

# RESOURCES

## Local Northwest Groups:

Asian & Pacific Islander Women & Family Safety Center [www.apifwsc.org](http://www.apifwsc.org)  
Chaya [www.chaya-seattle.org](http://www.chaya-seattle.org)  
Coalition of Anti-Racist Whites (CAR-W) [www.carw.org](http://www.carw.org)  
Common Action [www.nwcommonaction.org](http://www.nwcommonaction.org)  
Communities Against Rape & Abuse (CARA) [www.cara-seattle.org](http://www.cara-seattle.org)  
Democracy Insurgent [www.democracyinsurgent.org](http://www.democracyinsurgent.org)  
Entre Hermanos [www.entrehermanos.org](http://www.entrehermanos.org)  
El Comité [www.elcomitewa.org](http://www.elcomitewa.org)  
For Crying Out Loud [forcryingoutloud206.wordpress.com](http://forcryingoutloud206.wordpress.com)  
Home Alive [www.homealive.org](http://www.homealive.org)  
INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence [www.incite-national.org](http://www.incite-national.org)  
People of Color Against AIDS Network (POCAAN) [www.pocaan.org](http://www.pocaan.org)  
Pinay sa Seattle  
Real Change [www.realchangenews.org](http://www.realchangenews.org)  
Seattle Young People's Project (SYPP) [www.sypp.com](http://www.sypp.com)

## Blogs:

crispchick <http://m33scripchick.wordpress.com>  
Scarleteen website [scarleteen.com](http://scarleteen.com)  
CARA blog <http://cara-seattle.blogspot.com>  
This is What a Man Sounds Like

## Zines:

Learning Good Consent [zinelibrary.info/learning-good-consent](http://zinelibrary.info/learning-good-consent)  
Don't Rape Each Other [zinelibrary.info/dont-rape-each-other](http://zinelibrary.info/dont-rape-each-other)  
Icarus Project Navigating Crisis Handout [zinelibrary.info/icarus-project-navigating-crisis-handout](http://zinelibrary.info/icarus-project-navigating-crisis-handout)  
Taking the First Step: Suggestions to People Called out for Abusive Behavior [functiondesign.com/dealwithit/02wispy.php](http://functiondesign.com/dealwithit/02wispy.php)  
My Body My Limits My Pleasure My Choice [www.phillypissed.net/node/9](http://www.phillypissed.net/node/9)

## Books:

Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power & A World Without Rape, eds. Friedman and Valenti  
Colonize This! Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism, eds. Hernandez, Rehman, & Moraga  
Color of Violence Anthology, ed. INCITE!

Please copy & distribute freely  
but if you change anything,  
please take our names &  
info off of it!

# How to Put together your own participatory, community-specific, radical CONSENT WORKSHOP!



- + in-depth workshop curriculum to use/adapt with definitions and activities
- + how to be a good facilitator
- + resources
- + and more...



She is a red bean woman.  
 Durian breasts, lychee lips, mango cheeks  
 sugar cane arms, watermelon belly, coconut tears -  
 a wetness all over that makes everything  
 taste good together.  
 She has sweet almond bean curd heart, cocktail fruit jokes  
 mandarin orange generosity, rambutan touch,  
 sweet potato words, water chestnut sensibilities,  
 chrysanthemum tea crystal wishes,  
 and salty dried plum nipples to make your mouth water.  
 And when you hold one  
 in your mouth long enough,  
 the revived flesh  
 slips off its  
 pit.



## COMMUNITY VISIONING CLOSING EXERCISE

This closing activity is meant to apply the things we've learned about interpersonal consent to the larger society, which is not based on consent. We believe that consent needs to extend to all parts of our lives: workplaces, schools, community, government, etc.

We ask people to brainstorm about what our communities would look like if they were based on consent and if we all practiced consent. You can ask questions like:

- what does learning look like here?
- what does healing and accountability look like?
- what do your relationships look and feel like?
- where do you get your food/clothes/~~good~~ goods?
- How can we make this happen?

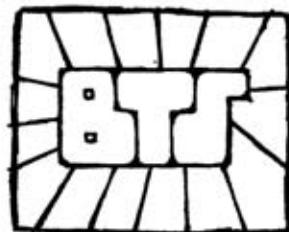
Thanks to Dustin Fujikawa!

Ideally, people's comments are written up/displayed somehow.

## CHECK-OUT

At the end of what is a pretty intense workshop, we like to give people time to reflect and give feedback about the workshop. We ask each person to share thoughts or feelings about the workshop, how they're processing things, whatever. At this point, we encourage participants to sign up on our listserv, fill out our feedback survey, pick up materials, and chat with us. Inviting everyone to go get food is also a good way to get more feedback, make friends, and build connections between groups.

So there you have it. BTS' version of the consent workshop. PLEASE email us and let us know what you think about this zine, the workshop, and anything else, or if you want to get involved!  
 nwbreakthesilence@gmail.com  
 coffeeforkatya@gmail.com





closer.") Have everyone take a turn. This activity lets people practice setting boundaries with their ~~voice~~ words and tone while exploring their physical "bubble" or comfort zone.

↳ participatory; 10-15 minutes

## HAND HOLDING ACTIVITY

Break everyone into groups of 3. In this exercise, the metaphor of holding hands will be used to explore consent, although no actual hand holding will go on between participants. In part I of this exercise, we practice saying no, so one person will ask another to hold their hand and that person will say no. The 3rd person watches and supports the interaction. Each person should have a chance in each role. For part II, we practice saying yes. The same scenario will happen, but with person saying yes (but not actually going through with it.) This exercise differs from the Hand on Knee activity because it gives people the chance to practice the process of consent (asking, answering yes/no, and discussing) rather than having to fend off an advance and re-assent boundaries.

↳ participatory; 10-15 minutes

## YES/NO/MAYBE ACTIVITY

from Chris Burns

This activity may be more of a personal one to suggest that people take on with their partner/s outside of the workshop. Each person will make their own lists of romantic/sexual activities that they are interested in doing (the yes list), perhaps interested in exploring or learning more about (the maybe list), and are not up for (the no list). Partners should compare and discuss lists. Although it's important to recognize that these lists are fluid and that things can move from any column to another, the list as it stands must be respected. That is, if there's something on the no list, it's there for a reason and no one should push to get it on the maybe or yes list. Also, even if something is on the yes list, it doesn't commit to that person saying yes to it any or every time. This is a good way for partners to begin expressing their preferences about sexuality and discuss exploring new activities.

↳ participatory

# WHAT IS THIS ZINE?

This zine is a practical guide to putting together your own consent workshop. It is the product of almost a year of work from members of the Break the Silence collective formulating and facilitating participatory consent workshops. It is a collection of what we've learned over this time about what consent means, how to implement it in our lives, and how to work with others to collectively unlearn the fucked up practices and beliefs that we are taught in this culture of rape. This is not meant as an introduction to radical consent or sexualized violence. If that's what you're looking for, please see the resources section at the back for some amazing books, articles, blogs, and organizations to check out. In this zine, we assume you have a basic understanding of consent, rape culture, sexualized violence, and the many interlocking oppressions that shape our society.

This was not an easy journey for us, nor will it continue to be for anyone who embarks upon it. Many of us have chosen to do the work we do because of our connections to interpersonal violence, particularly sexualized violence. In this process, we not only hit obstacles in our research and with the triggering effects it had on many of us, but also in being challenged by individuals and the institutions we are a part of. This is the kind of work that cannot take place without self-care, group discussions about personal experience and identity, and solidarity. Without these things being present throughout the process, and even when they are, burn-out is frequent and persistent.

That's why although each workshop only requires 3 facilitators, taking on this project should be done by a group twice that, which has some experience working together already. However, despite being painful and sometimes discouraging work, I doubt any of us would regret taking it on.

The reason for putting this zine together is that we found available resources of this kind few and far between. We hope others can take what we've done and find some use in it: adapt it to fit your own community, switch out the activities, make it into a musical, improve on it in whatever way you want.



## HISTORY OF BTS

Break the Silence was formed by students in Seattle out of a radical class taught by a radical professor/organizer. It started as a one-time event, a movie night and an open, honest discussion of SV and incest. 2 years later, it was a conference attended both by other students and community members. That conference was entitled Break the Silence: Shattering the Culture of Violence and offered workshops on a wide variety of anti-violence topics such as community accountability, SV + native women's healing through writing, transgender individuals in the PIC, domestic violence, and more. That was last year. The people on the conference committee (there were 7 or 8 of us, of varying identities) formed a group over the summer and began taking on internal education and collective analysis building. We started working on consent workshops, community engagement, and involving ourselves in events and issues on our campus. We are now very close to holding our 2nd annual conference, Creative Resistance: Confronting Legacies of Violence and Building Consent.

# AS OF 2010!

## PENCIL ACTIVITY

from Mako Fitts

This activity would be good for a younger (middle-high school) audience. In this activity, one of the facilitators asks to borrow a participant's pencil. Someone will usually give their pencil without thinking. Ask all the participants "Did I have permission to take the pencil?" and "How did I get or establish permission?" Then, return the pencil to the owner and pretend it's the next day. The facilitator goes to the same participant and takes the pencil (not using force). Ask again "Did I have permission to take the pencil? Can't I just assume that the person will let me have their pencil because they let me borrow it yesterday? Didn't they deserve to have their pencil taken because they just left it out for anyone?" Ask participants how consent or lack of consent with the pencil is similar (or different) to consent w/ sex. 4 observatory; 10 minutes

## SKITS/STOPLIGHT ACTIVITY

from Mako Fitts

In this activity, facilitators act out prepared skits or dialogues setting up scenes where issues of consent come into play (examples include a party setting where a friend puts an arm around you without asking; a couple staying at a hotel where one pays for the room and wants to initiate sex, etc.) To add more of a participatory element to this activity, you can hand out scraps of red, yellow, and green paper to each person. As they are watching the skit, they act as the stoplight, holding up the green card when they think consent is present, and things are going well, the yellow one when they are unsure or think things need to pause or slow down in the skit, and red when consent is not present and things need to stop. After the skit is over, discuss people's reactions to it via the metaphor (once the light turns yellow, it can't go back to green without stopping on red.) Skits can be difficult to perform, so an alternative is showing clips from movies and analyzing those scenarios. 4 observatory/participatory



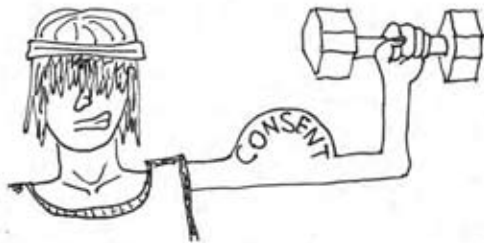
## PRACTICING YELLING ACTIVITY

from Home Alive

In this activity, one person stands at the end of the room and everyone creates a single-file line facing them. One by one, they walk at the person who practices setting boundaries with their voice ("Stop. Don't come any

# ACTIVITIES NOTE

We generally chose 2 or 3 activities to include in each workshop in the interest of time, and we describe several possibilities below from which to choose. We found that there are a few different types of activities, with pros and cons for each. We appreciate the participatory exercises because they give people the chance to learn skills (i.e. asserting boundaries, using new language, actively listening, etc.) that they can directly implement in their lives. However, the intricacies of power dynamics and the complexity that exists in all relationships isn't communicated as well in these more participatory activities. For that, we found that activities that may be more observatory can help to fill in gaps and bring a complexity to consent that would otherwise be lacking. In formulating these exercises (such as the skit activity) we tried to keep a few things in mind. We asked ourselves what stereotypes we may be enforcing. We need to be writing/showing authentic dialogues and reducing tokenism.



## HAND ON KNEE ACTIVITY

This activity is from Home Alive. We ask the participants to sit in a circle. Each person will take a turn putting their hand on the knee of the person sitting next to them (you may choose to

'hover' if you feel uncomfortable). That person will use their words and tone to re-establish their boundaries ("Get your hand off of me!", "I'd rather you not touch me without my permission", "That's not okay", etc.) Playing both roles as well as hearing other's reactions, we've found, leads to incredible and difficult discussions. If people aren't sharing as much at first though, link this back to the first free write and ask people if they found any connections.

+ participatory; 15-20+ minutes

# FACILITATING BASICS

Facilitating, as we've noted, is not an easy process, particularly for a topic like this. It requires sensitivity to body language and group dynamics, thorough knowledge on the issues but a willingness to learn from others, enough comfort with the topic of sex and sexuality to be able to engage in meaningful discussion, the ability to mitigate and de-escalate conflict, as well as to encourage participants to share deeply personal experiences and thoughts in what might be an entirely unfamiliar setting for them. When we held workshops, we had a team of 3 facilitators working with 5 to 10 participants (any more and it's difficult for everyone to have time to fully participate in the conversation). One facilitator is ideally dedicated to the task of 'vibes watcher' - the person who pays attention to body language and group dynamics, and who intervenes if someone seems to be triggered, is resisting the material, or if people are having trouble focusing. They are available to step out with someone if they want to talk, and are proactive about following someone out and checking in with them. We didn't have formal training in this, and are of the opinion that you don't need to either, though it may help. It is our opinion that the power of popular education comes from personal experience and self-instruction, not from accreditation.

## VIBES WATCHER TIPS

- Let the person speak/frame the convo if they want to
- Give them space (leave 'em alone!) if that's what they want
- Don't place judgement or attempt to rationalize others' behaviors
- It's okay to share some personal info too when appropriate
- Acknowledge their emotions + thoughts, even if you follow it up with constructive criticism

Be intentional about the identity of the person acting as VW. For example, a white cis-man may not be the best choice for this position due to the patterns of violence and perpetration in this society. This may differ depending on your own community. Also be intentional about other facilitator roles. Some things to think about: what are the identities of the various facilitators? Who is the audience/will there

be a diverse range of identities? If so, how will they perceive/interact with the facilitator group? How well will specific facilitators work together? Do any of them have histories or are currently in relationships with each other (this may be something for them to discuss outside of the group, rather than as an agenda item at a group meeting)?

We found it useful to have more than 3 people trained to facilitate the workshop so that we could offer them continuously without having to worry about scheduling issues (organizers are always crazy busy) and, of course, burn out. In general, BTS tries to shift around tasks and responsibilities so that we can all build our own repertoire of skills. This is also so we don't get entrenched in the roles that we take on and begin to claim ownership to work that is ultimately a group project (although we do definitely believe in giving credit where it's due.) Again, this is dependent on the type of group you're organizing in. We also began doing regular, intentional ~~check-ins~~ commitment check-ins within the organizing collective, which consisted of each person giving an update of how they were doing on energy and time to commit to the project. When we weren't doing this, it was much easier to assume others' ability to commit and

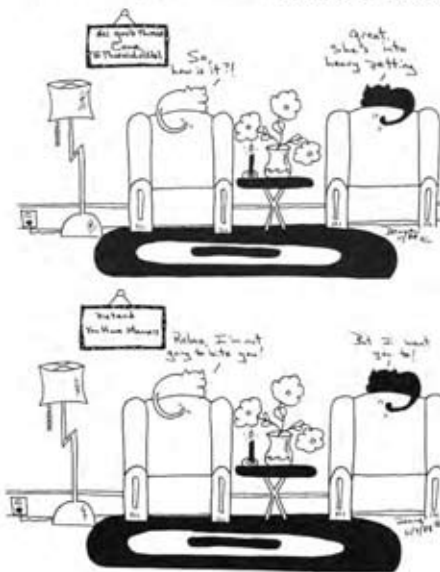
get frustrated when we perceived some people taking on more or less slack. Depending on where the group is on commitment, you can adjust your plan or scale it back—overextending yourselves is the worst.

## MATERIALS

Depending on where you take your workshop and what you plan to do with it, the materials you need will vary. For example, if you decide to do an activity that evaluates how well (or not) famous movies depict consent, you'll need computer and projector equipment, as well as space that accommodates that (and perhaps a back-up plan if the equipment doesn't work.) We had our own mini-zine that we passed out to participants that included the agenda,

consent

You can change your mind at ANY TIME before or during sex. Consent means that ALL parties say YES! Just assuming someone wants to have sex is not enough—it's not safe. Further, it is a free, fluid ongoing discussion and negotiation about what our desires are, what we want for ourselves in our lives and what we want for the people we're either intimate with or in relationships with at any level. Through free association, we have the ability to make choices about what we feel is best for ourselves, for our bodies, for our communities. To complicate consent is to realize that we live within an oppressive society, so consent is always tenuous. We don't really get to ~~the~~ consent to the country we live in; we don't really get to consent to live within capitalism. Often times, even making a choice, yes or no, has many other implications about the choices we were forced to make before that.



## HUMOR CAN BE A GOOD TOOL

The Miz Willoughby  
Series by Deane  
Brittingham, from  
Silverleaf's Choice:  
An Anthology of  
Lesbian Humor



We did it this way because we felt that before moving into the bulk of the consent workshop, it might be necessary to start with why it's important to have these discussions about consent at all (this is more for when consent is a new ~~topic~~ concept for some participants; if you know that everyone is past this step, you can skip it.)

## DEFINING & BROADENING CONSENT

We begin by presenting the legal definitions for Washington state and Seattle University (since that's where we're located), which are, incidentally, extremely similar. We encourage you to do a little research on your local legal definitions as well as the definitions of any institutions that participants might be connected to. Both of the definitions below are highly problematic, and don't encompass the idea of radical consent. After presenting the definitions to participants, we ask the questions "what is missing, assumed, and excluded?" and begin to break apart the definitions. Then we present an activist definition of radical consent from, in part, Generation5 and Common Action, and ask the same questions of it. If you have group values, this may be an appropriate time to share them.

WA state definitions: "consent means that at the time of the act of sexual intercourse or sexual contact there are actual words or conduct indicating freely given agreement to have sexual intercourse or sexual contact." Ann WA state law RCW 9A.44.010 available here: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=9A.44.010>

SU definition: "consent means at the time of the act of sexual intercourse there are actual words or conduct indicating freely given agreement to have sexual intercourse." from SU Code of Conduct, available here: <http://www.seattleu.edu/studentdevelopment/Inner.aspx?id=11456>

Activist definition in part from Gen5 and Common Action: Consent means everyone involved wants and agrees to be present at each step of the way.

definitions, our group values, as well as other cool shit that we didn't have time to go into in the workshop, like info on safer sex and model conversations between couples practicing consent. If you don't have paper handouts, you might want to have a powerpoint, or chalkboard, or really large notepad so you can display info/take notes from group discussions (particularly the ground rules + definitions sections.) Participants found this helpful so that they could reflect back on ~~peer~~ previous discussions



...ERROR...

during the workshops. We would also provide info on BTS, free condoms and dental dams, and info on upcoming community events. If you're planning on doing free writes, provide scratch paper + pencils.

## SPACE & ACCESSIBILITY

We wanted anyone who was interested to be able to attend the workshops, which means being aware of how accessible the space is: how easy/difficult is it to access for those who live far away, have difficulty with mobility, how safe do people feel in the space (are there gender neutral bathrooms, where is the workshop being held/ what are the values of that space/institution, etc.)? Are you charging for the workshops? If so, is there a fund/sliding scale for those who can't afford but want to attend? Are you offering childcare? How are you marketing the event - is it restricting your audience? There is an amazing list of things to think about when putting on an event at cripchick's blog: <http://blog.cripchick.com/archives/2910>

Check it out!

That covers the essentials for prep that we went through. Now on to BTS' version of the consent workshop curriculum...



|   |   |
|---|---|
| ○ | AGENDA                                      |
|   | 15 min - Introductions and guidelines       |
|   | 7 min - Why is consent important free write |
|   | 17 min - Defining and broadening consent    |
|   | 15 min - Not giving permission activity     |
|   | 10 min - Engaging consent activities        |
|   | 6 min - break                               |
|   | 30 min - skills and scenarios               |
|   | 10 min - Community visioning activity       |
|   | 10 min - check-out                          |
| ○ | TOTAL: 2 hours                              |

## INTRODUCTION

The first thing we do is have everyone introduce themselves with name and gender pronoun. Depending on the participants in the workshop, it can be necessary to explain why sharing gender pronouns contributes to a more welcoming space. Something as concise as, "It is important to recognize that we don't all identify with the gender assumed by our appearance. Please be respectful and ask if you are unsure instead of assuming!" We also do a short ice breaker (like asking 3 things people are really good at). We give a quick history of BTS. We talk about how we don't want to present one type of relationship as normal; we believe that every relationship should be based on consent but we recognize that consent should adapt to fit the relationship, not the other way around; and that even though power dynamics mean that consent may be complicated for some relationships (ie. interracial relationships, polyamorous relationships), that doesn't mean that we don't support them!

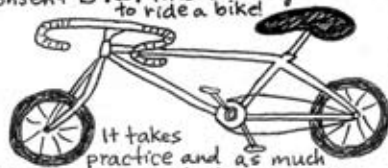
Then we go over a plan of the agenda (lovely displayed on the wall or on a handout.)

## GROUND fuckin' RULES:

adapted from CARA

- We want this to be a safe(r) space, recognizing that no space is entirely safe and oppressive shit may need to be called out to make it so - therefore, this is also a BRAVE space (brave so that we can take the risk of being open to others' ideas, and so that we can tackle issues that arise.)
- Use 'I' statements and speak from personal experience. For example, say "I felt like this when you said that" not "you were saying this."
- Be aware of your participation and identity. How much are you talking in relation to others in the group? Who is dominating the conversation/staying quiet?
- Ask questions to clarify if you aren't sure about what someone is saying.
- Assume that people have good intentions when speaking. Actually have good intentions when speaking.
- This is a confidential space. Anything personal shared stays within the space.

consent is **NOT** like learning to ride a bike



It takes practice and as much un-learning as it does learning.

## WHY IS CONSENT IMPORTANT?

FREE WRITE

We start with a free write on what it feels like when boundaries of consent ~~are~~ are broken and/or how it feels when you violate others' boundaries. We let people know that we'll move on into a group discussion after, and that not everyone has to share their responses. This is a very short free write, just 2 or 3 minutes. It's not to exhaust the topic, but to open us up so that we can have a full discussion. After we shift to the group discussion, we ask the question "why is consent important?" which gives people the chance to share from their free writes if they want, but doesn't put pressure on them to do so.