



Pass the Megaphone

SFCC's Advocacy Toolkit

VOLUME 1

About SFCC

Students for Consent Culture Canada is an organization dedicated to supporting anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism on campuses across the settler colonial state known as Canada by serving as a hub of resources, tools, community, and institutional memory for student engagement. SFCC also engages in advocacy at the provincial and federal level to create better policies, practices and accountability measures to protect students. Our overall goal is to build relationships of solidarity across social justice movements and organizations to support cultures of consent on campuses and in our communities across Turtle Island.



Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the funding and support from the Government of Nova Scotia through the 2020-21 Sexual Violence Prevention Innovation Grant and our partner South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre in Halifax. Thank you for your belief in us to do this work and support survivors.

Volume 1 of the Pass the Megaphone: SFCC's Advocacy Toolkit could not have been done without the thoughtfulness and dedication of Kelsea McCready, Chantelle Spicer, Kate Mullin, Addy Strickland, Ellis Pickersgill, Maddy Brockbank, and Tia Wong.

Solidarity with Indigenous Communities

Our work today takes place primarily in Kanata (also known as Canada) on the unceded territory of different Indigenous communities. Sexual violence is a symptom of the larger capitalist, colonial system that "Canada" is based off of and continues to perpetuate. We cannot speak of consent on campuses without also acknowledging, unpacking, and actively addressing the ongoing non-consensual relationship Canada has with Indigenous communities. We cannot effect change in a culture where sexual violence is an everyday occurrence without including addressing other forms of violence in our approach.

SFCC supports the varied strategies that Indigenous peoples are using to protect their land and their communities, and we commit to dedicating time and resources to working in solidarity. We acknowledge that we, as people living and working on unceded territories, are accountable to the laws and protocols of the people who have cared for this land since time immemorial. It is our intention to continue learning how to honour this responsibility.

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Chapter 1: Advocacy Basics



1.1 Defining Advocacy

Broadly speaking, advocacy is a process of socialization that seeks a desired change. In practice, advocacy generally takes place through members of civil society supporting or recommending a cause or proposal to target actors. In campus anti-violence advocacy, target actors are often institutions and varying levels of government with the goal of producing policy and/or legislative changes that lead to learning environments free from violence or fear of violence. A variety of activities can fall under the category of advocacy, including campaigning, protesting, lobbying, research, and public education.

In our consultations toward the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence, students shared that the direct action, student activism, and visibility of survivors is an important part of campus support, accountability and prevention initiatives to end violence.

1.1.1 Campaigning

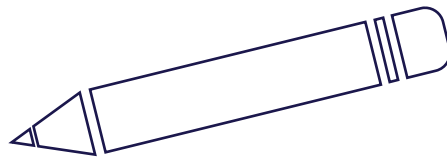
Campaigning is a broad term which describes organized action that seeks to achieve your desired outcomes. The types of activities you might undertake in any particular campaign will depend on the specific context of the issue area, as well as who's involved and where the campaign takes place. Some common advocacy campaign strategies that will be discussed in further detail include protesting, lobbying, and public education. The duration of these activities within a campaign can be time-bound (we are going to do a walk out on this date) or ongoing (such as education or awareness type campaigns). Campaigns can be conducted by organizations, groups of organizations (sometimes referred to as coalitions or advocacy networks), and/or individual activists.

Regardless of the types of activities that your campaign undertakes, it is important to plan out your strategy and be clear, concise, and consistent with what your desired outcomes are. Who are the targets of your advocacy? What is it that your campaign is asking for? A well-known framework that helps advocates strategically plan campaign objectives is called the SMART framework.

SMART goals are:

1. **Specific:** The intended outcome of your advocacy campaign should be specific. This will allow you to create a clear plan that includes the tactics to be used, who is assigned to particular tasks, and allotment of resources. This will help your campaign maintain focus and increase the likelihood of success.
2. **Measurable:** Developing quantifiable indicators or criteria to be met will allow you to track progress made by your campaign, know what your goals are, and when they have been achieved.
3. **Attainable:** While the issues that advocates address are often part of much larger systems of oppression (ex. cisheteropatriarchy, colonialism, systemic racism, etc.), it is important that your campaign tackles particular goals that are attainable based on the resources available and the structure(s) that you are advocating within.
4. **Relevant:** The goals of your campaign should be consistent with the values of your organization and benefit the population that it is intended to serve.
5. **Time-bound:** Setting deadlines or target dates for the completion of campaign tasks or goals will make it easier to stay focused and on-track.

SMART Goals Worksheet



	SMART Questions	SMART Answers
Specific	<p>What is the goal?</p> <p>What outcomes do I want to achieve?</p>	
Measurable	<p>How will I know that I've accomplished the goal?</p>	
Attainable	<p>Is this goal attainable based on available resources and capacity?</p> <p>What will I need to achieve this goal?</p>	
Relevant	<p>How is this goal relevant to the issue area of concern?</p> <p>How will this goal benefit the groups that it is intended to serve?</p>	
Time-bound	<p>How long of a timeframe is needed to achieve this goal?</p> <p>What is the deadline for accomplishing this goal?</p>	

Another way to plan out your goals is using a system called “Quadrants” (which looks exactly how it sounds!). The Quadrants planning tool asks four main questions:

What do I need to do?	Who can help me?
Think about the steps you’ll need to take in order to achieve your final goal. Maybe that means setting up a petition site, starting a Facebook group, or having a meeting with fellow activists.	Make a list of all the people who you think could help you in your campaign. Who do you know who has a useful skill, a plethora of connections, or experience in the area you’re advocating in?
What could challenge me?	When will I have it done?
Think about potential barriers or oppositions you might come across while implementing your campaign. What could you do now to prevent or address those challenges?	Set yourself timelines for each of the tasks on your list, as well as for when you’re aiming to achieve your final goal. These can be flexible, but it’s good to have a general idea of when things should get done!

1.1.2 **Protesting**

Protesting, or public demonstration, is a display of dissent or objection to a situation. A non-violent protest can take a variety of forms including marches, rallies, and sit-ins and can also include artistic expression. While protests can sometimes occur spontaneously in response to significant events, they can also be strategic components of campaigns. When a protest falls under the latter, much like planning the broader campaign, it is important to know what the desired outcome of the demonstration is. Who or what are you trying to influence? Where would be the most effective location(s) to do this and why? What tactics would likely be the most effective?

For example, if your student group wants to protest against a harmful institutional sexual violence policy, you are most likely trying to influence higher-level administrators including the Board of Governors (refer to section 1.2 for further details). As such, your desired outcome might be a review of the policy and subsequent amendments that rectify the issue. Once you know who or what your targets are and what you’re trying to accomplish, you can then decide where the ideal locations for demonstrating would be and what strategies to use. It might also be helpful to refer to prior demonstrations that have occurred at your school and get in touch with the groups who organized those events to get an idea of what may be effective.



For the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.

– Audre Lorde



Content warning: The following sections on protesting will discuss securitization and policing. While the goal is to help you be prepared and know your rights in the event that you're in certain situations, we understand that this subject matter can be difficult and potentially triggering, especially for folks who have been disproportionately targeted by police, historically and in the present. Please take care of yourself and know that you can skip over sections or come back to them later if you need to.

Types of Nonviolent Resistance¹

- Marches
- Silent protests
- Leafleting
- Rallies
- Picketing
- Boycotts
- Sit-Ins
- Civil Disobedience
- Protest Art

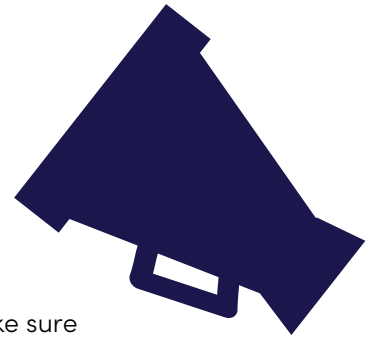
Protesting Safely

While planning your protest is helpful for increasing the likelihood that your desired goal will be accomplished, planning is also crucial to ensure that everyone involved is safe. Your ability to protest is protected in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms under Section 2(b) freedom of expression and 2(c) freedom of peaceful assembly. There are a few circumstances where these protections may be limited, so it is important to know your rights prior to organizing or participating in a protest.

¹ Further reading on nonviolent resistance: [Healing Resistance: A radically Different Response to Harm?](#) by Kazu Haga and [East Point Peace Academy](#).

If you are organizing a protest:

- Decide on a date, time, and location;
- Get the word out through posters, leaflets, social media, etc. Make sure that your promotional materials are clear about who is organizing the event, include a precise location of where to meet, and give a brief description of what you'll be doing (i.e. marching, walking out of classes, etc.);
- Especially if you will be holding a large public event like a rally or a march, make sure that you and your group as organizers have a safety plan in place. Organizers should maintain awareness of the situation and be prepared to address problems that may arise;
- Establish how you will be communicating with attendees before, during, and after the event; and,
- If possible, have organizers wear an identifiable marker, such as a bandana or armband, to help participants distinguish who they are. Not only does this inform attendees who they can go to if there is a concern, but they will also know who to look to for direction.



If you are attending a protest:

- Learn about the event:
 - » Find out who the organizers of the demonstration are → have they planned demonstrations before? How did those events go? What is their reputation in the activist community?
 - » If you have any accommodation needs, connect with the organizers ahead of time to ensure that these needs will be met.
 - » Ensure that you are comfortable with the location, date, and time of the demonstration.
 - » Critically evaluate the purpose, goals, and tone of the protest. If something doesn't sit well with you or makes you feel unsafe, then it may be worth reconsidering your attendance.
- Before you go:
 - » Designate a friend or family member who will not be at the protest as your contact person. This means that you should inform them that you will be attending a demonstration and putting in place an emergency plan that may include: providing them with contact information for legal counsel, having them reach out to your employer if needed, and/or arranging child or pet care.
 - » Memorize or write on your arm the phone numbers for a lawyer and family members that you can call in the event that you are detained.
- At the demonstration:
 - » Form an "affinity group," a small group of fellow protesters who agree to stick together during the demonstration for safety and wellbeing reasons. Have a plan in place in the event that someone gets separated from the group.
 - » When you arrive at the demonstration, survey the crowd and determine a few possible exit strategies in the event that you need to leave quickly. As the demonstration progresses, keep checking in to make sure that you know where your potential exits are.
 - » If you bring your phone, make sure you protect it with a password. Disable fingerprint or other biometric data protection measures.
 - » Wear clothing and shoes that are comfortable. You may also want to wear clothing that helps to conceal your identity and any distinct markers, such as tattoos.
 - » Ensure that you keep a government issued ID with you.
 - » Bring water, snacks, and any medications in their original containers.

- » If you require medication, it is advised that you bring enough to last two to three days.
- » Avoid bringing criminalized substances, weapons, or items that could be interpreted as a weapon by law enforcement.
- » Do not bring unnecessary documents containing personal information about yourself or your comrades, organizing plans, agendas, or anything else that you would not feel comfortable being confiscated.
- » If you are taking photos or videos to amplify the event on social media, make sure that faces of fellow protesters are NOT visible.
- » Minimize, or, if possible, avoid interaction with any police or security personnel that are present.
- » Although there may be situations that happen that are out of your control, do your part to help keep the assembly peaceful.

In the event that you are caught in a situation with police and/or security, it's important that you know what your rights are.

- Under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, you have the right to:
 - » Know your charges → an officer might not tell you what those are right away and any potential charges can change while you are in custody.
 - » Remain silent → you do not have to share information outside of what is necessary (see below).
 - » Speak to a lawyer → in the event that your desired lawyer is not able to take your call, you will likely speak to duty counsel.
 - » Be brought before a court within 24 hours → you would likely be brought before a Justice of the Peace rather than a judge, and this appearance may or may not include a bail hearing; uncomplicated matters will typically get their bail hearing within 24 hours.
- Information that you are required to share with police in the event that you are stopped:
 - » If you are stopped while walking on foot, you do not need to share any information unless you are under arrest.
 - » If you are stopped while riding a bicycle and accused of an infraction, you are required to provide your name and address → refusal of providing this information can result in arrest.
- If you are under arrest, you must provide your:
 - » Name
 - » Date of birth
 - » Current address
- In the context of protesting on campus, you will likely encounter your institution's own security or police force rather than the municipal police of the community where your school is located. This is important to understand because the role, authority, and type of presence of campus security/police will vary depending on the institution.
- Therefore, it is important to gain an understanding of your institution's form of security and what their role is (i.e. are they able to speak on behalf of the administration?).
- Your Charter rights and guidance on what information you need to provide will still apply; be aware that there may be coercive attempts to get you to provide information that you are not required to share.

Disclaimer: This resource is intended for informational purposes and does not constitute legal advice.

1.1.3 Lobbying

Lobbying is a strategy that can occur at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels. The Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying Canada defines lobbying as, “communicating, with public office holders, for payment, with regard to: the making, developing, or amending of federal legislative proposals, bills or resolutions, regulations, policies or programs; the awarding of federal grants, contributions or other financial benefits; and the awarding of a federal government contract (for consultant lobbyists only).”² Arranging a meeting with a public office holder can also be considered an act of lobbying.

At the federal level, lobbying activities are regulated by the [Lobbying Act](#). Municipalities and provinces also have their own laws and by-laws on lobbying activities. In general, it is very important to have an understanding of the regulations relevant to your region and context as there are standards that you are required to adhere to. For example, if you are being paid to do lobbying activities at the federal level, you must register as a lobbyist with the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying Canada within 10 days of being retained as a lobbyist. Additionally, there are expectations for the conduct of lobbyists with a particular concern over conflicts of interest. At the federal level, these expectations are outlined in the [Lobbyists’ Code of Conduct](#).

Once you have determined that you are able to participate in lobbying activities, it is important to develop a strategy that includes:

- A solid and credible understanding of the issue area
- Precise and well-defined objectives → what do you want the outcome to be?
- Defined targets of your lobbying → who are you reaching out to and why?
- How are you going to carry out your lobbying activities → are you going to arrange a meeting with a key figure? Write a letter?
- Use the language of the government against itself - what have they already said on this issue? How did they say it?
- A plan to document a written report of any meetings
- A monitoring/evaluation strategy → how are you going to hold figures accountable to and/or follow-up on any promises or commitments that were made?

There are various ways to approach lobbying depending on your issue area and context. Importantly, when communicating with public office holders, it is crucial to be well-prepared, informed, and clear on what your desired outcomes are and how such changes can be made. You will often have a very short period of time to communicate with public officials, so it is important to stay on track. Also ensure that you keep a record of any meetings and commitments made for your organization’s records.

Additional resources on lobbying:

- [The Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying Canada](#)
- [Amnesty International Campaigning Manual](#) (chapter 11)
- United Food and Commercial Workers Union “[How to Lobby Your Elected Official](#)”

2 For further guidance, refer to the “[Frequently asked questions](#)” on the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying Canada website.

Knowing the Limits of Lobbying

It is important to meet with those who hold positions of power to make the changes we need to see. In these meetings, we get to carry our stories and the stories of our communities into spaces that *could* make change. It is also part of our due diligence as organisers to put these stories and our recommendations into as many ears as possible (and with as much respect as possible).

However, it is important to have realistic expectations about what will happen in these meetings with government officials. I have found that at best, government officials will tell you what they are already doing (which often isn't enough) or what you want to hear. Use your energy and expectations wisely by not attending meetings alone (bring your comrades!), try to set actionable items together with the official you are meeting with, and know that ultimately, change is going to come from a lower level than this meeting. It is going to come in yourself, your community, or your campus. Remember what Audre Lorde said: "For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change."

Also do not forget about the staff of the government! When the elected official you are meeting with doesn't win their next election or they decide not to run anymore, the staff will most likely still be there. They are also the individuals most likely to be carrying out the work you are asking to be done. Include them in our emails and try to schedule meetings with just them – we have done this with some staff of a party here in BC and have found it very effective to understand what is realistic and where there may be holes in the plan.

The opposition can also be useful to meet with to get things done. Part of their role is to hold the government of the day to account (even if it's something they would never do themselves, they will happily point out what the current government is following through on). During question periods or debates they might be able to bring up your concerns or questions. A good tip for meeting with opposition governments is to know the language that will be most effective so do take the time to do your research!

– Chantelle Spicer, former Women's Representative for the BC Federation of Students



Our Co-Chair Chantelle and Alliance of BC Students Executive members, Anna-Elaine Rempel and Grace Dupasquier, met with then Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Daryl Plecas about accountability in post-secondary institutions and sexual violence policies in January 2020.

1.1.4 Research

Research can be useful to your advocacy in a variety of ways. While research should always be conducted with care and aim to do no harm, especially if you are working directly with individuals with lived experience, the outputs of your research do not have to be purely for academic consumption. In fact, doing research as part of your advocacy work can be an opportunity to make knowledge on certain issues more accessible.

There are various methods that you might consider using in your research, from reviewing relevant literature and statistics to undertaking primary research such as interviews or focus groups with individuals in the community of interest. Whichever approach you decide to take, it is important to prioritize research ethics. If you are doing research in partnership with an institution, then you will need to gain approval from the relevant ethics board prior to beginning your project.

If you are conducting research within a setting that does not have access to an institutionally-based ethics board, The [Community Research Ethics Office](#) (CREO), based in Waterloo, Ontario, is a wonderful resource for individuals and groups across Canada who are seeking an ethics review procedure and/or consultations on their proposed projects. The CREO and institutional ethics boards at Canadian institutions will adhere to the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#) (TCPS 2, 2018). Regardless of where you are undertaking research, it is strongly recommended that you review this policy prior to undertaking research involving human participants.

In order to maintain a survivor-centered approach to your research, you might consider using participatory or co-design forms of research where subjects are actively involved and have agency in the progression of the project. For example, in [Participatory Action Research](#) (PAR), participants essentially become co-researchers to incorporate three core principles: participation (life in society), action (engagement with experience), and research (growth of knowledge). Participatory styles of research move away from viewing subjects as data to be observed and towards acknowledging the value that participants can bring to research through interaction and promoting a sense of agency.

Once you are finished the data collection process, you can disseminate your findings in a variety of ways within academia and beyond, including through:

- Publicly accessible reports
- Actionable policy recommendations
- Scholarly articles
- Social media campaigns
- Artistic mediums, such as a zine or performance art
- Presenting at conferences
- Presenting to relevant community groups
- Press releases
- Creating accessible toolkits and other informative resources

Survivors are not research objects or topics – we are knowledge carriers!

SFCC has conducted a wide variety of research as a part of our advocacy and activism, including the [Open Secrets project](#), and has supported student organizations like PEARS at University of Toronto in their research as well. If you are interested in learning more about our experiences or would like to talk through your project, please contact us at chair@sfcccanada.org.

Worksheet Example: Open Secrets Project

Having research that lifts up the experiences of survivors as expertise, that provides recommendations for building post-secondary experiences free from violence, and that provide tools for other anti-violence advocates is an important tool in our work. An important part of having that good research is for the research planning process itself to be good – to be survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and intersectional in its approaches. These are not checkboxes, but opportunities to be thoughtful in how you build care into all aspects of your research. We have prepared this worksheet to give you a roadmap for thinking through these different stages of research design and action in caring ways. Below is an example of how we completed the worksheet for our project [Open Secrets, Power, Professors: A Study on Rape Culture and Accountability at Canadian Post-Secondary Institutions](#).

Intersectional and Trauma-Informed Approaches

This project is committed to amplifying voices and experiences that rarely get into the mainstream.

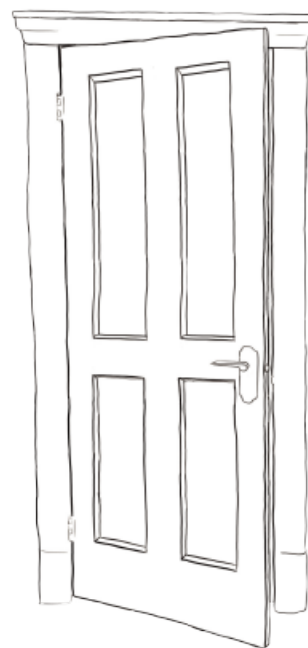
This means *all* survivors, which underlines the importance of working in ways that are trauma-informed. It also means we pledge to pay attention to our continuing gaps in networking, representation, knowledge and power, and to minimise or account for those gaps in our work. But *how* are we doing this?

Intersectionality is complicated. We do want a broad range of voices and experiences represented in the research. But working intersectionality is not just about listing and checking boxes of identity categories, such as race, class, gender, sexuality, ability. It is about recognising how experiences of oppression or expressions of power mesh together, interlock, and crystallise into various combinations of privilege or disadvantage, violence or freedom from violence, legitimacy or marginality.

Most research on sexual violence in postsecondary settings has not looked at intersectional identity factors. It tends to be based on simple gender binaries and often carried out in relatively homogeneous, US student populations. Recent work is moving away from that model (dominated by psychology), and our research will be in dialogue with this new stream, as well as work outside the narrow range of sexual violence research.

Below are some charts that (begin to) itemise concrete ways that the Open Secrets project has integrated both trauma-informed and intersectional approaches into each stage of the work. They're divided into the following sections:

- Overall study design and protocols
- Surveys and Interviews: Design and Content
- Literature and Policy Review
- Surveys and Interviews: Data Analysis (shared methods/approaches)
- Planning, Knowledge-Sharing and Report Writing
- Outreach and Knowledge Mobilisation



Overall Study Design and Protocols

Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical approach: Survivors are subjects and protagonists, policy analysts, experts: survivors are not mere objects of study or policy This project challenges conventional notions of expertise to centre the knowledge of students, survivors and survivor activists Study passed rigorous, community-oriented ethics review Care taken to establish actual informed consent for all participants Participant comfort and control prioritised over data collection Research training focused on accountable and supportive interviewing of survivors Adjusted timelines when COVID-19 disrupted society, allowing for more time for both participants and researchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand and amplify range of voices on this topic; to gather data from more sources, to support students' experiential data about power, identity and sexual assault at universities Bilingual surveys, interview capacity and promotions—aim of linguistic diversity/access Promoted to reach multiple regions of the country—aim of regional diversity/access Recruit and train members of research team from wide range of identities, communities and experiences

Surveys and Interviews: Design and Content

Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple opportunities to opt out No question is mandatory (can skip); no forced or coerced disclosure Multiple reminders about community counselling resources High standards of confidentiality and anonymity which are clearly outlined Next steps and contact information clear at conclusion of survey/interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-identifying via write-in identity categories for gender identity, sexuality, and race-ethnicity Catalogues economic and other factors (Domestic/international/out of province, exchange, disability, parent, PT or mature stud.) Asks about comfort reporting various forms of violence (racism, sexual violence, transphobia, etc.) Asks about reflections on role of identity in accountability for sexual violence Various questions about power relations in academic spaces

Literature and Policy Review

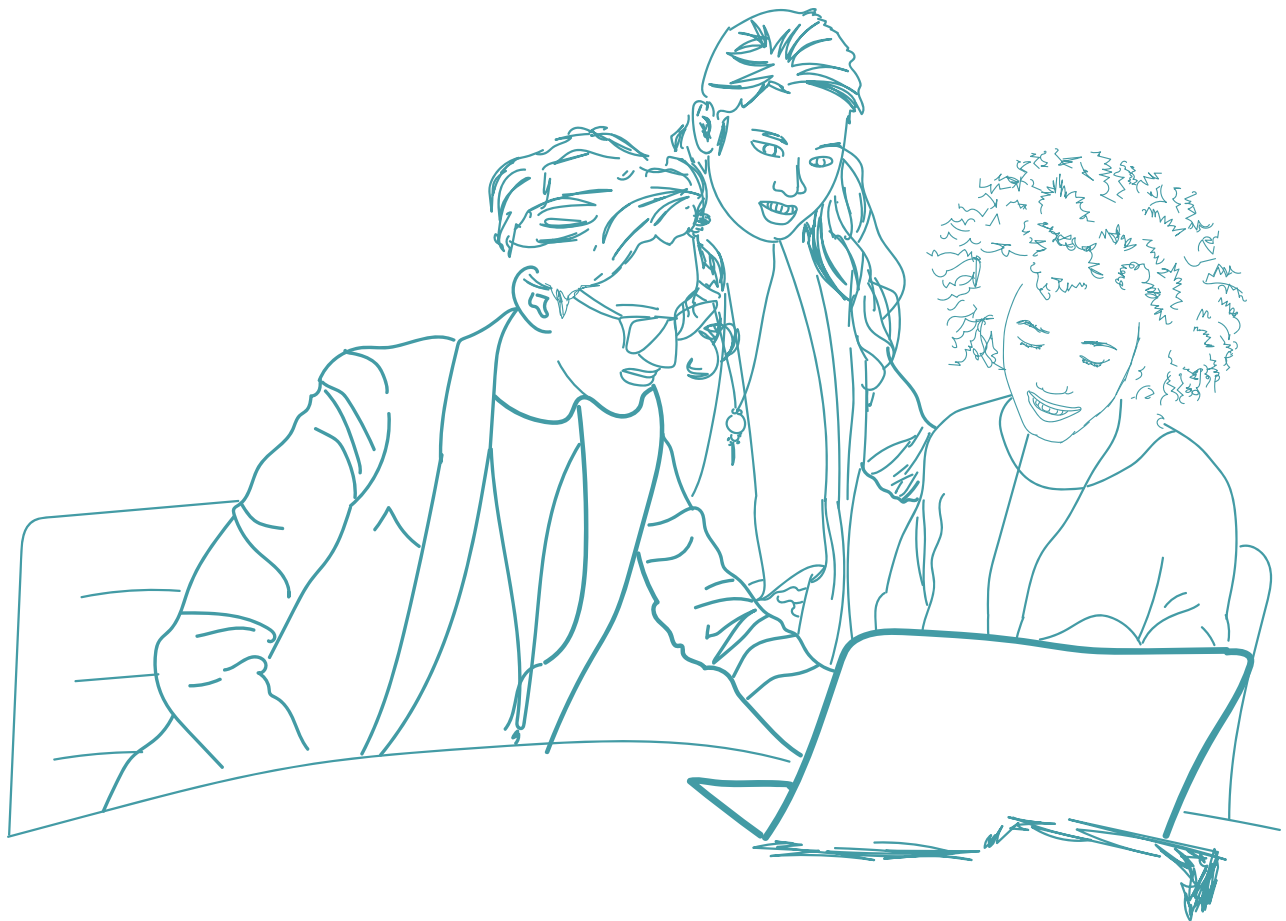
Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For communities and individuals that have been re-traumatized by sexual violence research that asks for repeated re-telling of trauma: commitment to incorporate existing record into this research • Read widely across multiple disciplines/sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seeking out research that uses intersectional and anticolonial methodology, to inform analysis and to highlight in report • Reading mainstream literature for gaps related to limited data and research capacity on identity • Reviewing and incorporating/legitimizing mediums that survivors are using that may not be printed in academic lit - social media, blog posts, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical approach: Survivors are subjects and protagonists, policy analysts, experts: survivors are not mere objects of study or policy • This project challenges conventional notions of expertise to centre the knowledge of students, survivors and survivor activists • Attentive to how participants articulate concepts, experiences; stay true to their words, quote rather than paraphrase when referencing narratives, large ideas, unique experiences • Codes developed from collective knowledge and experience in SFCC, and refined through engagement with preliminary data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit effort to analyse and amplify more marginalised or silenced experiences • How do participants themselves articulate the importance (or irrelevance) of identity? • How do they comment on or connect their identity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » their experiences with sexual violence » being heard by admin » having their pain understood » getting services or accommodations » “deserving” sexual assault/trauma, or other rape myths » access to power » access to empathy » resources of strength and resilience, community, etc. • What common experiences or analyses emerge from respondents in the same group, without them making the connection explicit? • Be aware of how easy it is to take a generalisation about data for granted just because a majority of people said it, without trying to understand more about the shared experience or identities of the group

Planning, Knowledge-Sharing and Report Writing

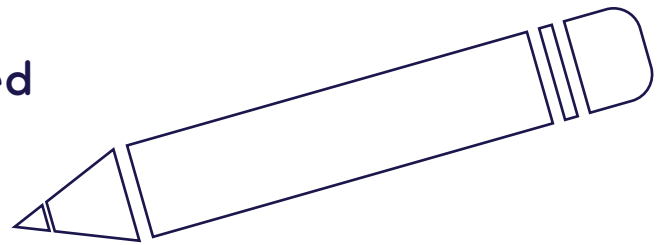
Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking on team members’ capacity, adjusting timelines and workloads as needed • Breaking down work into small pieces that can be carried by many people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising the identities that we carry and our subjectivity in report writing, we will honour our expertise in writing the report, as well as those of other survivors • Take opportunities to be educated about intersectional approaches to research wherever possible • Have discussions about the language we use in the report and how it impacts survivors and those carrying intersecting identities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a report in a thematic model rather than a conventional model—to prioritise the words and experiences of participants rather than fit them into more rigid (often quantitative) academic or policy models • Writing the report in a way that provides care for the reader when disclosures are made. We have taken on the responsibility to take on people’s stories and experiences with care. This is done by preparing the reader, using language that allows people to take in what they are reading, and be conscious of what you say after • For us as writers: don’t write after a certain time, don’t write in your bed, don’t consume pop culture about violence, check in w each other – know who in your network can provide the care you need (buddy system) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach and consultation with specific community groups for feedback on analysis and report drafts

Outreach and Knowledge Mobilisation

Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Release a preliminary summary so students, survivors, and activists can have access to knowledge as soon as possible• Create useable tools for student activists• Intervene in existing policy narratives - this is a policy issue but also an issue of culture• Create social media campaigns as a part of knowledge production and mobilisation• Use art (like zines!) to create softer/gentler entry points into difficult conversations and stories• Using graphics within the final report to communicate ideas and to provide care and support for readers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When making graphics or other visual components, being aware of having representation of diverse individuals or communities impacted by sexual and gender-based violence• Considering accessibility: having good image descriptions, as well as using accessible fonts and colour combinations• Having workshops, sharing, and feedback sessions with communities most impacted by violence and imbalances of power



Intersectional and Trauma-informed Approaches Worksheet



Overall Study Design and Protocols

Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches

Surveys and Interviews: Design and Content

Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches

Literature and Policy Review

Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches

Planning, Knowledge-Sharing and Report Writing

Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches

Outreach and Knowledge Mobilisation

Trauma-informed approaches	Intersectional approaches

1.1.5 Public Education

Public education and research often go hand-in-hand. Cultivating awareness and understanding of the issue that your advocacy work is addressing allows others to see the importance and necessity of your cause. This may even mobilize more people to support your work directly.

Public education can take a variety of forms and the methods that will make the most sense will depend on your particular context. For example, if you are campaigning about an issue that is directly related to the context of your particular post-secondary institution, then it may be most useful to carry out public education activities for members of your campus community and perhaps the municipality that your school is located within.

Examples of public education include, but are not limited to:

- Facilitating workshops and discussions
- Circulating a newsletter relevant to your organization and/or cause
- Handing out leaflets, pamphlets, or zines
- Writing an article or opinion piece for a newspaper (including student publications)
- Publishing accessible reports
- Hosting guest speakers, panels, and roundtables

When working on education initiatives, it's important to remember that everyone is coming into this conversation with different levels of experience, knowledge, and expertise. Similarly, topics of violence are sensitive and best practice assumes that there are always survivors in the room. To keep spaces both safe and accessible, set clear expectations on how people can ask questions, explore, and otherwise engage in the conversation, as well as how they can care for themselves and receive support as needed.

Here are some tips for creating effective education campaigns³:

- Use specific and concrete examples and scenarios
- Avoid explicitly violent language or images
- Provide a debrief space and/or support resources
- Consider and include different contexts and situations
- Build in feedback mechanisms for continued improvement

1.2 Understanding the structures that we advocate in

Knowing the structures we advocate in is foundational to understanding who to put pressure on and how to make change in post-secondary systems. Although it will be difficult to capture all of the variations of institutional structures across the country, we want to highlight some of the bodies you may encounter in organizing and what their roles typically are.

1.2.1 Board of Governors

The Board of Governors (BoG) is considered the highest level of governance in the post-secondary system and legislation around post-secondary education. Though each province has its own system for determining membership and a term of reference for this body, it is generally charged with overall responsibility for the business of the institution. Examples of their responsibilities include overseeing policies (like sexual violence

3 Further reading: [Evaluating Sexualized Violence Training And Resources: A Toolkit For BC Post-Secondary Institutions](#)

and human rights policies!), property, consultation processes regarding tuition fees, decisions around changes to tuition fees, hiring senior administrators, and budgets.

We encourage you to look into who sits on your board—who makes these high level decisions that impact so many of our experiences as students, who are your potential allies (two students generally sit on the BoG!) and who will push against your calls for justice and accountability? It should be noted that the balance of power in voting in the BoG often lies with members who have been appointed by the government. These members have, historically, been from outside of your community or area, meaning that it's possible they are unaware or unfamiliar with issues specific to your institution, city, or region. Additionally, while these members have been tasked with having the interests of students and the post-secondary sector at heart, they are frequently partisan appointments and may be obliged to uphold the ideology of the government that appointed them. Efforts have been made by various student organizations and federations, including the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators, and the Confederation of University Faculty Associations to raise awareness about this critical issue of bias.

Issues you might bring to the Board of Governors include:

- Unfairness in policy or procedure
- Lack of institutional accountability to policy or procedure
- Silencing of survivors reporting violence (this may come up in the institutional reports the BoG presents or hears—this kind of annual reporting is often mandated in policy to happen every year so keep an eye on the agendas)

1.2.2 Senate

The Senate is the branch of institutional governance that deals with the academic governance of the institutions including standard academic topics like formulating the academic plan, creating graduate attributes, examination policies to more complex and involved issues such as working to Indigenize the institution. The members of the Senate are mostly faculty, though it does include some administrators, staff (like librarians!) and students.

Issues you might bring to the Senate include:

- Issues with racism, misogyny, or discrimination in curriculum that you want to address at an institutional level
- Ensuring policies around anti-violence and accommodations for survivors appear on all course syllabi
- Encouraging anti-violence education to be a part of curriculum
- Addressing academic accommodations for survivors

1.2.3 Institutional Committees or Working Groups

Although the Board of Governors and Senate are charged with these different forms of governance, much of the work of these governance bodies is done in committees. We encourage you to look up the list of committees at your institution, as these are often good entry points into the main governance bodies—and are more likely to be able to take real action on the issue you are carrying.

Besides the committees of BoG and Senate, your institution probably has a vast web of committees doing various kinds of work for the institution that impact policy, practice, and student lives. Regarding your work to end sexual and gender-based violence, there is most likely a committee which has been tasked to do work toward this that may include planning events and education campaigns. Some committees are tasked with policy review or creation—this is actually common when it comes to anti-sexual violence policies. If in doubt, you can always email the Chair of the committee to get terms of reference for the group.

Issues you might bring to an institutional committee include:

- Proposing an educational campaign or to propose a collaborative partnership on an anti-violence event;
- Being part of policy and procedure reviews, creations, or analysis or demanding better consultation practices;
- Unfairness in policy or procedure;
- Lack of institutional accountability to policy or procedure;
- Recommending better data collection; and
- Increasing support systems for survivors on campus

These committees generally have some kind of student representation (or they absolutely *should*, anyway!).

1.2.4 Faculty Unions or Associations

The type of relationship you develop with the faculty union or association (FA) on your campus will be dependent on a few things: the President or Chair of the FA, the politics of the FA, and how successful divisive politics have been. Students and faculty have been pitted against each other by administrators for decades, meaning we have much to overcome in building collaborative, solidarity-based relationships. However, it is an area worth investing energy (in some cases) because FAs often have perceived or real power (again depending on the politics of the FA on your campus).

An excellent entry point into an FA may be a committee or working group that is addressing equity or diversity issues, a womens' or queer caucus, or knowing a faculty member who could "vouch" (or advocate) for you to give a presentation or speak at a meeting.

Canadian Union of Faculty Associations – British Columbia

In the summer of 2021, Chantelle and Connor met with Executive members of the Canadian Union of Faculty Associations – BC to discuss aspects of the Open Secrets Report.

We had worked as a team to prepare an agenda for our meeting, so that we could direct the kinds of topics we would cover and the purpose of the meeting. Our primary intent was to begin breaking down the division that university administrators have been driving between faculty and students for decades, so we knew that our expectations should be low - that the work of building this relationship needs to be slow and reciprocal if it is to be sustainable.

During the first part of our meeting, SFCC and faculty Association members got to know who we were, what our positions in our various movements are, and a bit about our organizations. From there Connor and Chantelle were able to provide some details about the goals of the Open Secrets Report and the ways we see faculty playing a role in the project and how we build campuses free from violence. Although the Open Secrets report specifically looks at profesor-perpetatred violence and we had concerns about this putting faculty on the defensive, framing the conversation as "how do we do this work together?" and recognising the allyship of faculty we have experienced was very successful. From there, we were able to talk about our shared perspectives on how a lot of systems and processes don't serve everyone. At the end of the meeting, they shared they will take our conversations back to the rest of the Executive as these are important issues they as faculty are also dealing with every day.

1.2.5 Staff or Administrative Unions

Don't underestimate labour unions on your campus! Labour unions often have an anti-violence campaign going on surrounding topics such as bullying and harassment in the workplace (your learning environment is their workplace!). If you are attending a post-secondary institution that has unionised Teaching Assistants or Sessional Instructors, that is an excellent place to start, as they are often fellow students—they can also have significant power at the institution and much experience in organizing and activism.

Issues you might bring to a Faculty Union or Association, or to a Staff or Administrative Union, include:

- Endorsements on campaigns you are running (such as signing onto a letter)
- Requests to speak at or participate in a rally or town hall on issues of sexual and gender-based violence
- Having conversations and knowledge-sharing around sexual and gender-based violence happening on campus
- Creating joint policy and procedure recommendations
- Providing funding so your campaign and organizers can be properly compensated for their immense amount of labour

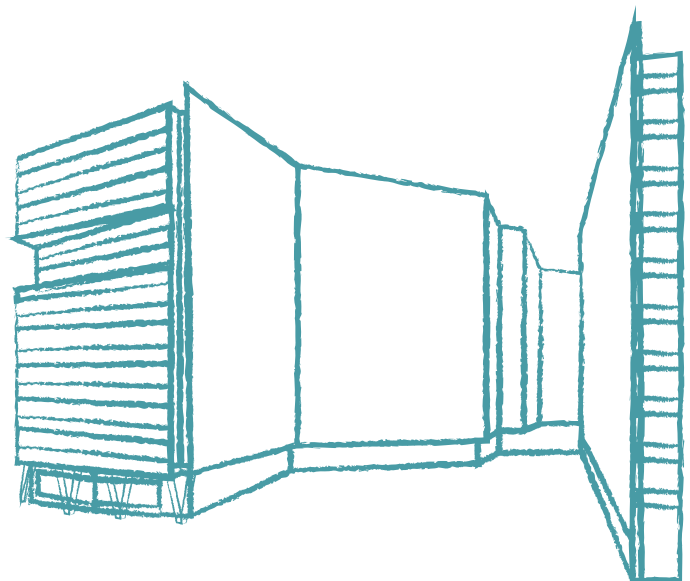
1.2.6 Student Unions or Associations

Similar to labour unions, your relationship with your student union may be determined by their politics, but also their capacity. As fellow students and with many responsibilities of their elected positions they often have a lot on their plates. However, student representatives often have training in campaigning, advocacy, talking to the media, and other useful skills that can be drawn on. They also may have relationships with key administrators or decision-making bodies because of their position in the student union that could be useful to your advocacy. For instance, because they are a student union representative they may have a guaranteed position in a governing body or a committee that deals with the issue you are addressing or a regular meeting with the president of the institution.

We would like to note that though we have worked with many excellent student unions, student representatives or student unions do not always have experience in anti-violence specific work and organizing.

Issues you might bring to a Student Union include:

- Proposing an educational campaign or to propose a collaborative partnership on an anti-violence event
- Student-run surveys for collecting information about experiences of harm (they have or should have emails for all their members!)
- Collaborating on rallies, protests, and campaigns
- Providing supplies for campaigns or events (printing, tables, megaphones, etc.)
- Skill and knowledge-sharing
- Getting you into spaces they have access to
- Proposing a new program that requires physical space or funding
- Requesting funding to cover campaign, program, or event costs



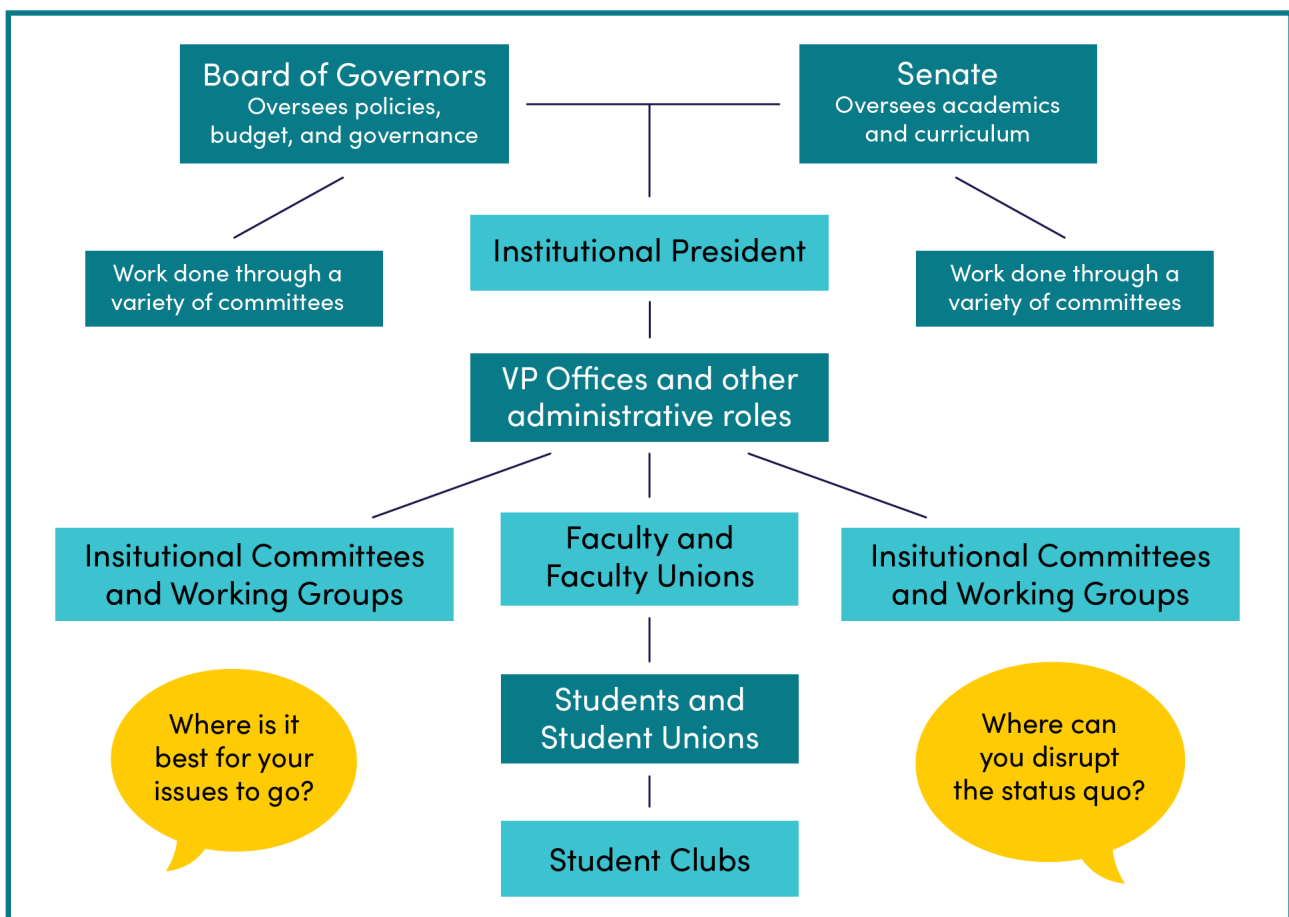
How Prepared is Too Prepared? An anecdote about interacting with a Students' Union on the subject of Peer Support

In 2019, my friend Emma and I stood in front of our Students' Union to present the idea of a student-led peer support program. We'd done our research, called and emailed similar programs on campuses across the country, connected with dozens of local and campus supports, interviewed, hired, and trained a team of amazing volunteers—and yet, when the council voted, we got an answer we weren't anticipating: they said no. The motion to launch the Peer Support Program failed because the majority of councillors didn't think we had enough information.

Now, we did have enough—we had more than enough information on everything from program construction, to training, to confidentiality—but our issue was in the presentation. When we first presented to council, we gave a short overview—we didn't detail the process of creating the program or recount every minute detail of our operating procedures, but after sitting through question period, it was obvious that's what council wanted to hear. And so, a few months later, we returned to council with an eighty-page package of *details* (granted, longer than it needed to be... perhaps out of spite), and passed the program as a pilot. Two years later, it's an established part of our campus.

The lesson: when dealing with official processes, show up overprepared. There will always be questions or concerns that pop up out of the blue, unanticipated, but the more you're able to prepare beforehand, the easier it will be to mitigate those concerns in the moment, and the less time you'll need to spend going back and forth down the road. *Make your proposal impossible to poke holes in.* This toolkit can help you do that.

– Addy Strickland, Co-Founder of the StFX Peer Support Program



Not Your Typical School Project

An anecdote about partnering with student groups

Partnering with other student groups on campus, in your area or online can help foster a sense of community in this challenging work. When putting our efforts together we can create impactful projects that ties our network, supporters and groups together. Not only can it provide unity in our movement against sexual violence, it helps lighten the work load for us individually to create larger pieces of work together. In this process, communication is essential to ensure everyone is on the same page and using their efforts as anticipated to reach a common goal. This isn't like a school group project where one person does it entirely, it's essential that all ideas and perspectives are included. While work may be divided differently based on interest or experience, it's crucial everyone has a voice in this movement.

I've personally worked with many different student groups and organizations over the last few years, having both situations of good and bad communication. It's important to reflect on your own capacity and ability within the group. Share that with your teams and respect the boundaries you set for yourself and others. When communication is broken, boundaries are crossed or respect is forgotten it's okay to take a moment to reset the team and learn from the situation or possibly even step away from the project.

While partnering with an disability activist team in 2020, I was in a position with a large capacity to support our project. Due to miscommunication, our priorities didn't align and the work I put in was cut. A large part was discussing consent, which left me discouraged and used. This shut down collaboration and the sense of a welcoming environment. It was in this situation where I recognized being part of this team was actually more harmful than the work we were doing. I stepped back from my role and used my efforts to explore new opportunities.

– **Kate Mullin, Founder of RH&T ([@r.healing.t](https://www.instagram.com/rh_t)) and volunteer with SFCC**

1.3 Making your work survivor-centered

There is no checkbox or formula for making your work survivor-centered as knowing what this looks like comes from being in respectful and trusting relationships with survivors. However, there are some things that could be considered while doing the work of ending violence on campus:

- What community safety mechanisms do you have for survivors who carry risk in coming forward?
- Bring other advocates into the room with you. The reality is that white, cis, able-bodied women will most often seem 'more easily approachable' by university administrators and media, and for that reason will be invited into more rooms and contacted more often by media for interviews.
- Know your place - Before you start a new campaign or organising a rally on campus, see if there is a group that already exists on campus and is doing similar work and find out how you can support them. Make sure your work acknowledges the work of others, as well as the fact that marginalized students with intersectional identities are the ones who are most likely to experience sexual violence as students and are the least likely to be believed by persons in positions of authority.
- Reflect on your positionality. For instance, if you are a student representative, you will often be called upon to be the expert in what students are experiencing. Be aware of how much space you are taking up. Step back and reflect on whether someone has already said what you want to say, or if someone is in a better position to speak to what you wish to say
- Accept that you are learning and will make mistakes. Perfectionism is a part of white supremacy culture that creates toxic organising cultures. It also prohibits us from learning from each other.

- As we will make mistakes, we also have to be willing to learn from them rather than defending those mistakes. This is a part of building community accountability and good relationships in anti-violence movements



Making Your Work Survivor-Centered

[Video](#) | [Transcript \(PDF\)](#)

1.4 Relevant legislation and key points

Each province that has legislation surrounding sexual violence offers an opportunity to learn what could be done, what could be done better, and what potential mechanisms might be available for greater accountability in your province. Governments (and administrators) like it when there is a precedent that can be followed rather than having to take risks or be creative themselves).

We would like to note that, similar to the policies on our campuses, there is often a vast difference between what is in the legislation and what actually happens if post-secondary institutions are in violation of the legislation. These are early days in the Acts, and there is still much to learn here.

British Columbia

Bill 23 (2016): Sexual Violence Misconduct Policy Act

- Requires a stand-alone sexual misconduct policy
- Policy must be reviewed at least once every three years and when requested by the minister
- Establishment and subsequent reviews must include student consultation
- Implementation report made to institution's governing body annually

Alberta

None

Saskatchewan

None

Manitoba

Bill 15 (2016): The Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention Act

- Requires PSIs to adopt and implement a policy that (1) raises awareness of sexual violence, (2) addresses issues related to consent, (3) addresses training on sexual violence, and (4) establishes complaint procedures
- Developed in consultation with students, is culturally sensitive, and is easily accessible
- Mandatory five-year review

Ontario

Bill 132 (2016): Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan

- Amended subsection 17 of the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities Act
- Requires stand-alone sexual violence policy
- Policy must be reviewed at least once every three years
- Student input is required in the development of the policy and every time that it is reviewed or amended
- Institutions must collect data and information relating to the policy for the ministry and for annual reports to the board of governors
- *Amendment filed September 2021: Regulation 131/16 of the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities Act → As of March 1, 2022, students who are accessing supports or services for sexual violence are not to be asked irrelevant questions, including in regards to sexual expression or past sexual history, during investigation processes by faculty or staff

Québec

Bill 151 (2017): An Act to Prevent and Fight Sexual Violence in Higher Education Institutions

- Requires stand-alone sexual violence policy
- Acknowledges intersectionality
- Policy must be reviewed at least once every five years
- Institutions must establish a standing committee on their policy that includes students
- Students must be consulted when policy is under review

Newfoundland and Labrador

None

New Brunswick

None

Prince Edward Island

Chapter P-11.2 (2021): Post-Secondary Institutions Sexual Violence Policies Act

- Required PSIs to establish and maintain sexual violence policy that addresses and raises awareness of sexual violence, addresses issues of consent, includes provisions on the prevention and reporting of sexual violence, establishes reporting procedures
- Consultation with students is required when the policy is reviewed or amended
- Considers cultural sensitivity

Nova Scotia

Guidelines and Recommendations for Nova Scotia Universities and the Nova Scotia Community College, Development of Survivor-Centric Sexual Violence Policies and Responses (2019)

- Uses language such as 'rape culture', 'trauma-informed', and 'survivor-centred'
- Likely due to it being a series of recommendations rather than policy
- Revictimization
- Mandatory three-year policy review
- Encourages campus discussion and input
- Recommendation to evaluate policy as per OurTurn

Yukon

Yukon University Act (2019)

- Requires stand-alone sexual violence policy
- Policy must include provisions regarding prevention, training on sexual violence, complaints, and response procedures
- Does not specify review periods or consultation processes

Northwest Territories

None

Nunavut

None

Chapter 2: Navigating Formal Complaint Processes



While the process of filing a formal complaint is not, in itself, an advocacy activity, this movement is very much led by survivors who may actively be involved in complaint procedures, have been through them in the past, are considering accessing complaint mechanisms, and/or have supported someone who has filed a complaint. Therefore, in anti-violence work it is important to be aware of how such procedures operate, the nature of the structures that house them, and when these mechanisms can be accessed.

Knowing about how complaint procedures work can also be helpful to your advocacy work by contributing to your understanding of the structure that you are advocating within. Especially if your advocacy intends to target specific policies, learning about how they play out in practice can help you to highlight attributes that could be more survivor-centered and/or trauma-informed.

2.1 Post-secondary Institution Complaint Mechanisms

The improvement of institutional complaint mechanisms is a long time advocacy issue for SFCC. We recognise that many of the processes created by institutions continue to serve as protectionary mechanisms for the institution's reputation, are often not grounded in justice or rights for survivors, or will cause institutional betrayal. We do, however, recognize the rights of survivors to pursue any mechanism available to them and for survivors to be supported in navigating those mechanisms.

Complaint mechanisms within post-secondary institutions are the resources that you access if you would like to file a report or complaint against an individual or group of individuals who are also part of the campus community or - if possible within the policy - adjacent to the campus community. Generally, other students, staff, faculty, and volunteers are eligible to be brought into one of these processes. The particular intake office that you will go to for certain complaints will vary depending on the particular institution. For example, when considering sexual violence policies, it is increasingly common for Canadian post-secondary institutions to have a Sexual Violence Response and Prevention Office (SVPRO) that administers relevant mechanisms and procedures or for a student services office to handle such cases. Such policies may also be administered within multiple offices depending on who is involved in the complaint. For example, if a staff member is involved, your institution's Human Resources Office and any relevant collective agreement may also be part of the process.

Accordingly, it can be quite overwhelming to discern where to go at your school to file a complaint. Within policies, it should be made clear where to go, but you may also find it helpful to book a preliminary consultation at an intake office to speak with a staff member about what kind of services are available and what one should expect to experience if they open a complaint. This will allow you to gain a better understanding of what you can expect from institutional policies before committing to filing a complaint. On this note, a staff member should never make you feel pressured to disclose or initiate a process before you are comfortable. However, in cases where something that you share causes concern that you or someone else is in danger, they will be under obligation to break confidentiality under their professional standards.

Remember that regardless of the policy, you have the basic rights of procedural fairness. Procedural fairness is integral to all policies and procedures, though the level of procedural fairness required does vary depending on the circumstances and the forum for the decision. Being fair requires a nuanced decision-

making process that takes into account all relevant circumstances, as opposed to strict reliance on the blanket application of a policy that was never designed to anticipate all situations and circumstances.


The basic rights of procedural fairness include:

- The right to be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect;
- Clearly defined and stated rights and responsibilities of each party involved in the process;
- The right for respondents to complaints to be made aware of allegations and evidence brought against them.
 - » Not all decisions made about graduate students are disciplinary in nature. To reflect this, procedural fairness includes students having a right to notice that a decision affecting them will be made, the possible outcomes of that decision, and enough information about that decision (and adequate notice) that they are able to participate meaningfully in the process;
- An understanding of what to expect from all stages of the process including including estimated time frames, delays, potential outcomes, and reporting
- The right to reasons explaining how any decision is made and what information was considered in this process.
- An impartial decision-maker;
- If you should have concerns about the confidentiality of the process you are involved in you have the right to raise this concern and get clarity about the role of confidentiality within that particular procedure;
- The ability to be represented or accompanied by legal counsel, a support person, and/or an advocate;
- Parties should also be made immediately and regularly aware of their rights and options for representation, advocacy, services, and supports throughout the process;
- The rights to transparency related to any investigation and adjudication processes; and
- The right to appeal decisions you feel violate procedural fairness.

2.2 Provincial and Territorial Human Rights Complaint Mechanisms

If you are concerned that you are being discriminated against or being treated unfairly by an institution on the basis of a protected characteristic under your provincial or territorial human rights code, you may qualify to submit an application to a Human Rights Commission and/or Tribunal. In order to be accepted, your complaint must fall within the scope of the relevant human rights code and the respondent must fall within provincial jurisdiction. If your application is accepted, there is a requirement that the respondent actively participates in the process. However, it is important to be aware that Human Rights Commission or Tribunal Procedures are quasi-judicial, meaning that they are not court processes and are not legally binding per se. Decisions will be in the form of recommendations and compliance with such will not be monitored by the issuing Commission or Tribunal. In the event that the respondent continued to violate your rights, despite being issued recommendations, you could use outcomes from these procedures to support a subsequent court case.

Prior to pursuing a complaint at the provincial level, it is important to be aware that Human Rights Commissions and/or Tribunals will require strong comprehensive documentation and evidence of the complaint(s) being made within the application process. It is also important to know that these processes tend to be long and it can take months to receive an outcome.



Procedural fairness is what you can expect to happen in any policy or procedure

To receive more information on your provincial or territorial Human Rights Commission and/or Tribunal, please refer to their linked websites which will often have a comprehensive information section for prospective complainants:

- [Alberta Human Rights Commission](#)
- [British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal](#)
- [B.C. Office of the Human Rights Commissioner](#)
- [Manitoba Human Rights Commission](#)
- [New Brunswick Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Nunavut Human Rights Tribunal](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)
- [\(Ontario\) Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario](#)
- [\(Ontario\) Human Rights Legal Support Centre](#)
- [Prince Edward Island Human Rights Commission](#)
- [\(Québec\) Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse](#)
- [Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Yukon Human Rights Commission](#)

2.3 Federal Human Rights Complaint Mechanisms

In the context of anti-violence work at post-secondary institutions, it is extremely unlikely that someone would be eligible to access complaint mechanisms through the Canadian Human Rights Commission as they only hear complaints about the Government of Canada or a specific federal government department, banks, airlines, phone companies, trucking companies, or First Nations Governments. However, you may find it useful to access their website as an educational resource to gain a further understanding of human rights in the Canadian context and where to go if you are not eligible to file a complaint at the federal level.

2.4 Ombudsperson

An Ombudsperson is an independent official who investigates complaints regarding procedural and systemic unfairness. Provincial or territorial Ombudspersons will hear complaints from members of the public regarding provincial and municipal government organizations, post-secondary institutions, school boards, child protection services, and French language services. Similar to provincial and territorial human rights commissions and tribunals, Ombudsperson complaint processes are not court procedures and the outcomes will be in the form of recommendations. However, provincial Ombudspersons generally offer more in terms of monitoring compliance with recommendations as once the public sector in question accepts a set of recommendations, they will be required to report on their implementation progress. Within this process, the Ombuds Office will also keep track of new complaints against an organization and take note of

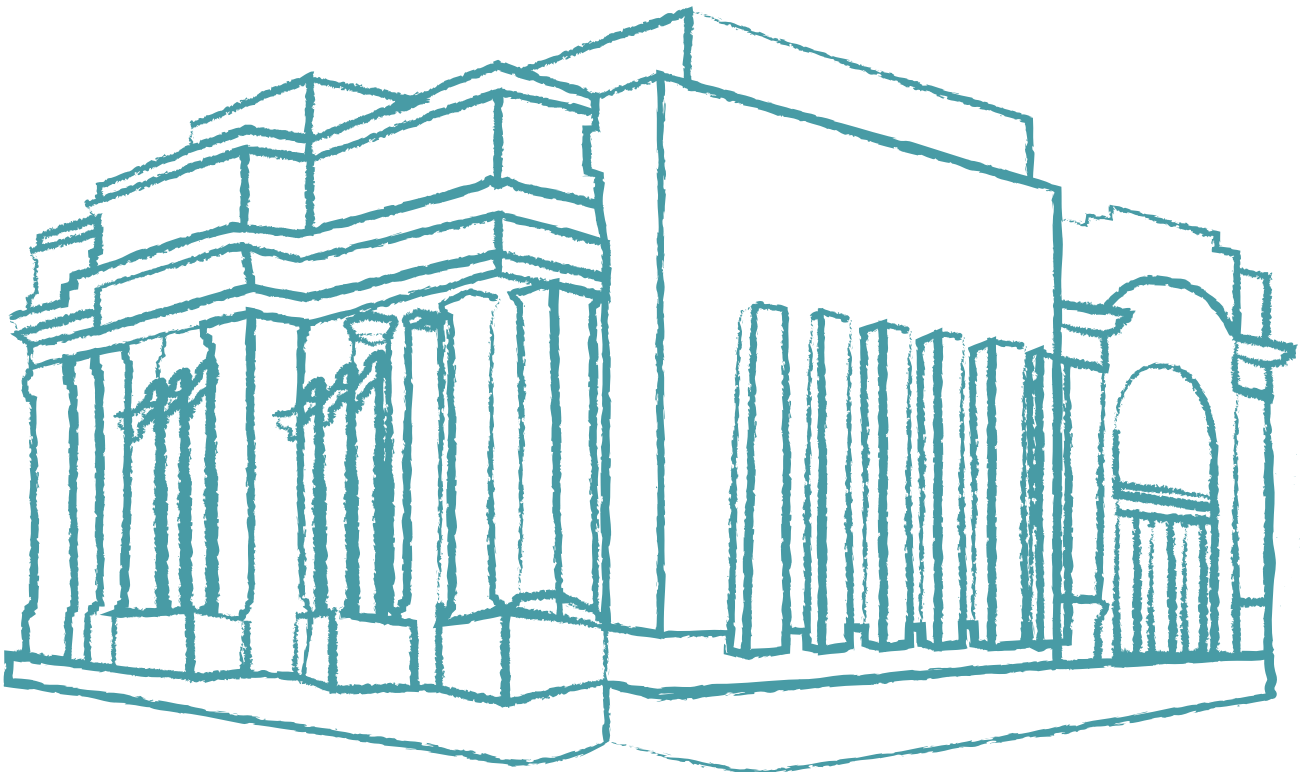


possible recurring issues. Do be aware that in some provinces the provincial Ombuds Office may not consider complaints from a post-secondary institution, so do ensure you check their terms of reference.

Many campuses have their own ombuds office that operates independently from the university (albeit often funded by the institution and/or the student union). Ombuds people can be a helpful resource to talk to if a student finds that they are being treated unfairly under a policy and can make recommendations to file a complaint with the provincial Ombudsman or help students assess their case.

Provincial and Territorial Ombudsman (note that Nunavut and Prince Edward Island currently do not have a provincial Ombudsman office):

- [Alberta](#)
- [British Columbia](#)
- [Manitoba](#)
- [New Brunswick](#)
- [Newfoundland and Labrador](#)
- [Northwest Territories](#)
- [Nova Scotia](#)
- [Ontario](#)
- [Quebec](#)
- [Saskatchewan](#)
- [Yukon](#)



Chapter 3: Taking care of yourself and your community



3.1 Preventing and coping with burnout

To start, we need to understand what burnout looks and feels like. Burnout is a state of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion as a result of giving too much, or excessive or prolonged stress.

Symptoms of burnout might include:

- Emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion
- Reduced sense of personal accomplishment or meaning in work
- Brain fog or trouble concentrating
- Decreased interactions with others (isolation)
- Physical exhaustion
- Increased emotional intensity or irritability
- Trouble sleeping
- Withdrawal from regular activities
- Impaired judgement or difficulty in decision making

While capitalism and our current culture of work has made burnout seem like a benchmark of hard work, it is not something to strive for, and it can have a multitude of long-term consequences to our overall health and wellbeing.

With this in mind, rest is revolutionary!



I believe that the powers-that-be don't want us rested, they don't want the Earth rested, they don't want us as bees rested—because they know. They know that if those folk rest enough, they're going to figure it all out. They're going to figure it all out and overturn them and the entire system.

-Tricia Hersey

When advocating for an issue you care about, it is easy to add too much to your plate, which can lead to exhaustion and burnout. Practicing strategies for taking care of yourself is just as important as doing the advocacy work itself. Keeping good boundaries and maintaining a sustainable pace will make you a more effective advocate. Besides, you are just as important as the work itself! Capitalism and white supremacy tell us rest is a luxury, when in reality it is a necessity and therefore resting is resisting!

Everybody has different needs, capacity levels, and rest routines, so there is no one way to prevent burnout. Instead, we offer these ideas as places to start, and encourage you to listen to yourself and what you need most of all.

Importantly, the way that you take care of yourself does not have to be extravagant. While it is wonderful that there is more mainstream awareness of mental health and wellbeing, this area is not immune from the internalization of Capitalist ideas. These days, forms of “self-care” that are promoted to us through various platforms, such as social media, tend to be rooted in consumerism and focus on solitary “luxury” activities (for example, buying expensive bath products or skin care routines). This is not to say that there is anything wrong with partaking in these activities if you enjoy them and they are accessible to you, but it’s important to recognize that the things that are most promoted to us are not the only valid ways to take care of ourselves. Even the act of doing nothing at all can be a very liberating form of self-care.

Additionally, as we will discuss in sections 2.5 and 2.7, taking care of yourself and preventing burnout does not have to be a solo activity. Building movements that foster a culture of collective care can be immensely helpful in ensuring that our community members’ needs and boundaries are met which in turn, helps the sustainability of the overall movement.



Preventing and Coping with Burnout

[Video](#) | [Transcript \(PDF\)](#)

3.2 Understanding Capacity

Capacity is simply how much a person is able to take on at any given time, without causing them harmful consequences. An important part of understanding capacity is understanding that there is no right or true capacity level; it both varies based on the person and exists on a spectrum for each person, changing based on various circumstances. Personal stressors, health status, financial obligations, and mental health can all impact someone’s capacity level. Nobody can tell you what your capacity is; you have to decide how much you can reasonably take on at any given time. Being honest with yourself about your limits allows you to communicate, and creates a stronger team moving forward.

A common way to visualize capacity is with something called a “window of tolerance.” Everyone, no matter what kind of work they do, has a window. Our window is the space within which we are able to function how we normally do, process and integrate information, and complete work in a way that is safe and fulfilling. When a situation pushes us outside of our window, when stressful situations that we could normally tolerate increase in frequency, or when our environment causes our window to narrow, the amount of stress or trauma we are able to handle gets smaller.

At SFCC, we use Slack to help keep us organised and in touch with each other. We made a [#check-ins](#) channel there where we can share what we are working on, how much capacity we have that week, ask for help, or otherwise communicate where we are at and how we are available.

3.3 Communicating boundaries and limits

Knowing your boundaries and limits is important, as is communicating your capacity to your comrades. When you communicate your needs and limits, the work can get done in a different way, and everyone can support each other. How you do so is up to you, but here are some options you can try:

- Regular group check-ins that ensure people can express their capacity to the group
- Sign-up systems for tasks that allow collaboration and ongoing communication

3.4 Re-evaluating and Re-Working

Capacity exists on a spectrum and it changes all the time based on circumstances. It is normal and okay for your capacity level to change, even in the middle of a project. That's why it's important to have regular check-ins with yourself and your team so you can re-evaluate your capacity level and communicate it. Sometimes this means re-working a plan, but it is worth it to keep everyone on your team healthy and well.

3.5 Collective Care—stepping up for each other

Communicating capacity levels and checking in with each other is how we create a culture of collective care on our teams and networks. When advocating for a specific topic or change, it's easy to get caught up in the work and forget about the guiding values of what you're fighting for in the first place. Advocacy usually happens (and really always should happen) in a team setting, and prioritizing care for the team is a revolutionary act within a culture which prioritizes competition and violence over collective action and care.

This means there may be times we have to step up to fill in for others who have to set a limit, but it also means we have to set our own limits too. When working on a project with a non-negotiable deadline, maybe everyone who can pitches in a little extra, but gets to take a break once they are done. Or maybe the deadline is flexible, and moving the project forward at the pace the team can handle is more important than an arbitrary date.

Taking care of each other is the work; you don't need to define yourself or your team based on your perceived accomplishments or advocacy wins.

As you consider working as a team, try to recognize your place in the work and how your privileges may make some burdens easier for you to bear than others. Everyone deserves rest and boundaries, but some people might be impacted more heavily by the work than others, and if you have the privilege and capacity to step up, do so.

We Care About Your Care

An anecdote about rest and care in anti-sexual violence work

It's okay to feel tired, restless or discouraged in this area of work. Others are feeling the same way too! It's hard to fight against a system that is designed not to listen to survivors or activists; but that doesn't mean your work isn't important!

I often feel discouraged when comparing myself to others, their capacity or set expectations in things unrelated to success in this field. As an example, in many training sessions that I've attended, often coming

from a non trauma informed lens, it will prioritize results when hosting events or putting our work into the world. I've learned this isn't always a healthy view in terms of anti-sexual violence work. While it may provide a guide on how to improve it in the future, it can be harmful to worry about the number of people interacting with it. Even if one person views it, it can impact everyone around them that you won't see. It's also important to remember that when we are talking about topics like sexual violence, people may be viewing your work but unable to interact as a risk to their safety or unable to have the capacity to support it. That doesn't mean it wasn't worth your efforts! Just doing this work shows support to survivors and shares to our community that sexual violence isn't okay. I've found it helpful to not come into spaces looking for success but as an opportunity to learn more and help others learn as well. We are all fighting to end sexual violence so we must uplift each other in this work.

– Kate Mullin, Founder of RH&T (@r.healing.t) and volunteer with SFCC

Common Pitfalls in Organising and How to Overcome Them

- The tireless advocate mentality
 - Make and communicate boundaries
 - Take time to heal and rest
- Perfectionism
 - Show up ready to learn rather than as an expert
- Urgency culture
 - Take breaks from social media
 - Be in long-term relationships with your partners
- This that organising is only protests and rallies
 - Support and cultivate the artists in your organising group
 - Create gratitude practices for notetakers, event planners, cooks, medicine makers



3.6 Little Things Add Up: Some Common Strategies for Sustainable Work

Start with a smaller workload. You can always add on projects if you feel you're able to. It's much more difficult to ask someone for help once you've committed to something.

Ask for help! It's very difficult, but it's perfectly okay to not complete something, or ask for support in your task.

Write it down! Sometimes when we think about our work or the tasks involved, it becomes overwhelming, or we lack important details. Writing down specific tasks that need to be done can give you a clearer picture of exactly what needs to happen, which can help you be honest with yourself and others about what you can reasonably manage to take on.

Take breaks. Schedule them, if that's easier for you, or listen to your body and take breaks organically. Do what works for you, but make sure you take care of yourself!

Recognize what kind of work is easier or harder for you to take on, and try to give yourself a balance of tasks so you aren't loaded with only very difficult tasks.

3.7 Community Care and Mutual Aid

What is Community Care?

We envision a world where people invest in each other's health, success, wellbeing, and happiness. This is the core of community care: we take care of each other because we recognize that everyone in our communities deserves to live a life free of violence, and full of fulfillment and joy. We live in a world where that is not a reality on a structural or cultural level, but we have the power to prioritize each other even when the rest of the world won't.

So while capitalism and white supremacy teach us that we should put ourselves first, to the detriment of others, we resist by building systems of care for each other, by refusing to give up on each other, and by rejecting violence and competition.

We can build care in our community by:

- Feeding each other and sharing resources
- Providing nonjudgmental space to listen when someone needs to share
- Communicating our capacity and stepping in for each other when we can
- Building systems of accountability when harm is done within the community
- Sharing skills and learning from each other
- Creating and respecting a common understanding about what is acceptable and what is harmful in our spaces
- Taking time for joy and celebration

In the 2020 SFCC Team Orientation, we did a Jamboard together to highlight what care looked for us as individuals participating in this organization and anti-violence organizing. This is a snapshot of what care looked for us in that moment so that we could build a plan for care in all our events, campaigns, writing, researching, and planning.



Why is community care important in Anti-Violence work? In many ways, care is the opposite of violence. While advocating for a world without violence, we can model a future in our communities, and mitigate violence that might occur internally. Furthermore, many advocates are survivors of violence themselves, and everyone experiences some level of normalized violence in our culture, so by prioritising community care, we can work towards healing together.

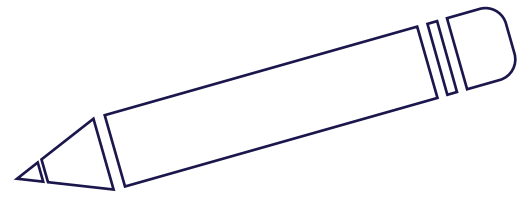




Community Care

[Video](#) | [Transcript \(PDF\)](#)

What kind of rest do I need?



All rest is not made equal! Whenever I was feeling rundown in a pre-COVID-19 world, I would book a Saturday afternoon pedicure. It would work—sometimes. But other times, I left the salon feeling even worse than when I arrived. I was jumpy, easily agitated, and more than a little tired. I may have rested my mind (and feet), but I was still missing something.

According to physician Sandra Dalton-Smith, M.D., author of *Sacred Rest: Recover Your Life, Renew Your Energy, Renew Your Sanity*, humans need physical, mental, social, creative, emotional, spiritual, and sensory rest. This worksheet will help you identify what kind of rest you need to actually begin to recover. We encourage you to think expansively, dream big rest, and return those exercise as needed.

Physical Rest

The most common form of physical rest is sleep, but it might also be taking deep breaths during the workday, or squeezing in a restorative yoga class to give your body some time to stretch.

what plan can you make for this kind of rest?

Mental Rest

The mind gets tired too! A mental break might look like turning off your screens and taking a few moments to ground yourself, meditating, or going for a walk.

what do you do to rest your mind?

Social Rest



Feeling exhausted at the thought of another meeting or going out? Social rest might mean catching up with an old friend who knows the way you think and feel without any lengthy explanation. Or, perhaps it's just taking a night off and reconnecting with yourself.

how do you recharge when feeling socially drained?

What is the difference between doing nothing and resting for you?

Creative Rest

You're tapping into creative thinking whenever you are strategising or brainstorming. Giving yourself a break by going on a walk in nature or surrounding yourself with inspiration can help replenish your drained resources – and take the pressure to create off your mind.

what might creative rest look like for you?

Spiritual Rest



Feel afloat, unanchored, alone? It's understandable – this is an oppressive world. Spiritual rest can help you remember your sense of purpose or grounding. You might find spiritual rest in community care or other things that make you feel part of something bigger.

how do you recharge your spirit?



We are not resting to be more productive. We are resting because it is our sacred right.

– Tricia Hersey, The Nap Ministry

Emotional Rest

Advocating to end violence is emotional work. It's subjective, often re-traumatizing, and BIG work. If you are feeling irritable, hopeless, numb, or are having trouble sleeping, you might be emotionally exhausted. Some mitigating strategies might be connecting with a good listener, finding outlets to cry, or leaning into small joys.

what do you do to restore emotionally?

Sensory Rest

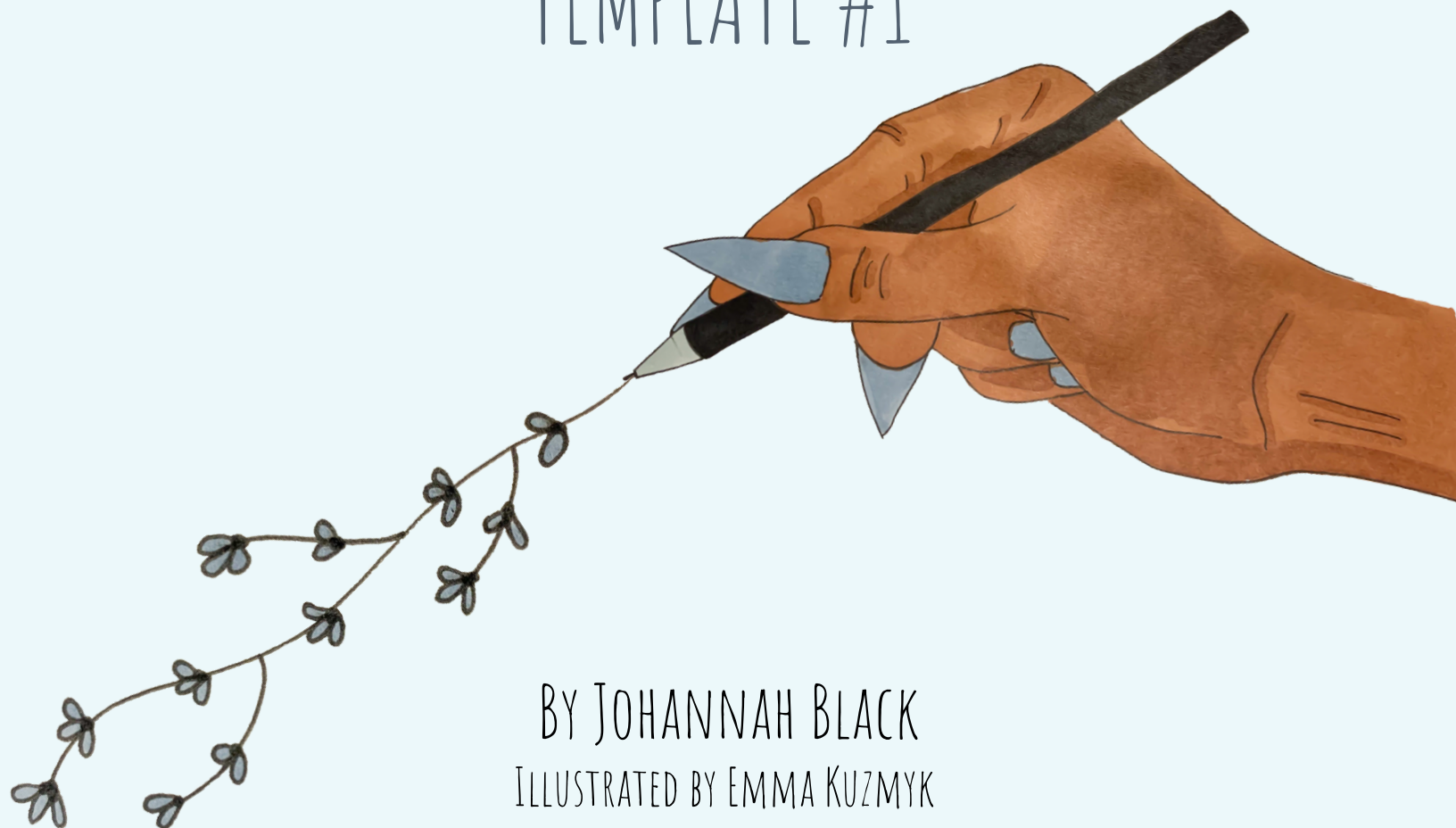
Sensory exhaustion is one of the most prevalent drainers thanks to screens. This form of exhaustion is also common for neurodivergent peoples or those carrying PTSD. Catch up on sensory rest by putting aside technology and stepping outside for fresh air if you're able to do so.

what practices do you have for sensory overload?

A.W.R.C.S.A.S.A.

SELF CARE THROUGH JOURNALING

TEMPLATE #1



BY JOHANNAH BLACK
ILLUSTRATED BY EMMA KUZMYK



This journaling template is for you to use in whichever way works for you. It is not something you should feel pressured to share with others although you are welcome to do so. It is also not a one-time exercise. This is something that you can come back to again and again as your life changes and relationships change.





BOUNDARY MAPPING



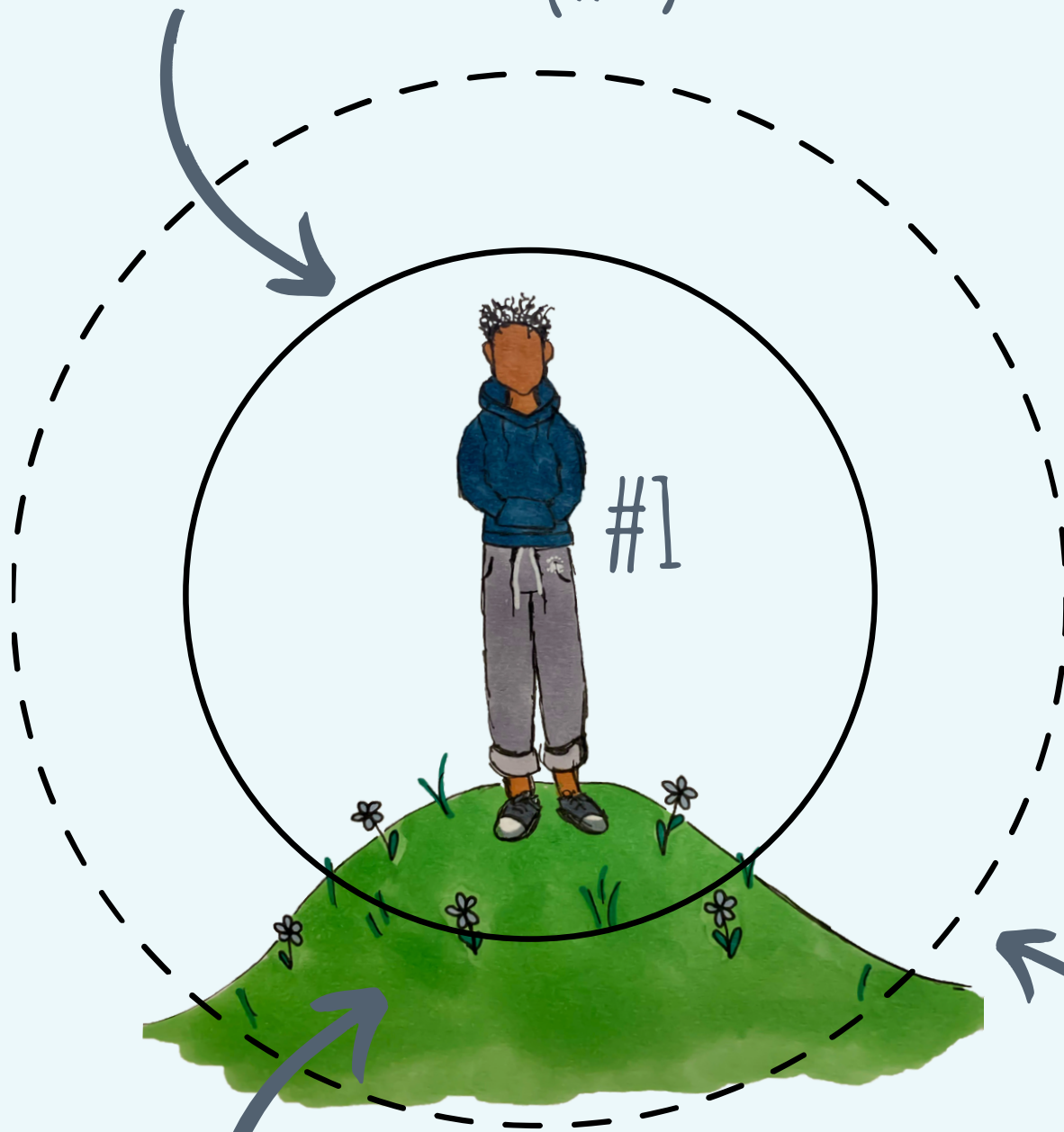
Setting boundaries can be really hard. Most of us are never really taught about how to set boundaries or even that we have the right to do so! For some of us, this journaling exercise will be the first time that we have ever explicitly thought through what our boundaries are and how to enforce them.

For this boundary mapping exercise it is best to have a specific relationship or group of relationships in mind. For example, you could explore your boundaries relating to your immediate family or your romantic partner. Another way you could use this exercise is with a specific scenario in mind. For example, you could explore your boundaries when visiting a relative who often makes offensive comments or jokes.

We are going to use art to explore our boundaries. We will do this by drawing a picture similar to the picture on the following page. Our picture will include the following elements:

1. Ourselves
2. A small hill that we are standing on. This represents our foundations, the things that give us strength, our sources of support, and our values.
3. A continuous line that circles around us. This line represents our hard boundaries.
4. A dotted line that circles around us and around the continuous line. This represents our more flexible boundaries.

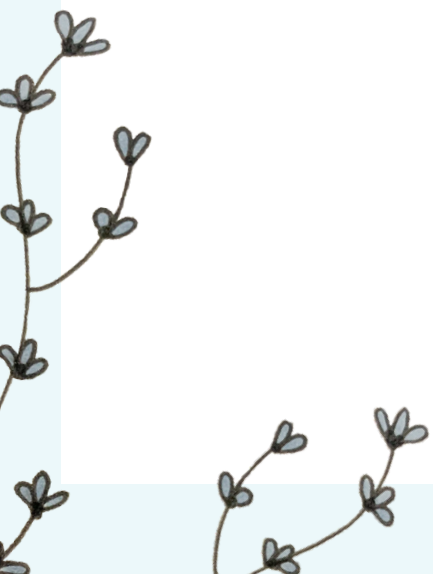
HARD BOUNDARIES (#3)



SOFT BOUNDARIES (#4)

FOUNDATIONS (#2)

YOUR TURN...





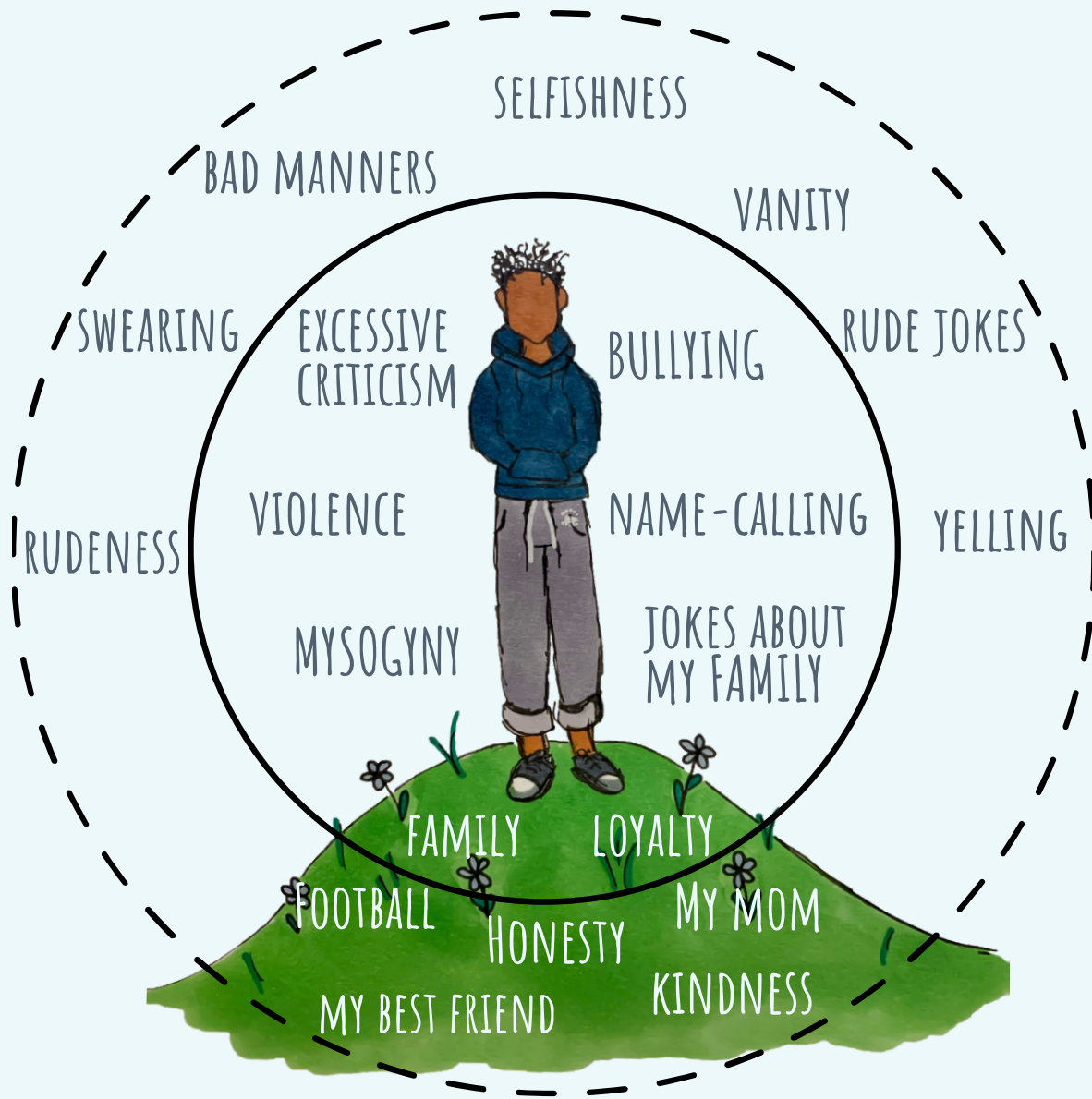
BRAINSTORMING



Once we have drawn each of these elements, we are going to brainstorm and fill-in different things for each section.

- In the foundations section we will be brainstorming all of the things and people that give us strength, that support us, and that help us get through tough times. This could include: our values, our friends, our hobbies, our pets, nature, etc.... there are no right or wrong answers.
- For the continuous line we will be brainstorming our hard boundaries. These are the things that we absolutely cannot accept. Remember, we all have the right to set boundaries. No one has the right to violate our personal boundaries for any reason. Your hard boundaries might include: physical violence, yelling, name-calling, adequate alone time or quiet time, swearing, excessive criticism, discussion about topics you are uncomfortable with, inappropriate jokes, etc.... There are no right or wrong answers.
- For the dotted line we will be brainstorming our flexible boundaries. These are things that might make us feel upset or uncomfortable, things that could be hard boundaries depending on the context or circumstance. These are things that we are willing to put up with in order to reach a compromise, or for the sake of engaging in a difficult conversation, or for a temporary time limit. Again, there are no right or wrong answers.

FOR EXAMPLE...





FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS



Once we have completed our brainstorming there are some follow up questions to consider. It is important to realize that our boundaries might change over time. You might think you are able to accept something but later find out that you are not able to do this without harm to your mental health. It is normal for our boundaries to change over time as our relationships change and as we deepen our understanding of ourselves. You have a right to continuously explore your boundaries, to change those boundaries in a way that supports your well-being, and to draw new boundaries.

1. **For each of your flexible boundaries it is important to think about when these boundaries become hard boundaries.** For example, you might be OK with your partner swearing out of frustration when you confront them about something they did that hurt your feelings. People often find confrontation difficult and become defensive. However, if your partner doesn't move past this initial discomfort, if they do not take the time to listen to you respectfully, and they continue swearing or escalate by getting angry at you, then your flexible boundary becomes a hard boundary. **Your boundaries are personal to you and so it is up to you to decide when your flexible boundaries become hard boundaries.**

3. Finally, it is important to realize that just because we have boundaries and have communicated those boundaries, this does not guarantee that others will respect them. **So, what are some strategies we can use when our boundaries are violated?** For example, we might invest less energy into that relationship, we might withdraw to our sources of support and strength, we might have a firm discussion with the person who has violated our boundaries about the impact that violation has had, we might ask another family member or friend to support us by talking to the person for us. There are multiple possibilities. Remember you have a right to boundaries.





A.W.R.C.S.A.S.A.

SELF CARE THROUGH JOURNALING

TEMPLATE #2



BY JOHANNAH BLACK
ILLUSTRATED BY EMMA KUZMYK



This journaling template is for you to use in whichever way works for you. It is not something you should feel pressured to share with others although you are welcome to do so. You can use this as a one-time exercise for self-discovery or as a daily exercise to help you plan your day.



CENTERING OURSELVES

When we are anxious or depressed, when we are going through tough times, we can often feel lost, isolated, and disconnected. We might feel like we are unmoored boats floating without direction on a stormy sea.

One way to rediscover a sense of calm and security is by centering ourselves and returning to our core values. Often our values are handed down to us by the culture we are a part of, our family, and broader society. We can work on developing a stronger sense of self by exploring these values and reflecting on what they mean to us.

1. CORE VALUES

List the core values that are important to you:

(Remember we are exploring the values that are important to you and not necessarily the values that are important to society, your culture, or even your family. What do you value?)



2. INTENTION

Set an intention. Choose one of the values listed above to honour today.

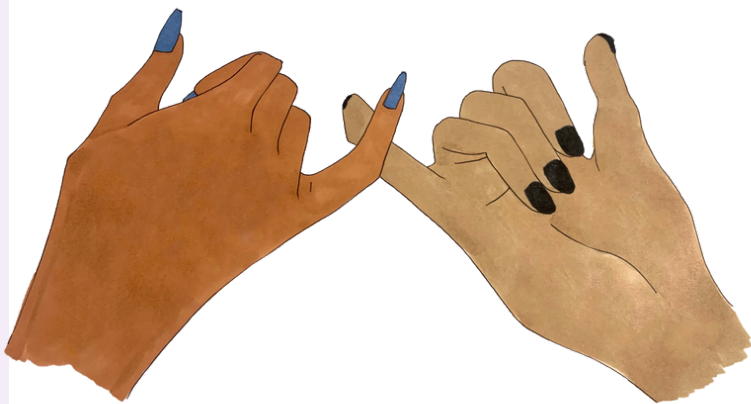
Write out and intention to honour that value.

(i.e. Today I am honouring the value of family OR I am choosing to honour the value of integrity today)

3. DRAW

Draw. Draw a symbol, object, or image that you can use to visually represent the value you have chosen to honour today.

EXAMPLE...



LOYALTY

YOUR TURN...

5. PRACTICE

Practice. Think of 1 or 2 small ways you can practice your chosen value today. Write out an intention to do these 1 or 2 small actions.

(For example, I will practice the value of self-care today by doing a guided meditation OR today I will honour the value of connecting with nature by taking a 20 minute walk on my favourite trail)

A purple watering can is shown on the right side of the page, tilted as if pouring water. Several blue droplets are falling from the nozzle of the watering can towards the bottom of the page.

6. REFLECT

Reflect. At the end of the day, write a few lines about how it felt to centre your chosen value today.

A purple tulip flower is shown on the right side of the page, with a green stem and two green leaves. The flower is in the bud stage.

A.W.R.C.S.A.S.A.

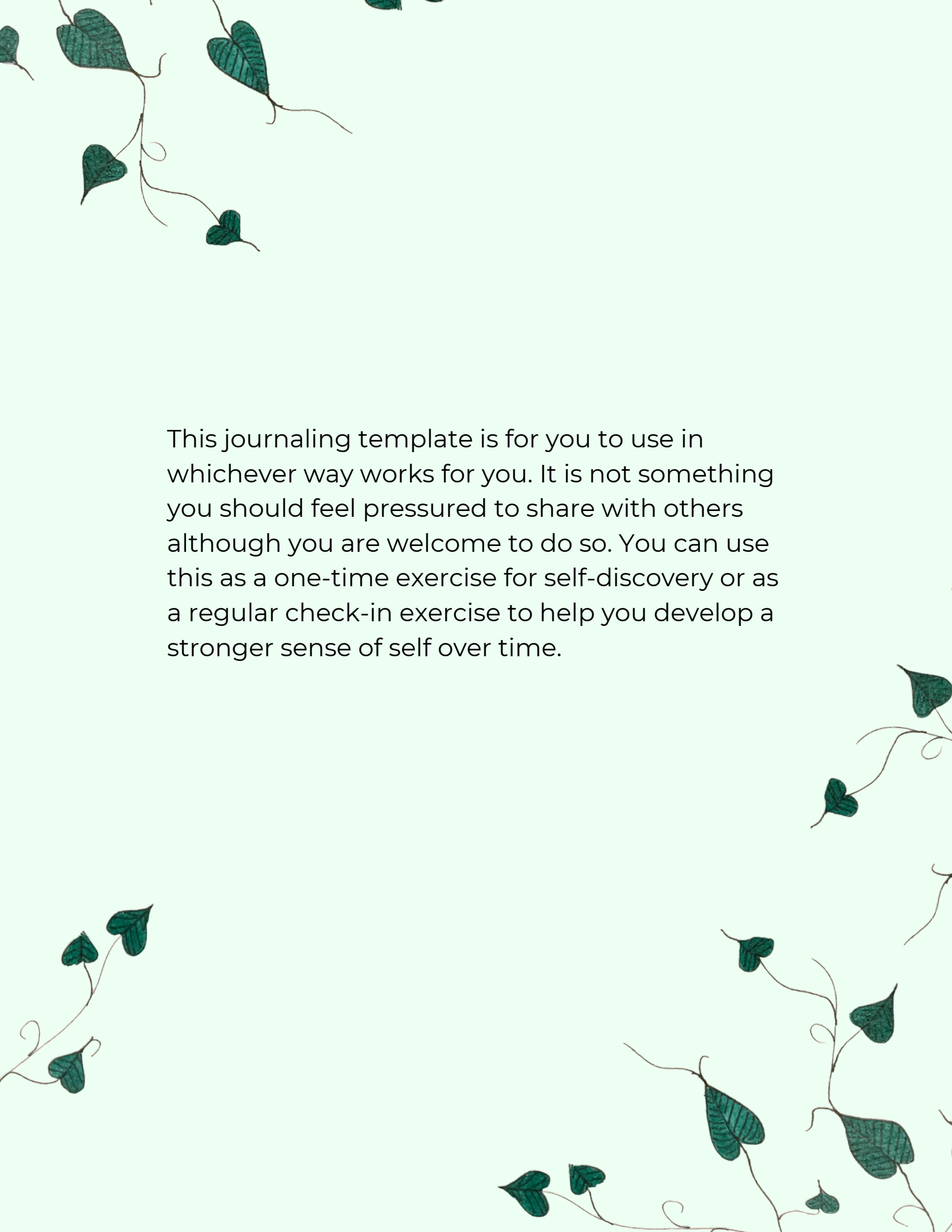
SELF CARE THROUGH JOURNALING

TEMPLATE #3



BY JOHANNAH BLACK

ILLUSTRATED BY EMMA KUZMYK



This journaling template is for you to use in whichever way works for you. It is not something you should feel pressured to share with others although you are welcome to do so. You can use this as a one-time exercise for self-discovery or as a regular check-in exercise to help you develop a stronger sense of self over time.

OUR SENSE OF SELF



There are many times in life when we can start to lose our sense of self. This might happen when we face hardship or adversity, when we are discriminated against or treated without dignity, or when we are too busy to spend time taking care of ourselves. When we lose touch with our sense of self we can suffer because we lose sight of who we are at the core, what is important to us as individuals, what our values are. Instead we become overwhelmed with the negative things that are happening to us or around us, and we start to believe that there is no "us" outside of these challenging events.

Other times we might be faced with a person or people in our lives who either intentionally or unintentionally damage our perception of self. It is difficult not to be influenced by other peoples' ideas about us. Many of us want to improve ourselves and become better people and so we take criticism and advice from others very seriously. Sometimes the negative opinions that others have unfairly projected onto us can cause us to forget our own strengths.

It is important to return to our sense of self, to nurture that self, to explore our values, and to offer gratitude to ourselves. We should do this often. When you have a stronger sense of self, it is more difficult for others to bring you down. But this is difficult work. It takes practice and intention to build that sense of self and it is a life-long project.

The following journaling questions are suggestions for how we can discover and nurture our sense of self.

1. HOW DO YOU THINK OTHERS SEE YOU?

Free write for a minute or two and get down everything you can in a point form list about how you think others see you. Include negative and also positive judgements or perceptions.

2. HOW DO YOU SEE YOURSELF?

Reflect on what you just wrote in the previous question. You now have permission to throw out what isn't truthful or what is unfair. You now have space to make corrections. You can also agree with what people see of you. You can also add things about yourself that only you know, that others don't see, or that they overlook.

3. LIST 5 OF YOUR FAVOURITE THINGS ABOUT YOURSELF.

These can be physical attributes, memories, personality features, your strengths, your values, the way you have responded to various events, your likes or dislikes, your ways of thinking and looking at the world around you, or even your relationships with others.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

4. HONOUR. CHOOSE ONE OF THE THINGS FROM THE PREVIOUS LIST TO HONOUR TODAY & WRITE AN INTENTION.

For example, Today I am taking the time to honour my voice. I use my voice to speak truth to power and this is something worth celebrating. OR My intention today is to honour my story of survival. I am grateful to myself for surviving.



6. NURTURE. THINK OF 1 OR 2 SMALL WAYS THAT YOU CAN NURTURE THIS PART OF YOURSELF TODAY. WRITE OUT AN INTENTION TO DO THESE 1 OR 2 SMALL ACTIONS:

For example, Today I will nurture my connectedness to nature by taking a walk along the ocean. OR I intend to nurture my resilience today by telling someone I care about my story of survival.

7. REFLECT. AT THE END OF THE DAY, WRITE A FEW LINES ABOUT HOW IT FELT TO HONOUR AND NURTURE THIS PART OF YOURSELF TODAY.



This template is a project from the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association.

www.awrcsasa.ca

All three journaling templates can be found online here: <https://linktr.ee/StFXPSP>

Glossary

Advocacy: a process that seeks a desired change. In practice, advocacy generally takes place through members of society or a specific community supporting or recommending a cause or proposal to target actors.

Anti-Oppression: The work of actively challenging and removing oppression perpetuated by power inequalities in society and organizations through systemic oppression and individual expressions of oppression.

Allyship: an active, consistent practice of un-learning and re-evaluating in which a person of privilege seeks to operate in solidarity with a systematically marginalized group. This is a long-term process that is contingent on building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability.

Bill: a draft piece of legislation.

Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC): Canada's national human rights institution or state-mandated body that operates independently from the government to monitor, protect, and promote human rights at the federal level. This includes offering individual complaints processes where the respondent is a federal government department, federal organization, or a First Nations government.

Complaint Resolution: A decision-making and arbitration process where complaints are investigated to find out 'what happened' and make a determination of who, if anyone, is responsible for the situation, and what the consequences/resolutions for the parties involved should be.

Consent: The voluntary agreement to engage in an activity in question and refers to both sexual and non-sexual forms of consent. In other words and without limiting the foregoing, consent:

- Is never assumed or implied;
- Cannot be obtained by silence or the absence of 'no';
- Cannot be obtained if one is impaired by drugs or alcohol, is unconscious, is under the legal age of consent, or is mentally or physically incapacitated by other means;
- Cannot be obtained through threats or coercion;
- Cannot be obtained if the alleged perpetrator(s) is in a position of trust, power, or authority;
- Cannot be obtained only in advance, and must be obtained at the time that the act occurs;
- Cannot be obtained by means of fraud, extortion, or blackmail;
- Can be revoked at any time;
- Must be given for every act, every time; and
- Must be obtained by the person(s) engaging in the act and never by a third party.

Disclosure: Occurs when a Survivor shares experiences of harm in order to receive support. It is possible that disclosures may not enact processes of this policy, but in some cases and some accommodation requests, this may be waived. Disclosing will not result in disciplinary action.

Discrimination: The treatment or consideration based on class or category rather than individual merit and that can be used to privilege (special treatment in favour of) as well as disadvantage (special treatment against) a particular group or individual.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Refers to a broad understanding of gender-based violence (GBV). Gender-based violence is often understood to consist mainly of rape, sexual assault, abuse, and sexual harassment, mainly perpetrated by men against women. While this is one major dimension of gendered violence, we do not see it as simply an act of violence between two binary sexes. Instead we include gender and sexual identities within broader systems of hierarchy, power, and discrimination. We recognize that GBV intersects with other forms of violence and oppression in ways that can impact its meanings and effects on victims and survivors. These include racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, and poverty.

Harm: Refers to a spectrum of experiences that includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment, sexualized violence, rape, gender-based violence, threatening behaviour or bullying, racism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism. We further recognize that harm can take place in both physical and digital spaces.

Institution: a society, foundation or organization devoted to a particular cause or delivering a specific program such as those of a public, educational, religious, or charitable nature.

Intersectionality: The concept of intersectionality, introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw, is important to understand how different systems of power and oppression work together to mediate an individual's lived experiences. These systems include racism, classism, cis-sexism, homophobia, ableism and xenophobia, among others. They are interconnected and cannot be examined in isolation. Similarly, different aspects of an individual's identity interact to influence their navigation, opportunities, and experiences. An intersectional approach takes into account the historical, social, and political context and recognizes the unique experience of the individual based on the intersection of all relevant grounds. It also recognizes that no identity is inherently oppressed, but instead oppression is imposed through systematic and systemic mechanisms of the state and society.

Legislation: written laws that are enacted by Parliament, the legislative arm of government. Also referred to as Acts or statutes.

Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA): a binding confidentiality agreement where one or more parties agree to not disclose certain information to anyone outside of the contract. May also be colloquially referred to as a "gag order."

Oppression: The use of power or privilege by a socially, politically, economically, culturally dominant group or individual to disempower (take away or reduce power), marginalize, silence or otherwise subordinate one social group or individual. Individual oppression is demeaning and oppressive behaviour towards and treatment of a particular group or individual, expressed through individual attitudes, beliefs and values.

Peer Support: when two or more people with a shared experience, such as an illness or significant traumatic event, provide each other with information and/or emotional, practical, or social support. Peer support can take place informally or within the programming of an established service.

Policy: a set of guidelines proposed or adopted by a government, institution, business, or individual that outline processes and procedures to facilitate decisions and outcomes.

Provincial and Territorial Human Rights Agencies: bodies that operate independently from the government to monitor, protect, and promote human rights at the provincial and territorial level. In each province and territory, these include a human rights commission that hears discrimination and harassment complaints against housing, schools, and most workplaces. In British Columbia, Ontario, and Nunavut, there are also human rights adjudicative tribunals which are quasi-judicial bodies that hears and determines applications brought under the respective provincial or territorial human rights code.

Report: Is a document or series of documents created when a Survivor shares experiences of harm with the Anti-oppression Officer or Director with the purpose of enacting this policy and finding some form of fairness or justice that SFCC is able to provide.

Sexual Violence: Any sexual act or acts targeting an individual's sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, whether the act is physical, emotional, social or psychological in nature that is committed, threatened or attempted against an individual without that individual's consent. Examples of sexual violence are sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, distribution of a sexually explicit photograph or recording, and stealthing.

Survivor: For the purposes of this toolkit, a person who has experienced an act or acts of sexual violence as it has been defined above. We want to acknowledge that everyone labels their experiences of sexual violence, rape, abuse, assault, and trauma differently. The term survivor is used throughout this toolkit to identify those who have experienced violence or abuse but that people may—and have every right to—choose to identify themselves or their experiences differently. We wish to underline that any and all language someone may or may not choose to use when naming or labeling their experience is valid, important and their choice.

Student Union: a student-run, democratic organization at post-secondary institutions that dedicate resources to represent the student voice and improve the campus experience. They are often a separate entity from the post-secondary institution they are located at and have a democratic governance structure.

Victim: While some may chose to identify with survivor-first language, our justice system, institutions and society continue to victimize people who have experienced sexual violence. Thereby, some people are not given the privilege of surviving, or of claiming “survivorhood,” victimization is an ongoing process and we recognize the strength in identifying as a victim.