

Sikh Family Center's

# Sehj Series

Conversations about boundaries,  
consent and relationships

Facilitator's Guide



### **About this Guide**

This guide is intended for those who wish to facilitate SFC's Sejh Series Workshop 1: an interactive learning opportunity that incorporates conversation, exploration, and activism. Please note, this workshop is intended for youth aged 16 or above.

This guide has been updated in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessity for virtual workshops. The workshop in its entirety is designed to take 75-90 minutes.

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Sikh Family Center promotes community health and well-being with a special focus on gender justice. We provide trauma-centered interventions for victim-survivors of violence while working to change the social and cultural conditions that allow gendered violence to occur in the first place. Our training, outreach, and advocacy are grounded in cultural tradition, grassroots power, and intergenerational healing.

[www.sikhfamilycenter.org](http://www.sikhfamilycenter.org)

SFC Nationwide Helpline:  
866.SFC.SEWA  
866.732.7392

## Vision for Sehj Series

Given the prevalence of intimate partner violence and sexual assault in our society, this workshop has been designed with the intention of trauma-centered education & violence prevention. Through activities and facilitated discussion, we hope to encourage individuals to engage in healthier behaviors and practice recognition and respect of personal boundaries and consent.

This workshop does not seek to forward any one statement on the Sikh position on premarital sexual activity, nor does it attempt to negate individual families' different positions on the subject. It does respond to the reality that several Sikh young adults find themselves with questions and in situations that are not adequately addressed in our current community conversations.

This workshop hopes to encourage dominant individuals to become more self-aware as much as it hopes to encourage less dominant voices to speak up and voice how they feel. This workshop does not focus on sexual health or pregnancy prevention.

Violence is a learned behavior that is grounded in social and cultural practices. With this foundational understanding in mind, this workshop has been designed to be culturally-relevant. We have included room for discussion about how our socialization as Punjabi individuals impacts our engagement in platonic, romantic, and sexual relationships. We have been careful to recognize that such socialization has cultural, not religious origins. We encourage you to bring in personal experience, as appropriate, and to tie in Sikh principles which encourage folks to be respectful of consent and personal boundaries, and cognizant of how their behavior may affect others.

## Workshop at a Glance

Workshop Sections	Key Topics	Activity	Approx. Time
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectives</li> <li>• Why is this workshop needed?</li> <li>• Note about gender</li> <li>• Group agreements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Icebreaker</li> </ul>	15 mins
Understand Boundaries in Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to set boundaries</li> <li>• Practice setting boundaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple choice poll questions</li> <li>• Group Discussion</li> </ul>	20mins
Gain a Nuanced Understanding of Consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is consent</li> <li>• How to ask for consent</li> <li>• Gurbani reflection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tea &amp; Consent video</li> <li>• True &amp; False poll questions</li> </ul>	15 mins
Reflect on the Intersection of Culture, Power and Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consent in real life</li> <li>• Reflecting on personal boundaries</li> <li>• Power &amp; Control Wheel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group discussions in breakout rooms</li> </ul>	25 mins
How to Support a Friend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What to say or do</li> <li>• What not to say or do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Discussion</li> </ul>	8 mins
Conclusion & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share key takeaways</li> <li>• Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Discussion</li> </ul>	5 mins

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# Facilitation Tips & Techniques

## GENERAL TIPS

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### Avoid asking “Why?”

Try: “How Come?” or “Tell me more”

- “Why” can be aggressive, judgmental, and generally comes off too strong. It may provoke defensiveness.

### Use reflective listening in addition to active listening

Try: “It sounds like...” or “You are wondering if...” or “I hear you saying...”

- While a participant is talking, use active listening by nodding, “uh huh”, “mm hmm” etc.
- Once a participant has finished talking try repeating back key words and phrases that people have said. This acts to summarize thoughts, but also helps clarify your (and your group’s) understanding of their thoughts (reflective listening).

### Normalize feelings

Try: “That you for sharing and trusting us with that reflection/experience” or “That’s probably very powerful to hear for others who have gone through similar experiences”

- People might be bold about what they choose to share. Don’t back away if it is uncomfortable! Acknowledge what they are saying as normal.
- Be aware of your facial expression: that speaks volumes too. If you have an involuntary reaction like “Oh gosh!” explain that as your own internal processing, and not any judgment on what the person shared.

### Ask open-ended questions

Try: “Can you describe...” or “Explain...” or “What are your thoughts on...?”

- Closed-ended questions force dialogue to stop and pause. Open-ended questions will help you facilitate a dialogue and allow you to obtain nuanced comments and stories from participants.

## HANDLING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

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Because of the nature of the topics addressed by these activities, it is to be expected that some participants may be disruptive (e.g. use inappropriate humor) to rally others to not participate. The aim of the below ‘Call Out’ Strategies is not to encourage the development of destructive emotions (i.e. shame, guilt) but rather to strategically engage participants in critical self-reflection and eventually to call them in. The hope is for individuals to reflect on why they act the way they act, and why they believe what they believe.

### Call out behavior

- “I noticed you made a joke when we started talking about...”
- “I noticed you made a gesture about...can you tell me more about why you chose to make that gesture?”
- “I am not doing this to pick on you, but to understand more about what is going on for you.”
- “Could I invite you to share what you are feeling? Our external expressions might affect our community, and those here. But I don’t want to assume what you are feeling internally, would you care to share?”

Note: different people have different trauma-reactions. Some people, when triggered, may adopt traditionally “disruptive” behaviors. Try your best to assume positive intentions. But one person’s reactions should never hurt other participants: that’s the line you are walking!

### Use personal narrative

- Bring in personal narrative when appropriate to model vulnerability.

*Don’t know how to answer a question? Ask the audience for their opinions to buy yourself time as you gather your thoughts!*

# Tips for Using Virtual Platform

1. Strongly encourage participants to use the video feature via Zoom platform, to build community and rapport. It is important to be able to see facial expressions and body language, allowing participants and facilitators to “read the room” and react accordingly.
2. At the same time, the workshops must be accessible to all, as well as sensitive to the many stresses and even traumas folks are juggling. Video is optional; require only a 2 minute facial check in at the beginning.
3. Inform participants of the technical features you will be using to make the most of the interactive session; ask them to “test” them while waiting for the session to begin. E.g. chat box, raise hands, mute/unmute.
4. Be sure to learn the features of Zoom/tech platform in advance - eg. how to mute everyone; how to make a poll; how to create breakout rooms, etc.
5. For more meaningful discussion and easily manageable breakout rooms, allow 5-7 people per breakout room; feel free to contact us if you are concerned your group is too big. More details are included in the section on breakout rooms.

SFC can help if anyone has any questions about how to set up necessary features for this workshop on Zoom.

# Tips for Using Virtual Platform

## Slide 1: SFC's Sehj Series

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*Note to Facilitators: If you are a mandated reporter due to your job, please state so before continuing with the presentation.*

In life, we have to attend Math class and History class, but we may not have been offered a Relationship Education class or Sex Education class. As a society, we have all these issues (i.e. domestic violence, sexual assault) related to these topics - 1 in 4 Sikh women, and 1 in 10 Sikh men report being survivors of sexual abuse, yet how many of us have heard much about this topic from within our own community and families? These problems could be prevented, or at least reduced in their negative impact, if we did talk more about supposedly “uncomfortable” or “taboo” issues! This workshop is an attempt at culturally-specific relationship safety education.

## Slide 2: Objectives

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The specific objectives for this workshop include:

1. Understand Boundaries in Relationships
2. Gain a Nuanced Understanding of Consent
3. Reflect on the Intersection of Culture and Consent
4. Learn How to Support a Friend

## Slide 3: Why is This Workshop Needed?

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The majority of sexual violence survivors report being hurt by someone they know – a partner, another family member, a fellow student, even “respected” elders. (Source: [www.rainn.org/statistics/perpetrators-sexual-violence](http://www.rainn.org/statistics/perpetrators-sexual-violence))

Per SFC's national survey of 500 Sikhs, 9 out of 10 abusers are known to the victim.

By creating space for dialog and education around boundaries and consent, we hope that you will leave here feeling empowered and informed, and most importantly, in control of what happens to your body.

## Slide 4: Introductions + Gender Pronouns

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Use appropriate gender pronouns, words that function in the place of a name. You can't always know what someone's pronouns are just by looking at them. Asking and correctly using someone's pronouns is one of the basic ways to show your respect for their gender identity.

1. A “gender pronoun” is the pronoun that a person chooses to use for themselves. Gender pronouns specifically refer to people that you are talking about: she/her/hers; he/him/his; they/them; theirs
2. Gender neutral choices may be: they or ze (pronounced “zee”)

Continue the workshop by introducing yourself with your pronouns and asking participants to do the same, if they would like. For example, “My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and my pronouns are she/her/ hers.”

**Important Tip:** Perhaps note how in fact, in Punjabi, we regularly and automatically use the singular “they” (gender-neutral pronoun “Unhaan”) as a mark of respect...

# Introduction

## Slide 5: Note About Gender

You can quickly note: We will not be going fully in depth about gender or the interrelation between gender identity, gender expression, biological sex, and sexual orientation; however you should know that everything we are talking about is relevant to everyone. Just because you identify in a certain way doesn't mean that particular parts of the presentation are not important to know.

Biological Sex is not equivalent to gender.

The image illustrates the differences between:

- Gender Identity: A person's innermost concept of their gender: man, woman, nonbinary, genderqueer etc.
- Biological Sex: Medical label assigned at birth used to categorize people: male, female, intersex
- Gender Expression: How people demonstrate who they are: clothing; style; mannerism
- Sexual Orientation: Who a person is attracted to, romantically and/or sexually

**Important Tip:** To simplify you can note that sex refers to what we are born with, related to our organs, and gender is constructed over time, influenced greatly by society.

## Slide 6: Group Agreements

*Note to Facilitators: Only read out the agreements. You can paraphrase: Confidentiality; Curiosity; Respect are at the core!*

1. What is shared here stays here; what is learned here LEAVES here.
  - If anyone shares a personal anecdote, don't go around sharing. But definitely take the lessons you've learned here out in the world. There's no guarantee or assumption that your friends, family, etc have had access to the same knowledge you might have.
2. Respect different experiences; recognize your privileges.
  - It's important to remember we all come with different experiences and identities. We should all feel comfortable saying what we are feeling, but we should also recognize what we think and feel is a product of our specific experiences. E.g. How I feel about a particular issue might be totally different if I were a different gender.
3. Maintain an inclusive space.
  - Use language that is familiar to everyone in the room. Define any new language or words that might not be so well known, such as gender identity, queer, etc to ensure our discussion remains inclusive.
4. No expectations, no assumptions
  - If you leave, it could be because you feel a certain way, or because you have some place else to be. You are here by your own choice. We hope you participate, but it's not expected
  - Do what you need to do to take care of yourself during this workshop.

# Introduction

## Slide 6: Group Agreements (cont)

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5. Assume best intentions
  - If someone says something you do not agree with, do not assume that they are sexist or racist or meant to be harmful.
  - This is meant to be a learning environment. If you have a question that may not be so “PC/Politically Correct”, ask it! We will do our part to assume best intentions when you do.

## Slide 7: Icebreaker

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Objective: This activity hopes to set the stage of the workshop by acknowledging the diversity of experiences and values in the room.

Instructions (under 10 participants)

1. Ask for a volunteer to go first, and choose a question to ask them.
2. Then, ask the volunteer to choose a question and another participant to ask it to.
3. Continue until everyone has answered.

Instructions (If you have over 10 participants; to manage time & maintain interest):

1. Explain activity to participants and ask up to 10 people to use the hand-raise function if they would like to participate.
2. Ask a participant with their hand raised one of the questions.
3. Then, that participant chooses the next person with their hand raised to ask a question, and so on.

# Boundaries (20 minutes)

## Slide 8: Boundaries

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By definition boundaries are *invisible* guidelines. People create boundaries so they feel safe and comfortable. People create boundaries based on their past experiences as well as present realities and dreams for the future.

### Different Types of Boundaries

1. Physical Boundaries
  - On an airplane, some people are okay sharing an armrest, or if their elbows touch. Others are not.
  - Some people are okay being in close proximity at a party; or dancing with a stranger. Others may want more of an emotional relationship before being in such close proximity and engaging in that way.
2. Emotional Boundaries
  - Some people can open up about death, sex, relationships, etc. on a first meeting. Others might take months or years to open up about specific details.
3. Sexual Boundaries
  - Some people can feel comfortable holding hands, cuddling, or kissing someone after a short period of knowing someone. Others might need more time, or even an official declaration of what the relationship is.

## Slide 9: How to Set Boundaries

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Having and setting boundaries are two different things. We convey boundaries through verbal and non-verbal communication

1. Be open and clearly express what you are or are not comfortable with.
2. Recognize that other people are not mind readers.
3. Practice saying “NO” out loud until you feel confident in your right to say it to any other person.
4. If someone invades your boundary, bring it up with them in an honest and straightforward way, IF SAFELY POSSIBLE. Otherwise create a safety plan to create some distance.
5. Trust your gut feeling and instincts. If something doesn’t feel right, it most likely isn’t right (for you).

## Slide 10: Practice Setting Boundaries

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Ask the audience how they would react in the following two situations.

# Boundaries

## Slide 11: Example #1

They keep texting you wanting to hang out even though they know you have other plans.

What might you say?

*Note to Facilitators: Create multiple choice poll questions using the following suggestions below. Ask participants to complete the poll based on which they might feel comfortable using. Share the results and open for discussion before moving on to the explanation.*

- Hey. I like/miss/love you too, but I don't really like being made to feel guilty about hanging out with you. I feel you said "I love YOU" to make me feel bad.
- If you really feel like we don't hang out enough, I would have preferred you just told me that. It feels like you are responding out of anger.
- Can we talk about boundaries? I love our relationship, but my definition of healthy communication is not constant communication. I'm ok catching up once a day/week.
- Can we talk about boundaries? I'm not okay with texting so often, especially when you know I'm busy with my friends/family/school.

**Important Tip:** Explain the need to consider safety in the relationship when attempting methods of communication.

There are certain methods of communication that may escalate the situation. Think about when you would have this conversation with your friend/crush/partner. What is the ideal way to communicate this, in terms of your safety?

*In person*

Pro: better communication through body language  
Con: potential for physical harm; during COVID, such a meeting might be very delayed/impossible

*Over the phone at a later time*

Pro: Allows them to cool off, think about how they can respond  
Con: Not responding might escalate their anger and behavior

# Boundaries

## Slide 12: Example #2

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You just started getting to know someone and they lean in to kiss you, but you aren't ready for that. Share how you would respond in the chat box.

*Note to Facilitators: This example deliberately does not specify whether the people are getting to know each other romantically.*

Ask participants to share how they would respond to the prompt. How could you tell them they are invading your boundaries?

- Hey, I feel strongly about you and think I may like you, but I'm just not ready for that.
- No, I'm not comfortable with that. (It is ok to just say No!!)
- I really appreciate your desire, but I would prefer talking about it first.
- I understand that kissing to say good-bye might be a norm in your culture, but it's just not my thing.

## Slide 13: Easy Enough?

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This slide is actually intended to highlight that difficult conversations such as these are NOT easy.

Let participants know that while this all may seem easy enough, not everyone has the same comfort/ease with speaking up in uncomfortable or challenging situations. And that is why it is so important to not only have these discussions, but to practice saying these things out loud.

We will be discussing the way power and culture can make it difficult for us to advocate for our needs and desires.

## Slide 14: Tea and Consent

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Let participants know that we will be shifting to a dialogue on sexual consent which might be awkward, but that we are all in it together. Take a moment to figure out what the room knows.

*Note to Facilitators: Ask participants to answer the statements on sexual consent, which need to be set up as a single choice poll on Zoom prior to starting the meeting. Refer to the Appendix: Polls for the workshop – Sexual Consent.*

*Share the poll results briefly, and let participants know that answers to poll questions will be discussed throughout this section. See reference to each question in brackets [].*

Play the video - [bit.ly/tea-and-consent](https://bit.ly/tea-and-consent) (3 minutes). Ask participants these prompt questions after the video:

- What is consent in the context of relationships?
- How is it defined? How does one definition differ from another?
- Did video change/clarify your initial understanding of what consent is?

# Sexual Consent (15 minutes)

## Slide 15: Gurbani

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Typically, we think of kindness as helping an old lady down the street, or picking up a piece of trash, or saying ‘please’ and ‘thank you’. While those are nice things, kindness is also the conscious effort of recognizing that each soul/spirit is invaluable, priceless. It is important to treat all souls/spirits – both yours and those of others – with the utmost respect and dignity.

Consent is essentially that - being respectful and kind towards other people’s souls.

The “Golden Rule” is “treat others how you want to be treated”. Radical kindness or the “Platinum Rule” is “treat others how they want to be treated” -- and remember not everyone wants to be treated in the same manner. To follow this rule, you have to figure out how they want to be treated and to do that, you have to ask.

## Slide 16: Consent is...

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Transition: Now we’ll be talking about consent from an intimate relationship perspective.

1. Consent is (verbal) communication. It is an ongoing conversation. It is required at each step of escalating sexual activity. Consent for a hug is NOT the same as consent for a kiss, cuddling, or removing of clothes. [Poll Ques #4 - TRUE]
2. Consent is an enthusiastic YES! Consent is not a “maybe” or silence. It is explicitly agreeing to certain activities, either by saying “yes” or another affirmative statement, like “I’m open to trying.” [Poll Ques #2 - FALSE]
3. Breaking away from gender “rules”. Girls are not the only ones who might want to take it slow. Also, it’s not the guy’s “job” to initiate action (or anything else).
4. Consent is respecting a “no”. Consent is not assumed by flirting, nakedness or type of clothing.
5. Consent is freely given and can be withdrawn at any time. You can withdraw at any point if you feel uncomfortable. It’s important to clearly communicate to your partner that you are no longer comfortable with this activity and wish to stop. The best way to ensure both parties are comfortable with any sexual activity is to talk about it. You have the right to express what you want and how you feel. [Poll Ques #1 - TRUE]

# Sexual Consent

## Slide 17: How to Ask for Consent

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Ask. DO NOT guess or assume based on what the other person is saying, doing, or wearing. Consent is giving permission for something to happen. It defines boundaries in healthy relationships and is NOT static.

- Consent should not be assumed because someone is in a relationship or married.

How to ask for consent

- “Do you want to...?”
- “Can I...?”
- “Are you comfortable...?”
- “Do you like...?”
- “Is this ok?”
- “Do you want to keep going?”

Feeling violated does not have to be physical or sexual. Although we are talking about sexual consent, the conversation on the types of boundaries is still important. You can feel emotionally violated. It’s important to know and remember this because sometimes in the moment, it is hard to know that there is language for how you are feeling.

## Slide 18: Consent cannot be given if...

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- Someone is incapacitated or unconscious because of drugs or alcohol.
- Someone is under the legal age of consent, as defined by the state. All U.S States set their limits between 16 & 18 years old. It's recommended to look up your state's specific laws before your presentation. Feel free to contact SFC for assistance. [Poll Ques #3: FALSE]
- Someone is being pressured into sexual activity because of social pressure, fear, or intimidation.

If anyone involved isn’t consenting, then what is happening is or could be rape, sexual assault or abuse. [Poll Ques #5 - TRUE]

### Pause

Ask participants how they’re feeling about all of this information. Do they have any questions or things they want to talk about? Thumbs up/down?

**Break -- resume after few minutes**

# Culture, Power and Relationships (25 minutes)

## Slide 19: Culture, Power and Relationships

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The purpose of the following section is to understand how the dynamics of Punjabi culture and power impact our ability to practice consent and engage in healthy relationships. In order to do this, we will attempt to separate out the various identities that inform our decisions.

### Consent in Real Life

Can you think of real-life moments in which consent is needed, but may be hard to obtain due to cultural norms or power dynamics? (Present scenarios below if participants struggle to identify any):

1. That family friend who makes you uneasy every time they visit because he/she makes an effort to give you an extremely long hug, or attempts to kiss your *forehead*.
2. A situation in which your friend/crush/family member posts or shares pictures of you on social media (including WhatsApp) without asking you first.

Any sexual advances, or misconduct by an acquaintance (close family friend, peers, long-time friend, co-workers, or even your doctor) are unacceptable.

Instructions: Inform participants they will be joining breakout rooms for the duration of this section. (\*Zoom automatically splits participants into separate sessions; the number of participants per room is based on the total number of participants in the meeting.) See “Tips for Virtual Platform”.

*Note to Facilitators: If folks struggle to start the conversation, ask them to come up with sexual stereotypes of men and women. This section is heavy on discussion... encourage folks to dive in! Remind them of the original agreements: no assumptions will be made if they are quiet/unable to participate.*

## Slide 20: What about being a person makes consent complicated?

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- Fear of rejection
- Not wanting to ruin the moment
- Lack of practice with such open communication

## Slide 21: What about being a (Punjabi) man/male/masculine makes consent complicated?

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Stereotypically:

- Men are supposed to want sex all the time
- Men are supposed to be sexually aggressive, to dominate
- Men are supposed to initiate sex with confidence, to not hesitate
- Men are often taught to ignore other’s emotions, and to ignore their own emotions
- Men are taught to avoid presenting themselves as too emotional or risk coming off as “gay” or “like a girl”
- Punjabi men are supposed to be confident, to beat their chests, to be proud.

# Culture, Power and Relationships

## Slide 22: What about being a (Punjabi) woman/female/feminine makes consent complicated?

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Stereotypically:

- Women are not supposed to want sex
- Women are seen as submissive
- Women are socialized not to speak up
- Women are not portrayed as sexual initiators, so asking for a consensual, communicative relationship would be difficult
- Punjabi women are taught to not think about sex at all
- Punjabi women are raised with the narrative that they will lose their virginity on their wedding night; they are not raised to know their sexual rights
- Punjabi women are rarely raised with any form of sex education

## Slide 23: What about being a couple makes consent complicated?

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- Consent is assumed because of marriage; saying “no” or “let’s wait” do not seem like options
- It is assumed that on the wedding night, the couple must have sex; there are social pressures to follow through with this cultural norm

*Note to Facilitators: Exit the breakout rooms, ask participants to share and continue with the following slides in this section.*

## Slide 24: What about being a Sikh makes consent complicated?

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- Trick question! Nothing! Sikhi does not attribute gendered assumptions. Our society imposes those.
- Sikhi does ask us to take control of all of our natural human instincts (whether anger, or greed, and sexual desire) and to engage in moderation, and with full introspection and intention.
- The Sikh Rehat Maryada, literally “code of conduct” (a document prepared over 20 years and formalized in the 1940s, outlines Sikh practices including birth and naming a child, marriage, death, etc) asks every Sikh to refrain from sexual relations outside of marriage. Consider what value or relevance this holds for you personally (on your own unique spiritual journey).
- Society and media may largely present sex as something all couples do, often spontaneously or very early in a relationship. However, the intimate acts of sex can quickly change the dynamics of a relationship.
- Have you had a chance to think about and reflect on your personal values and boundaries with intimacy?
- Some might want a deep emotional connection with their partner before having sex; some might prefer to wait until committing via marriage; and some might be ok with sex after just a few dates.
- Being a Sikh also teaches us to be sovereign. Our sovereignty extends to our right to not be forced into anything, including our right to consensual physically intimate interactions.

# Culture, Power and Relationships

## Slide 25: Reflecting on Personal Boundaries

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Give participants a few minutes to reflect and write down their thoughts on the questions in the slide. Ask if anyone is comfortable sharing their responses, or general thoughts on the activity.

*Note to Facilitators: The questions for this activity are available as a handout in the Appendix.*

## Slide 26: Power and Control Wheel

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Our different identities contribute to the type and amount of power that we hold in a relationship. Let's take a moment to think about how power and control dynamics can occur in a relationship. Ask participants to provide examples.

*Note to Facilitators: Refer to the complete Power and Control Wheel in the appendix for examples.*

## Culturally-Specific Forms of Abuse

- **Pressure:** Forcing to tell relatives/parents about intimate relationship if he/she doesn't do what they say
- **Minimize/Deny/Blame:** Using substance abuse (alcohol) as an excuse for violent behavior
- **Using Social Status:** Using "caste" to degrade you
- **Threats:** Threatening suicide if you leave the relationship--often glorified in Bollywood
- **Threats:** Use of intimate photos to blackmail or pressure them to do something they are uncomfortable with

## Slide 27: Shaming, Guilting, Threatening

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- Consent in an unhealthy relationship: being shamed, guilted, or threatened into doing something is never a good thing.
- These are red flags to watch out for!

If anyone involved isn't consenting, then what is happening is or could be rape, sexual assault or abuse.

# How to Support a Friend (8 minutes)

## Slide 28: How to Support a Friend

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The purpose of the following section is to give participants basic tips on how to support a friend who may have been sexually assaulted, raped, or experienced any form of boundary-crossing (emotional, physical, sexual).

*Note to Facilitators: This is the second to last section in the workshop. If you are running out of time, consider reading through the notes. If you have time, ask participants to contribute their own thoughts.*

## Slide 29: What to Say or Do

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Listen to and believe them

Examples of what you might say:

- That sounds really scary/hurtful.
- I appreciate you sharing this with me, even though it looks like it is making you sad to talk about it.
- That's a lot, would you like a break...?
- I feel concerned because...
- I don't know much about that. But I know some people who do.
- Have you ever been worried about that before? Did anything help when you felt this way before?
- Here are some resources if you would like them.
- I want to be able to listen and support you, but I want to be honest that I do not have the emotional/mental space to...

**Important:** Let people know from the beginning whether or not you have the emotional space and ability to support them. Avoid allowing someone to become dependent on you if you cannot support them in the way they need.

## Slide 30: What Not to Say or Do

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Don't Diagnose, Advise, or Be Their Therapist

- Don't diagnose: Only support.
- Don't advise: Avoid telling your friend what to do. Give them options and let them decide what makes sense for them. Remember, they are the expert on their own situation.
- Don't be their therapist: Encourage survivors to seek help from people with expertise in sexual assault and who are comfortable with the issue. Not all counselors or therapists have these qualifications. There are specialized crisis counselors and advocates who can provide free and confidential support.

Examples of what you should not say:

- I don't know if I can believe that...
- But he's such a nice guy!
- Pull yourself together
- Other people have it much worse
- I have to hug you now!
- At least...

Starting any sentence with "At least" does not convey empathy. It minimizes what they are experiencing.

## Slide 31: There is no Perfect Response

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Chanel Miller, survivor of sexual assault shared this quote by author Anne Lamott in her impact statement.

Different things work for different people. There is no perfect way... And there is no perfect resource you can offer to people. Give them options (crisis hotline, Gurbani, therapy, exercise) and let them decide what makes sense for them. Remember, they are an expert of their own situation.

**Pause:** How are you feeling? Thumbs up/down? Any questions?

# Conclusion & Evaluation (5 minutes)

## Slide 32: Conclusion & Evaluation

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- Copy and paste the SurveyMonkey link ([bit.ly/sfc-evaluation](https://bit.ly/sfc-evaluation)) into the chat box and give participants 3-4 minutes to fill out the survey.
- When they are done, ask 3-5 people to share out some of their takeaways and thoughts.

Thank you everyone for joining!

## Slide 33: Resources

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Leave this slide up as you end the workshop. Read from the slide: Privacy is not Confidentiality!

Especially when your participants include current students, make sure to point out both the availability and potential limitations of their school/college resources for victim-survivors of violence. Otherwise, there may be situations where a survivor is painfully surprised that a resource that said they would respect privacy, has also initiated a formal investigation or other proceeding by the school/university.

Explain that their school may have employees (like a Title IX coordinator or a crisis advocate) who will keep information shared private, but still be obligated by law to report it to other authorities.

Remind participants that it is best to ask any resource person very explicitly and clearly whether a resource is confidential or not.

It is perhaps safest to approach a non-school, non-university confidential resource to assess needs and options.





# Appendix

# Polls for the Workshop

*Note to Facilitators: The polling feature for meetings allows you to create single choice or multiple choice polling questions. You will be able to launch the poll during your meeting and gather the responses from participants. The following poll questions should be set up before starting the Zoom meeting. Polls can be conducted anonymously.*

## Boundaries

Set up this example as a *multiple choice* poll, where the participants can select all that apply

**Example #1: They keep texting you wanting to hang out even though they know you have other plans. What might you say?**

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- Hey. I like/miss/love you too, but I don't really like being made to feel guilty about hanging out with you. I feel you said "I love YOU" to make me feel bad.
- If you really feel like we don't hang out enough, I would have preferred you just told me that. It feels like you are responding out of anger.
- Can we talk about boundaries? I love our relationship, but my definition of healthy communication is not constant communication. I'm ok catching up once a day/week.
- Can we talk about boundaries? I'm not okay with texting so often, especially when you know I'm busy with my friends/family/school.

## Sexual Consent

### Before playing the Tea & Consent Video

Set the following five statements as a *single choice* 'True & False' poll

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1. A person can change their mind (withdraw consent) at any time before or during sexual activity. — TRUE
2. If someone doesn't say 'no', it means they are giving consent. — FALSE.
  - Consent is an enthusiastic YES! Consent is asking, NOT guessing or reading into what someone is saying, doing, or wearing.
3. The legal age of consent is 18 years old — FALSE.
  - All U.S States set their limits between 16 & 18 years old.
4. Consent is an ongoing conversation and required at each escalation of sexual activity. — TRUE
  - Consent is (verbal) communication. Consent for a hug is NOT the same as consent for a kiss, cuddling, or removing of clothes.
5. If anyone involved isn't consenting, then what is happening is or could be rape, sexual assault or abuse. — TRUE



# Power & Control Wheel



Source: [www.theduluthmodel.org](http://www.theduluthmodel.org)