

Take a Few Deep Breaths. We Will Begin Shortly.

Where The Line Resides

Surviving The Cycle of Sexual Harm

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The HEAL Project | heal2end.org | @heal2end



HouseKeeping

Audience Participation
Content Warning
Take Care of Yourself
Trigger Guide



Who Are We?

The HEAL Project

A BIPOC-led, Trans/Nonbinary-led, Survivor-led
Educational initiative using media to **prevent & end**
Childhood Sexual Abuse (CSA)
through **healing the wound** of Sexual Oppression
& embracing **Sexual Liberation**

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Welcome!

Agenda

- Objectives & Intentions
- The Line
- The Culture of Sexual Violence
- Navigating the Cycle of Sexual Harm
- The Personal & Political Work
- Resources + Discussion

Agreements

- Respect
- Agree to Disagree
- Minimize Triggers
- Honor Confidentiality



This is NOT a place for...

Shaming *Blaming*
Counseling *Accusing*
"Ignacio said you're a ..." *Dismissing*
"Closure"



This is a place for...

- Those *Feeling Stuck*. "Am I a survivor/harm-doer?"
- Those Looking to *Take Care* of Themselves
- Understanding The *Culture of Sexual Violence*
- Identifying *Your Position* in the Cycle of Sexual Harm
- Validating Our *Collective Feelings & Experiences*
- Offering Ourselves *Acceptance & Compassion*
- Moving toward *Sustainable Accountability & Transformative Justice*



“The Line”



Labels can empower, but they also limit.



You Get To Define Your Experiences. So Do Others.

“I kissed without asking.”

“I didn’t really like it, but they liked me being rough.”

“I think I messed up and want to check in, but I’m afraid of being labeled a…”

“Maybe I deserved it after watching all that violent porn.”

“They were too aggressive, but it turned me on.”

“I thought everything was fine, but they didn’t think so.”

“They looked tense. I checked in and they said they were fine.”

“I hated it, but I know they didn’t mean it.”

“Am I a horrible person for fantasizing about being sexually aggressive?”

Use the Chat Box!

- What are the “typical” traits of survivors vs. harm-doers?
 - Consider who is believed to be a victim and who is not
 - Consider who is believed to be a harm-doer and who is not

Culture of Sex(ual) Violence

The Culture of Sex is Violent.

Culture of Sexual Violence refers to the **normalization** of physically and mentally harmful practices that lead to violent sexual **actions and relations**. These practices may or may not be illegal or criminal and are **perpetuated at every level** of society from interpersonal to institutional.

Rape culture is a subset of the Culture of Sexual Violence.

Cycle of Sexual Harm

Victims & Harm-Doers are Made.

The Cycle of Sexual Harm refers to the reality that sexual harm is **NOT an isolated or individual issue**. The Culture of Sexual Violence fuels Sexual Harm in **cyclical patterns**.

We are all a part of this cycle and need to actively work to break away through *personal and political work*.

Systems of Marginalization Fuel The Cycle of Sexual Harm.

- Patriarchy
- Body Norm
- White Supremacy
- Adult Privilege
- Carceral



Navigating The Cycle of Sexual Harm

We are in this together.

Barriers to Navigation

- Shame, Secrecy
- Privacy, Personality
- Family, Religion
- Fear of Carceral Responses
- Lack of Access to Resources (Financial, Emotional, Etc.)



The Personal Work

The Power of One.

- Understand your **relationship to shame**
- **Accept your place** in the cycle of sexual harm
- Differentiate between **difficult feelings** and sexual harm
- Set and expect the bar to be much **higher than consent**
- Develop an **internal compass** based on YOUR values and boundaries
- **Practice accountability** around small stuff



The Political Work

The Power of Many.

- Stop doing the work in a **silo!**
- Evaluate your engagement in **call-out/cancel culture**
- Detect **carceral responses** to sexual harm
- Learn about **Transformative & Healing Justice**
- Dedicate more effort to **prevention instead of reaction**
- Incorporate compassionate **connection skills** in your work



How do we break the cycle of sexual harm without perpetuating harm?

“ I don't believe in putting anyone in human cages, and that has little to do with how much I feel for abusive people. It has to do with recognizing the possibility of ending the problem of abuse rather than running from it. It has to do with needing to end it, needing more than temporary answers that always seem limited in addressing the long standing health issues within our community, and knowing there will never be an opportunity as long as prisons stand.

~Excerpt from *What do we do with abusers like R. Kelly if we abolish prisons?* by Hari Ziyad



Thank You for Showing Up Today!
questions?

Use the Chat Box!

