

National Skillshare Series - Towards a Justice that Heals, March 24th 2021

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Farrah: We're going to start in about 50 seconds, so get your glass of water, get a snack that you really like, and just get settled in, because we're going to be talking about ways that we can look at justice from a non-punitive space, and I'm really excited about this session. So, take a moment and then we'll start. [Long pause] OK, wonderful, so I want to welcome everybody to the National Skillshare Series by Courage to Act. And this is the part of a series that we're doing every two weeks to look at issues of gender-based violence on campuses. And my name is Farrah Khan and I am the co-director of Courage to Act. And we are seeing here and an amazing conversation that we're going to be having today, and this conversation is a part of a project funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada.

And today we're welcoming – specifically looking at issues of gender-based violence on campuses. And Courage to Act is a two-year national initiative to address and prevent gender-based violence at post-secondary institutions in Canada. It builds on key recommendations within Possibility Seeds' vital report, "Courage to Act: Developing a National Framework to Address and Prevent Gender-Based Violence on Campus." So, today, I want you to just know there's some quick note on language. We do have interpretation support, so you can switch to the language that works for you. You can also turn on and off captioning on Zoom, so please do that. Also, you can just know that today's session is being recorded and will be put on our website. So, if you are, like, "I have to step out or I have to move away for a minute" no problem, we have this recorded.

And also, there'll be a graphic recording here, which is really exciting, it's going to be from Carina from Drawing for Change. And we're really excited about this because this allows us to have a fulsome kind of understanding of this conversation in a beautiful way and celebrates the amazing work that's being done. Carina is doing a draft graphic recording that will be available for all Skillshare attendees, which you can find on the education tab of our website. Our release is a part of the Courage to Act tools. And Courage to Act, we really are looking at developing a national framework to address and prevent gender-based violence on post-secondary campuses. The project is the first of its kind in Canada, and brings together scholars, educators, students, student activists, survivors, and frontline workers, to have fulsome conversations on how we can look at this issue from a way that brings us forward, not back.

The National Skillshare is a key feature of our project. And the National Skillshare is an opportunity to listen to our Communities of Practice that

have been meeting for over a year, to also listen to keynote speakers, discuss tools, promising practices, and actions we can all take to address this important issue. Also, through the Skillshare Series, we're really excited to share with you the development of tools that we've been creating over this time period, and look at ways in which experts are saying, "OK, this is one way to address gender-based violence on campus." And all these tools will be released in August and fall 2021 through our knowledge centre. And it's really important that you know that attendees are connected to a network of experts and advocates across Canada.

A lot of us feel really isolated often in this work, and this is a really great opportunity for us to be connected with one another, learn from one another, and build on our knowledge. It's supported by CAUCUS, these Skillshare sessions are an opportunity for us and a recognized learning opportunity. So, if you attended a number of them, we actually have a certificate for you that you can have and it's an important piece of your own professional development. And, again, our project is made possible from the amazing funding from the Department for Women and Gender Equality, WAGE, the Federal Government of Canada. And they have made a five-year commitment to look at gender-based violence on campuses and we're a part of that five-year commitment. And I also want to really name the piece around talking about a land acknowledgement. And I know Leah, Sam, and Sarah also would like to add to this conversation, as well.

So, if they want to bring on the cameras and unmute, welcome to. Because we know that this session is – we have to recognize that this land is Indigenous land, that we're taking place on the traditional territories of many Indigenous nations. And we recognize that gender-based violence is not just one form of violence that's caused by individual acts, but also by colonization and capitalism, and that it's a form of violence that displaces and dispossess Indigenous peoples across this country. And our project strives to honour this truth as we move towards reconciliation and look at decolonizing this work and actualizing justice for Indigenous communities across this nation.

Leah: Thanks so much, Farrah. We just want to add that in the context of the work of our community of practice, we need to acknowledge the ways that Canada's laws and our legal system are shaped by colonialism and a colonial mindset, and that in the context of restorative justice and non-punitive accountability, we also need to recognize that Indigenous people and nations are systematically separated from their legal and peacemaking traditions, which includes restorative justice, and ways that make it possible for white settlers to adopt, co-opt and implement these practices while First Nations, Inuit and Metis people and nations often must fight to assert their rights to self-determination and self-governance.

Sarah: We also want to add and recognize that community accountability and transformative justice processes and practices grew out of the knowledge of queer and trans BIPOC communities, and these practices

emerged because when many marginalized communities access traditional criminal justice responses, it often created further community and interpersonal harm. For many, the prison industrial complex was a site of violence, not safety or accountability. So, they used their collective experiences and wisdom to create processes that didn't rely on the police, courts and prisons, but responded to harm, held people accountable, while centring community safety, justice, healing, growth and transformation. And basically, we owe all of our learnings in the process to their work.

Sam: And the last part we wanted to add was that in acknowledging the land we're on, we also think it's really important to name the ways that these systems of power and oppression have played out in our own group, namely it's really notable that each of us presenting today is a white settler. This isn't representative of the way we started out. So, several racialized and Indigenous folks were crucial to bringing this project to the place it's currently at. However, those folks were generally in more precarious employment situations and weren't able to continue on with this work without detriment to various aspects of their wellbeing. And this is how capitalist white supremacist hetero-patriarchy operates and perpetuates itself, right? Even when a group tries to work in a way that acknowledges and [resist] those systems, it's important for us to mention this because so often, I think, we don't think these dynamics are made invisible or sort of normalized, but it's definitely been part of our group process and something we wanted to name. So, our moderator is [Deborah Eerkes] and I think the plan is for her to take away the session.

Farah: Yeah, we just have a couple more things to talk about before that, but I really want to thank Sarah, Leah and Sam for raising these pieces, because it's something not only to acknowledge the land, but what does it actually mean to us? And it's a practice that we really try to bring about in Courage to Act, and I loved seeing this as we move forward. And what Sam is really bringing about and something that we notice in PSIs across the way is that to end gender-based violence is also to address precarious work status, and so many racialized Black and Indigenous people experience precarious work in our PSI system, and one of the ways that we can actually have their voices centred and ensure that our voices are heard and that their voices are continuously centred not only in the conversations but in the work that's being done, is providing real sustainable employment.

So, I also want to get to the next piece, which is around self-care. I think any of these conversations we know can take a toll on you, and although you may be someone who's been a practitioner, worked for a very long period of time, you do need to take care of yourself and that's really important. So, we do have a self-care page that you can look at, you can also participate in the conversation if you're on social media, you can follow along with the hashtag GBV National Skillshare. We want people to know about this, because we want people to participate, so please do participate in it as much as you can. And thank you so much for folks, I know this topic can raise lots of questions, so just put it into our

conversation. So, you're also invited to ask questions in the Q&A box throughout the session. They'll be posed to the presenters at the end of the presentation. So, we often don't get through all the questions, but we also have [blog posts] that we can make to answer some of your questions.

So, don't hesitate, ask questions. And at the end of the hour, you'll find an evaluation form, it really helps us to fill that out, because it not only helps us make better presentations, but also makes our project better and stronger. So, please do that. I'm really excited to introduce you now to an amazing group, which is the Towards a Justice that Heals Community of Practice. And this is actually built out of a conversation that we had three, four years ago, a number of us were – [Deb] and Sarah and Bailey, a number of us met to be like, "What can we do about these conversations on campus?" And it bled into this project, and then came into this community of practice, and it's so exciting to see this. So, I'm going to stop sharing now and ask our amazing Deborah Eerkes to come on and speak about the amazing work that they've been doing with Towards a Justice that Heals Community of Practice.

Deborah: Thank you. I am just going to share my screen now. And forgive me if my technology fails me. It seems to be the way it's going today. So, thanks, Farrah. My name is Deb Eerkes, and I'm the director of Student Conduct and Accountability at the University of Alberta located on Treaty 6 Land. I'm also a member of the Courage to Act complaints processes working group, reporting investigations and adjudication and moderator of today's discussion. So, we're here today to talk about the upcoming toolkit entitled, Essential Elements for Non-Punitive Accountability: A Workbook for Understanding Alternative Responses to Campus Gender-Based Violence. The group coined the phrase "non-punitive accountability," or NPA, as a descriptor for different options for addressing campus gender-based violence.

The term includes restorative justice, transformative justice, and community justice, and attempts to describe the common themes of these options in that all of them shift the focus away from punishment and toward accountability in both prevention and response to gender-based violence. As the title implies, the workbook lays out the essential elements to these options to ensure that post-secondaries are able to engage them with – ethically and effectively and in a way that reduces harm. The essential elements are divided into four equally important categories: foundational principles, procedural elements, institutional commitments, and facilitator commitments. The workbook uses reflection exercises, example cases, and links to existing resources to assist those who are interested in exploring the use of non-punitive accountability at their institutions.

It also provides lists of recommended training and required and recommended resources. Before I introduce our panel, I want to acknowledge the work of the entire Towards a Justice that Heals Community of Practice, formerly known as Can Justice Heal?, who have been meeting together for over a year. They came together with diverse

and sometimes divergent perspectives that grounds goals and priorities. Over the past year, they went through the difficult work of finding common ground, a process that was itself a demonstration of their commitment to restorative, transformative and community justice principles, holding themselves and each other accountable for the work they were doing and ultimately, the toolkit they would produce.

The community of practice members are: Samantha Pearson, Sarah [Scanlon], Chris [Hackett], Leah Martin, and [Imre Juurlink], all of whom you'll meet in just a minute, and Samantha [Bokma] and Bailey Reid, who are unable to join us today. I also want to acknowledge Jessica Ketwaroo-Green and Carol Bilson, both of whom contributed to this toolkit. I jumped into the group a couple of months ago to help finalize the project. And with that very brief introduction, I will un-share my screen and introduce – or let the panel introduce themselves. So, we'll start with a quick introduction round, if you want to – panel, you want to turn on your cameras. Chris, do you want to go first?

Chris: Sure. So, my name is Chris Hackett, he/him. I'm with – the other person in the Office of Student Conduct and Accountability at the University of Alberta, so you've got the whole group of us here. I, too, am coming from Treaty 6 land, and thinking about that land acknowledgement, it's important to acknowledge that it's a variety of Indigenous cultures on – occupied this land and, in effect, our institution every single day, including in the way that we're looking at this.

Deborah: Imre?

Imre: Hi everyone, my name is Imre Juurlink, my preferred pronouns are she and her. I am the student conduct and care office at Vancouver Island University in British Columbia. And I am on the unseeded territory of the Snuneymuxw people.

Deborah: Leah?

Leah: Hello everyone, my name is Leah Martin, my pronouns are she and her and I was connected to this community of practice through the work of community justice initiatives, an organization in Kitchener, Ontario, which is the traditional territory of the Anishinabe and Haudenosaunee people. And also, it rests on land promised to the 6 Nations of the Grand River.

Deborah: Sam?

Sam: My name is Sam Pearson, my pronouns are she and her, and I'm the director at the University of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre, which is also located on Treaty 6 territory, which is the unseeded territory of the Cree and the traditional territory of the Blackfoot, the Cree, the Dene, the Nakota Sioux, Saulteaux and Metis nations peoples, as well as a host of other Indigenous peoples whose cultures, languages and traditions have been obfuscated or lost to colonialism.

Deborah: And Sarah.

Sarah: My name is Sarah Scanlon, I use they/she pronouns, I am the manager of Sexual Violence Response at Wilfred Laurier University, which is on the traditional and stolen territories of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinabe and the Mississauga of Credit, and as Leah said, the Haldimand Tract in which just massive land grab of land stealing from 6 Nations Territory and we're watching that still happen right now today in the Land Back action you can find about on social media.

Deborah: OK. With that, we're going to get to our panel discussion. I'll be throwing out questions and asking the folks on the panel to speak to the issues. Again, if you do have questions for a specific panelist or for all of us, you can drop them in the Q&A and I will do my very best to monitor them. I've got Kelly as my back-up in case I have a massive technological breakdown, which I always want to anticipate. So, the first question is, then, for the panelists and for the community of practice, what brought you to this project? And I think we'll start with Leah.

Leah: Thanks, Deb. I became kind of interested in this project and the concept more generally of young punitive accountability responses to gender-based violence in post-secondary institutions when I was a grad student. And I was a grad student at the time that kind of the legislative movement was coming into place where institutions who received public funding needed to have standalone sexualized violence policies. And almost as soon as these policies came into effect, we also started to understand the limits of kind of a formal response mechanism and, you know, began exploring what alternatives to a formal complaints pathway could be for folks who were affected by sexualized and gender-based violence while they were attending post-secondary institutions. So, I then started working for a restorative justice organization, community justice initiatives in Kitchener that has one of the most established programs that works at the intersections of restorative justice and sexualized violence. And so, I felt that there were a million opportunities to kind of bridge post-secondary interests in incorporating restorative or non-punitive accountability practices, and the kind of expertise and experience that exists within community organizations.

Deborah: Thank you, Leah. Can we go to Imre?

Imre: For me, the reasons were, first, on a personal level as a survivor who has gone through the system, And then, as someone who, in my work, I've worked with a lot of survivors, as well as people who have caused harm. And just really have seen first-hand and up-close how the systems really don't serve survivors or anyone else. I had been reading about and did some training in restorative justice, and really wanted to know how we can bring this into PSIs, or specifically mine. And so, I was drawn to this group really aspirationally, as in, how can we – how can I bring this to my university and help other people do that at theirs? And I really have to say the people on this panel have been amazing. I have learned so much from them and I'm super impressed with the workbook and I'm excited that we get to share it with everyone.

Deborah: Thanks, Imre. Sarah?

Sarah: When I first got hired at Laurier a little over five years, I specifically felt really excited about the idea and the potential of creating new pathways for justice and accountability that could exist because of the nature of PSIs, the community, the commitments of the institution, and it was one of the things that actually drew me out of doing non-profit, frontline work into an institution, because of the bubble that exists and how we could maybe re-examine how we come to this – how we come to holding people accountable. I've been working in the gender-based violence field for 15 years, including years working with perpetrators, partner violence and sexual violence, court mandated and not, and have seen the amount of gaps and flaws in how we're showing up to support survivors in our community.

I come, personally, with a really deep commitment to transformative justice and restorative justice as a pathway, as both a survivor, a long-time advocate and counsellor and a community activist. And basically, what I keep coming back to with my personal experience and with my professional experience currently supporting over 150 survivors typically a year, that what we're doing right now mostly isn't working for the vast majority, in particular, those of us from marginalized identities and communities. I felt really excited by the idea of communities taking responsibility for the harms that are happening, in that we know the harm isn't solely happening unidirectionally between two people, it's happening in multiple and complicated directions, and it ripples out into our communities. And so, for the past five years at Laurier, I've been working with me supervisor and other amazing colleagues to find ways to grow our commitment to this work and I was really excited for Laurier to be part of this collective learning process because, as Imre just spoke to, we've done so much learning and diving into this really complicated and challenging work together, and it's been a pretty big honour.

Deborah: Thanks so much, Sarah. So, the next question is, why should PSIs consider using non-punitive accountability in and around gender-based violence? Sam, would you like to jump in on that one?

Sam: Absolutely. I think for a couple of reasons that Sarah started to touch on, also. I think first and foremost, people who have experienced sexual violence deserve to be supported and seeking justice in a way that feels right to them. So, over the decades that we've been doing this work on campus, I think we've heard this restorative impulse from survivors over and over again. They're looking for ways to connect with their communities, and communicate with them, and folks who've caused them harm, to sort of repair this harm and relationship or, you know, transform the nature of that relationship. But as an institution, our response is always a sort of patronizing, "We can't support you in that way, it's not safe." And I think even as a field, in anti-sexual violence advocacy world, we've also taken a sort of paternalistic approach by placing a sort of, like, soft embargo on engaging in non-punitive accountability work in cases involving sexual violence, again, stating that it's not safe, there are too many risks, and just not even approaching it.

However, meanwhile, [our numbers] statistically prove that the options we do offer survivors just don't meet their needs. The overwhelming majority of the, like, 250 plus people that we see at our service each year aren't interested in making formal complaints, either to the institution or to law enforcement because of the historical harm the systems are rooted in and continued to perpetuate, or because of the general inefficiencies within them. It's hard to get an answer out of a lot of our institutions as to what exactly is going to happen within these processes, who [somebody] is going to speak to or what's going to be required of them, how long the processes are going to take. So, there's sort of a gatekeeper feature built into these processes that folks and their community are exposed to and come into our service already having sort of considered and been dissuaded themselves. Of the handful of people who decide to move forward in this way, often, we see them coming back to us seeking additional support when these systems ultimately retraumatize or fail them.

So, for survivors, the reason I think to, first and foremost, invest in non-punitive accountability, but secondly, I think our current systems don't allow for any possibility of transforming the conditions that allow violence to happen in the first place. So, especially for a service like ours where the goal is a campus community free of sexual violence, we inherently need new approaches, because the sort of reactive retributive systems that we have currently sort of – it's mutually exclusive, they exclude the possibility of transforming their society into one where sexual violence isn't normalized, minimized, and sort of condoned, overall. And part of that, I think, is destigmatizing talking about harm we've all caused, and the particularly for folks who've caused – who've engaged in sexually violent behaviours and provide actual ways of understanding and unpacking that harm, you know, making different choices [into] the future, still seeing themselves as part of a community, so that everyone, I think, has more of a possibility to move forward in a different way.

So, I think that, you know, is about seeing humanity in folks who've caused harm, recognizing our responsibilities to everyone who's a member of our community, not just displacing, you know, the responsibility of accountability to justice onto either processes external to our university or other universities. And, again, it's important because that's what survivors have been asking for and when we deny them this support, I think we effectively push that work of teaching and supporting folks who've caused harm back onto them or their communities, which is really just not fair when we have such a large infrastructure in this institution that could, I think, pick up more of that responsibility.

Deborah: Chris, did you want to weigh in?

Chris: Absolutely. And I'm going to talk about things people have already talked about, because these are, I think, fundamental truths that we certainly all agree on. I've spent – I added this up this morning, so it's terrifying, 45 years in post-secondary education in some form or another since I first walked in the doors as a [student] – 15 years – the last 15 years I've been working in our punitive accountability process, in one form or

another. The last 10 of which I've been the decision maker. As I've been saying a lot recently, you don't know how messed up it is until you're actually the person responsible for making decisions under it and seeing the cases that go through. And that's particularly true with sexual violence, that we learn that we – everything everybody's just said is absolutely true, we deal with a tiny fraction of the instances that happen on campus.

We are more likely to cause harm to survivors than we are to find some way for them to actually come out of it. We are embedded in a culture that struggles to understand this. And, you know, I think – and for me, the motivation, frankly, in doing this is I'm a big believer in the values of post-secondary education, and I think we violate those constantly because we are trapped within this mindset that "fairness" is culturally rooted, and it's culturally – and we believe it's all about process. And even when we see that damage and we know it's doing it, we prefer not to look at it too closely, because we don't know how to get out of it. And that attracted me to restorative justice a particular number of years ago, as I'm struggling to deal with those kinds of issues.

And we've done some work in that area. And I think the key thing in terms of why you should be looking at it as opposed to, like, why replacing the existing system has to happen, is it does, as Sam said, change the dynamic so that we can actually help people, we can actually give people the paths that they need, and the process can adapt to what they do, that the community itself can engage in what it needs out of this as opposed to be completely cut out of the entire process. And that accountability piece is critically important. If we're going to grow as a community, if we're truly going to become who we say we want to be, people need to be held accountable, not in a way how do we punish them, but how do we find a way to bring them back into – so that they can be healthy members again, how do we hold ourselves accountable so that we are acting in the way that is in line with what we say are our values. And so, for me, this is something that universities need to do for themselves, not just for all the people that we should be doing it because we're nice people. We should do it because we have to.

Deborah: Thank you for those insights. Turning to, now, the workbook, what is the one thing that, from your perspective, absolutely had to be included in the workbook and why? And we'll go to Leah.

Leah: Thanks. So, the workbook that will be released later this year was envisioned to be, you know, a quick 10 pages, and I think we maybe, I don't know, are at, like, 60 or 70 pages. So, you know, it somehow still feels incomplete. And I think that's just because it is not possible for this collective community of practice, despite our varied and extensive skill sets, to account for everything that is needed to realize the possibility of non-punitive accountability responses to sexualized violence at your institution. And so, I think if non-punitive accountability is going to be housed within an institution, as opposed to functioning independently, so, in a community group or functioning informally because we know that community groups and communities have embodied and enacted these

forms of non-punitive accountability for centuries in response to harm, but if institutions are going to take this up, then the institutional commitments that are outlined in the workbook I think are essential, and really need to be reckoned with in a very real way before it's possible for someone who has experienced harm or someone who has caused harm or facilitators to explore this work without serious risk of further harm to everyone involved.

I mean, it's all necessary and you need to understand the procedural elements and commit to the facilitator commitments and engage in the required resources to do this work. But in an institutional context without serious commitment, resource allocation, I think that institutional ambivalence will really undermine the immense potential of non-punitive accountability responses that are outlined in this workbook.

Deborah: Sarah, for you, what was the one thing that had to be included?

Sarah: So, I'm cheating and I'm going to say more than one, but I'm only going to say two, but I found that painful to be honest. As everyone in this group knows, I'm a – I could talk about this stuff for years. So, I think the thing I really appreciated about this group, and I really hope gets communicated through the workbook, and I hope that people really honour and hold onto, is that before you can even begin this work, before you can even start even considering processes, if you don't build a really strong base of ethics and values and principles that ground the collective group in the work, it is doomed. I think that we spent a lot of time talking about, even as a group, how we're going to form and create direction.

And I think by engaging in that ongoing piece together of, like, what is bringing us together, what do we believe are our base ethics in trying to move through this work, it acted both as a measurement for us to evaluate ourselves and hold ourselves accountable, too, as well as a goalpost that we're trying to work towards. And I think seeing it as, like, you know, the bowling ball moving down the gutter trying to keep us in our lane and moving us forward, but, you know, if we aren't acting out the accountability with ourselves and finding a metrics to do that, and work around accountability, then we're not doing the work well. And so, I just really encourage folks to consider the pieces that we put in there around ethics, around principles and, you know, relationships, too.

And then, the second piece is – that feels really, really critical for me as someone who has a history with doing intimate partner violence work, is having a conversation about risk assessment and planning, as well as mental health assessment planning, crisis assessment planning, because there's just tremendous risk in doing any work when it comes to intimate partner violence and sexual violence. On working with folks who cause harm, as someone who has a history with that work, it is very complex work, not everyone should just do hast work. And I don't think you can apply the traditional risk assessment tools that most universities have onto IPV cases.

The deep embedment of stories that people who've caused harm in particular intimate partner violence cases that people carry is so pervasive, and you need a lot of skill and tools to be able to, like, walk through and see where there's red flags and concerns before allowing someone to move into restorative justice or transformative justice type process, because a lot of harm can happen. And also making sure that you have people who are skilled at assessing mental health crises along the process, everyone involved, and making sure that people are equipped and connected. This is deeply vulnerable work, and we need to be really realistic about how much harm can happen in any process, but this work is particularly vulnerable, we're asking people to show up as their full selves, and that means we need to have the skills and tools to respond to that. Thanks, Deb.

Deborah: Thank you for that, yes. Imre, what was your non-negotiable?

Imre: For me, I really wanted to make sure that we included something to help make this happen at our PSIs, and to me, that meant that we needed some very good, solid reasons to convince senior administration, where the power and the money is, and give them some solid reasons as to why they should be adopting this or interested in this. And I think everything everyone has said has been connected to that already in terms of the values being much more consistent with the values of PSIs, and the idea of sort of educating the whole person and engaging with the community and not focusing on individual incidents, but transforming our cultures and societies. And then, also, just on very practical levels, things like if people have a process that serves them well, you were less likely to have appeals, you are less likely to have complaints, you're less likely, perhaps, to have those big media blow-ups that harm the reputation of the institution. And so, I felt it was important to include those things, as well, so that the people that want to bring this into their PSIs have a way of convincing the university and getting that support and resources that are needed to do that.

Deborah: OK. So, our last question, then, what is one critical issue or learning that you want post-secondaries to take away from your work? And I'll start with Sam.

Sam: I think a lot of what we might have brought up is, you know, the nuance and the challenges to this work and the intentionality that's required to engage in it. And I think that's all really true, and I hope what comes across in the workbook is that that's really a lot of, like, potential and possibility, and something to get excited about. And so, I think we're always holding those two things together at the same time. This is hard work, intentional work, it takes a lot of thought and a lot of time because our community deserves that, but also, it's worth it because the potential, the possibility there, is exciting. It's something that we should be invested in. I was at a workshop by a local group called Freelance, Free Peoples, an Indigenous scholar, Molly Swain, was talking about, you know, a decolonial approach to police [abolition] and prison industrial complex abolition. And what I really took away from that is that a core tenant of

that work needs to be building something, not just tearing something apart.

And I think that is, again, something we hope to communicate in the workbook and that folks can come together to the work that they're then inspired to do. I think you need to ask the right questions and be really committed to pushing past some of these commonly held assumptions about what justice looks like, I think particularly in an institution that's often more concerned about liability than anything else. But that's really valuable work, because it gives us an opportunity, I think, to define and express our own values, have those values be heard by others, hear other people's values and to cocreate that community that we'd all feel safe and represented in. We get to delve into things like community and empathy and change and transformation, which there is so often so little space for in, again, institutions that are so set in their ways and have their processes and procedures and the things you need to follow. We often don't get to challenge ourselves with those questions and grow to get there as a group.

I know each of us who've had the chance to engage in this sort of dialogue at our own institutions. I have come away with really important connections with other colleagues that maybe we didn't expect. Several of us are here on this panel today because of that work that we got to do together, and I think that's – yeah, it's magical, like, it's really not something that is present in a lot of work that can be – could feel really hopeless and oppressive sometimes. And so, I hope that sense of, like, possibility, potential, is something that folks take away as they develop that nuanced understanding of these values at each stage of the process. So, you know, it's really important, I think, for the group who's looking into the implementation of non-punitive accountability to do that work together. And when you're rolling out the [office] or initiative within the broader community, the values [of what needs to happen], and they're implementing non-punitive accountability, that values work needs to be front and centre all the time.

And so, you know, part in parcel to that, folks will notice there isn't a lot of, like, process or procedure in the workbook, that's really intentional for us, because it demands this sort of deeper investment and commitment. But I think that that's really exciting, and something I hope folks are really engaged by and rise to the opportunity to take on in their institution. And so, yeah, I hope they'll plant that seed, water that seed with the workbook, and be excited to see how that pops up at other institutions across the country.

Deborah: And Chris, for you, what are the takeaways for PSIs?

Chris: Again, I think there's going to be a lot of overlap between what I say and what the others say, because these are, I think, the fundamental importance of a lot of the work we were doing. For me, I mean, I mean, what I'm looking at is my almost fear of success. We're hearing a lot of talk about restorative justice and transformative justice, and all these kinds of non-punitive accountability processes. And, you know, as Imery

said, we want senior administrators to look at what we're doing and then, often, in the past, post-secondaries have gone, "OK, yeah, we want some of that stuff," just whatever, if only just to cover their butts. And sometimes they really are trying to do the right thing, which is awesome. But they turn – there are a lot of groups out there, for-profit entities, that are going to come and say, "We'll do that for you."

And what they'll do is repackage stuff that they already know, because – so, that it makes it, "Here's the easy way through to this stuff." And it avoids all of the kinds of things that we said, "You need to think about this." And, you know, that's what, as Sam said, that's what we were trying to do is really to go, "These are all the complexities that you're going to have to grapple with, we're not going to tell you what the path is, because the path is going to look different at every institution." And to look for not only those big groups who will, for a sum of money, put together whatever package of whatever you may need or think you need, look to the people in – not only in your immediate community but the community that surrounds you. Think about how all the people who come to your institution are going to see ways to interact, or may need to see ways to interact with each other.

Think about the balance between the top-down building of an institution and a bottom-up and why it's important that you have the bottom-up as much as you have the top-down in order to have a healthy institution. So, what we – hopefully they take away from this is, as Sam said, this is enormously beneficial, but you're going to have to put some work into it, and you can't avoid these difficult conversations. And you don't want to. Avoiding them is really just perpetuating problems, engaging them. You know, and I've been struck by this ever since I began to work in this area. How many of the issues that we – not only sexual violence, but so many issues that we see as, "Well, they're impossible to deal with within a post-secondary –," we could be dealing with? And frankly, we could be dealing with them all at the same time if we really worked through all of this.

Deborah: OK, well, you can see from those amazing answers, the kinds of conversations this group must have had over the year really absolutely, you know, in-depth, very intention, you know, and difficult, really challenging themselves on how to express what needs to be done, thinking about what needs to be done, how to work with each other and work with people of different perspectives on what needs to be done. So, thank you to the panel. We do have some questions in the Q&A. So, I'm just going to throw some out. I'll start with, "sometimes non-punitive accountability processes are framed as an alternative, which minimized their viability or effectiveness for all concerned. How can PSIs uphold and promote non-punitive accountability processes to be more than just an alternative to the formal systems?" Thank you, it's like we planted that question almost, it's perfect. So, who wants to take that one? Chris, do you want to take that one?

Chris: Sure. You hit on a thing we talked a lot about and we believe in very strongly. This isn't an alternative, this is – these are – we're talking about,

you know, a whole range of possible processes and things that are the ways that people interact. And so, one of the things that institutions are going to think – have to think about is how – is how does this relate? So, if we've got a formal process, you know, we've got the existing processes over here and we'll punish anybody who comes in and we'll sanction – how does that relate to other ways of addressing not only conduct, but the harm that's underneath it? And what the people need to recognize is that if you have a process like that, it should be at the most – their most extreme outlier. The processes that you want to be central to people's lives are the non-punitive ones. So, they're not the alternative, the alternative is that we might have to actually remove them, whatever we have to do, because it's such an – if you have to do that, the non-punitive processes, when they're implemented properly, I believe can address anything that happens on campus, and do so in a much healthier way than we are right now.

Deborah: So sorry, it's that technology thing again. What do folks think about impact statements? I'm currently navigating the system and I want to find a way to be heard so my story creates an impact for change behaviour from perpetrators. Who wants to take that one?

Leah: I think that speaks to what Sam talked about in terms of the restorative impulse that sometimes survivors come forward with. And so, you know, we – I think Sarah said, you know, don't outline a clear policy and procedure or model in this workbook and, you know, that's very intentional, because there exists a wide spectrum of non-punitive accountability responses and, you know, something like an impact statement could be a piece of that, you know, if that's meaningful for a survivor to kind of communicate in that way to the person who has harmed them. Maybe that is not communicated directly, perhaps it's indirectly communicated, depending on the capacity of the person who caused harm to receive that information and to kind of respond to it in a way that will not contribute to further harm in that situation. And so, again, I think it's, you know, about institutions being open to possibility and exploring, you know, what it is that a survivor is saying they want from a process and how they might realize that or support that outcome.

Deborah: Does anyone else want to speak to that one? Imre.

Imre: Yeah, I just wanted to add to that and that's sort of – no matter what the process looks like exactly, when you're coming – when you're in a punitive model, the question is, what rule was broken? And then, if we can establish that, what's the consequence? When you're in a non-punitive system, the question becomes, what has harmed you? How have you been harmed? And what do you need to be healed from that, right? So, the questions become very different. And that's why the processes can be very different because it depends on the harm and on what the needs of that person are – persons.

Sarah: I also just want to jump on and say that – so, when I do an intake with a survivor, I often ask the question, what does healing look like for you? What would accountability look like for you? What are your big needs?

And I would say across the board, almost every survivor I work with, when they talk about what accountability or what justice or what feeling like moving forward in regards to the person who caused them harm would look like, is that the person understands the impact that their harm had on them. And very few survivors get the opportunity to do that. And I think non-punitive accountability creates space for people in a grounded way to be able to offer that, and also in a grounded way be able to receive that. And I think that's an incredibly important opportunity and, you know, the person who offered that question, being heard and understood is, like, is often a critical part of accessing accountability. And it's one of the few ways – because I think that healing and accountability are different things, but it is one of the ways we can see an overlap.

Deborah: OK. Dana has asked, what's your – what's been your biggest takeaway from working together this year? Does someone want to take that one?

Sarah: I can just say really quickly that this work is really messy. Even when you're working with an incredibly skilled, committed, passionate group of people, this work is messy, and we came back to it and we came back to it, and we had to talk in circles. It felt like we didn't move anywhere for months, because we just kept digging into really, really hard conversations. And I feel like the transition we've had over the past year and a bit has been – almost a year and a half – has been, like, massive. But just that this work is messy, and as soon as you try and make it clean, you're moving away from the work.

Sam: I think similar to that, I think the importance of being adept at practicing accountability yourself and within the group is really key. And we have been and still do, in a lot of different ways, and I think that maybe ties into one of the questions about, you know, working accountability into these processes and trusting is so central, how can we trust these big institutions to practice accountability within their own processes, not just, you know, between folks who've experienced or caused harm, or community. And I think that is part of the responsibility you're taking on when you're stewarding this kind of non-punitive accountability work within the institution. And even if, you know, big bureaucracy that's concerned with liability is maybe to ever going to be the trustworthy mechanism that we would hope for, you need to be pockets of, like, accountability and turning practice into action and sort of a safe haven for owning when we cause harm within these processes and trying to navigate through that.

So, it's, I think, a very active, lifelong commitment to these values that you create as a group through everything that you do to try and change the culture and the system that way. Then, I think, you know, even when you think you got it and, again, you're a group of folks who've done a lot of this work or thought a lot about this, and you come up against the ways that you still cause harm and you still don't quite get it or you unintentionally exclude folks or perspectives, you're reminded that, like, this is the lifelong practice of accountability that we're equipping other folks to do, not just, like, a, like, there's no end goal that you just get to and suddenly it's, like, you're good to go for life, no accountability. And

so, I think there's times people think, "Ah, I'm tired, this is hard, and I feel bad – I feel bad about myself or the thing that I did," but that's just a moment for empathy, I think, for folks who we're trying to reach with this work. So, yeah, the work should push you and it did push me and all of us, but I think we're better for it.

Deborah: OK. I've been told we have time for one more question, so here it comes, from Lindsey Anderson. Sometimes with restorative processes, a survivor or other harmed parties may want a punitive outcome imposed on a person who has caused harm. How might we deal with the confusion or friction when punitive-looking outcomes are part of a non-punitive accountability process? Do you believe that punitive outcomes should or can be a part of a non-punitive accountability process?

Chris: I just want to add to that, partly because I think what we need to do, when people come and say, "I want this to happen," right off the bat, we're not saying, "OL, we're going to do whatever you say when you first come in the door." To me, that's an expression of how powerful the issue is, and they may only be able to see at that moment one thing that needs – that they think can be done. And traditionally, Western-European cultures, the way you handle harm is to cause harm to somebody else. And what we're looking for is a process. And so, talking them through the process so that they can engage it is important, rather than just saying, "OK." I mean, people may come and say, "I don't want to participate in this at all, here's what I want." I think that that's, again, something where we can take it into account in a degree, but it's not simply a sort of a binary issue, "Yeah, we're going to do all these things as soon as they come in," or – we're going to try and do something that's more reflective and engaging. But it does tell us a lot about the impact of that harm on that person.

Sarah: I would also say that I think that a lot of our internal metrics for accountability as Chris said are driven by, like, deeply embedded stories about what justice looks like that have come through the prison industrial complex, and it actually takes a lot of, like, unpacking and work to move away from that. And I think that's, you know, I believe Sam was speaking to, like, the – Leah was speaking to the time and commitment and resources needed, and I think that before you're even – or, like, into what we would call, like, a circle, you know, or something like that, there is work that's happening at the beginning, not just with the person who caused harm to make sure that they're at a place where they can show up grounded and able to hold accountability, it's also doing work with the person who experienced harm to really get down to their base things that they want – what do they believe they want moving forward?

And, like, and that moves. When you've experienced trauma, when we're looking at sexual violence, what you think you want – or what you want, sorry, is going to shift and change, and that's OK. And so, it's kind of the work, you need someone who's skilled and tooled, and you can see that in a punitive process, as well, that the survivor will say that they want things and then that will shift. And so, that's just to be expected. And it's

up to the people who are facilitating those conversations to be able to help people, like, unpack and go down to their base needs or remind them of what their base goals are. And when they're having those reactions, you know, like, speak to them and be like, "What's coming up for you that's – like, what's not working here that's making you want that particular outcome? Are there other ways to have that need met?"

Because the whole point of outcomes is that they're co-created by all the individuals impacted, so that it is a truly voluntary process in which everyone transforms, and it's not, you know, we obviously want to be trauma informed, we obviously want to be survivor informed, but that does not mean the survivor dictates every aspect of the process. And as a survivor, I deeply believe that's critical, because I'm not always going to be grounded and regulated with my requests [laughs], like, today, you know?

Leah: I would just add that, you know, as a program, this is where the ethics kind of comes into play, you need to define what is and isn't possible within your kind of scope of practice, and that's OK to say to someone, "It's valid that you want that, unfortunately, this process cannot offer you that particular outcome." So, again, just kind of grounding in ethics and values to guide your work.

Farrah: I could probably listen to your group for another six days, and it wouldn't be enough, but I just want to say thank you to Working Towards a Justice that Heals Community of Practice, because this was an exceptional conversation. And I know there's so much more that we could be asking, and some of your questions, we're going to be making sure that we can hopefully maybe put into a blog post and also, we'll give the final kind of checkpoint for folks – the folks that are making this toolkit to actually bring it in. So, big thank you to you and, you know, this project is a lot of a labour of love for a lot of people, and a lot of time and energy outside of our work on the side of our desk, so I cannot thank this group enough for this tremendous work that's come towards this toolkit. I'm so excited about this workbook coming out at the end of the summer, at the beginning of fall. And I also want to just kind of remind people that Carina from Drawing for Change has made this really beautiful image that she's putting together for us, and you can see it on the side here.

And the final graphic will be – the video will be available for folks in our conversation on our website. So, please look for that. And don't forget to register for the other sessions that are coming up, there are some amazing ones coming up. I know the next one I'm really excited about, which is working with people who've caused harm. And that is another amazing conversation that is sorely needed in our movement to end gender-based violence on our campus and in the world. And I think it's something that's really exciting. And another thing to know is, please, please fill out the evaluation, because we cannot learn and do better without your feedback and support.

We want to really thank the attendees, many of you are part of the Courage to Act project and have been doing tremendous work



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yourselves in your communities of practice and can't thank you enough for being a part of this. We're so excited for this project to continue. And, of course, thank you to WAGE for funding this project, the government of Canada, Women and Gender Equality, Kelly Prevett and Anoodth and Carina and Andreanne and all the people from Courage to Act who've been doing tremendous work on this. Thank you, and I hope you have a really great afternoon. Bye, everyone.