice that a lot of the names applied to folks who fall out of the ideal “woman and man box” are homophobic, and homophobia is closely related to sexism. Explain that those ideas create an imbalance that is often called “gender oppression.” It affects a range of people and is experienced differently according to their gender. As we live in a society where misogyny (the devaluation of women and the feminine) is rampant stereotypically male traits are valued over female traits. Male identified folks can experience privilege or power associated with their gender, while female identified folks can experience loss of power or oppression associated with theirs.

Debrief:

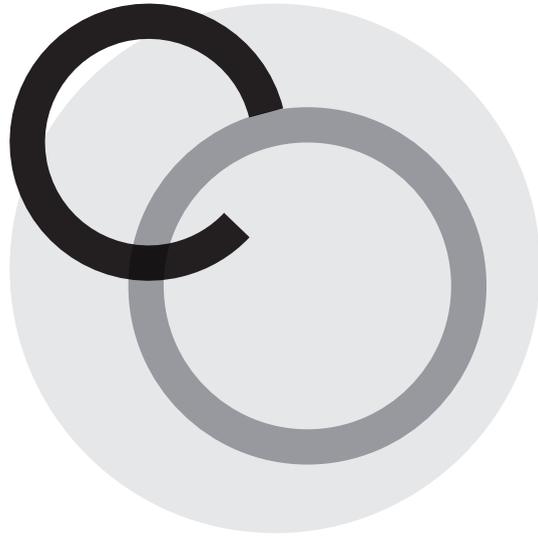
- Popular representations of men and women are often white, thin, able-bodied, middle-class, as well as straight and traditionally masculine or feminine. Facilitate a discussion about how gendered stereotypes mentioned earlier are also tied to racism, ableism, classism etc. Ask what happens to anyone who does not fall into these categories? Possible answers could include: people outside of these categories are seen as having something wrong or difficult about them.
- Ask how can we create safer spaces where different expressions of gender are valued and appreciated, instead of being policed (e.g. having pronoun check-ins)?

.....

**Facilitation tips:**

- We have found it helpful to frame gender as a spectrum (see Genderbread activity) \*before\* introducing discussions about gender stereotypes, so that the group is aware that there are more than two options—the purpose of using the two gender boxes is to highlight the options/pressures we are presented by society at large.





# Exploring RELATIONSHIPS

## LEGEND

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Large Group



Small Group



Pairs



Individual  
Reflection



Game



Arts Based



Discussion



Role Playing



Media

# FORMAT

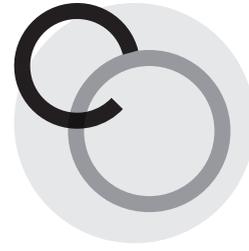
# TECHNIQUE

Activity	 Large group	 Small groups	 Pairs	 Individual reflection	 Game	 Arts-based	 Discussion	 Role Play	 Media
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## RELATIONSHIPS

<b>My rights, My Relationship</b>	●					●	●		
<b>Relating in a Relationship</b>	●		●		●		●		
<b>Expression Without Words</b>			●		●		●		
<b>Healthy/ Unhealthy Relationships</b>	●	●					●		

# Exploring RELATIONSHIPS



“

It can be hard to handle the fact that you will have to lose that partner that you love - will she/he go to jail? And then what?

- YOUNG WOMAN FROM ONTARIO

Young women still sometimes get blamed, for instance by saying “what did you say to provoke the violence?”

- SERVICE PROVIDER FROM A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Small communities create barriers because you will still have to cross paths with the person who committed the violence and there is NO anonymity.

- YOUNG WOMAN FROM ATLANTIC REGION

”

These activities explore how participants navigate **relationships with friends, family and romantic and/or sexual relationships**. These activities may bring up negative experiences within relationships that participants in the group have or are experiencing.

Participants will explore how an awareness of one's rights can lead to nourishing and positive relationships. Helping participants identify healthy and productive ways of communicating, verbally and non-verbally, is important in developing participants understanding of what constitutes a healthy relationship. Healthy relationships vary from person to person but are based on awareness of one's needs and an ability to meet those needs while pursuing friendship, dating or any other type of interpersonal relationship.

These activities provide a safe(r) environment for exploring relationship dynamics and the role and presence of conflict in the lives of the participants. As a result, the participants may begin to feel more comfortable discussing their rights in a relationship, exploring ideas around personal conflicts and healthy ways of communicating.

**Healthy relationships** all look different, but regardless of how they are structured, or who is in them, they are based on equality and respect.

**Unhealthy relationships** can be hurtful and have a negative effect on one's feelings of self-worth and self-confidence. In this type of relationship power is unequally shared between partners. Power may be used to control and dominate the other person. In an unhealthy relationship blame and denial, jealousy, control, criticism, fear and force may be present.

---

# My rights... my relationship<sup>30</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will create a “relationship pillow,” representative of rights and ideas that are important to their relationships.

### Format:



Large Group

### Technique:



Discussion Arts-based

## Materials:

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Flip chart paper, Markers, Patterns for pillows, Scissors, Glue guns, A variety of coloured fabrics, Cotton batting, String or wool, Camera for taking group photo, Thread, Fabric markers and/or paints, Buttons, Pens, Cardboard or coloured paper, *Reference Sheet: Rights in a Friendship, Romance, or Sexual Relationship*, *Reference Sheet: Criminal Harassment in the Context of Intimate Relationships (optional)*

## Activity Breakdown:

---

### Preparation:

1. Participants should be told in advance to bring in any artefacts, stories, images, etc. that represent their ideas of a healthy and meaningful friendship, romance or sexual relationship.
2. Create “meta cards” (half pieces of coloured papers) with the word “Right” written on each piece.
3. Using the rights listed in the *Rights in a Friendship, Romance, or Sexual Relationship: Reference Sheet*, write one “Right” on each meta card.
4. Stick the meta cards to a piece of flipchart paper to prepare for Part 1.
5. Write “My Rights... My Relationship” on a piece of flipchart paper.
6. Cut fabric into pillow-sized pieces. Make sure there are at least 2 pieces per participant so that they can make pillows in Part 2.

### Workshop:

#### Part 1:

1. Present the prepared “Rights” meta cards to participants on the piece of flip chart paper.
2. Explain to them that each “Right” relates to their right to have relationships, whether it is a friendship or a romantic or sexual relationship.
3. Lead a brief brainstorm with participants. Ask them: “Are there any rights that you can suggest that you don’t see on this list?”
4. Once the list is complete, write each new “Right” on a meta card. Spread all of the meta cards on a table or on the floor face up.
5. Ask participants to each select one “Right” that they feel is important to their relationships. Tell them that they will use this “Right” as the basis of the story they will create to add to their relationship pillow.
6. After each participant has made their selection, invite them to share with the group why they selected this “Right” and how it is important to the relationship that they are thinking about.

7. After each participant has spoken, ask them to stick their meta card to the flip chart entitled “My Rights... My Relationship.”
8. To close, summarize the discussion and explain to the group that there are many rights that apply to a relationship. Remind them that this list is just a representation of many of the rights, and not an exhaustive list. Ask the participants if they have any closing questions or comments.

Part 2:

1. Explain to participants why the workshop is important:
  - Creating a relationship pillow is an exploration of what is important in a friendship, romantic or sexual relationship. The finished pillows will be a reminder of what is wanted and needed in relationships. Each participant should be encouraged to put into the pillow any objects, words, stories, images, etc. that they feel serve as a reminder or definition of what it means to them.
2. Hand out two pieces of pre-cut fabric to each participant.
3. Explain to participants how to create the base of their relationship pillow:
  - Apply glue to the edges of one piece of fabric and press it against the edges of the other piece. Leave enough room at the centre (3 inches square diameter for pillow stuffing). If sewing is an option, participants can sew the two pieces of fabric together using the same diameters.
  - Stuff the pillow. Participants can include their writings or artefacts inside the pillow or they can create pockets on the outside.
  - Decorate the pillows.
4. Ask participants to design their pillows, keeping in mind the “Right” they chose in Part 1.
5. Once the pillows are complete, ask participants to exhibit their pillows against the walls or on the table.
6. Tell participants they can walk around to admire the other pillows if they would like to do so.
7. Ask participants to sit in a circle and return the meta card (with the “Right” they chose) to the bowl at the centre of the circle.
8. Invite participants to then share one thing they learned from creating their relationship pillow.

Debrief:

- Ask the group if they want to spend more time on any issue or topic raised in the workshop.
- Do they have lingering questions?
- Share resources related to human dignity. Is there any additional information that the group would like?
- Is the group motivated to take action against human dignity violations? Why? How do they want to take action?

**Facilitation Tips:**

- In part 1 of the workshop you may want to incorporate a discussion of nonviolent communication skills to get the conversation going.
- It may trigger memories of experiences that have been or are hurtful. Ensure that you have time to debrief with participants (either as a group or one on one) if this arises.
- You may want to take note of the themes that arise in the conversation in order to follow-up with another workshop that responds more directly to the needs that emerge. These themes are important in facilitating the next steps in healthy relationships and helping the group decide how they want to take action.
- You may need to bring in additional information to respond to themes or questions raised in the group.
- Hand out copies of the *Criminal Harassment in the Context of Intimate Relationships: Reference Sheet* if participants are interested in learning about the legal implications.

---

## Reference Sheet: Rights in a Friendship, Romance, or Sexual Relationship<sup>31</sup>

It is my right in a relationship to:

- Express my opinions and have them respected
- Change my mind
- Choose if and when I want to have sex or fool around
- Have my needs be as important as my partner's needs
- Not have sex if that is my choice or to use safer sex practices
- Not be emotionally, physically, or sexually abused
- Choose to stop having sex or fooling around at any time, even during
- Not take responsibility for someone else's actions and words
- Choose my friends and/or partner(s) without discrimination or pressure from others
- Fall out of love or end a friendship and/or a relationship without fear of negative repercussions and/or violence

---

# Reference Sheet: Criminal Harassment in the Context of Intimate Relationship<sup>32</sup>

Sometimes, when we break up with a partner, or when someone is interested in us but we aren't interested in them, they may engage in behaviour that could be considered **criminal harassment** (for example, stalking).

**YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM HARASSING, THREATENING AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR (BOTH OFFLINE AND ONLINE).**

---

## Legal Definition of Criminal Harassment:

### In Canada, it is a criminal offence:

- **to communicate repeatedly** with a person or someone known to them in a way that causes the person to reasonably fear for their safety or the safety of someone they know
- to engage in **threatening conduct** towards a person or their family member in a way that causes the person to reasonably fear for their safety or the safety of someone they know

### Some examples include

- to **threaten to kill or harm** someone
- to **threaten to burn, damage or destroy** someone's property
- to threaten to **kill or harm a person's pet**

### What counts as "reasonable fear for safety"?

It depends on the circumstances, but could include factors like:

- Difference in age
- Gender dynamics
- Nature & history of the relationship between the people
- Differences in size and strength

### What is "threatening conduct"?

The courts say: "A tool of intimidation designed to instil fear in the recipient." It can be...

- Verbal
- Behaviour (like chasing someone or blocking their way)
- Indirect (through another person)

### What does this look like online?

It can take many forms, including:

- Sending threatening images to someone through their friends on social media
- Sending threatening texts
- Sending someone emails after they've told you to stop
- Posting or threatening to send our intimate images without the person's permission to do so.

---

# Relating in a relationship<sup>33</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will explore what their boundaries are and how this is connected to communication.

### Format:



### Technique:



## Materials:

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Flip chart, Markers, Masking tape, chalk or string, *Relating in a Relationship: Reference Sheet*

## Activity Breakdown:

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### Preparation:

1. Make a flipchart version of the “Boundaries,” “Listening,” and “Barriers to Listening” points from *Relating in a Relationship: Reference Sheet*.
2. If needed, prepare a flipchart version of the listening points in Part 2.

### Workshop:

#### Part 1: Pair Work #1

1. Explain to participants that it is important to gain a sense of what their boundaries are, and what it feels like when boundaries may be stepped over. It may be that participants realize that they have not set any and may need to.
2. Remind participants that knowing one’s self comes from experience.
3. Review the information about boundaries on the flip chart version of the *Relating in a Relationship: Reference Sheet* and then begin the exercise.
4. Divide participants into pairs. Ask each pair to sit facing each other.
5. Give each pair some masking tape, a piece of chalk, or a piece of string.
6. Invite each pair to sit as close together as *they would like* to. It is very important to express this as an invitation and not as mandatory or something they have to do.
7. Ask participants to use the masking tape, chalk, or string to create a boundary around themselves.
8. Ask each person to sit as close to their partner as they would like without stepping out of the visual boundaries they created.
9. Ask participants:
  - Between the two scenarios, which one made you feel more at ease, or more comfortable?
  - What reactions did you have physically, mentally, or emotionally when you had to sit in a proximity to your partner that made you uncomfortable?

<sup>33</sup> Adapted from: The Laurel Centre. (2003). *It's Our Turn: A Handbook for Youth Role Models*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: The Laurel Centre.

Part 1: Pair Work #2

1. Divide participants into pairs. Ask each pair to sit facing each other.
2. Ask each pair to select a Listener and a Speaker. They will have an opportunity to switch roles and repeat the exercise.
3. Ask the Speaker to tell the Listener a story about an experience they had when they were a child.
4. Ask the listener to:
  - Find out what the speaker is feeling while telling the story.
  - Tell the speaker what they understand from the story being told and check if they correctly understood the story.
  - Ensure they have enough information to really understand and if not, to ask the speaker questions.
  - Give feedback to the speaker and ask if they would like to discuss anything else.
  - Try to be comfortable with not responding right away, but use silent time to think about the other person's story.
  - You may wish to put up a flip chart version of these points for participants to use as a guide during the activity.
5. Once the first set of stories is complete, ask the participants to switch roles and repeat the exercise.

Part 2: Large Group Discussion

1. Lead a large group discussion to synthesize the experiences of the participants.
2. Ask them to discuss what their most important lesson was from each part of the activity.
3. Record their answers on flip chart paper.

Debrief:

Questions to ask the group:

- Why do you think boundaries are important?
  - What was your favourite part of the activity? Why?
  - Did you learn anything new or were you reminded of something important?
  - Is there anything you are still wondering about or would like to know more about?
- .....

**Facilitation tips:**

1. This activity may trigger memories of experiences that have been or are hurtful. Ensure that you have time to debrief with participants (either as a group or one on one).
  2. You may want to take note of the themes that arise in the conversation in order to follow-up with another workshop that responds more directly to the needs that emerge.
- .....

**Adaptability:**

Part 3 can be done more creatively, if you think a discussion period isn't suitable for your group. Set up a row of flip chart papers (2 or 3 pieces) on the wall. Ask participants to write down a word or phrase that indicates their most important lesson from each part of the activity. Invite them to sign their names next to their contribution or draw a picture that represents who they are.

## Reference Sheet: Relating in a relationship<sup>34</sup>

You may often be in a one-on-one situation where the other person will be focused directly on you and how you respond. Communication is made up of many components, including:

- What you say verbally
- What your tone, body, eyes and face say
- What you are saying to yourself while you are listening to another person
- When you say something in response
- How you say something

*The following concepts are important in order to understand how you may have an impact on those you communicate with and how they may have an impact on you.*

### Having Boundaries Means Having:

- A sense of your own non-verbal communication
- A sense of where you end and where another person begins
- An awareness of your rights and responsibilities
- An understanding of yourself—in order to set your own limits
- An awareness of your limits: what makes you comfortable or uncomfortable
- An awareness of your mental, emotional, spiritual, physical, and financial capabilities

### Listening Means:

- A commitment on your part to hear what is being said and to give encouragement to the speaker
- Caring about what is happening in your life and knowing that your experiences are important
- Having an awareness about your importance in the world and how your presence impacts relationships around you
- A sense of when it is important to silently take in information and allow another person to speak
- The confidence to ask questions when you need clarity about things being said to you and knowing that all your questions are important and have meaning
- Self-awareness about your reactions both verbally and nonverbally, which helps you to be honest, respectful, and to be supportive of the speaker
- Consciously giving feedback in constructive and meaningful ways.

**Listening** is hard work! It is not just about passively absorbing information; it is about **hearing** and **understanding** the meaning of the information.

### Barriers to Listening

- Daydreaming and thinking about your own life while someone is sharing their experiences and emotions with you
- Wanting to fix the situation or the other person, trying to have the “right” answer
- Comparing the other person to yourself
- Pre-judging what the other person is saying before you have fully understood what they mean
- Being pre-occupied with your own experiences and letting those feelings get in the way of hearing the other person

<sup>34</sup> Adapted from: The Laurel Centre. (2003). *It's Our Turn: A Handbook for Youth Role Models*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: The Laurel Centre.

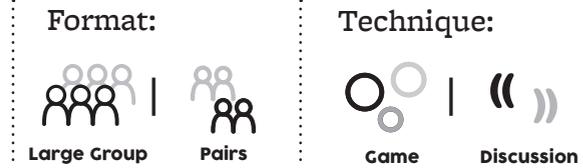
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# Expression without words<sup>35</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will explore non-verbal communication cues.



## Materials:

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Spool of string, Pair of scissors

## Activity Breakdown:

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### Preparation:

- Photocopies of the *Expression Without Words: Non-Verbal Communication: Reference Sheet* for each participant

### Workshop:

1. Divide participants into pairs.
2. Provide each participant with a hand out of the *Expression Without Words: Non-Verbal Communication: Reference Sheet*.
3. Ask each pair to select a Listener and a Speaker. They will have an opportunity to switch roles and repeat the exercise.
4. Explain to participants that you will call out an emotion. The Speaker will communicate this emotion to the Listener non-verbally.
5. Choose from the following list of emotions/feelings to call out one at a time:
  - Love
  - Fear
  - Joy
  - Sexy
  - Happy
  - Daring
  - Proud
  - Anger
  - Peaceful
  - Sad
  - Nurturing
  - Outrageous
6. Explain to participants that non-verbal communication cues are:
  - Tone of voice (sounds)
  - Facial expression
  - Posture
  - Eye contact
  - Gestures
  - Spatial distance
  - Body movement
  - \*Touching

**\*This activity can include some touching of other participants. Let participants know that they have the right to “opt in” if they don’t mind being touched. If any participants choose not to “opt in,” please remove “touching” from one of the ways of non-verbal communication.**

7. Tell the Listeners to write down their description of the Speaker's non-verbal communication cues on the *Expression Without Words: Non-Verbal Communication: Reference Sheet*.
8. Ask participants to switch roles and repeat the exercise.
9. Once participants have completed the task, lead a discussion using the suggested questions below:
  - What were the similarities between you and your partner's non-verbal communication cues?
  - What about your partner's non-verbal communication cues surprised or confused you? Tell the Listeners to write down their description of the Speaker's non-verbal communication cues on the *Expression Without Words: Non-Verbal Communication: Reference Sheet*.

Debrief:

- How did this activity make you feel?
  - What important things did you learn?
- .....

**Facilitation Tips:**

- You may need to bring in additional information to respond to themes or questions raised in the group.
- You may want to take note of the themes that arise in the conversation in order to follow-up with another workshop that responds more directly to the needs that emerge.

# Reference Sheet: Expression without words: non-verbal communication<sup>36</sup>

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION CUES	EMOTION:	EMOTION:	EMOTION:
<b>Tone of Voice</b>			
<b>Facial Expression</b>			
<b>Posture</b>			
<b>Eye Contact</b>			
<b>Gestures</b>			
<b>Spatial Distance</b>			
<b>Body Movement</b>			
<b>*Touching</b>			

**\*This activity can include some touching of other participants. Let participants know that they have the right to “opt in” if they don’t mind being touched. If any participants choose not to “opt in,” please remove “touching” from one of the ways of non-verbal communication.**

<sup>36</sup> Adapted from: Johnson, D. (2005). *Reaching Out: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Self-Actualization* (9th ed.). Windsor Locks, CT: Allyn & Bacon.

---

# Healthy vs. Unhealthy relationships<sup>37</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will discuss, identify and examine the attributes of healthy or unhealthy love.

### Format:



Large Group | Small Groups

### Technique:



Discussion

## Materials:

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Flip chart, Markers, Copies of *the Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationship Scenarios: Reference Sheet*, *Sexual Exploitation in an Online world: Reference Sheet*, *As a survivor, you have the right to: Reference Sheet*

## Activity Breakdown:

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### Preparation:

1. Create a flip chart with two columns, one titled “Healthy Love,” the other titled “Unhealthy Love.”
2. Prepare copies of the *Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationship Scenarios: Reference Sheet*, *Sexual Exploitation in an Online world: Reference Sheet (optional)*, *As a survivor, you have the right to: Reference Sheet (optional)*

### Workshop:

#### Part 1: Large Group Brainstorm

1. Post the prepared flip chart titled “Healthy Love,” the other titled “Unhealthy Love.”
2. Ask the participants to brainstorm attributes that fall into each of these categories. Use the Reference Sheet as a guide if necessary.

#### Part 2: Small Group Work

1. Divide participants into small groups of 3–5 persons.
2. Provide them with copies of the Scenarios.
3. Ask each group to read over the Scenarios and using the list of attributes for a healthy or unhealthy love, ask them to identify what attributes are represented in the scenario.
4. Using the flip chart paper, have participants write down the results of their discussion. An alternative way of sharing the results of their discussion could be through drawing, acting, miming, etc. Be creative with your ideas, but make sure the messages they are sharing are clear.

#### Part 3: Large Group Discussions

1. Ask all the participants to sit in a circle.
2. In turn, ask each group to present the results of their discussion to the large group.
3. Lead a large group discussion using the suggested questions below:
  - Would anyone like to share examples of conflict that can happen in a relationship (with a friend, partner, parent, etc.)?
  - How can these be turned into positive experiences? Positive experiences can be supported through good communication, knowing one’s boundaries, active listening, etc.
  - Help deepen the understandings by providing examples or ask them to share an example.

<sup>37</sup> Adapted from: Girls Action Foundation. (2009). Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships. *Amplify Toolkit*, p.314-316.

### Part 1: Pair Work #2

1. Divide participants into pairs. Ask each pair to sit facing each other.
2. Ask each pair to select a Listener and a Speaker. They will have an opportunity to switch roles and repeat the exercise.
3. Ask the Speaker to tell the Listener a story about an experience they had when they were a child.
4. Ask the listener to:
  - Find out what the speaker is feeling while telling the story.
  - Tell the speaker what they understand from the story being told and check if they correctly understood the story.
  - Ensure they have enough information to really understand and if not, to ask the speaker questions.
  - Give feedback to the speaker and ask if they would like to discuss anything else.
  - Try to be comfortable with not responding right away, but use silent time to think about the other person's story.
  - You may wish to put up a flip chart version of these points for participants to use as a guide during the activity.
5. Once the first set of stories is complete, ask the participants to switch roles and repeat the exercise.

### Debrief:

Questions to ask the group:

- How did this activity make you feel?
- What did you learn or find useful from this activity?
- How can we support healthy relationships?
- What are the barriers to healthy relationships?
- Can we act on these barriers? How?

---

### **Facilitation tips:**

- You may need to adapt scenarios depending on the realities of the participants and/or the community you work in. For example, if you are working with participants who have survived violence, consider the scenarios in advance and be aware of what might trigger difficult emotional reactions. We have included alternative options within the scenario to help relate to the experiences of different groups.
- If participants are beginning to question the health of their relationships, you can refer them to *As a survivor, you have the right to: Reference Sheet*.
- If participants are interested in how the law can protect us in the online world, you can refer them to *Sexual Exploitation in an Online world: Reference Sheet*.
- Other types of scenarios that focus more on relationships with parents, friends, brothers or sisters, etc. could also be used.
- This activity can easily bring up painful experiences for participants. It is recommended that someone with strong facilitation skills lead this activity.
- You may want to consider having an external facilitator come do the workshop if you feel that you are not equipped for any reason.

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# Reference Sheet: Healthy vs. unhealthy relationship scenarios<sup>38</sup>

## Scenario 1:

My partner and I have been dating for a month. I wanted to fool around or have sex with them and I sort of said that two nights ago. Yesterday my parents left for the weekend and my partner slept over. But I started to feel really uncomfortable when we started kissing/ or /when my partner was touching my breasts/ or /when my partner went down on me. I started feeling sort of sick and nervous. I think my partner noticed that I didn't feel good. My partner asked me if there was anything wrong. It was kind of hard for me to explain, so I didn't say anything for a few seconds. Then I just said I didn't feel well. My partner seemed a little annoyed, but they said that that was cool, and got me a glass of water. I told my partner that I didn't feel good because, I wasn't ready to go that far yet. My partner listened and we decided that we would wait until we both felt like it was comfortable. Then we watched a movie and went to sleep.

## Consequence 1:

Healthy relationship: This person feels as though their feelings are supported and their decision is respected. They are able to communicate their feelings and have an honest discussion.

## Scenario 2:

I was 17 and it was two weeks into the semester, when some friends invited me to a dorm party. I went and soon my friends disappeared. I started drinking as soon as I got there and I met this person that was a junior there. We talked throughout the night and they kept bringing me drinks. After a while, I invited this person to my dorm room, which was a couple of doors away. All I wanted to do was kiss this person. I thought that this person was really cute. They told me we should go to their place. I still have no idea why I went. When we got there we started kissing and this person started taking off my clothes and I let them. It wasn't until we were having sex that I said "no." I told this person to stop over-and-over, but they wouldn't. I tried to push this person away but they grabbed my hands and pushed them against the bed. The next day I had bruises.

## Consequence 2:

Legal: *Criminal Code* Section 271 – Sexual Assault

Sexual assault includes any form of sexual activity without a person's consent. This may include: any kissing, fondling, touching, oral/anal sex or sexual intercourse without consent; not stopping sexual contact when asked to; forcing someone to engage in sexual intercourse or any other sexual act.

- Prohibits sexual contact without consent
- If complainant is under 16 years (or does not fall within the "close-in-age" exception); consent is no defence

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# Reference Sheet: Sexual Exploitation in an Online World<sup>39</sup>

As technology becomes more entangled with our everyday lives, understanding the crime of sexual exploitation is increasingly important for young people who are interacting with and developing intimate relationships with others in online spaces. The crime of sexual exploitation includes using the Internet to communicate with someone under 18 in order to sexually exploit them.

## **What is the purpose of the sexual exploitation law?**

This law exists to catch predatory adults who troll the Internet for vulnerable children and teens. They usually take advantage of being anonymous online, and try to gain the trust of their targeted victims through online chats (known as “grooming”). Once they have gained the trust of the person, they try to convince them to engage in sexual activity either over the Internet or in person.

## **What exactly is “grooming”?**

“Grooming” might not involve anything sexual at first. Predators will often begin by trying to gain the trust of a young person by having conversations about their home life, their personal interests or other seemingly harmless topics. They are trying to be friendly and make the young person feel comfortable so that later, they can take advantage of them more easily. “Grooming” is considered a crime if the person is doing it in order to commit a sexual offence later on.

## **What is extortion?**

Extortion, also known as “blackmail” is when someone threatens to do something to you if you do not cooperate with their wishes or demands.

## **What can you do?**

If you’re in a situation like this, there is help available. Even if you feel like you’ve made mistakes or done things you wish you hadn’t, it’s never too late to get help. If you can, tell a trusted adult what’s going on, and ask for their support in going to the police. Police will want to know as many details as they can in order to find the person who’s targeting you. Save messages, texts, videos, etc. so police can see them, even if they’re embarrassing.

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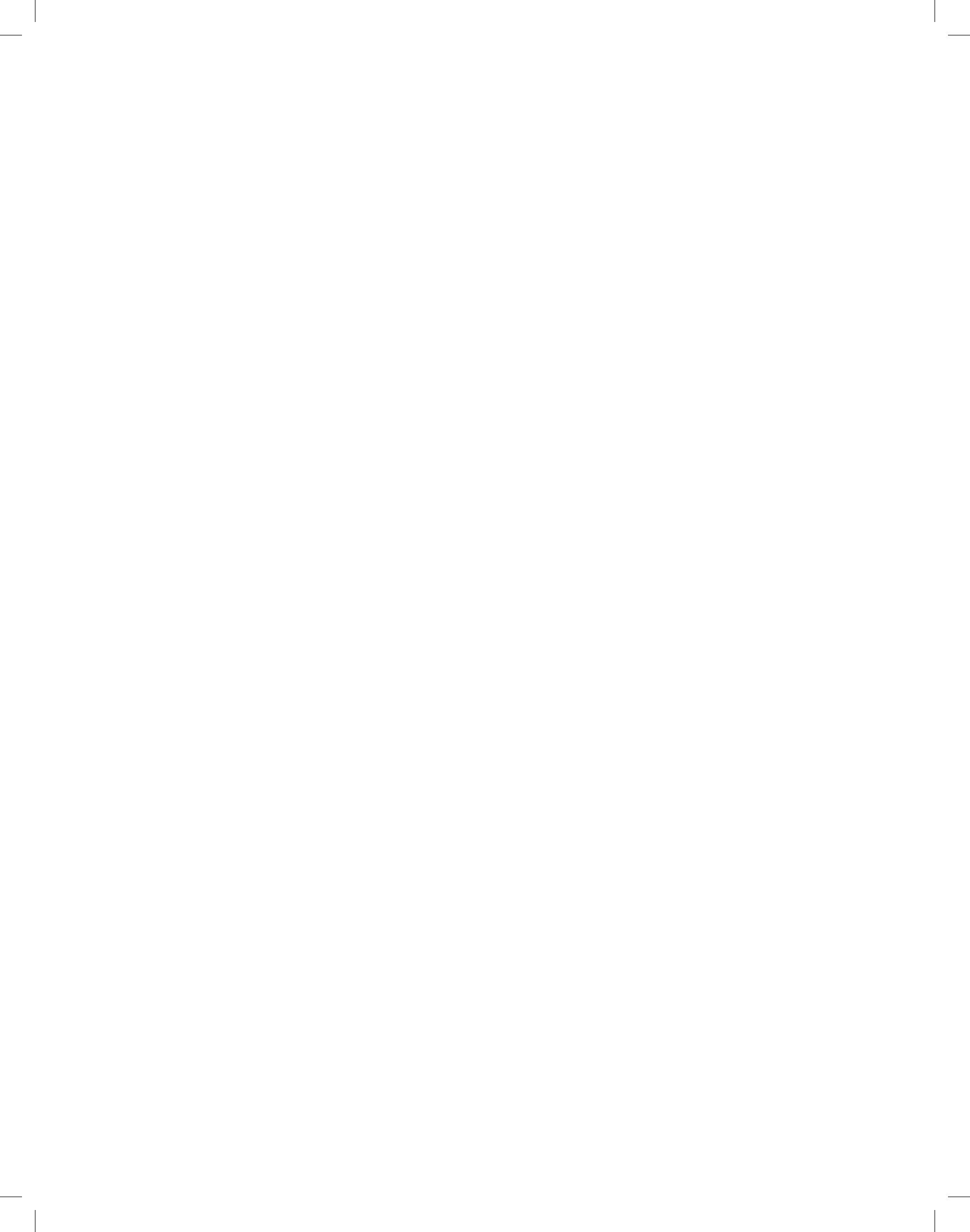
## Reference Sheet: As a Survivor, You Have the Right to<sup>40</sup>

Our Society often blames survivors for their experiences of violence, but **you cannot be responsible for the actions of another person** who chooses to assault you, regardless of:

- **Who** it is
- **Where** you were when the assault took place
- **What** you were wearing
- **What** time of day the assault occurs
- The type of **relationship** you may or may not have with this person

### As a survivor, you have the right to:

- **Name** the abuse
- **Feel** angry, hurt, sad, loving, or forgiving of the person(s) who assaulted you and any friends or family who have collaborated with the violence. Any or all of those emotions can be a natural response.
- **Speak** about your abuse.
- Have **space to reflect** upon your personal history without judgment.
- The physical and psychological **care** that is necessary for surviving trauma.
- A safe and secure home.
- Safe relationships with family, friends, partners, lovers, and service-providers.
- **Confront** perpetrators and those who have participated in violence and abuses.
- **Leave**
- **Take action** to stop the abuse.
- **Love and be loved.**





# Accessing JUSTICE

## LEGEND

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Large Group



Small Group



Pairs



Individual  
Reflection



Game



Arts Based



Discussion



Role Playing



Media

## FORMAT

## TECHNIQUE

Activity	 Large group	 Small groups	 Pairs	 Individual reflection	 Game	 Arts-based	 Discussion	 Role Play	 Media
<b>JUSTICE</b>									
Justice Poem			●	●		●	●		
The Learning Tree	●	●				●	●		
Consent as Communication	●		●		●		●		
Consent & Sexual Assault	●	●					●		
Self-Care & Coping Maps		●					●		
Establishing a Safe Place				●		●			
See-Name-Check	●						●		
My community, My Cause	●	●		●		●	●		●

# Accessing JUSTICE



“

It has become clear that “justice” is much more than a way of resolving situations through legal means – although this, of course, is very important to women and adolescent girls who use our services.

– FACILITATOR

**A response-based approach** is about acknowledging the complexities of young women’s lives and honouring multiple truths & paths to healing.

– SERVICE PROVIDER

There needs to be more of “[a] process of community learning and development for prevention and wellness created from within the community.

– SERVICE PROVIDER

”

These workshops explore the concepts and issues around consent, sexual assault and justice in young women’s lives, their communities and as defined by the laws in Canada. A **rights-based approach** to violence equips young women with knowledge of their legal rights, potentially bridging the gap between existing services and their likeliness of accessing them. A rights-based approach is one method of supporting young people experiencing intimate partner violence; however, the formal justice system has its limitations and is not equally accessible for all.

People of color and racialized communities continue to be incarcerated at higher rates in Canada; specific cultural communities in Canada have faced increased criminalization due to negative cultural stereotypes and racism. Indigenous peoples and communities face increased rates of criminalization as well. Given the justice system and police agencies’ complicity and/or active participation in displacing people into residential schools, among other impacts of colonization in Canada, there are many considerations to keep in mind when addressing intimate partner violence through rights based frameworks.

Allowing participants the space to explore their legal rights and have discussions about what justice means to them can encourage a sense of agency, resilience and drive to take action against violence.

**Consent** is a concrete tool for healthy relationships. It is also the law. The legal definition of affirmative consent is a conscious and voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity every step of the way. A person cannot give consent if they are being forced to participate, if they are incapable of consenting, if they are afraid of the person who is asking them to consent, or if consent is obtained through the use of threats or fear of force. The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that silence is not consent.

The legal definition of **Sexual Assault** is forcing someone to participate in sexual activities without their consent. It is a sexual assault to sexually touch any part of another person's body without their consent.

While the law on consent is very clear, the reality is that many factors play into young people's beliefs and understandings of consent in relation to sexual activity, such as the pervasiveness of **rape culture**, power, violence, and stereotypes. These workshops aim to open up dialogue about how these factors impact the way participants understand consent and sexual assault in relationships and how to build a **culture of consent**.<sup>41</sup>

**Justice** can refer to the process of becoming safe both physically and emotionally. For some survivors of intimate partner violence accessing the formal justice system may be a necessary step in the healing process, while for others it may not. Accessing justice may mean leaving a violent partner, accessing community services, accessing one's own support system of family and friends, or if one chooses to report their partner to the authorities, making sure that their voice is being heard and that the authorities are making their safety a priority. It is important to remember that survivors know best what they need, they are the experts of their experience and healing is non-linear.

“ We are survivors and use the language of survivorship because we know the path to healing and justice can be a lonely and difficult road full of disappointment and frustration. We are not victims though we have been victimized, first by the violence we experienced and too often a second time by the very systems that exist to support us. We know our rights and understand the mandates, visions and policies of these systems but still must fight to get our needs heard and met.<sup>42</sup> ”

– A YOUNG WOMAN

<sup>41</sup> R. v. Ewanchuk. (1999). 1 S.C.R. 330.

<sup>42</sup> METRAC. (2012). *Choosing Your Own Path to Survivorship: For Young Survivors, By Young Survivors*, p. 2.

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# Justice Poem<sup>43</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will write an artistic piece (i.e. a poem) from words that come to mind when they think of “justice.”

### Format:



Individual reflection

Small Groups

### Technique:



Arts-based

Discussion

## Materials:

---

Flip chart or whiteboard, markers, Papers and writing/drawing materials for participants.

## Activity Breakdown:

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1. Invite participants to individually brainstorm as many words for Justice that they can think of and to write them down.
2. Invite the participants to get into pairs and share their list of words with each other. Encourage participants to have conversations with their peers as to why specific words came up for them. Invite participants to add any words they liked from their partners list and add it to their own.
3. Have the group rotate and share their longer lists with new participants. You would rotate about 3-4 times depending on the size of the group.
4. Once all rotations are completed and you feel that participants have a solid list of words that they could choose from to start writing an artistic piece (i.e. a poem) for the words that come to mind when they think of justice. Participants will complete their poems and share back with the larger group.

---

## Facilitation tips:

- This activity can be done in a large group.
- Participants can choose to write a poem based on the words they have on their lists or a poem based on the conversations they engaged in with their peers based on the words that came up.

<sup>43</sup> Contributed by: METRAC. (2015). Justice Poem. *Project ReAct*.

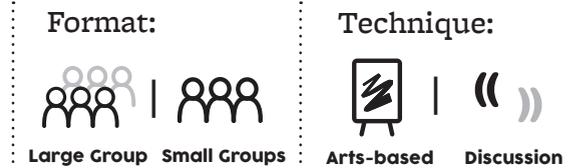
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# The Learning Tree: Justice in our Community

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will create an art piece representative of different ideas, definitions and experiences of what “justice” means to them.



## Materials:

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Flip chart, Post-it's, markers, *Learning Tree Template: Reference Sheet*

## Activity Breakdown:

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1. Explain that *The Learning Tree* is a visual tool to explore problems, solutions and ideals of an issue. Write down in a visible place for all participants that different parts of the tree represent:

**Branches** = symptoms of the problem | **Trunk** = values & beliefs that cause the symptoms  
**Roots** = institutions that support the values and beliefs that cause the symptoms | **Leaves** = solutions  
**Fruit** = ideals

2. Ask the participants to split into small groups.

3. Distribute the *Learning Tree Template: Reference Sheet* or have participants draw their own trees. Have the group brainstorm ideas for each part of the tree around the question of “What is Justice,” “What is justice in response to violence,” or “What are barriers to accessing justice.” Depending on the group, this question will vary. There can be different questions between individuals or groups and they can decide on the question together. People may have different opinions; the goal is to acknowledge and validate the participant’s different ideas, definitions and experiences of what justice can look like.

Some examples are:

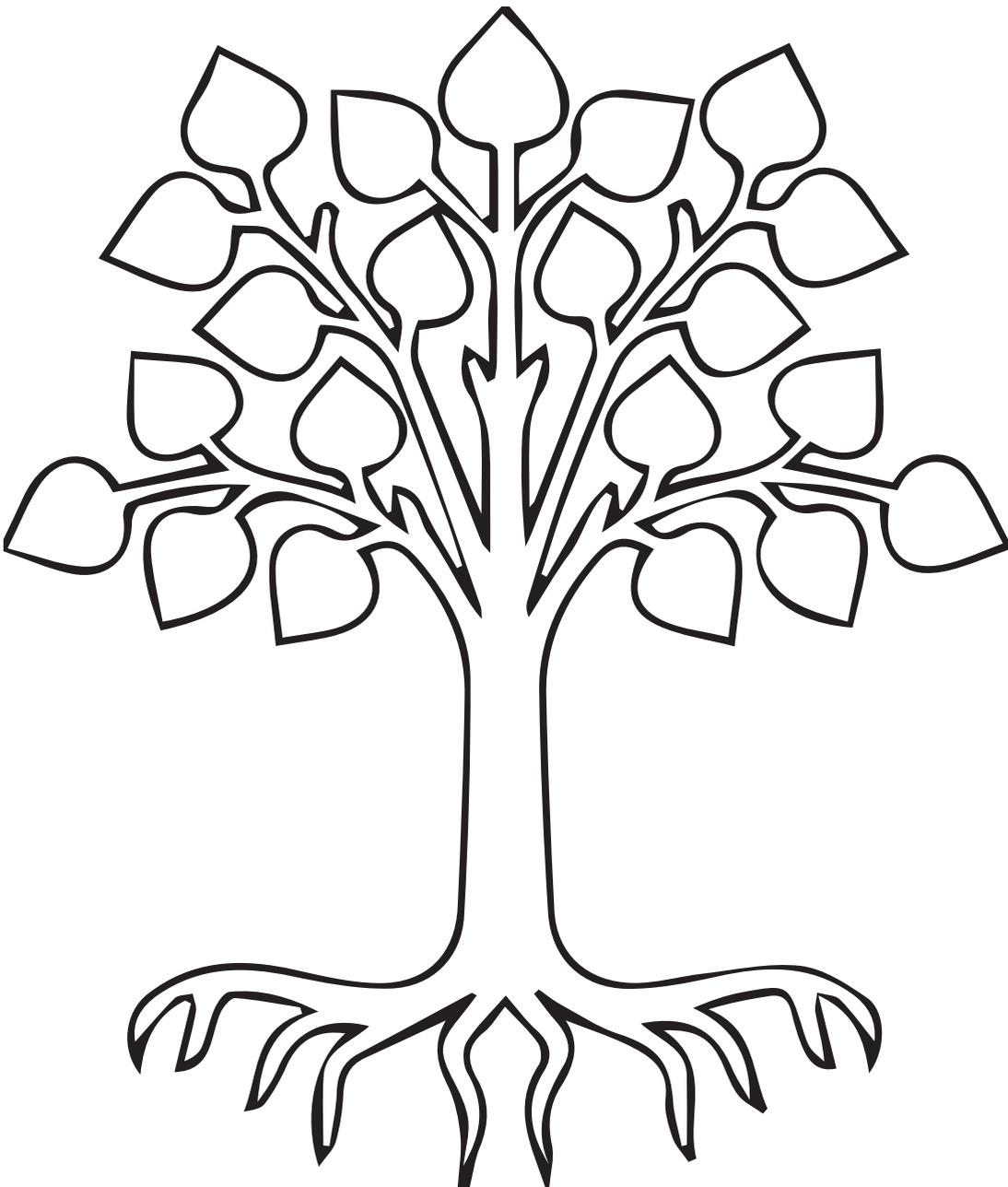
**Branches** = Racism, colonialism, barriers, institutions defining justice, victimization, isolation  
**Trunk** = cross cultural taboos, stereotypes, rape culture, victim blaming  
**Roots** = Depersonalized system as response to IPV, legal system, macho-police culture, disconnected needs, lack of trust of responders, past trauma  
**Leaves** = Respect, empathy, honouring multiple truths, inclusive of paths to healing)  
**Fruit** = Violence stops, collaboration across community / justice systems, all survivors are believed

3. Invite each small group to share with the larger group. Sharing ideas and experiences involves getting to know and understand where group members are coming from. Sharing ideas, feelings, and experiences related to certain issues is an important part of exploring the issues and is required before creative, effective solutions can be defined.

4. Ask after seeing each other’s ideas, experiences and feelings, are there leaves and fruit that we can add to the trees? Go ahead and add them (using Post-its)!

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## Reference Sheet: Learning Tree Template



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# Consent as communication<sup>44</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will identify and examine definitions of consent and how it is related to communication.

### Format:



Large Group

### Technique:



Game

Discussion

## Materials:

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2 colours of Sticky Notes and markers, Paper & Pens, *Consent – Legal Definition: Reference Sheet*, *Age of Consent: Reference Sheet*, *Active Listening Actions: Reference Sheet* on small pieces of paper, *Is there consent if?: Reference Sheet*

## Activity Breakdown:

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### Preparation:

Fold “active listening actions” papers and put them in a hat.

### Workshop:

#### Part 1:

1. Ask participants to take a couple of sticky notes in one of the colours. Ask them what comes to mind when they hear the word “consent” and have them write one thought per sticky note. Give them a couple of minutes - when they are done, have them stick the notes up in a common place.
  - Have a brief discussion with the group about the different answers, and try to come to some common understanding with the group of the word.
2. Now, with the other colour of paper, have participants brainstorm the different ways people communicate. Have them stick these pieces in a common place near the consent stickies.
3. Facilitate discussion with the group about how they think consent and communication are related?
  - Ask the group why consent might be more complicated sometimes than simply saying yes to something. What other factors might come into play when we think about consent? Power? Stereotypes? Violence? Fear?
4. Do the Active Listening Activity (see *Reference Sheet: Active Listening Actions*)  
Participants are to stand up and form two lines facing each other. Have each person shake the hand of the person across from them, thus identifying their partners for the activity. Once everyone has been placed into pairs, send one person from each partner out of the room.  
Explain to the rest of the group that everyone from one side will be drawing a piece of paper from the hat. They are to keep the message on their paper a secret, as their partners cannot know what it says. Written on the piece of paper is a behaviour that the person needs to exhibit while engaging in a conversation with her partner. Bring the other partners back in the room. Tell them that they now have one minute to tell their partner about the thing they are most passionate about in the world. As they are speaking, the other partner should be exhibiting the action on the paper.

5. After 1-2 minutes, have participants return to the circle and sit down for discussion with the following questions:
  - What happened in your conversations? What actions did those of you who drew a piece of paper do in the conversation?
  - For partners who were talking about their most passionate things, what did you notice about your partners?
  - How did it feel when you were trying to tell them about something which you felt strongly about, and clearly they were not interested?
  - For the partners who were pretending not to listen by displaying some form of strange/rude/bored behaviour, how were you able to concentrate on the conversation? Do you actually have any idea what your partner said in the conversation?
6. How does it feel to not be actively listened to? How might this relate to consent? How do we make sure our sexual partners know we are actively listening to them? Note that sometimes having conversations about consent can feel awkward at first, but it is very important to have them.

Part 2:

1. Hand out *Consent - Legal Definition: Reference Sheet*. Go over the Legal Definition of consent. Ask participants if they have any questions.
2. Ask the group for examples of when a person might be incapable of consenting to sexual activity.
3. When might a person be afraid? (If someone is in a position of power, if they rely on that person for food/shelter/etc.)
4. When might they feel forced?
5. When would they be incapable? (drunk, high, etc.)
6. Ask the group if they know what the Age of Consent is in Canada. Many will have different ideas and different guesses. Let them guess for a minute or so and then tell them. Refer to Reference Sheet: Age of Consent.
7. Ask if there are any questions about consent.
8. Tell participants you are going to do a quick “quiz” to make sure they understand the laws. Refer to Reference Sheet: Is there consent? Facilitator should read each scenario out one at a time and the group should respond by yelling yes/no out loud.

**\*ALL OF THE ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ ARE NO.**

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**Facilitation Tips:**

- Make sure to have conversation about the different ways people communicate—not all communication is verbal and this is important to take into account.
- The age of consent can be quite confusing—make sure this is cleared up for participants before moving on.

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## Reference Sheet: Active Listening Actions<sup>45</sup>

- As your partner talks to you, do not make eye contact. Stare at the floor or just look around the room.
- As your partner talks to you, do not be at eye level with them. If they are standing up, sit or kneel down. If they are sitting down, stand up.
- As your partner talks to you, answer with a “yes” or a “uh huh” every two seconds to make it seem like you are interested, but really you are not.
- As your partner talks to you, keep trying to walk away or move away. Do not stand or sit still...try to slowly get away from your partner as they are talking.
- As your partner talks to you, start laughing at them.
- As your partner talks to you, try multitasking. Write notes in a notepad, clean your fingernails, play with your hair, etc.
- As your partner talks to you, try finishing their sentences. Talk over them.

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## Reference Sheet: Consent – Legal Definition<sup>46</sup>

Consent means voluntary agreement to participate in sexual activity.

A person **cannot give consent** if they are being **forced** to participate, if they are **incapable** of consenting, if they are afraid of the person who is asking them to consent, or if consent is obtained through the use of threats or fear of force.

The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that **silence is not consent**.

*NOTE: The responsibility to ensure that a person can legally give consent is on the older person. If you engage in sexual activity with a person under the age of 16, and you do not fall within the “close in age” exceptions, **you could be held legally responsible for sexual assault**. A person’s ability to consent also depends on their capability to give consent. For example, if a person is too drunk or high, is asleep, or is unconscious, **they are not capable of consenting to sexual activity**.*

<sup>45</sup> SeriousFun Children’s Network. (n.d.). *Staff Training Guide*.

<sup>46</sup> Contributed by: West Coast LEAF. (2015). *No Means No Curriculum*.

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# Reference Sheet: Age of Consent<sup>47</sup>

## Age of Consent ...it's more complicated than you think.

The age of consent for sexual activity is **16 years of age**.

However, the age of consent is **18 years of age** where the sexual activity is seen to exploit the young person.

Exploitation is seen to include:

- Sex work, including pornography (this is not limited to situations that include the exchange of money)
- Sexual contact or touching in the context of a relationship of **authority, trust, or dependency** (e.g. with a teacher, coach or babysitter)

Sexual activity can also be considered exploitative based on the nature and circumstances of the relationship, such as:

- The young person's age
- The age difference between the young person and their partner
- How the relationship developed (quickly, secretly, or over the Internet)
- How the partner may have controlled or influenced the young person.

There are also several **close-in-age exceptions** to the age of consent.

- There is a close-in-age exception which permits **14 and 15 year old youth** to engage in consensual, non-exploitative sexual activity with a partner who is **less than five years older**.
- There is a close-in-age exemption which permits **12 and 13 year old youth** to engage in consensual, non-exploitative sexual activity with a partner who is **less than two years older**.

<sup>47</sup> Contributed by: West Coast LEAF. (2015). *No Means No Curriculum*.

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## Reference Sheet: Is there consent if?<sup>48</sup>

### Is there consent if...

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Someone says nothing but pushes their partner's hands away?   | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 2. Someone is smiling but at the same time says "no"?  | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 3. At first someone says "yes" they want to hook up and then they change their mind?                         | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 4. Someone says "I'm not sure about this"?   | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 5. Someone is drunk or high?   | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 6. Someone consented to having sex with their partner in the past, but today they don't feel like it?        | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 7. Someone under the age of 18 agrees to have sex with their hockey coach?                                   | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 8. Someone under the age of 18 agrees to have sex with their guardian in exchange for food and shelter?      | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 9. Someone says "no" but does not physically stop their partner?   | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 10. Someone is asleep or passed out?   | <b>Yes/No</b> |
| 11. Someone consented to participating in one form of sexual activity but they don't want to go any further? | <b>Yes/No</b> |

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# Critically Reflecting on Consent and Sexual Assault<sup>49</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will learn about the legal definition of sexual assault and how this can play out in real life situations.

### Format:



Large Group | Small Groups

### Technique:



Discussion

## Materials:

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*Sexual Assault – Legal Definition: Reference Sheet, Scenario 1: Reference Sheet, Scenario 2: Reference Sheet, Sexual Assault – A Scenario (Discussion Questions): Reference Sheet, Case Summary: Reference Sheet (optional)*

## Activity Breakdown:

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### Preparation:

1. The room should be set up to accommodate both small and large group discussion.
2. If there are desks, set up in pods of 4-5 desks and ensure there is room to pull all the chairs into a large circle.

### Workshop:

#### Part 1:

1. Remind the group of the previous workshop on consent. Ask the group to recall some of the things you talked about. Conduct a small group discussion on this ensuring that the legal definition of consent is brought up, and that you review the age of consent laws. See Reference Sheets for a reminder of these.
2. Tell the group that when any kind of sexual activity is pursued without consent, it is considered sexual assault.
3. Hand out *Reference Sheet: Sexual Assault, Legal Definition*.
  - Ask for a volunteer to read the definition of sexual assault. Debrief.
  - What is sexual contact or touching?
  - Why do you think intention is important in determining whether a sexual assault occurred?
  - What does consent look like?

#### Part 2: Scenarios

1. Hand out *Reference Sheet – 2 Scenarios*
  - Ask for volunteers to read Scenario 1 aloud (until the sixth paragraph).
2. Tell the group we are going to break into small groups, hand out Reference Sheet: Sexual Assault –A Scenario (Discussion questions), and take a few minutes to discuss. Say: we're going to think about Nisha and Andre. How were they feeling, what were they thinking, why did they make the choices they made? Why didn't they do something else? Think about how power plays out in this scenario.

<sup>49</sup> Adapted from: West Coast LEAF. (2015). *No Means No Curriculum*.

3. Debrief as group:
  - How did it feel hearing this scenario?
  - How was Nisha feeling when Zara arrived with Andre and Mazdah? What was she thinking? (Did she want them to come in? No. Why did she let them in, then?)
  - How do you think Nisha felt when Andre started to touch her?
  - How was Nisha feeling/what was she thinking later that night?
  - What was Andre thinking when he was touching Nisha? Why did he do that?
  - Do you think Nisha is going to talk to someone about what happened? Why or why not?
  - Do you think Nisha **should** tell someone? (Raise hands. Who could she tell?)
  - If Nisha was your friend, what would you recommend that she do?
  - If Nisha doesn't talk to anyone, what will Andre think?
  - **Did Andre get consent from Nisha? Did a sexual assault occur?**
4. Be sure to touch on
  - Alcohol (not an excuse for committing sexual assault),
  - **Responsibility/victim-blaming** (Whose fault is it? It is not Nisha or Zara's fault; Andre is responsible for his actions. There is a myth that people who experience sexual assault are to blame for what happened to them—because of where they were, how they were dressed, who they were with, how much they drink, how they behave—but the truth is nobody is ever to blame for being sexually assaulted. If we are sexually assaulted, it is never our fault.)
  - Silence (Why didn't Nisha do/say anything to stop Andre? She was scared, froze up, didn't know what to do. etc)
5. RE-EXAMINING THE SCENARIO: Read Scenario 2 with the group.
6. Lead group discussion:
  - Did you feel different hearing this story vs. the Nisha/Andre scenario?
  - Who had the power? Who was responsible to ensure that there was consent?
  - What stereotypes were at play in these scenarios? How did they affect how Miguel and Andre acted?
  - Was this a sexual assault? How did Miguel indicate he didn't consent?
  - What do you think happened at school the next day?

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**Facilitation tips:**

- This workshop should only be facilitated after the previous workshop on consent has been completed with the group.
- These activities work best when there is a balance struck between small group discussion and a more guided large group discussion.
- Be aware that upon initial reflection on the first scenario, it is common for groups to engage in “victim blaming” of Nisha—it is extremely important to unpack the reason that they may do this, and to guide the group to understand that the responsibility here is for Andre who did not ask for Nisha's consent to sexual activity.
- Once the activity is over, you can have copies of the *Case Summary: Reference Sheet and What are my Rights?: Reference Sheet* on-hand to provide participants with a legal example of a sexual assault court case, as well as their legal rights throughout the criminal process. Consider the readiness of your group.

**Adaptability:**

Instead of asking the guiding questions, facilitate the activity as a spectrum. Invite participants to share whether or not they thought the scenarios had consent or not. This discussion will explore the nuances of consent.

---

## Reference Sheet: Sexual Assault – Legal Definition<sup>50</sup>

**Sexual Assault** is defined as forcing someone to participate in sexual contact or touching without their permission (consent). It is a sexual assault to sexually touch any part of another person's body without their consent.

A conviction for sexual assault requires proof of the following:

1. Sexual contact or touching
2. The intention to sexually touch a person
3. No consent
4. Deliberately or recklessly ignoring the fact that no consent has been given.

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## Reference Sheet: Scenario 1<sup>51</sup>

It was a hot day in July and Nisha was sleeping in late. She was happy to be out of school for the summer and was looking forward to taking some time to relax before school started again in the fall. Nisha's parents had already left for work and wouldn't be home until 5:30. She had the whole day to herself.

It was only 10:00 AM, but the day was already hot. "What a perfect day to just hang out by the pool," Nisha thought. She texted her best friend Zara and invited her over for a swim.

About an hour later, the doorbell rang. Nisha was surprised to see Zara standing there with two guys from school. "Hey," Zara said. "I hope you don't mind, but I invited Mazdah and Andre along. It's such a hot day, I thought maybe we could all swim and have a little party!"

Nisha wasn't sure what to say, but she didn't want everyone to think she was a loser so she smiled and led everyone outside to the back deck. Mazdah and Andre had brought beer and were opening some before Nisha had a chance to sit down. Nisha was worried her parents would find out, but her friends were all laughing and having a good time so she didn't say anything.

"Who's going swimming?" Zara yelled as she jumped into the pool. The beer was all gone and the music was up loud. Everyone was in the pool except Nisha. "I'm just going into the house to change into my swimsuit. Be right back," Nisha shouted.

While Nisha was changing in the bathroom, she heard a voice calling her name. She called back, "I'm in here getting changed; I'll be out in a minute." She was only partially dressed when she looked up and saw Andre standing in the doorway smiling. Nisha screamed, "Get out of here!" but no one heard her over the music. Andre stepped inside the bathroom and locked the door. "Why are you yelling?" Andre asked quietly. "I know you like me. Why else would you invite me over here when your parents are away?"

"You don't know what you're talking about," Nisha shouted. "Get out of here right now!"

"Oh yeah? Who's gonna make me?" Andre joked. He stepped towards Nisha and touched her bare shoulder. His voice was soft as he whispered, "I thought you liked me." His hand slid down her back and he pulled her close to his body. Nisha was very scared and she couldn't think of what to do. Her throat felt like it was closing up. She didn't speak or make a sound. All she could do was shake her head. It was like she was frozen.

Andre took her silence to mean that she was interested and so he undid the strap on her bikini top and started kissing her. Nisha stood there motionless feeling scared and ashamed as tears ran down her cheeks. Suddenly, there was a loud knock on the bathroom door. Zara's voice called out, "Hey Nisha, whatcha doin' in there?" Nisha heard Zara giggling on the other side of the door. Andre unlocked and opened the door, turned to Nisha with a smile and said, "I'll see you later," as he walked out.

<sup>51</sup> Contributed by: West Coast LEAF. (2015). *No Means No Curriculum*.

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## Reference Sheet: Scenario 2<sup>52</sup>

Miguel transferred to a new school in the middle of Grade 9. His family had just moved half-way across the country, from Toronto to Vancouver. Everything was completely different. Miguel was worried about fitting in and making new friends. When he heard about a party some eleventh-graders were throwing, Miguel knew he had to go.

When Miguel got to the party, the house was already packed with people. It seemed like the whole school was there and maybe some university students, too. Miguel started to feel nervous. He made small talk with a guy he recognized from his English class but they ran out of things to talk about pretty quickly. Miguel wandered around the house, feeling awkward.

Miguel slipped out the back door into the backyard, where he could be alone for a minute. He was feeling so anxious; he needed to chill out before heading back inside. He leaned back against a tree and tried to come up with things to talk about. He was desperate to make a good impression.

It was dark out, so Miguel didn't notice a girl walking towards him until she was just a few feet away. Miguel had seen her before and he knew she was in Grade 12, but they had never actually met. "Hey," the girl said. "I've been checking you out all night." Miguel blushed and looked down at his shoes. The girl smiled and said, "I'm Molly."

Before Miguel could introduce himself, Molly kissed his mouth hard. She pushed him against the tree and grabbed his crotch. Miguel winced from the pain of her touch. When Molly noticed Miguel wasn't kissing her back, she pulled away and asked, "What's the matter, are you gay or something?"

Miguel was completely taken off guard. Before he could respond, Molly turned and walked back towards the house. In the distance, Miguel could hear her laughing and calling to her friends.

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## Reference Sheet: Sexual Assault – A Scenario (Discussion Questions)<sup>53</sup>

1. How did you feel listening to this story?
2. What do you think Nisha was thinking or feeling?
  - When she let everyone into the house?
  - When Andre came into the bathroom?
  - When Andre was touching her?
  - After Andre left?
3. What do you think Andre was thinking or feeling?

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## Reference Sheet: Case Summary<sup>54</sup>

*R. v. Ewanchuk, [1999] 1 SCR 330*

Sarah (not her real name), a 17-year-old young woman, was interviewed by Steve Ewanchuk, a 44-year-old man, for a job selling his woodwork products in booths in shopping malls.

The interview took place in Steve's van in the parking lot of a mall in Edmonton, Alberta. Sarah left the van door open as she was hesitant about discussing the job offer in Steve's vehicle. The interview was conducted in a polite, business-like fashion.

After the interview, Steve invited Sarah to see some of his woodwork which was in a trailer behind the van. Sarah purposely left the trailer door open, but Steve closed the door in a way that made Sarah think that he had locked it. Sarah became frightened at this point. A short time later Steve said he was tense and asked Sarah to massage his shoulders, which she did briefly. Then Steve began massaging Sarah's shoulders, but when his touch became sexual in nature Sarah said "no." Steve initiated a number of incidents involving touching, each becoming progressively more sexual, despite the fact that Sarah plainly said "no" each time. Steve would stop his advances each time Sarah said "no" but would then try again shortly after with an even more sexual advance.

Throughout these events, Sarah was afraid that anything she did to resist might provoke Steve to become more violent. Sarah said nothing when Steve laid down on top of her, but when he attempted to undo his pants Sarah said "No, stop." At this point Steve stopped, saying, "See, I'm a nice guy, I stopped." Then he gave Sarah a \$100 bill for the massage and told her not to tell anyone about it. Sarah said that she had to go and Steve opened the door of the trailer.

When she got home, Sarah was very emotionally distressed and called the police, claiming that she had been sexually assaulted.

### **Comments by Justice McClung:**

Justice McClung of the Alberta Court of Appeal made several remarks about the character and lifestyle of Sarah, the young woman who reported the sexual assault in the *Ewanchuk* case.

He commented that her clothing (shorts and a t-shirt) was not conservative enough for a job interview and that this may have led Steve Ewanchuk to think she would be interested in his sexual advances. "It must be pointed out," said Justice McClung, "**that the complainant (Sarah) did not present herself to Ewanchuk or enter his trailer in a bonnet and crinolines.**"

Justice McClung also commented on Sarah's past sexual history and her lifestyle when he noted that "she was the mother of a six-month old baby and that, along with her boyfriend, she shared an apartment with another couple." He joked about her innocence when he remarked that she was not "**lost on her way home from church.**"

In dismissing the appeal and upholding the acquittal of Steve Ewanchuk, Justice McClung described Ewanchuk's actions as "**far less criminal than hormonal.**" He was also critical of Sarah's decision to report the

incident to the police and suggested that advances like Steve's were better dealt with by **“a well-chosen expletive, a slap in the face or, if necessary, a well-directed knee.”**

**Supreme Court of Canada decision:**

However, at the Supreme Court of Canada the decision by the Alberta Court of Appeal, and Justice McClung, was overturned. Ewanchuk was convicted of sexual assault.

In its decision, the Supreme Court of Canada affirmed that consent must be freely given and that no means no. In her decision, Supreme Court Justice L'Heureux-Dubé, stated that the Alberta Court of Appeal relied on inappropriate myths and stereotypes in its decision. She wrote: **“Complainants should be able to rely on a system free from such myths and stereotypes, and on a judiciary whose impartiality is not compromised by these biased assumptions.”**

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## Reference Sheet: What are my Rights?<sup>55</sup>

There will be many times throughout the criminal process where you will not have any control over how your case is progressing. The police have the choice whether or not to charge your assailant; the Crown Attorney has the choice to go to trial or may drop the charges or accept a plea bargain; the accused has the right not to testify; the judge and/or jury decide on guilt or innocence. This may seem overwhelmingly unfair. Despite these limitations, there are some areas where you have rights:

**RIGHT** to be shown respect by the people involved in the legal system (unfortunately, this does not always happen). If you do not feel you are being treated with respect, find an advocate or support person. You may call your local sexual assault crisis centre

**RIGHT** to call the police or not

**RIGHT** to have a female officer present or to speak to a female officer only

**RIGHT** to have a physical exam or not

**RIGHT** to have a support person or not

**RIGHT** to stop the reporting process

**RIGHT** to be kept informed throughout the process and consulted on decisions being made about dropping charges, plea bargaining, or sentencing

**RIGHT** where available, to have support from the Victim/Witness Assistance program

**RIGHT** to have an interpreter or any necessary equipment during your statement to police, meeting with Crown Attorney, and at trial

**RIGHT** for anyone under 18 years of age, a person with a disability, a person for whom it would be particularly hard to testify because of context, or a person who has experienced prior abuse, is fearful, or is otherwise vulnerable to request that the Crown arrange for the victim or witness to testify behind a screen or by closed circuit TV

**RIGHT** to file a complaint against the police (local police complaints department), Crown (local courts Chief Crown and/or Attorney General), judges (provincial courts-Chief Judge, chairperson or Judicial Council; federal courts-Canadian Judicial Council) or any other court staff

**RIGHT** to obtain your own lawyer. Be aware that you will not be able to obtain legal aid and will have to pay for the lawyer on your own.

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# Self-Care & Coping Maps<sup>56</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will reflect on personal coping mechanisms and develop self-care strategies.

### Format:



Individual  
Reflection

### Technique:



Arts-based

## Materials:

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Flip chart or whiteboard, papers and writing/drawing materials

## Activity Breakdown:

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### Part 1: Coping Strategies

1. Ask the participants to sit together in a circle. Let them know that this activity is about learning what we can do to take care of ourselves. This may come from ourselves or sometimes we may need other people to help us take care of ourselves. This can include people like doctors, acupuncturists, therapists, but also family members, partners, roommates and friends.
2. Invite participants to reflect on the following questions, they can make lists, draw or write a story, whatever they like. Write these questions on paper or a whiteboard for reference. Make it clear that participants will not have to share their list with anyone else.
  - What are some things you do that you think of as “coping” [survival - helps you get through tough times but not necessarily something you consider “positive” or healthy for yourself]?
  - Are there any “coping” strategies you used to use that you don’t anymore?
  - What are some things you think of as “self-care” [taking care of yourself/nurturance/nourishment]?
  - How else could you incorporate self-care into your life?
  - Are there any ways of celebrating or taking care of yourself that you’d like to try?

### Part 2: Mad Maps

1. Let the participants know that they will now be creating a “mad map,” which is a kind of a “user’s manual”, or a set of strategies you come up with when you are not in crisis, so that you have something to refer to in times when you are struggling. The participants already started one with the last activity when they wrote down coping mechanisms they sometimes rely on and some things they can do to self-care. The self-care strategies might be things you use to help keep yourself healthy and help prevent or minimize mental health crises.
2. Invite participants to reflect and write some things down in response to the prompts below. They can choose if they would like to try to respond to all of them, or focus on a couple.

<sup>56</sup> Adapted from: Monster Academy Montreal. (n.d.). *Self-care and Coping Maps*.

3. Write on the board/paper:

- Warning signs that I am not ok or am headed towards not being ok (crisis/extreme state/triggered)
- Triggers to be aware of and things to avoid
- What my friends can do to help when I am not okay
- Supportive people I can talk to
- Name 3 concrete items that bring inspiration, a sense of calm, or which are reminders of spaces where I feel safe
- Daily things to take care of myself (pull from or add to the self-care list you made earlier)
- Optional: handout and introduce the *Skills handout for emotional regulation* and the *affirmations and positive coping statements*. These handouts provide tips to help ground and calm oneself when experiencing overwhelming emotions.

Debrief:

Let participants know that:

- They might want to keep working on this on their own time.
- This might be something they keep as a reference in the future.
- They might want to share some parts of it with people they trust and who are able and willing to be part of their support system (maybe friends, family members, partners, roommates).
- If they want to consider someone as part of their support/crisis intervention team, it is a good idea to have a conversation with them about it and make sure that it is something they feel good about.

.....  
**Facilitation tips:**

Parts of this activity can be triggering. Let participants know that if they are feeling uncomfortable they can feel free to stick to prompts that are a bit lighter-like where they feel safe and ways to self-care. They can always work on the other prompts at another time, if they want to.

---

# Reference Sheet: Skills for Emotional Regulation<sup>57</sup>

## Grounding Strategies

**Grounding:** refers to the tool(s) used to help calm oneself when experiencing overwhelming emotions. It is a process that helps to distract oneself from our inner emotional turmoil to the external world around us. We can learn to refocus our awareness off of our emotional pain and onto more calming and secure things.

### **Physical Grounding Strategies**

**Mindful Breathing:** deep breaths, feeling the air going to the bottom of your lungs. Breathe in...breathe out, say “one” breathe in... breathe out, say, “two”.

**Clench and relax your hands**

**Shake your hands**

**Feel your body in your chair;** feel your feet on the floor

**Basic Grounding Stance:** Stand upright with your feet hip-width apart or slightly wider. Allow your feet to be just slightly pigeon-toed, with the heels wider than the toes. Bend your knees out over the feet just slightly. Press into the floor as if you were trying to push two rugs apart from each other with your feet. Feel the solidity and strength it gives you in your lower body. Hold this pose a few moments and imagine holding your ground in a difficult situation.

**Touch an object** (i.e., a smooth rock or something else around you). Notice the texture and temperature of the object.

### **Mental Grounding Strategies**

**Use your senses:** Becoming more aware of your physical surroundings can help shift your awareness. Describe your environment in detail using all of your senses. Identify colors, smells, shapes, sounds, tastes, textures, temperatures and so on.

Play the categories game:

- Name 5 cities that start with the letter ‘S’ or 5 countries that start with the letter ‘C’
- Name 5 things you see that are the color green
- Name the colors in a rainbow
- Name 10 kinds of flowers
- Listen to the sounds around you, naming 5 of them
- Talk to someone about how you are feeling

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## Reference Sheet: Affirmations and Positive Coping Statements<sup>58</sup>

Some or all of these statements may be useful to say to yourself when you are feeling overwhelming emotions.

I am okay.

I am going to be okay.

I am a good person. Nobody's perfect.

I am a sensitive person who experiences the world differently.

Each day I do the best I can.

I'm a sensitive person with rich emotional experiences.

Even though bad things have happened to me in the past I'm still a good person.

My feelings may hurt but they are not here to hurt me.

This won't last forever.

I have been through other painful experiences and I've survived.

My feelings make me uncomfortable right now, but I can accept them.

I am strong, I can handle this.

I can ride this out.

These are just my feelings and eventually they will go away.

I am safe; it is only my feelings.

I trust myself and believe that I will be okay.

My feelings won't kill me; it just doesn't feel good right now.

It's okay to feel sad/anxious/afraid sometimes.

I am not in danger right now.

This doesn't feel good but it's only temporary. I radically accept myself and my feelings.

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# Establishing a Safe Place<sup>59</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will create an inner safe space, to feel grounded and regain a sense of safety when they are feeling stress, anxiety or are in crises.

## Format:



Individual  
Reflection

## Technique:



Arts-based

## Materials:

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Flip papers, Writing/drawing materials, Hand out of *Establishing a Safe Place: Reference Sheet*.

## Activity Breakdown:

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1. Introduce the activity: Everyone needs a place where they can feel safe(r). This might be a cozy room, a place outside, or somewhere we have never been physically. These types of places are not always available to us when we need them most. A mental space, accessible through guided imagery can be available to you whenever you need it. Having an inner safe space can be effective in helping people cope with stress and increasing their sense of safety and comfort. When fear, panic, or self-destructive thoughts become overwhelming, you can use your imagination to go to an inner space that can be restful—a personal space to regain a sense of safety, to restore strength and to help restore a feeling of being grounded.
2. Handout *Establishing a Safe Place: Reference Sheet* to each participant. Explain that the first part will be a written, reflection activity and the second part will be an arts based activity.
3. Once participants have completed the writing activity on *Establishing A Safe Space*. Introduce the second part of the activity and provide participants with art making materials.
4. Invite participants to draw their safe(r) place by using the art materials they have chosen. Explain that there are many ways to represent your safe place, from different points of view including aerial or side views, to a simple diagram or a more elaborate illustration, whatever format works for you. Explain that the participants can take their art work home with them and don't have to share with the rest of the group unless they want to.
5. Invite the participants to make a “security check” of their safe places by adding any features that will enhance their sense of safety and comfort. For example, if your safe place is a room, you may want to add a door that can be closed or a window with a beautiful view.

<sup>59</sup> Adapted from: Cohen, B., & Barnes, M. (1995). Establishing a Safe Place. In *Managing Traumatic Stress Through Art: Drawing from the Center*. Sidran Press.

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## Reference Sheet: Establishing A Safe Space<sup>60</sup>

1. List all the places, both real and imaginary, that have felt relatively secure and safe to you during the course of your life. (If you have never had an experience of a safe place, don't be discouraged. Try to imagine what such a place would be like).

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2. Take your time and allow yourself to begin to see, in your imagination, a place that feels safe to you. It can be real or imaginary, or have elements of both. You are in control of this visualization. If anything appears that makes you uneasy, you can replace it with something comforting. This safe place can be located anywhere: in a room, house, building, boat, or outdoor setting. This environment may be based on one or more of the safe places you listed above or you may want to create an entirely new safe place, it is up to you. Write some notes describing a safe place suitable for you.

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3. List the features that you want to include in your safe place. These might be elements that are comfortable (pillows, blankets, furniture), familiar (meaningful items from among your possessions), or pleasurable (flowers, music, books).

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# See-Name-Check It<sup>61</sup>

## Summary:

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In this activity participants will learn how to recognize the signs of abuse, and ways they might respond to these situations.

## Format:



Large Group

## Technique:



Discussion

## Materials:

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*Tips for Supporting a Friend: Reference Sheet*, Flip chart

## Activity Breakdown:

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1. Let your participants know that this activity is about learning to See, Name and Check the warning signs of abuse, risk factors of abuse, and/or abusive behaviour. There are powerful societal reasons why seeing and naming abuse can be challenging. Abusive behaviour makes people feel uncomfortable and/or afraid. The social norm to “mind your own business” is hard to overcome. People in situations of abuse often have difficulty ‘seeing’ what is happening to them as violence or even the danger they are in. As a society, we are trained in many ways not to see. Learning to SEE it – NAME it – CHECK it is a matter of understanding it as a process of small and subtle steps.
2. Ask participants to brainstorm signs that someone is in an abusive situation, and ways we might respond to these situations.
3. Write 3 columns on a flip chart with the titles: SEE it, NAME it and CHECK it.
4. If participants are having trouble thinking of examples, here are some to get them thinking:

### SEE it:

- Notice a gut feeling that something is not right
- Find the willingness to look squarely at the situation

### NAME it:

- Name what you are seeing; “that’s a bad bruise, or I heard yelling...”
- Just the facts
- Say it out loud, first to yourself “it looks or sounds like abuse”
- Say it to someone else. Don’t sit in isolation.
- Name your concern; “I am worried about you...”

### CHECK it:

- Check the situation; is it dangerous? Trust your gut. If so, call 911 or someone from your community that you trust who can provide safety and conflict resolution.
- Check yourself; don’t judge, don’t jump to conclusions, don’t try to fix it—ask questions.
- Check with a professional e.g. someone from a sexual assault center, someone at school, abuse counsellor: same principle - name what you saw (just the facts) and then ask questions about what to do.

<sup>61</sup> Adapted from: Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children. (January, 2013). *Make it Our Business: Workplace Domestic Violence Program*, p.9. London, ON: CREVAWC.

- Check it with the person; are they open to hearing from you at this time? Are you the right person to ask them about the situation? Ask yourself if you feel able to support them in being available to talk or to accompany them? If you feel unable to help, it is important to tell them and help them find someone else who is able to assist them.
5. Brainstorm out loud or on a flipchart, suggestions for what to say to a person experiencing the abuse. Here are some examples:

**Helpful suggestions for what to say:**

- I'm concerned about you. Is everything OK? Is there anything I can do to help?
  - I am here for you.
  - And if you feel they are open to it: Are you being hurt?
  - Be prepared to handle a disclosure – I believe you. It's not your fault.
6. Hand out Tips for Supporting a Friend: Reference Sheet. Invite participants to discuss these tips afterwards or at another time.

.....

**Facilitation tips:**

The conversation can be redirected to be based on participant's experience of giving and receiving support.

.....

**Adaptability:**

This activity can be adapted so that participants share the ways they recognize violence (i.e. social and peer responses to violence). Questions to ask: "What are common societal responses to violence?"; "How can we support peers experiencing intimate partner violence?" (Examples of supportive attitudes are being accepting, empathetic, respectful, engaging and focused).

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## Reference Sheet: Tips for Supporting a Friend<sup>62</sup>

*These tips were written by young survivors themselves.*

- **Believe** them.
- **Listen** fully and **non-judgmentally**.
- Remind them that **they are not to blame**. The abuse is the responsibility of the perpetrator.
- **Maintain the survivor's confidence** and resist the urge to share their story with others unless given permission by the survivor.
- **Ask** what their needs are for **safety** and **healing**.
- What do they **need** from friends, family and community members?
- Help them explore what would help with **accountability** and **reparations**. Advocate for a process which **supports** them in making decisions they identify as the right choices for their individual needs.
- Remember the **survivor knows best**. They are the experts of their own life and experiences. Don't pressure them to act before their time or before they are ready,

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# My Community, My Cause. Making It Happen.<sup>63</sup>

## Summary:

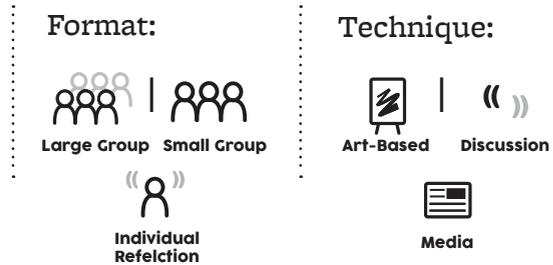
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In this activity participants will explore the concept of advocacy and create an advocacy project based on each group's chosen issue or topic.

## Materials:

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Chart paper, Markers, Video clip, Media player



## Activity Breakdown:

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### Activity 1: What Can Advocacy Look Like?

- Play a video clip from the toolkit, for an example of an advocacy campaign
- Based on the above examples, lead a brainstorming session on what advocacy means. Ask participants to think about a time when they spoke out about something. Go around the room and ask people to share.

### Activity 2: My advocacy project

- Split the group into 3 smaller groups. Have each group choose a space in the room for them to work. Each group must include 1 to 2 facilitators who will work to assist them in creating their own advocacy projects. Below is a list of questions that need to be answered and discussed.

#### Step 1

- Choose an issue or topic that is important to your group.
- Ask yourself why this issue exists.
- How will you organize awareness and/or prevention of this issue? Come up with a strategy.
- For example, the group could do a community fundraiser, a rally, a letter or petition to the government, or an arts show / talent showcase.

#### Step 2

- What is the goal and mission of your project?
- What specific issue are you bringing awareness to? Why is this issue important?

#### Step 3

- What roles and responsibilities are included? Who will do what?
- How will you do outreach or promote your project?
- Is there anyone outside your group you need to contact? (For example: venue owners, a catering company, sponsors, teachers).
- How much time is needed for preparation?
- Do you need money for this project? How much?
- Come up with a basic budget outline that displays how much money you need for each task.

#### Step 4

- Look over all project details. Is anything missing?
- Does everyone know what their roles and responsibilities are?
- Is there enough money in the budget to carry out the project?
- What are some challenges you can foresee?
- Are you confident that this project will be successful?
- Give each group 15 minutes to present their project plan to the rest of the group. Ask questions and provide feedback. Have the group vote on which idea they find the most exciting.
- If the group is particularly excited and motivated, ask them if they would be interested in meeting again to figure out how they can work on the chosen advocacy project and actually get it done.

#### Debrief:

Have the participants personally reflect on:

- “My actions have the power to ...”
- “I will learn more about ...”
- “I want to make my community better by ...”

## Conclusion

The richness and depth of this resource is directly linked to the collaborative way in which it was created. Numerous consultations were held across the country engaging young women, program practitioners, support workers, service providers and policy makers. Subsequently, an advisory group and a team of community partners, in collaboration with Girls Action Foundation, embarked upon creating a resource to address intimate partner violence faced by young women and to identify gaps in the services that exist nationally, as well as in local communities. Young women face violence in many forms in today's society and intimate partner relationships are no exception. They also come across many barriers, both external and internal, when experiencing violence.

Although violence is a prevalent phenomenon, there are ways of addressing it and improving the lives of those impacted, as well as communities as a whole. There is no one proven method—instead, approaches must be multi-faceted, rooted in the community and take into account the intersection of identities and the systems of power that exist around certain identities and realities. We hope that this resource will provide support to young women experiencing violence and equip program facilitators with the understanding and knowledge needed to name and address violence in their programs. It is clear that programs such as those offered by our partner organizations for the project and other members of the Girls Action network do improve the lives of young women experiencing violence and the communities they belong to. More programs specifically designed for young women are one of the many ways we can address and reverse the violence young people face in relationships.

Thank you to Justice Canada for providing the funding opportunity to create this project and address such an important and systemic issue. We also want to thank every individual and organization who took the time to consult with us and contributed to this guide and the project. To the organizations and facilitators who see the consequences and impacts of violence everyday but continue to run programs and offer services to improve the lives of members of their communities, thank you. To the young women who shared their stories and experiences, it is difficult to name and discuss violence but we thank you for having the courage to do so. Thank you especially to our community partners and advisory group members who have supported the development of the guide from the beginning. The work you do is very important and powerful in the lives of individual young women and the community as a whole. Thank you for taking the time to share your experience with Girls Action while continuing to provide front line and meaningful services and programs for those in need.

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# FORMAT

# TECHNIQUE

Activity									
	Large group	Small groups	Pairs	Individual reflection	Game	Arts-based	Discussion	Role Play	Media
<b>TRUST</b>									
Spool of String	●				●				
Two Truths and a Lie	●				●				
Group Agreement	●					●	●		
Community Sketch	●					●			
Compliment Circle	●				●				
"Me" Quilt		●		●		●			
<b>POWER</b>									
Where is the "P" between you and me	●	●				●	●		
Power Flower	●					●	●		
Privilege Pendulum	●		●		●		●		
<b>VIOLENCE</b>									
What Violence Is	●	●		●			●		
Human Rights in our Lives	●		●				●		
<b>GENDER</b>									
Genderbread Person	●	●				●	●		
Gender Stereotyping	●	●					●	●	●
What We Hear, What We Think	●						●		●
Man/Woman Box	●						●		●

# FORMAT

# TECHNIQUE

## Activity



Large group



Small groups



Pairs



Individual reflection



Game



Arts-based



Discussion



Role Play



Media

## RELATIONSHIPS

**My rights, My Relationship**



**Relating in a Relationship**



**Expression Without Words**



**Healthy/ Unhealthy Relationships**



## JUSTICE

**Justice Poem**



**The Learning Tree**



**Consent as Communication**



**Consent & Sexual Assault**



**Self-Care & Coping Maps**



**Establishing a Safe Place**



**See-Name-Check**

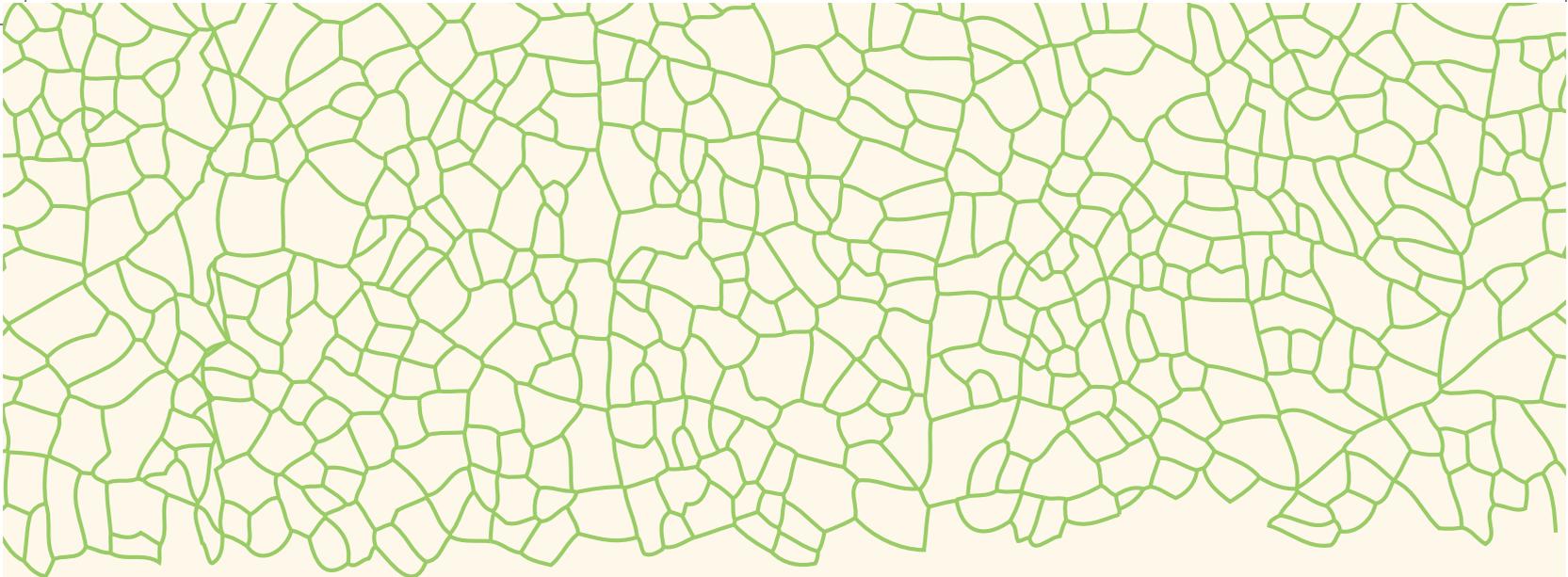


**My community, My Cause**









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