

Glossary of Key Terms

POSSIBILITY
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#IHaveTheCourageToAct



Land Acknowledgement

This work is taking place on and across the traditional territories of many Indigenous nations. We recognize that gender-based violence is one form of violence caused by colonization that is still used today to marginalize and dispossess Indigenous Peoples from their lands and waters. We must centre this truth in our work to address gender-based violence on campuses and in our communities. We commit to continuing to learn and take an anti-colonial inclusive approach in all our work. One way we are honouring this responsibility is by actively incorporating the [Calls for Justice within Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#).

About Possibility Seeds

[Courage to Act](#), is a national initiative to address and prevent gender-based violence at Canadian post-secondary institutions. It is led by Possibility Seeds, a social change consultancy dedicated to gender justice, equity, and inclusion. We believe safe, equitable workplaces, organizations and institutions are possible. Learn more about our work at www.possibilityseeds.ca.

We offer this glossary of terms in the context of addressing gender-based violence on campus. We recognize that many of the terms provided are broad, ever-evolving, and continuously expanding as this work continues to grow. We welcome suggestions from those involved in and familiar with gender-based violence intervention and prevention. Please email your suggestions to anoodth@possibilityseeds.ca



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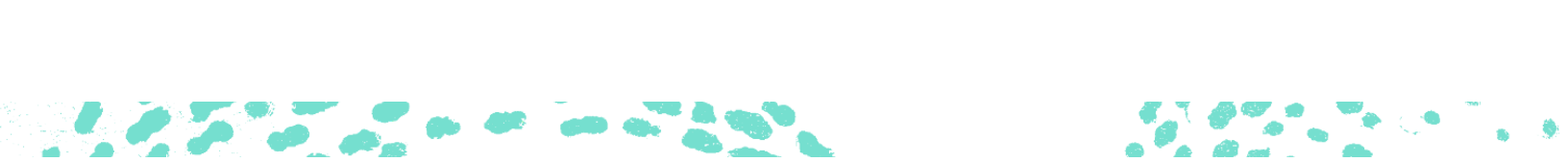
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2SLGBTQQIA

The initialism stands for: Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual. We use 2SLGBTQQIA to identify the diversity of sexualities and gender identities while also recognizing that identity is expansive and growing. We honour the unique histories and distinctions of these umbrella terms and cannot apply a singular lens to any term or identity. We acknowledge that "2SLGTQQIA" is not inclusive of many other identities such as non-binary, gender nonconforming, genderqueer, and that many other genders and sexual identities fall outside the gender binary or identify as non-heteronormative.

Advocate

An individual or group who works to end campus gender-based violence by advocating for adequate policies, survivor support, accountability, resources, and community prevention education. An advocate can also refer to someone who advocates on behalf of a



survivor/client to obtain necessary resources and to support with system navigation on or off-campus.

Anti-Oppressive Practice (AOP)

Individual and institutional strategies, theories, actions and practices that seek to dismantle the effects of institutionalized power and privilege – particularly of white European experiences and structures – and ultimately to equalize power imbalances (Simmons University Library, 2021). Anti-oppressive practice includes being anti-racist, sexist, ableist, ageist, classist, colonial, as well as actively working against homophobia, transphobia, and religious discrimination.

Anti-Racism

“Anti-racism is an active and consistent process of change to eliminate individual, institutional and systemic racism as well as the oppression and injustice racism causes. Anti-racism is an action-oriented strategy which mobilizes the skills and knowledge of racialized people in order to work for a redistribution of power in organizations and society” (Community and Race Relations Committee of Peterborough, n.d.).

Compassion Fatigue

“[A] state of exhaustion and dysfunction biologically, psychologically, and socially as a result of prolonged exposure to compassion stress and all it invokes” (Figley, 1995). It is sometimes referred to as secondary traumatic stress.

Complainant

The person who reports an incident of campus gender-based violence with the intent of pursuing the institution’s formal complaints process, in most cases the person who was subjected to the incident of gender-based violence.



Complaint

When an individual provides information regarding a potential gender-based violence policy violation to the appropriate post-secondary institution official with the intent to initiate an investigation.

Complaints Process

Any post-secondary institution process begins with a formal report to the institution of potential sexual misconduct, which leads to an investigation, findings, and possible accountability measures, outcomes, or remedies under the gender-based violence policy. This process is governed by administrative law, which is separate and distinct from civil or criminal law.

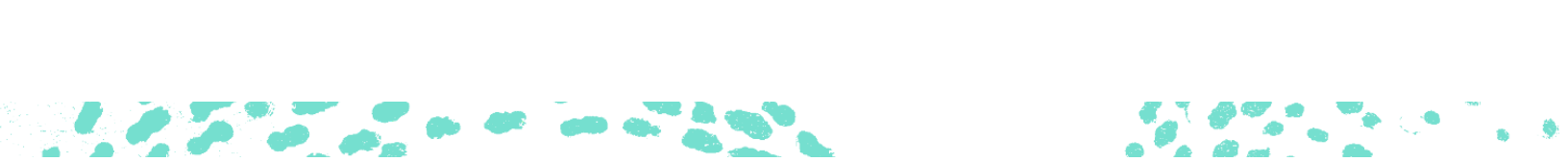
Consent

Consent is an everyday practice that is required before engaging in different types of interactions, including sexual relations. Consent must be voluntarily given by all parties. Consent must be informed, on-going, enthusiastic, withdrawn at any time, specific and is required before each interaction. It is important to note that any type of sexual activity without consent is sexualized violence.

Consent Culture

A culture where consent is practiced and normalized in everyday interactions and activities. In a consent culture, survivors of gender-based violence are believed and people's right to choice and autonomy are respected and valued in every aspect of their lives. Consent culture is often framed as an alternative to rape culture- a culture that upholds oppressive systems such as patriarchy, misogyny, white supremacy, colonialism, racism, etc.

"A culture in which the prevailing narrative of sex is centered on mutual consent. It is a culture that does not force anyone into anything, respects bodily autonomy and is based on the belief that a person is always the best judge of their own wants and needs. Consent



to any activity is ongoing, freely given, informed and enthusiastic” (Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children, 2019).

Courage to Act

Courage to Act is a national initiative to address and prevent gender-based violence (GBV) at post-secondary institutions (PSIs) in Canada. It is led by Possibility Seeds, a project management and policy development organization, directed by Farrah Khan and CJ Rowe, that works alongside communities, organizations, and institutions to cultivate gender equity. The project builds on key recommendations from the vital 2019 *Courage to Act* report. Funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), it is the first collaborative of its kind to bring together 150+ GBV experts and advocates across Canada. Over the span of two years, the Courage to Act team and 10 Communities of Practice created a number of cutting-edge resources, presented over a National Skillshare Series from January-August 2021. Starting in Fall 2021, these resources will be piloted, refined, and implemented in order to inform, harmonize, and strengthen efforts to better address and prevent GBV at PSIs in Canada.

Courage to Act’s Communities of Practice

Courage to Act has built ten robust, national English and French Communities of Practice for post-secondary administration staff, faculty and students as well as community advocates who are working to address and prevent gender-based violence on campus. Each Community of Practice has created a resource to address a significant gap or issue identified in the *Courage to Act* report (2019).

Culturally Safe Approaches

Approaches that recognize and challenge unequal power relations between service providers and survivors by building equitable, two-way relationships characterized by respect, shared responsibility, and cultural exchange. Survivors must have their culture, values, and preferences taken into account in the provision of services (Government of Canada, 2021).



Discrimination

Discrimination is behaviour that results from prejudiced attitudes by individuals or institutions, resulting in unequal outcomes for persons who are perceived as different. It is the unfair treatment due to a “Prohibited Ground” under the Human Rights Code, which includes race, sex, sexual orientation, gender orientation and gender expression, same-sex partner status, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, marital status, age, disability, citizenship, family status, or religion. Discrimination includes, but is not restricted to, the denial of equal treatment, civil liberties and opportunities to individuals or groups with respect to education, accommodation, health care, employment and access to services, goods and facilities (Canadian Human Rights Commission, n.d.)

Discloser

The person who shares that they have been subjected to gender-based violence without necessarily intending to pursue, or prior to initiating, the institution’s formal complaints process.

Disclosure

When a person shares that they have been subjected to gender-based violence, often for the purpose of accessing support or resources.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

An umbrella term that includes sexual violence and other forms of “use and abuse and control over another person” that are “perpetrated against someone based on their gender expression, gender identity, or perceived gender” (BCFED, 2018, as cited in Khan & Rowe, 2019, p. 10). Forms of gender-based violence include: physical violence; online violence/technology-facilitated violence; sexual violence including sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual exploitation; spiritual abuse; financial abuse; harassment including stalking; and emotional and psychological violence including put-downs, bullying, threats and intimidation.



Grievance

“[A] violation of the employee's rights on the job – whether under the collective agreement or under legislation. Not all complaints are grievances. They need to clearly violate either the contract or the law” (Canadian Labour Congress, 2015).

Harassment

“Persistent, ongoing behavior conveying negative attitudes towards an individual or group to make them feel intimidated and humiliated. Harassment is an exercise of power. It includes any action that a person knows, or should know, is not welcome. Harassment includes name-calling, jokes, slurs, graffiti, insults, threats, rudeness and crude gestures, verbal or physical abuse. Human Rights Codes in most provinces prohibit harassment based on race, religion, sex, ethnicity and the other prohibited grounds for discrimination” (Springtide Resources, 2018)

Harm

In the context of addressing sexual violence on campus, harm refers to negative consequences of GBV, the PSI complaints process as a whole, or specific elements of the process, experienced by the involved parties. The institution can introduce measures to reduce or mitigate harm throughout its complaints process or offer non-adjudicative options specifically designed to address the harm resulting from gender-based violence.

Harm Reduction

A recognition that the processes designed to address gender-based violence in post-secondary institutions can themselves cause harm; and a series of practices that, wherever possible, seeks to limit and reduce the negative consequences of gender-based violence and gender-based violence complaints processes on the involved parties.



Historical Trauma

Historical trauma is commonly referred to as the “cumulative emotional and psychological wounding spanning generations, which emanates from massive group trauma” (Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999 as cited in Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 54). Historical trauma can also be described as a previous trauma of gender-based violence, one that may have happened prior to attending or working at a post-secondary institution.

The “cumulative emotional and psychological wounding spanning generations, which emanates from massive group trauma” (Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999 as cited in Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 54).

Intergenerational Trauma

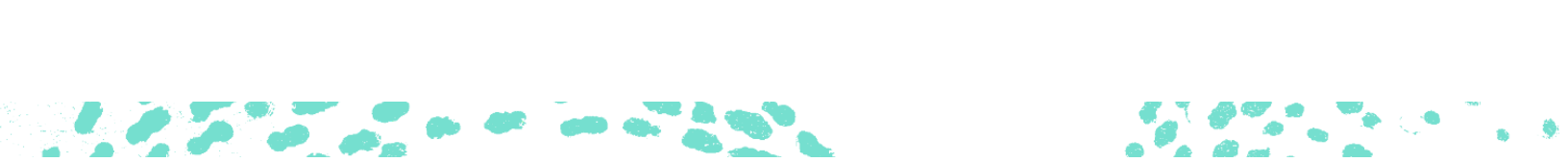
“[W]hen the effects of trauma are not resolved in one generation. When trauma is ignored and there is no support for dealing with it, the trauma will be passed from one generation to the next” (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 1999, as cited in Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p. 2).

Intersectionality

A term coined by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality is the acknowledgement that an individual can occupy a number of political and social identities and that this has an impact on that individual. Those identities and social categorizations can be understood under racial, gender, sexual, religious, disabled, class, and religious lines, to name a few. The overlap of any of these identities creates a complex system of discrimination where individuals face multiple oppressions. Any policy, procedure or support should adopt this lens, so as to be mindful and delineate who is being excluded from such processes.

Investigator

In reference to the PSI context of sexualized violence reporting process, an investigator is an individual who gathers relevant information, interviews the complainant, respondent,



and witnesses, and provides the investigation report to the decision-maker. In some cases, the investigator also makes a finding on whether a policy violation occurred.

Perpetrator

“A perpetrator is a person, group, or institution that directly inflicts, supports and condones violence or other abuse against a person or a group of persons. Perpetrators are in a position of real or perceived power, decision-making and/or authority and can thus exert control over their victims” (PSI, 2016, as cited in Learning Network, n.d.)

Post-Secondary Institutions (PSIs)

Includes (but not limited to) colleges, universities, Indigenous institutes, technical institutes, collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEPs), trade schools, and other institutions outside the K-12 systems, that fall under provincial or territorial legislation.

Procedural Fairness

Procedural fairness revolves around decision-makers and the process they use to come to a decision. In the context of gender-based violence on campus, it is the notion that individuals party to a complaint must be accorded a set of rights throughout the entire process sufficient to allow for the fair assessment of their case, regardless of which side of the complaint they are on.

Promising Practices

Promising practices, refer to campus gender-based violence programs, policies, services or strategies that show potential (or promise) for developing into a best practice.



Respondent

The person alleged to have committed gender-based violence on or off-campus, in other words, the subject of the complaint(s). A respondent can be any member of a post-secondary institution (student, staff, faculty, librarian, administrator, employee).

Retraumatization

Retraumatization occurs when someone re-experiences or re-lives a previous traumatic event. This can occur if a survivor of campus gender-based violence lodges a formal complaint to their institution. They may then have to “re-tell” their trauma story multiple times to different campus members (ie., administrators, investigators, campus police, residence dons, counsellors, support staff and potentially others). “Re-telling” of such traumatic events can set off a range of symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, sleeping issues, anxiety, withdrawal from school/social settings, intense emotions, and more. Retraumatization can also be brought on by environmental factors such as being in the same place where the violence took place, a similar scent, taste, or sound.

Occurs when the methods used to discuss, debate and analyze the original trauma cause triggering symptoms related to the incident itself, or reliving moments from the original trauma (Valpied et al., 2014).

Sanctuary Trauma

“Occurs when an individual who suffered a severe stressor next encounters what was expected to be a supportive and protective environment and discovers only more trauma” (Rose, n.d.).

Secondary Trauma

“[N]atural and consequential behaviours and emotions resulting from knowing about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other (or client) and the stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person” (Figley, 1995 as cited in Rauvola et al., 2019).



Survivor

We use the term survivor to refer to any individual who has experienced sexual or gender-based violence on or off-campus, whether or not a disclosure, informal complaint or formal complaint has been made. The term survivor is often interchanged with victim, which is often used as a legal term in the criminal justice system. Some individuals choose to identify with the term victim. An individual may use the term survivor as a way to reclaim power and/or to highlight the strength it took to survive such violence.

Survivor-Centric

A survivor-centric approach prioritizes the rights, needs, and wishes of those who have experienced campus gender-based violence first and foremost. Above all, survivor-centric protocols should prioritize placing the control and decision-making back into the hands of the harmed person so the response does not contribute to taking away further control from that person.

Systemic Discrimination

“The institutionalization of discrimination through policies and practices which may appear neutral on the surface but which have an exclusionary impact on particular groups, such that various minority groups are discriminated against, intentionally or unintentionally” (Canadian Race Relations Foundation, n.d.)

Systems Navigator

A person that explains intra-post-secondary policies, as well as internal and external, processes and procedures to involved parties, and offers guidance, referrals and coordination of support throughout the complaints process.



Technology-Facilitated Violence (also known as Technology-Assisted Violence)

A range of behaviours that use technology to facilitate virtual and/or in-person harm. The intent of technology-facilitated violence is to threaten, harass, bully, embarrass, assault, extort, coerce, torment or socially exclude another person by using technology (Government of Canada, 2021).

Technology-facilitated violence and digital abuse are two distinct categories of online abuse. TFV can refer to one or multiple perpetrators abusing someone online without necessarily knowing the survivor in real life. Digital abuse is inflicted by an abusive partner who uses technology to harm or control.

Trauma and Violence Informed Approaches/Trauma and Violence Informed Care

Trauma and Violence-Informed (TVI) approaches “are policies and practices that recognize the connections between violence, trauma, negative health outcomes and behaviours” (Government of Canada, 2018).

TVI approaches are based on four principles:

1. Understand trauma and violence, and their impacts on peoples' lives and behaviours
2. Create emotionally and physically safe environments
3. Foster opportunities for choice, collaboration, and connection
4. Provide a strengths-based and capacity-building approach to support client coping and resilience

The specification of violence in TVI approaches draws direct attention to the broader structural and social conditions, as well as forms of ongoing and/or institutional violence, and the need for service providers to conduct their work in full recognition of these contexts.



Trauma-Informed/Trauma-Informed Practice

Trauma-informed means acknowledging the harm endured by complainants and survivors along with having awareness of the impacts that trauma has on an individual's emotional, cognitive, physical and sexual wellbeing. Such acknowledgement and understanding should guide the creation of processes, procedures and support. Adopting such a lens should serve to not re-traumatize individuals further; it should maintain their dignity throughout the process, procedure or support they receive. In addition to processes, procedures or support that are infused with trauma-informed principles, trauma informed also implies that those individuals charged with creating processes, procedures or documents need specific training in trauma-informed practices as well.

Trigger

"A stimulus that sets off a memory of a trauma or a specific portion of a traumatic experience" (SAMHSA, 2014). Survivors of gender-based violence may experience triggers at any time, for example, "a survivor attending a seminar hears a joke about rape" may trigger a trauma response such as flashbacks, anxiety, panic, flight, fight or freeze.

Vicarious Trauma

"Vicarious traumatization (VT) refers to harmful changes that occur in professionals' views of themselves, others, and the world as a result of exposure to graphic and/or traumatic material. VT can be seen as a normal response to ongoing challenges to a helper's beliefs and values but can result in decreased motivation, efficacy, and empathy" (McCann & Pearlman, 1990 as cited in Baird & Kracen, 2006). Vicarious trauma can occur to those working with survivors of campus gender-based violence.

The "transformation in the inner experience of the [worker] that comes about as a result of empathic engagements with trauma material" (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995 as cited in Rauvola et al., 2019).

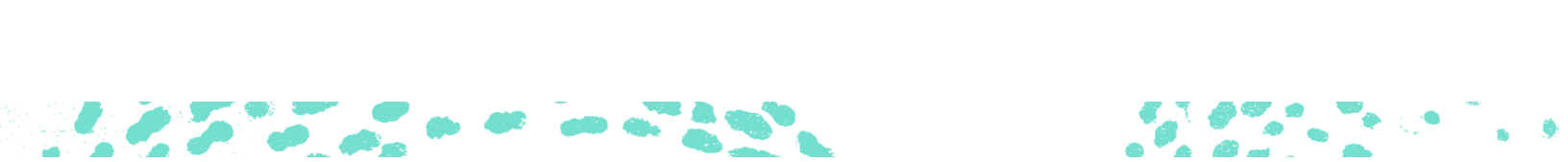


Victim Blaming

Victim blaming is when the default response to gender-based violence is assuming the fault lies with the victim/survivor. Victim blaming places the responsibility on the victim/survivor, rather than the person who caused the violence in the first place. For example, victim-blaming responses may sound like: “What were you wearing?” “How much did you have to drink?” “Are you sure it really happened?” These responses – often socially accepted- may come from post-secondary institutions, administrators, staff, peers, family, faculty, legal systems, and so on. Victim blaming is deeply rooted in rape culture and systemic discrimination.

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