Creative Interventions Toolkit: A Practical Guide to Stop Interpersonal Violence
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Section 1. Introduction & FAQ

We need to trust people to be the experts on their own lives and have faith in people to set the course for working from harm to transformation.

> - Words from a survivor of domestic violence (See full story, *A Community Intervention to Domestic Violence,* in Section 4.G *Working Together.* Also available in audio and transcript at the StoryTelling & Organizing Project (STOP) website www.stopviolenceeveryday.org)

1.1. Welcome

Welcome to the *Creative Interventions Toolkit: A Practical Guide to Stop Interpersonal Violence.*

If you are reading this, it is likely that your life or that of someone you care about has been by interpersonal violence – domestic violence, sexual abuse or assault or family violence. Perhaps you are in a crisis and you're not sure what to do, but you feel an urgent need to *do something.* Or maybe you have been trying to address a situation of violence, but you need some more ideas and resources on what to do. Perhaps you heard about this Toolkit because you are seeking safety, but calling the police is not a safe option for you. You may be reading this because you have been abusive or violent and are looking for support on how to change.

This Toolkit helps us figure out what steps we can take to address, reduce, end or even prevent violence—what we call *violence intervention.*

This Toolkit promotes an approach called *community-based interventions to violence* or what some call *community accountability* or *transformative justice* as a way to break isolation and to create solutions to violence from those who are most affected by violence – survivors and victims of violence, friends, family and community. It asks us to look to those around us to gather together to create grounded, thoughtful community responses. It builds on our connections and caring rather than looking at solutions that rely only on separation and disconnections from our communities. It invites us to involve even those who harm us as potential allies in stopping that harm and as active partners in deeply changing attitudes and behaviors towards a solution to violence. It expands the idea of violence and its solutions from that between individuals to one that includes communities – both close and intimate communities and the broader communities of which we are a part.

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This Toolkit is based upon the knowledge that our communities have been carrying out creative responses to end violence for many generations. When faced with someone in need of help, our aunts, uncles, and cousins, our friends and neighbors, our faith leaders and the people of all ages have been figuring out ways to address, reduce, end or prevent violence. We at Creative Interventions are building upon these best efforts and successes as well as lessons from mistakes and failures. These lessons have often been ignored as we look increasingly towards the police and agencies to protect us. Centering what we call *community-based interventions* reminds us of the importance of our own histories, our own expertise and our important roles in ending violence.

By *interpersonal violence*, we mean:

- *Domestic violence* or *intimate partner violence* that takes place within an intimate relationship such as marriage, domestic partnership, dating relationship, former relationship.

- *Family violence* that can include domestic violence between intimate partners, but can also extend to children, parents, grandchildren, grandparents, other family members and others who may be very close to family like family friends, guardians, caretakers.

- *Sexual violence* that includes unwanted sexual attitudes, touch or actions such as *sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, molestation, child sexual abuse, incest.*

- *Child abuse* that is any kind of abuse against children including neglect or emotional, physical or sexual abuse; we consider any form of sexual activity between an adult and a child as abuse.

- *Elder abuse* that is any kind of abuse against elderly people.

- While CI focuses on the types of violence just listed above, this Toolkit may also be useful for those experiencing violence in other settings such as within neighborhoods, schools, organizations, workplaces, or other employment situations – these forms of violence can also be considered interpersonal.

See Section 2.2: *Interpersonal Violence: Some Basics Everyone Should Know* for more information about interpersonal violence.

Interpersonal violence is very commonly a way to gain power and control over another person. It often takes advantage of unequal power. This is why interpersonal forms of violence are so often committed by men against women and girls, boys against girls, male-identified over female-identified, adults over youth and children, able-bodied over people with disabilities, citizens over immigrants, legal immigrants over undocumented immigrants, people with high

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status over people with lower status, rich over poor or those who financially depend on them.

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1.2. The Community-Based Intervention to Interpersonal Violence: An Introduction

The *community-based intervention to interpersonal violence* is an approach based upon the ideas and work of many individuals and organizations thinking about and developing similar approaches to violence. It offers the insights, tools and lessons learned from the three years during which Creative Interventions worked with community members seeking a response to their particular situations of violence. It is a work in progress. (See *Preface and Acknowledgements* for more information on the process leading up to this Toolkit).

This Toolkit focuses specifically on *interpersonal violence*, or what we might know as domestic violence, sexual abuse or assault or family violence – although it might also be useful with other forms of violence. Therefore, it involves situations of violence in which people often know each other – and may even be very close as intimate partners, family members or people who live or work with or near each other.

The Creative Interventions *community-based response to violence* is based upon the fact that first responders to interpersonal violence are most often friends, family and community members. It assumes that solutions to violence are most meaningful and effective if they come from those closest to and most impacted by violence. It believes that solutions created by communities affected by violence can strengthen the skills and ability of ordinary community members to keep violence from happening again.

The Creative Interventions *community-based* approach is:

- **Collective***:* The intervention involves the coordinated efforts of a group of people rather than just one individual.

- **Action-Oriented:** A community takes action to address, reduce, end or prevent interpersonal violence.

- **Community-Based***:* The intervention is organized and carried out by friends, family, neighbors, co-workers or community members rather than social services, the police, child welfare or governmental institutions.

- **Coordinated.** The intervention links people and actions together to work together in a way that is coordinated towards the same goals – and that makes sure that our individual actions work towards a common purpose. It sees us as a team rather than individual, isolated individuals working as

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lone heroes or rescuers – or as separated parts, not knowing about or considering what actions others may be taking.

- **Holistic.** The intervention considers the good of everyone involved in the situation of violence – including those harmed (survivors or victims of violence), those who have caused harm, and community members affected by violence. It also builds an approach that can include anyone involved in a situation of violence as a participant in the solution to violence – even the person or people who have caused harm if this is possible.

- **Centers on Those Most Affected by Violence to Create Change. The** intervention centers those most affected by violence. It provides ways for those affected by violence and causing violence to develop new skills, insights and ways to put together a solution to violence – or to form a system that not only addresses violence but reduces the chances that violence will continue.

- **Supports the sometimes complex pathway to change and transformation.** Changing violence, repairing from violence, and creating new ways of being free from violence can take time.

  For the survivor/victim, the intervention relies upon consideration of the best ways to support survivors or victims of harm by sharing the responsibility for addressing, reducing, ending, or preventing violence (**breaking isolation** and **taking accountability**), without blaming the survivor/victim for their choices (without **victim blaming**), and by offering support towards what they define as their own needs and wants (supporting **self-determination**).

  For the person doing harm, the intervention relies upon consideration of the best ways to support people doing harm to recognize, end and be responsible for their violence (what we also call **accountability**), without giving them excuses (without **colluding**), and without denying their humanity (without **demonizing**).

- **Facilitated.** The intervention works well if someone in our communities can act as a *facilitator*, someone who can act as an anchor for the process of intervention, or someone who can help us to walk through different parts of this Toolkit. Therefore, we call this a *facilitated* model. The facilitator role can be taken on by more than one person or it can rotate among group members as the process continues. The facilitator does not have to be a professional or someone who is an expert on violence intervention. It simply needs to be someone who can be clear-headed, act within the values and guidelines of the group, and who has some distance

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from the center of violence to be clear of the chaos and confusion that is often a part of a violent situation. See more about the facilitator role in Section 4.C. *Mapping Allies and Barriers.* If one cannot find a facilitator, then at the very least, this Toolkit and the many people whose experiences it represents may help to guide us through the process of violence intervention.

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1.3. Who Is This Toolkit For?

This Toolkit is meant for anyone interested in using a community-based approach to address, reduce, end or prevent violence (what we call an intervention). Unlike most violence-related resources, it does not assume that those intervening in violence must be trained professionals. It sees any and all of us involved in or affected by violence in our personal lives as potential actors in the solutions to violence.

Below, we introduce different types of relationships that you might have to a situation of violence, with special considerations about what to think about as you read or use this Toolkit. We also include an explanation of our use of certain terms. You may also want to refer to Section 5.1: *Key Words — Definitions* for a guide to other terms used in this Toolkit.

People Connected to the Situation of Violence

You may be using this Toolkit as a resource to help you or your group to address a situation of violence directly affecting you. The following are some of the basic ways you may be related to the violent situation. This section introduces the language that this Toolkit uses to name the different ways people may be involved in or related to interpersonal violence.

Person Harmed: Survivor or Victim

Are you someone who is being directly harmed or has been harmed by violence? The harm can be physical, emotional or verbal, sexual, financial and other.

We often refer to this person as the *survivor* or *victim* of violence. This Toolkit usually includes both terms because different people prefer one term over the other. We also know that often you will simply refer to someone's name without having to use these terms, *survivor* or *victim,* at all.

Although there may be one or two primary people being directly harmed by violence, it may be important to consider other people who may also be harmed. This harm may be direct violence, indirect harm resulting from violence, or threatened violence. A common list of others who can also be *survivors* or *victims* of violence can include:

- Children of all ages
- Family members (mother, father, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, in-laws, etc.)
- Household members (other people living in a violent home such as roommates, boarders)
- Intimate partners including spouse, domestic partner, dating partner, girlfriend, boyfriend, etc.

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- Friends
- Neighbors
- Co-workers

If you think you are the *survivor* or *victim* or if you want to pay attention to the perspective of the *survivor* or *victim*, look at the *Special Considerations* sections throughout this Toolkit that point to things for *survivors* or *victims* to consider.

Ally or Community Ally

Are you someone who is a friend, family member, neighbor, co-worker, or community member who is close to or connected to someone being harmed? Are you close to or connected to someone who is causing harm? Were you called in to help deal with a situation of violence?

We often refer to this person as an *ally* or *community ally*. In other settings, you might hear this person called the *bystander* or part of a *social network.* In this Toolkit, we use the language of *ally* or *community ally.* We also know that often you will simply refer to someone's name without having to use these terms, *ally* or *community ally,* at all.

Because this Toolkit is geared towards action, the *ally* or *community ally* may also become part of a team or become one who is intervening in violence. At times, the language can shift to *team member* or someone involved in the intervention.

If you think you are the *ally* or *community ally* or if you want to pay attention to the perspective of the *ally* or *community ally*, look at the *Special Considerations* sections throughout this Toolkit that point to things for *allies* or *community allies* to consider.

Person Doing Harm

Are you someone who is harming others or who has harmed others in the past? Or have you been accused of being this person by others?

We often refer to this person as the *person* or *people doing harm*. Alternatively, you may see the language *person who has caused harm* or *person who has been violent* or *abusive.* We also know that often you will simply refer to someone's name without having to use the term, *person doing harm* or similar kind of language at all.

In this Toolkit, we stay away from the language of *perpetrator or perps, offenders, abusers, batterers, rapists, predators, criminals* and other language of that kind that assumes that someone who has caused harm will always carry that label. We also stay away from the language of the criminal justice system

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since we are seeking a different approach. Since this Toolkit supports change, including the change of attitudes and behaviors of people who have done harm, we want our language to reflect this possibility for change.

If you think you are the *person doing harm,* or if you have been accused of being this person, or if you want to pay attention to the perspective of the *person doing harm*, look at the *Special Considerations* sections throughout this Toolkit that point to things for *people doing harm* to consider.

What If It Is Hard to Tell: Am I a Survivor or Victim, an Ally, the Person Doing Harm?

In some situations, it can be hard to tell if someone is the survivor or victim, the ally, or the person doing harm – or if people are all of these things. There are many reasons. For example:

- The survivor or victim may blame themselves and feel like they may have caused the abuse. They may be told by the person doing harm and others that they are to blame – and may begin to wonder if this is true. In our experience, this is often the case with women who are taught to blame themselves and take responsibility for problems within relationships.

- This may be a situation where each person has committed acts of violence against the other but where there is a clear difference in power – therefore, one person's violence may either be much less harmful than that of the other or one person's violence may be in self defense. In this case, we will still consider the person most harmed or using violence in self-defense as the survivor or victim. We consider the person most responsible for harm as the person doing harm.

- This may be a situation of what is often called "mutual abuse or violence" – that is, the balance of power is somewhat equal between people in the relationship and one person is as likely as the other to be abusive and as likely to harm the other.

Note that this Toolkit addresses situations in which there is one person or set of people more responsible for violence and with more power to abuse than the other. It is not made for situations of mutual abuse or violence in which there is relative equality of power and vulnerability in the situation of violence. In situations of mutual abuse or violence, mediation or relationship/couple/family /organizational counseling or therapy may be more appropriate. This Toolkit does NOT recommend mediation in situations in which there is a one-sided pattern of abuse or patterns of abuse because mediation is based upon equal power of both sides to negotiate. See Section 3.2 *What This Model Is NOT*, for more about mediation.

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See Section 2.2. *Interpersonal Violence: Some Basics Everyone Should Know* and Section 5.6. *Distinguishing between Violence and Abuse,* by Connie Burk of Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse for more information.

The Role of Facilitator

Since this is a *facilitated model,* one of the participants in the intervention may take on the role of *facilitator,* the person who may serve as an anchor or a guide through the intervention process. The facilitator role can be taken on by more than one person or it can rotate among group members as the process continues. This role is unique, and facilitators may have special needs and concerns throughout the intervention. Therefore, *Tips for Facilitators* also appears throughout the Tools in Section 4. *Tools to Mix and Match.* See Section 4.C. *Mapping Allies and Barriers* for more information on the role of the Facilitator.

Others who may find this Toolkit useful

Anti-Violence Organizations

This Toolkit has been written by people who have a lengthy history of working in the anti-violence movement and are seeking community-based responses to violence. We encourage anti-violence organizations including domestic violence and sexual assault centers and programs, batterer intervention programs and violence prevention programs to consider offering community-based interventions as another option for people seeking help.

Other Types of Organizations, Groups or Businesses

This Toolkit is also for people working in service organizations, faith-based institutions, community centers, political organizations, unions, sports teams, schools, child care centers, businesses or other groups where people live, work, worship, or participate in activities together. People often seek support from their workplace or from community members. This Toolkit can help.

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1.4. What Is in This Toolkit?

This Toolkit is divided into sections:

Section 1. *Introduction.* You are now reading the Introduction which provides a general overview of the Toolkit, including definitions, visions, and goals.

Section 2. *Some Basics Everyone Should Know.* The next section has some information that it is important to know as you think about what you want to do about violence and consider using this Toolkit to help you. *Some Basics Everyone Should Know* includes:

- *What Is the Community-Based Intervention to Interpersonal Violence?* This section is a more detailed discussion of the fundamentals of the Toolkit's approach to violence intervention.

- *Interpersonal Violence: Some Basics Everyone Should Know.* Our society continues to feed us misinformation about interpersonal violence. This section gives an overview of some key information about the dynamics of interpersonal violence that may help you make a more effective response.

- *Violence Intervention: Some Important Lessons.* In this section, we offer some basic lessons that Creative Interventions has learned about violence intervention over the 3 years of our project. It also builds upon the many lessons shared among other groups who have been creating similar responses to violence, many of which are listed in the *Preface and Acknowledgements: A Community Effort.*

Section 3. *Model Overview: Is It Right for You?* This section gives you an opportunity to think more carefully about the violence that you may be facing and helps you consider whether this approach is a good fit. It can spark more reflection on your situation of violence, your values, your resources, and the types of actions you might be willing to take.

Section 4. *Tools to Mix and Match.* This section has a whole series of tools and examples to help you as you go through different phases of an intervention to violence. Since every situation of violence and every intervention to violence is different and therefore difficult to predict, these tools are meant to be mixed and matched. As you consider and move through an intervention, you may need to revisit the tools as you go through the twists and turns of an intervention process.

The sets of tools include:

- A. *Getting Clear.* This set of tools includes questions designed to help you think more clearly about what the situation of violence is (no matter what your role is in the situation), what information to share with other people

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who are helping, and how to make sure that this reflects the most updated information. It also helps you think about how to safely keep track of and share information without making people have to keep repeating their story again and again.

- B. *Staying Safe.* This set of tools considers the very important issue of risks, dangers and safety. Violence of any form — including physical, emotional, sexual, and financial —can cause harm, which can sometimes be devastating. Taking action to address violence can also cause new sets of risks and dangers. Therefore, this section offers various tools to figure out how best to stay safe or reduce harm as you move through the steps of an intervention.

- C. *Mapping Allies and Barriers.* The community-based approach brings people together to overcome violence – even if it is only a couple of people. This set of tools guides you through a process to consider people to bring along as allies. It helps define what particular roles people can best play. It also helps you identify who might be barriers or pose a danger, and people who might become allies with some additional support.

- D. *Goal Setting.* This set of tools guides you to consider the actual outcomes that you are seeking. Each person in a group may actually have different goals. These tools are designed to help you come up with what the group's goals are so that individuals do not act in conflict with each other. It also helps you to separate goals that might be unrealistic or those that we might wish for, something that is very common, from those that are more realistic and are also in tune with your values.

- E. *Supporting Survivors or Victims.* This set of tools helps to keep your focus on supporting survivors or victims. It helps you develop time, space and skills to support survivors or victims of interpersonal violence. It also explores the different levels and ways that survivors or victims of violence can participate In a process of intervention and accountability.

- F. *Taking Accountability.* This set of tools is particularly useful for those who are directly encountering the person or people who have caused harm or a community that may have contributed to a situation of violence. This includes many tips and guides on how to *engage* (meaning the many different ways in which a community may communicate with, challenge, make requests of, and also support) a person doing harm through what may be many phases of accountability. This Toolkit supports the process of accountability without relying upon the police. That process may include community pressure, need for safety measures and possible consequences. At the same time, as much as possible, this Toolkit upholds an approach of compassion and connection rather than shaming, punishment and banning.

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- G. *Working Together.* This set of tools helps your group to work well together. Many of us are not taught to work in teams. Rather, we are often taught to value individual thoughts and actions. Working well together can be the most important part of a successful intervention – as well as the most challenging. These tools encourage you to reflect on how the group Is communicating, making decisions and sharing information with one another so you are working in a coordinated way – and not in a way that conflicts with the actions of others.

- H. *Keeping on Track.* This last set of tools helps you to keep moving forward through what may be a long process. It helps to guide your process of reflection, strategizing, thinking ahead, and identifying useful lessons along the way. It includes elements that are helpful for both groups and individuals, such as individual self-checks to keep you on track. Finally, it offers some guides to consider if and when an intervention reaches closure and ways to make sure that changes that you were able to achieve can hold steady in the future.

Section 5. *Other Resources.* This section has some useful resources including:

5.1. *Key Words – Definitions.* This has a list of words and terms that appear in this Toolkit with the definitions that we use.

5.2. *Real Life Stories and Examples.* This puts together the stories from this Toolkit in one place.

5.3. *Creative Interventions Anti-Oppression Policy (Anti-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment).* This is an example of the Creative Interventions policy that defines abusive attitudes and behaviors within an organization and states organizational policies about abuse.

5.4. *Sample One-Day Workshop on Community-Based Responses to Violence*

5.5. *Taking Risks: Implementing Grassroots Community Accountability Strategies,* by Communities Against Rape and Abuse (CARA*).* This is a useful piece written by CARA presenting their principles guiding community accountability.

5.6. *Distinguishing between Violence and Abuse,* by Connie Burk of Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse. The Northwest Network has developed a comprehensive process for assessing the dynamics of determining who is using violence. This is an introduction to Northwest Network's analysis about the dynamics of power and how this relates to the difference between violence and abuse.

5.7. *Portrait of Praxis: An Anatomy of Accountability,* by Esteban Kelly and Jenna Peters-Golden of Philly Stands Up (PSU)*.* This is a piece written by

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PSU describing their organization and the community accountability process they have developed for people doing harm.

5.8. *Confronting Sexual Assault: Transformative Justice on the Ground in Philadelphia,* by Bench Ansfield and Timothy Colman of Philly Stands Up (PSU). This is an article written by two members of PSU about a situation of sexual violence in the Philadelphia community and PSU's vision of transformative justice.

5.9. *Shame, Realisation and Restoration: The Ethics of Restorative Practice*, by Alan Jenkins. This article is written by an Australian practitioner with a long-term commitment to restorative practices.

5.10. *Tips for Seeking a Therapist [for People Who Have Done Sexual Harm],* by Anonymous. This article is written by a person who is two years into an accountability process for doing sexual harm. It gives some tips on finding a therapist from the perspective of one person who went through the process of getting help from therapy.

5.11. *Resource List.* This is a brief list of resources available on community-based interventions to interpersonal violence, community accountability and tranformative justice. It also includes some articles and zines that can be helpful in particular to survivors of violence and people doing harm.

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1.5. What Is Our Bigger Vision?

Our goal is not ending violence. It is liberation.

— Beth Richie

This Toolkit brings together vision and practice in a practical model with concrete tools. We hope that the Toolkit may help you consider and carry out ways to address, reduce, end or prevent violence.

Our vision is based on the following assumptions:

1. *Help comes* from *those closest to you* – friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, and community members. This model does not rely on social services, crisis centers or the police. It can be used alongside any of these forms of help, but it can also be carried out if you do not use these other forms of help or if you do not feel safe to use other types of services. With the help of this Toolkit, you may be able to create a response which is quicker, safer and more effective than professional services or the police.

2. *Recognizes that people experiencing violence may need to or want to remain in their relationships or community.* Most places such as domestic violence services, sexual assault services and so on assume that people being abused should leave those abusing them. They may think that people who have committed violence should be separated – through leaving, arrest and/or restraining orders. If you want violence to stop but also need to or want to consider staying in the same community or even same relationship, it can be difficult to explore these options if you turn to mainstream services. This Toolkit can help guide you towards other possibilities.

3. *Relies on community response.* Most places that help with violence work regularly with the criminal justice system. They may automatically tell you call 911, not thinking about how this might be unwanted or even harmful. Someone may not want to risk arrest. Someone may not want to turn to restraining orders which usually order people to stay away from each other or stop living together. Others may be undocumented and fear that the police could turn them over for deportation. Someone may be of a race or nationality, religion or immigration status, sexual orientation or gender identity that makes them vulnerable as a target for police violence rather than police assistance. There may be other reasons to fear that the police could make the situation worse rather than better.

4. *Helps people prepare for and take actions towards safety, support and transformation.* This Toolkit is oriented towards action —or

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at least the *consideration* of action – that moves towards goals of safety, support and transformation from violence. Actions can be immediate or long-term with lots of phases. Every small action can make a difference. What is important is that we are able to do what we can to take more control over our own lives and make decisions which are healthy and positive for ourselves and others. These are the small things that, all together, step by step, can lead towards more options for safety – and a possibility for deeper change and transformation.

▪ ***Considers ways to come together to support the sometimes complex pathway to change and transformation.*** Changing violence, repairing from violence, and creating new ways of being free from violence can take time. This Toolkit helps guide people through the difficult process of repair and change.

  For the survivor/victim, the intervention relies upon consideration of the best ways to support survivors or victims of harm by sharing the responsibility for addressing, reducing, ending, or preventing violence (**breaking isolation** and **taking accountability**), without blaming the survivor/victim for their choices (without **victim blaming**), and by offering support towards what they define as their own needs and wants (supporting **self-determination**).

  For the person doing harm, the intervention relies upon consideration of the best ways to support people doing harm to recognize, end and be responsible for their violence (what we also call **accountability**), without giving them excuses (without **colluding**), and without denying their humanity (without **demonizing**).

6. *Builds towards long-term community self-determination, health and sustainability.* Although this Toolkit is aimed towards practical, pragmatic responses to individual situations of violence, its larger vision is towards more self-determined, healthier, and sustainable communities. As these new approaches, skills and attitudes become part of everyday community-based responses to violence, we will strengthen the capacity of our communities to resist the devastation of interpersonal violence and to shift our collective energies towards greater self-determination and well-being for all.

Recalling our greater vision, "Our goal is not ending violence. It is liberation."

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1.6. Real Life Stories to Share

The following are three stories which also appear in Section 4. *Tools to Mix and Match.* They give examples of stories of harm and accountability from the perspective of the survivor dealing with domestic violence (A Community Confronts Domestic Violence); community allies preventing child physical abuse (A Small Story or *He Korero Iti*) and a person who has done sexual harm in the process of accountability and transformation (Surviving and Doing Sexual Harm: A Story of Accountability and Healing). All three stories were collected through the StoryTelling & Organizing Project (STOP) (www.stopviolenceeveryday.org).

Story from a Survivor: A Community Confronts Domestic Violence

Introduction

This story is a survivor's story of how she faced the violence of her husband through her own courage and the support of a network of friends and family. Married to a police officer, she could not turn to the police for protection. Instead, she overcame her own sense of fear and shame to reach out to a circle of friends. Together, they offer the resources of care and nurturing of her and her children to create a solution to violence that offers protection and compassion. This story is also in Section 4.D. *Setting Goals* to show how she is able to name her goals – what she calls "wants" – and how her friends and family support her reach her goals.

A Community Confronts Domestic Violence

Two years ago, I was married to a man who I'd been with for ten years prior, and our relationship had troubles. Over the last year of our marriage, my former partner was going through training as a police officer, and at the same time, we had just relocated to a new state. We were struggling with some large issues in the marriage, and things had gotten more difficult. I just became increasingly afraid of someone that I used to feel really safe with.

I have three kids who were 10, 6, and 4, and they were witnessing a lot of arguments, a lot of loud screaming, a lot of doors being slammed, a lot of things that I felt were really unsafe for them to see. My home just felt more and more dangerous. I felt scared to leave the house. I felt scared to come home. I felt scared to sleep in my bed.

The last straw came one night when I had gone to a friend's house and my partner followed me in his car. And when I arrived at my friend's house, he pulled up and got out of the car and was yelling and screaming horrible things at me. I felt very afraid, but I didn't know what to do. I knew wherever I went, he would

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follow me. So I decided I would go to my office which was nearby, and it was night time so there wouldn't be anybody there. When I finally got inside, I waited for a few minutes and he left.

I called a friend, who came and met me at my office, and she suggested that I call another friend who had a house I could go to while we figured out what to do, so that's what I did. When we got there, everybody sat around in the living room and just reassured me that it was safe for me to be there, that they were welcoming of it, that they understood. I was at this point on the run from someone who was furious and had a gun, and I *still* felt bad. I felt like I was exposing people to something that I couldn't control, something I was terrified of. But I didn't know what else to do at that point, and they were saying it was where they wanted me to be.

My friends asked me, are there some people that I could gather up, that I could call, that might be support from in this time. I guess I should say that being part of this, this community organization which is committed to ending sexual violence which meant that we had a way of responding that I knew people would come together. I knew if I needed help, people would come and talk to me and we could work it out together. So it didn't feel strange to meet, to call people and say, "Hey, I need help, and this is what's going on."

And at the same time, experiencing these things in my home felt like people would see me differently; people would judge me; people would think I was a hypocrite; people would think I was weak. And I remember being really troubled by that the first few days. But I got reassurances from folks that that was exactly what the point of the organization was, and that experiencing harm is not about being strong or weak, that experiencing harm just is. It's what we choose to do about it that's important.

So we made phone calls, and asked people to come over. We had 7 or 8 people come over and just started talking through what to do. At that point it felt totally overwhelming. I was still on, "Is this really happening to me?" and, "What can I do to make it okay?" rather than thinking of anything beyond tomorrow, or next week.

But I think my wants were something like: I want to be in my home; I want my kids to feel safe; I think I said, "I want him to leave."

I think those were basically it at that moment, and then we just brainstormed what needs to happen right now in the next hour, in the next day, in the next week, for those wants to happen. We walked through it so if I want to be in my home, how do we make that happen? How do we make sure that that's a safe space? And, I think one of the answers to that question was, at least in the near future, having folks be there with me.

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So we eventually set up a schedule. We put out an email with a schedule for the week, and blanks for people to fill in, and I was amazed that people did fill it in. And they did come by. They came by every day and they came and sat in my living room, and they brought food, and we just sat together. I was amazed at that. That was how we got home to be a safe space for me again.

When we were thinking about whether to call the police or not, I did feel like I needed some help in calming the situation down, but I didn't know what to do, because if I can't call his friends on the job, and I can't call them in…It doesn't seem right to call them in an unofficial way, because who knows what's going to happen with that. And calling them in an official way doesn't necessarily seem like it's going to produce any certain results either.

So we tried to think about who could talk to him. And we figured out some people in the community that he could talk to, if he was open to doing that. My mom talked to him, and she was willing to deal with him. He was totally raging, and for whatever reason she was not intimidated at all and just was able to talk to him really calmly.

I had people checking on me, people staying during the daytime hours, sometimes overnight for the next week, and it just felt good. It felt so good to have this full house, you know, this busy house of people coming by, and, you know, people were playing with the kids, and we were making art in the kitchen, and someone was always making tea, and it felt not alone.

In terms of talking about successes, I guess the biggest one is that I did get all three things that I wanted, that I identified as wants to happen. That my kids went through that time feeling safe; that he did leave the house; that I was able to return home; and that all that happened in a fairly short amount of time. So in terms of success, I'd say, ultimately for me as a survivor, those were the most meaningful successes.

Another success in terms of communication was that we made a phone list immediately. That was one of the first things we did so I always knew I had someone to call. And people would call and check on me. At that time, I think it was hard. I was worried about people burning out. I was worried about people feeling overwhelmed by me and my stuff.

So I didn't have to constantly, hour by hour, be reaching out for needs to be met because we'd identified them beforehand and there were enough people involved. It felt like no one was carrying all of it, or more than they could. It certainly wasn't that things didn't feel hard. It felt really bad. I think what *was* helpful was this wasn't an intervention where it was like, "How are we going to get him away from me? It was like, "How are we going to make sure that there's not harm happening in our community? How are we going to make sure that we've done our best to address that? The problem was consistently the harm. The problem was consistently the events or the behaviors, or the things that were harmful that

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were happening, but not *him* that was a problem – not that my choice to stay as long as I had was a problem.

That made it possible for me to feel like I could come into the space and say what *I* needed which at that time really included not being someone who was perpetrating harm against him by engaging the power of the state whether or not it would have benefited me in that moment. It could only have had negative effects on him.

And then I got to make a decision about what do I really need right now to do my work, to take care of my kids, to get through this day, to heal.

We need to trust people to be the experts on their own lives and to take them seriously and have faith in people to set the course for working from harm to transformation. I think that comes best from people who are experiencing harm and have a vision for themselves about what they want. And to give people time to identify what that is and be willing to sit with the discomfort of not being able to rescue somebody in a simple or quick way. I think that those values were ultimately the most healing for me.

(Adapted from the transcript from *Community Responds to Domestic Violence* available from StoryTelling & Organizing Project (STOP) www.stopviolenceeveryday.org. The story is also available in downloadable audio mp3 on the same website)

Story from Community Allies: A Small Story (He Korero Iti)

Introduction

The following story offers one real life example of what we mean by community-based interventions to violence. This story is also featured in Section 4.G. *Working Together.* This story shows how ordinary people in a family come together to creatively and collectively prevent a situation of violence against a child using the vision and values we discuss the previous Section 1.5.

A Small Story (He Korero Iti)

We live in a town, but many of my husband's *extended family* (whanau) live in the valley where he grew up about 40 kilometres away. My husband and his brother are renowned for a number of things – one being how they extend the life of their cars and vans using highly technical items like string and wire – another how they share these vehicles for a variety of tasks such as moving furniture or transporting relatives, building materials, tractor parts, *traditional herbal medicines* (rongoa), eels, vegetables, dogs, and pigs (dead or alive).They are renowned for being people of the people, the ones to call on in times of trouble and death, the ones who will solve the problem and make the plan. They travel to

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and from town, to the coast to dive for sea food, to endless meetings, to visit *extended family* (whanau) - along the many kilometres of dirt roads in and around the valley, through flood or dust depending on the season in those patched up, beat up, prized cars.

There are a number of things to know about the valley - one is that the last 33 children in the world of their *small sub-tribe* (hapu ririki) to grow up and be educated on their own lands go to school here, despite government efforts to close the school. Another is that the valley is known to outsiders and insiders as 'patu wahine' – literally meaning to 'beat women' and this is not said as a joke. The mountain for this valley is named as the doorway spirits pass through on their way to their final departure from this life. This valley is also the valley where my husband and his siblings were beaten at school for speaking their first language. It is the valley their mother sent them to so they would be safe from their father – back to her people. It is where they milked cows, pulled a plough, fed pigs but often went hungry, and were stock whipped, beaten and worse.

My brother-in-law still lives in the valley, in a group of houses next to the school. So it's no surprise that one of our cars would be parked by these houses – right by where the children play. Perhaps also not a surprise that while playing that time old international game of rock throwing our eight year old nephew shattered the back window of the car. If I'd been listening I probably would have heard the 'oh' and 'ah' of the other children that accompanied the sound of glass breaking from town, and if I'd been really tuned in I would have heard the rapid, frightened heart beat of 'that boy' as well.

His mother is my husband's cousin – and she was on the phone to us right away. She was anxious to assure us 'that boy' would get it when his father came home. His father is a big man with a pig hunter's hands who hoists his pigs onto a meat hook unaided. He is man of movement and action, not a man for talking. Those hands would carry all the force of proving that he was a man who knew how to keep his children in their place. Beating 'that boy' would be his way of telling us that he had also learned his own childhood lessons well.

So before he got home we burned up the phone lines – sister to sister, cousin to cousin, brother–in-law to sister-in-law, wife to husband, brother to brother. This was because my husband and his brother know that there are some lessons you are taught as a child that should not be passed on. The sound of calloused hand on tender flesh, the whimpers of watching sisters, the smell of your own fear, the taste of your own blood and sweat as you lie in the dust – useless, useless, better not born. This is a curriculum like no other. A set of lessons destined to repeat unless you are granted the grace of insight and choose to embrace new learning.

So when the father of 'that boy' came home and heard the story of the window 'that boy' was protected by our combined *love* (aroha) and good humor, by the presence of a senior uncle, by invitations to decide how to get the window fixed in the shortest time for the least money. Once again phone calls were exchanged

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with an agreement being made on appropriate restitution. How a barrel of diesel turns into a car window is a story for another time.

Next time my husband drove into the valley it was to pick up the car, and 'that boy' was an anxious witness to his arrival. My husband also has very big hands, hands that belong to a man who has spent most of his life outdoors. These were the hands that reached out to 'that boy' to hug not hurt.

A lot of bad things still happen in the valley, but more and more they are being named and resisted. Many adults who learned their early lessons there will never return. For *people of the land* (tangata whenua) this is profound loss – our first identifiers on meeting are not our own names but those of our mountains, rivers, *subtribe* (hapu) and *tribe* (iwi). To be totally separate from these is a dislocation of spirit for the already wounded. This is only a small story that took place in an unknown valley, not marked on many maps. When these small stories are told and repeated so our lives join and connect, when we choose to embrace new learning and use our 'bigness' to heal not hurt then we are growing grace and wisdom on the earth.

By Di Grennell

Whangarei, Aotearoa-New Zealand

Glossary:

Whanau – extended family group

Rongoa – traditional herbal medicines

Hapu ririki – small sub-tribe

Patu – hit, strike, ill treat, subdue

Wahine – woman/women

Aroha – love, concern for

Tangata whenua – people of the land

Hapu – subtribe

Iwi –tribe

This story is available in audio and written transcript at the StoryTelling & Organizing Project (STOP) website at www.stopviolenceeveryday.org.

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Story from a Person Doing Harm: A Story of Sexual Harm, Accountability and Compassion

Introduction

The following story offers one real life example of what we mean by accountability. A longer version of this story is also featured in Section 4.F. *Taking Accountability.* This story shares the process that one person is taking on the road from causing sexual harm to taking accountability for that harm. It also reveals the complexity ties between someone's acts of sexual violence and one's own early victimization, a situation that is common. While this story is from an unusual situation in which someone doing harm initiated their own process of accountability, it is useful in showing that deep change is possible. It also tells us that what can be a long and painful process of accountability can also lead to healing for the person who has done harm. The story teller requests anonymity not only because of confidentiality but also so this story does not become a means for this person to receive public recognition or a sense of heroism. He also asks that if people are able to recognize him or other identities through the details included in this story, that you please have compassion about who you share these identities with. If you recognize him, he asks that you please talk with him about this story, even if only to acknowledge that you know this part of his history.

Surviving and Doing Sexual Harm: A Story of Accountability and Healing

In all of my years trying to find resources, I've only come across three stories of people who've done harm and only one of them had enough information, enough of the person's real story, to actually be helpful to me. I want to tell my story to help people who are trying to work on their sh** and also to help people who are supporting that process or who are mentors to have some idea of what might be going on for that person who still doesn't understand themselves – to help folks be better support for accountability processes.

You know, for most of the harm that I've done, I've never really been called out for it, so I don't really have other people's names for it, just my own names. I consider myself to have sexually assaulted people, also crossed people's boundaries in sexual ways that aren't sexual assault, and just generally had patriarchal behavior. And then the last thing that's always a little more difficult for me to talk about is that I also molested a relative of mine when I was young.

My accountability process started in my early 20's. The violence and harm I had been doing wasn't just a one-time thing where I just messed up once, it was like an ongoing pattern that was chronic, and happening over and over again in my life. There were a couple of moments when I was able to stop myself in the moment when I was doing harm, like when I hurt someone I cared about very much, seeing her weep when I pushed her sexual boundaries, what I see as sexual

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assault, I said, "Sh**. I need to stop right now." But even then, that kind of like horror wasn't enough to let me intervene in the big, chronic patterns. It took a lot more before I could start changing, even when I was recognizing chronic patterns of harm I was doing in my life and hated that I was doing those things.

By that point in my life, I was a total wreck. For years and years of my life, my mind had been filled almost with nothing but images of doing gruesome violence to myself. I was having trouble just keeping my life together. I was just under huge amounts of stress, having total breakdowns on a fairly regular basis, and was just being ripped apart inside by everything. And also, being ripped apart by trying to keep myself from the knowledge of what I'd done. It was too much for me to even look at. At the same time, I really wanted to talk with people about it. I was just so scared to do it because of the particular sorts of thing that I had done. You know, like, people who sexually abuse are the most evil of all the monsters in our cultural mythology. And *everybody* is basically on board with doing nothing but straight up violence to them. And so much of my life had been organized around just trying to keep myself safe that it wasn't a risk I could take. It wasn't even a question of choice. It just wasn't a possibility, even though wanted nothing more.

At some point, I started spending more time around people involved in radical politics and feminist politics. And so one person that I knew, I'll call him Griffin (not his real name), one of their friends had been sexually assaulted. So I just happened to be at a table when Griffin was having a conversation about what people were going to do about it. And that was the first time that I had ever heard of Philly Stands Up. Where I was living at the time was really far away from Philly, so it was just basically a name and an idea. But, you know, that one tiny seed of an idea was enough to make me realize that it was possible. That there were people that I could talk to that weren't going to destroy me.

It was a few months later. There was just a lot of stuff going on in my life where my history of doing violence to people and my history of surviving violence, they were coming up over and over and over in my life. But I still refused to acknowledge either of them. And it wasn't like a conscious thing. I don't know exactly what it was, but I hadn't gained the moment of insight yet into understanding that that is my history. I ended up talking with that same friend, Griffin, who had mentioned Philly Stands Up, and just in this one conversation, my whole history came out. It was the first time I talked with anybody about either my history of being molested and raped or my history of doing sexual violence to other people. That was *a moment* when I stopped running from my past. Those two things in my life, surviving violence and doing violence, are inseparable. I started coming to terms with both of them in the exact same moment. That was the first time I ever broke my own silence. And that's when I started trying to find some way of doing accountability.

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Part of what made this possible was the particular relationship with one of the people I had harmed, June (not her real name), a person that I loved tremendously, and somebody who, even though I haven't seen her for years and probably won't see her again in my life, I still love tremendously. And so the pain of hurting somebody that I love that much was part of it. And then I think part of it was that I had had someone to talk to. I'd never been able to communicate with people about anything in my life before. And part of it was that things got so bad at one point that I didn't have the choice anymore of not seeking support. I had a breakdown where somebody came into my life and listened to me, and I couldn't hold it in any more. And so I had started learning how to communicate from that. And then Griffin, the person I had the conversation with, really started off my own accountability process. I think for me, it was about that friend. I didn't feel threatened by them. I had a trust with them that if I talked to them, they would still care about me and see me as a person. But it's all part of this much larger context. It wasn't just something about that one particular friendship that made the difference; it was like this whole arc of all these huge things that were happening in my life, all of these breakdowns and changes and new commitments and new understandings that were all developing together that brought me to that point...

...Now it's been years of seeking support through political groups working on accountability and therapy and staying committed to the process. The things I now understand about healing, in the wholeness of my experience, as both a survivor and a perpetrator, look very different than the ones that I've read about or that people have talked to me about, where it's healing only from *surviving* abuse or violence.

I think that the three biggest emotions that I've had to contend with in that healing and transformation – and this is something that I've only articulated in the last, like, month of my life – I think the three biggest things that I've had to contend with are guilt, shame and a traumatic response to being vulnerable.

I think those three things – in myself at least – are the sources for the self-hate. It took me a long time trying to figure out even what guilt and shame *are*. What the emotions are, what they feel like. I would just read those words a lot, but without being able to identify the feeling. One of the things someone told me was that it seems like a lot of my actions are motivated by guilt. And that was strange to me because I never thought that I had felt guilt before. I thought, "Oh, well, I feel *remorse* but I don't feel guilt." It was years of pondering that before I even understood what guilt was or what it felt like in myself. Once I did, I was like, "Well damn! That's actually just about everything I feel." I just hadn't understood what it felt like before, so I didn't know how to identify it.

Now my understanding of guilt is that it's the feeling of being worthy of punishment. That guiltiness crops up when I become aware of the harm that I've done. I might engage in minimization, trying to make that harm go away, so that

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I don't feel that guiltiness for it any more, so that I don't feel worthy of being punished. I might try denying it – same sort of thing. Maybe I'm going to try to numb myself so that I don't feel that – so that I don't have that feeling any more. Or maybe I'm going to make that punishment come to me – just being in that place where there's this feeling that the other boot is gonna drop all the time, and that it should drop, trying to bring about a sense of resolution to that sense of impending harm by harming myself.

And another thing that I can see in myself is trying to get out of that sense that harm is gonna come to me by dedicating my life to amending the harm. But the thing is that it's different from compassion, trying to right wrongs because of guilt instead of because of compassion. Doing it through guilt, I notice that I can't assert any boundaries with myself. It's like a compulsion, and it leads me to burnout, Because any time that I stop, that feeling comes back, and it's like, *the harm is gonna come.* I'm learning how to stay present with that difficult feeling and breathe through it. It helps me a lot.

And then, as far as the shame goes, my understanding of shame is it's like the feeling that *I am someone who I cannot stand to be.* I was at this workshop where somebody was talking about their experiences with addiction and said, "My whole life, when I was in the middle of this addiction, I had this combination of grandiosity and an inferiority complex." You know, like this sense that I was better than everyone else and that I was the worst scum of the earth. I think when that's the manifestation of shame – that *this* is who I should be and *this* is who I really am. When I've seen myself in that kind of place, then usually I'm reacting to the shame either by trying to drown out that awareness of the side of me that's scum, and one of the primary ways that I did that was through finding ways of getting sexual rushes or something like that. And the other thing that I've seen myself do is trying to eradicate that part of me that's the scum. And mostly that happened through fantasies of doing violence to myself, targeted at that part of myself that I hated, that part of myself that I couldn't stand to be, and trying to rip myself into two. I think that's a lot of what was fueling my desire for suicide, too.

One of the things that happened with the accountability process is that once I started talking to people about the things I was most ashamed about, and making it public, then that grandiosity went away. And instead I had to come to terms with this other understanding of myself that wasn't as caught up in illusions of grandeur and instead was this forced humbleness. Like, *I'm a person* and I'm no better than anybody else. *I'm a person and I can also change.* So through talking about the things that I'm most ashamed of, that shame became transformative for me. That was a really big aspect of healing for me. And it required a lot of grieving, a lot of loss. And that's something that I was going through during that first year when I was talking with people about it.

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As I was talking with other people about it, all these possibilities were closing off in my life. I'll never be able to do this thing now. I'll never be able to have this type of relationship now. The world was less open to me. Like, I can't think of myself in the same way any more. A lot of times I didn't really have the capacity to really face it. But in the moments of insight I had, where I was coming to terms with it, I was really grieving, weeping, over the things that I was losing because of the accountability. That was a big part of healing for me, finding and connecting with and expressing the grief. And also the grief over everything that I had done.

There are still some things that I probably will have to let go of but that I haven't allowed myself to grieve yet, some possibilities that I'm still clinging to. I've found that a lot of time when I get on a power trip and find myself in this controlling sort of attitude, one of the things that resolves that is if I can find a way to grieve. The power trips, the controlling attitudes, tend to happen when I'm trying to control things that are changing. If I can just accept the change and grieve ways that possibilities are changing, then that brings me back. I mean, I've come to terms with a lot of the things that I was grieving when I first started talking with people about it. I'm starting to be able to find ways in my life now of different paths to some of the same things that I wanted for my life, but just paths that have a lot more humility in them. And I think that's one of the really valuable things that accountability has given me. Any time I start that thinking big about myself, then I bring it back to this accountability that I'm doing and It's helped me a lot in just like helping me find ways to stay connected to humility. That's something that I really appreciate about it.

The third one's a traumatic response to vulnerability. And this is one that I still don't understand that well because I'm just now starting to have some understanding of it. But like I was saying before, because of the violence that I've experienced in my own life, a huge portion of my life has been dedicated to keeping me safe. And for me, those behaviors have been enforced in myself through that same type of self-hate and violence. So if I leave an opening where I'm vulnerable, then that self-hate comes to close it down. If I ever mess up in a way that left me vulnerable, then I find that I start having all these fantasies of doing violence to myself. It's a way of enforcing in myself to never let that happen again. I don't really understand it that well. One of the things that I've been working on more recently is learning how to be open to vulnerability. And that's the last part of self-hate that I've healed the least...

...I have a friend that's been involved in a lot of accountability work, and he's insisted to me that what I'm doing isn't accountability because there's not survivors somewhere who are issuing a list of demands or that kind of thing. But for me, that's only one aspect of accountability. There's another aspect that's being accountable to myself, making sure that I'm living the values that are important to me in the world. Ultimately, accountability for me is a commitment to do what I need to do to make sure that I don't repeat those patterns, that they stop with me. Part of that has been the work around creating boundaries for

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myself. Part of that has been the healing and transformation. And part of it is also engaging with the world, to not see it as an individual thing, but to see myself as part of a social struggle. I need to be engaged with the world to be part of ending all of this sexual violence that's everywhere.

The accountability has this gift of humility. One of the things that is really valuable for me about that humility is the amount of compassion that it's allowed me to have for other people. I still have superiority complexes, but nowhere near like I did. At this point in my life, I'm able to understand myself as being the same kind of human as so many other people. I don't put myself on a different level from them. And so I feel like I have a much greater ability to understand people's struggle and pain, and to learn from it, and to *love* people, coming out of that compassion and shared struggle.

That ability for real, authentic love is something I never had. I thought that love was this obsessive thing. And when I realized that I needed to stop that, I had this moment of grieving and loss and doubt, because I thought, "Well, if I stop this, will I ever feel love again?" It required this huge shift. Once it quieted down, once I stopped it, then the whole landscape was just silent. It took me awhile to re-tune my hearing so that it wasn't just the roar of this obsession, but that I could hear the birds, and the insects, and the breezes. From there, learn a sort of love that's based in resilience, and shared commitment, and sacrifice. So that's been a real gift that it's given me.

Another thing too, is that I can bear to live with myself. I never could before. Most of the time I'm okay being in my own skin. It's been huge – even though I went through some extremely dark and difficult periods where the basin of depression that I'd lived in for so long in my life dropped into an abyss, Coming out of that abyss, through a continuing commitment to accountability, it's like the first time in my life when I'm starting to feel I'm free of this sort of depression and this crippling anxiety and paranoia. I have emotional capacity now; like I can feel things. I'm still not in a place where joy is a big part of my life, but it seems possible now. Through all this grieving and everything that I've done, I've also had a couple moments of clarity and lightness that I'd never experienced before in my life.

I think something else that has been a real gift for me, in terms of accountability, is the possibility for having lasting intimate relationships with people, whether sexually or not sexually. And having some capacity for pleasure – sexual pleasure, even, because before it was so caught up in shame and guilt and feeling triggered that I only ever felt horrible. Now I don't feel like I'm consigned to that for the rest of my life. I feel that there's a possibility of being liberated from it.

(This story is available on the StoryTelling & Organizing Project (STOP) website at www.stopviolenceeveryday.org.)

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1.7. This Toolkit as a Work in Progress

This Toolkit is a Guide, Not a Guarantee

While this Toolkit may not always lead all the way to our most ideal goals, it helps us imagine how we want to respond to violence and work towards a vision of healthy communities. It helps increase the possibility of a community-based change away from violence, but it is not a guarantee.

It helps increase the possibility of community-based and directed transformation of violence, but it is not a guarantee. Some of you may not be able to put together enough of the resources including time and energy to move all the way through an intervention. You may not be able to find a group or your group may not be able to work well enough together. You may encounter too many risks and dangers to see this as an approach that will work for you. You may decide to use an approach available in more traditional domestic violence or sexual assault organizations. However, even the process of thoughtfully considering a community-based approach may help others clarify their own understanding of the situation and motivate others to do more preventive work or be better prepared if they encounter violence in the future.

Shifting Our Expectations and Our Definition of Success

The Toolkit has useful information for anyone interested in addressing, reducing, ending or preventing violence. However, we also understand that violence intervention is a difficult and often unpredictable process. Success may not mean reaching every goal we set. You may use this Toolkit to only consider some of your options or to move through part of the process without reaching all of your initial goals. Attempting any part of this process can be useful and valuable. We have learned through our own work that success often takes unexpected forms.

Improving this Toolkit through All of Our Experiences

This Toolkit is a work in progress. It has the best information that CI was able to collect during its years forming the StoryTelling & Organizing Project (www.stopviolenceeveryday.org) and its Community-Based Interventions Project (www.creative-interventions.org). We at CI also see this Toolkit as just a beginning.

We invite you to read through the various sections of this Toolkit and see if it works for you. If you are reading this, then we also ask you to consider how you can help someone else who may benefit from this Toolkit but have a difficult time reading this due to language, difficulty or dislike of reading, or level of emotional

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crisis. We ask you to contribute to efforts to find ways to offer this information, tools and lessons in forms that are accessible to many people.

Finally, if you use this Toolkit for your own intervention, consider how your experiences and lessons learned can add to and improve this Toolkit. As others pick up this Toolkit and begin to use it, we expect that new lessons will be learned; new tools will be created; and new stories of success as well as failure will add to our collective knowledge of how to end violence.

As you create additional useful knowledge, lessons, and tools, we invite you to contribute this knowledge to others by connecting to our websites www.creative-interventions.org or www.stopviolenceeveryday.org or offering your contributions to other public forums.

1.8. FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions about the Toolkit

Below are some frequently asked questions about this Toolkit and about the community-based approach to violence intervention. Look below to see if you may have these same questions or if they can help guide you towards some of the highlights in this Toolkit. Brief answers and suggested sections for further reading follow each question.

What do you mean by *interpersonal violence*?

We define *interpersonal violence* as the types of violence that happen in our *interpersonal relationships* including:

- *Domestic violence* or *intimate partner violence* that takes place within an intimate relationship such as marriage, domestic partnership, dating relationship, or a former relationship.

- *Family violence* that can include domestic violence between intimate partners, but can also extend to children, parents, grandchildren, grandparents, other family members and others who may be very close to family like family friends, guardians, caretakers and so on.

- *Sexual violence* that includes unwanted sexual attitudes, touch or actions such as *sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, molestation, child sexual abuse*.

- *Child abuse* that is any kind of abuse against children.

- *Elder abuse* that is any kind of abuse against elderly people.

- While CI focuses on the types of violence just listed above, this Toolkit may also be useful for those experiencing violence in other settings, including neighborhoods, schools, organizations, workplaces, and employment situations. These forms of violence can also be considered interpersonal.

The violence may be physical, emotional, sexual, economic, or may take some other form.

See Section 2.2. *Interpersonal Violence: Some Basics Everyone Should Know* for more information.

Then what is a community-based intervention to interpersonal violence?

In brief, the CI definition of *community-based interventions to interpersonal violence* is:

- An attempt to address, end, reduce, or prevent interpersonal violence (or what we call *intervention*),

- Using community resources rather than relying on the police or social services,

- That directly involves friends, family, co-workers, neighbors, or community members (what we mean by *community*),

- With the possibility of directly dealing with (or engaging) the person or people doing harm.

See Section 2.1. *The Community-Based Intervention to Interpersonal Violence* and Section 3. *Model Overview: Is It Right for You?* for more information.

What do you mean by accountability?

In brief, accountability is the ability to *recognize, end and take responsibility* for violence. We usually think of the person doing harm as the one to be *accountable* for violence. Community accountability also means that communities are accountable for sometimes ignoring, minimizing or even encouraging violence. Communities must also *recognize, end and take responsibility* for violence by becoming more knowledgeable, skillful and willing to take action to intervene in violence and to support social norms and conditions that prevent violence from happening in the first place.

Accountability is a process. It involves listening, learning, taking responsibility, and changing. It involves conscientiously creating opportunities in our families and communities for direct communication, understanding and repairing of harm, readjustment of power toward empowerment and equal sharing of power, and rebuilding of relationships and communities toward safety, respect, and happiness.

For Creative Interventions, we are promoting a different way of thinking about accountability. We promote a vision that is more positive, tied to responsibility and change, but not to punishment and revenge, and can be driven by connection and care rather than fear and anger alone. This is not to take away from the fact that violence and abuse cause fear, anger and outrage. It does. And such emotions have their place.

But the change from violence to compassion, safety, respect and health also needs to come from the values that we want to see even if these might be difficult to feel when we are facing violence. And we are promoting accountability as a way to

keep our communities whole, safe and healthy, rather than a way to punish, separate and send away.

This does NOT mean that survivors or victims need to forgive the people who do harm, or that we simply ask for an apology and everything is fine, or that relationships and families need to stay together. None of these fit the definition of accountability, although it is possible that forgiveness, apologies and even staying together may be part of what some people decide that they want and may even be able to reach.

Accountability is a process. We see accountability as a *stairway to change.* Although we use this staircase to show steps towards accountability and a vision of positive and transformative change, an intervention may never reach any of these steps. Intervention goals may only anticipate reaching Step 1 as a measure of success.

Stairway to change

Step 6	Become a healthy member of your community
Step 5	Change harmful attitudes and behaviors so that violence is not repeated
Step 4	Make repairs for the harm
Step 3	Recognize the consequences of violence without excuses, even if unintended
Step 2	Recognize the violence
Step 1	Stop immediate violence

Why are you using language like "person doing harm?" Isn't it just easier to say batterer or rapist?

In this Toolkit, we stay away from the language of *perpetrator or perps, offenders, abusers, batterers, rapists, predators, criminals* and other language of that kind that assumes that someone who has caused harm will always carry that label. We also stay away from the language of the criminal justice system since we are seeking a different approach. Because this Toolkit supports change, including the change of attitudes and behaviors of people who have done harm, we want our language to reflect this possibility for change.

See Section 5.1. *Key Words - Definitions* for more about the language that appears in this Toolkit.

Community accountability looks like mob action or vigilantism to me. Is this what you mean?

In this model, collectives or groups of people may be involved in a process of accountability, but we do not condone acts of violence meant as "punishment, vengeance, a way to get even, to let them know how it feels, to hurt them for the sake of making them feel the pain." Our aim is to offer an approach to violence

and intervention that relies upon compassion and connection to the person doing harm. We view this approach as a way to invite the person doing harm to participate in the process of accountability and to understand this as ultimately a benefit to them as well as others in their community. The image of "invitation" guides our approach. In balance, some use of force, even if in forms of gentle pressure, may be especially likely at the beginning stages of stopping violence and addressing the harms. We can also think about some form of pressure as a way of "leveraging" our power or influence with the person doing harm.

See Section 4.F. *Taking Accountability* for much more information on accountability.

I was harmed. And for me accountability would look like letting this person be very, very sorry that they ever did what they did. Couldn't community accountability be used to let the person doing harm regret that they ever did what they did?

Feeling sorry, feeling regret or feeling shame may be natural feelings as someone becomes accountable for their harmful attitudes and actions. However, this is different from us "making sure" someone feels sorry through punishment, shaming and inflicting suffering. In our society, we are not taught the difference between *making* someone feel sorry and creating a process to effectively address and stop violence. Accountability and vengeance are often confused. Seeking justice and revenge are also confused. While the desire for vengeance is very understandable, we ask people to acknowledge these feelings and step back and reflect on them, as well. We also have a set of values underlying our community-based responses that do not support revenge.

See Section 3.4. *Values to Guide Your Intervention* for a discussion and tools to clarify your values.

See Section 4.D. *Goal Setting* for more support on thinking about the goals of an intervention and community accountability process.

Aren't there crisis lines or shelters or police to deal with these things? Why are you asking people to get involved? Isn't this dangerous?

What we have found is that people who are harmed often turn first to families and friends. They often turn to crisis lines and shelters or police as a last resort – or maybe never at all. For some people, for example, someone who is an undocumented immigrant, someone who is already in legal trouble, or someone who is already the target of the police, they may not feel like they can turn to the police for help.

We believe that we can all do a much better job in increasing our knowledge and skills in addressing, reducing, ending or preventing violence (what we call "violence intervention"). If we as ordinary community members can get better at

this, then we are more likely to address violence when it first happens, rather than waiting until it is so serious or after so much harm has already been done. We can act with care and compassion to those we are closest to, including people who are causing harm. We can more immediately come to the assistance of our loved ones or those we understand and share community with. We can address harm directly and firmly without pretending like nothing is happening, blaming the victim or hoping someone else will deal with it. We can make our homes, families and communities the kinds of healthy places that we want to live in.

We also hope that as this approach becomes more known and more resources like this Toolkit are made available, then crisis lines and shelters can also provide more support for those of us who would like to take action to address violence when it is happening in our own families and communities. See Section 4.B. *Staying Safe* for more about addressing concerns about safety and danger.

This approach looks like the right one for the situation that I know about, but I see that it needs a facilitator. How can I find a facilitator? Are there professionals or experts out there who can do this? Will I have to pay?

Right now, there are very few organizations or "professionals" that are actually familiar with or prepared to assist with this type of approach to violence intervention. What we believe is that many of us have some kind of trusted person or people we are connected to and who, with the help of resources like this Toolkit, can do a pretty good job as a facilitator. They may already know us, be familiar with our culture and our language and be interested in a good outcome. In this approach, the facilitator does not make the decisions nor know everything. The facilitator is someone who is an anchor to a process that can get complicated, emotional and lengthy. They can help ask questions, look to see where this Toolkit and other resources might be helpful, help us remember what we have already decided. Or if we cannot find a facilitator, then this Toolkit can be a helpful guide to help us to lead, organize or take part in a community-based intervention.

Over time, we hope that more people in the community – the "go-to" people, "natural helpers," faith leaders, neighborhood leaders, family leaders, people who are good at this but may never have been leaders before – can build up their skills to be able to act as facilitators, allies and so on. One of our mottos has been "Make ending violence an everyday skill." We hope that the will, the desire and the ability to help end and prevent violence will be one that we all have and that we teach to our communities, our children and future generations. In that way, we will not only be better at addressing and ending violence. We will eventually weave this into our lives so that harm will be addressed and stopped by anyone and everyone. Harm may eventually be prevented from happening in the first place.

See "Tips for Facilitators" throughout Section 4 of the Toolkit for concrete suggestions on how to facilitate various parts of your process.

This Toolkit is so long. How can you expect an average person to read this?

Yes, this Toolkit is long. Violence intervention, unfortunately, cannot be written into a recipe or be reduced to 10 easy steps. This Toolkit tries to incorporate the types of considerations such as safety, making goals, communicating and working well together that may be relevant in dealing with many situations of violence intervention. Our experience at Creative Interventions showed us that there are so many different types of situations of violence, so many different types of people who may get involved in a violence intervention, so many unexpected things that can happen along the way. We wanted to do the best we could to include many different types of situations that might arise. We also know that we may be dealing with dangerous situations and that it is common that danger increases when people take action to address and end harm.

People who do harm sometimes feel even more threatened and feel that their sense of control is being taken away when they are challenged or when the dynamics of power change. This can sometimes set off a period of heightened danger and uncertainty. This is not to say that we should, therefore, not take action. This means that we need to be especially prepared to deal with these situations and make sure that we take precautions. Much of this information and these tools are geared towards taking action while considering safety and risks.

We know that the written form and length of this Toolkit can make this inaccessible to many people. We tried to keep the language simple, to explain terms that might be unfamiliar to people, and to focus on practical steps more than philosophical or political arguments. We hope that people who can read this or download this from a computer can help to make this knowledge available to those who may have a different way of learning and understanding. We hope that people add to this Toolkit or make new tools that are easy to use and understand and will share them with others through the Creative Interventions website or other means.

We also expect that when people are in danger or have loved ones who are being harmed or who are harming others, this Toolkit will become much more meaningful. We expect that people will be relieved to find a section that addresses their particular situations or needs. They may not need the entire Toolkit but they may be able to find enough useful information to support them to reach their goals.

This Toolkit makes an intervention look so long and complicated. I don't know how I can take this on.

This Toolkit is written to include interventions that may involve lots of people or may try to take on a long-term process of change for the person doing harm. It rests on the belief that patterns of violence are often the result of attitudes and behaviors that are built up over a long time, perhaps even many generations. They are unlikely to change with a single event or action.

We also understand that smaller actions may be significant steps. Working up the courage to tell one person about a situation of violence can be huge. Gathering friends to stay at one's home to provide safety and comfort may not transform the person doing harm, but it may provide a safe and healing environment for a survivor and her children. Safely removing a gun or weapon from someone's house may not stop a pattern of domestic violence, but it may significantly reduce the possibility of serious or deadly harm. Small actions may break the sense of isolation, shame and fear. They may give the message to the person doing harm that people are watching and are standing solidly with the survivor. These actions may give the message that people also care about the person doing harm and can support them to make significant changes.

I am a victim of violence and would love to have the kind of support that I see in this Toolkit. But I don't have anybody I can turn to. I can't think of anybody to support me.

It is true that the community-based response may not be within everyone's reach. People may need to rely upon the types of help that is available in many communities in the U.S., including crisis lines, shelters, counseling centers, medical centers, and criminal justice system responses.

At the same time, we have seen that once people begin to think in this more community-based way, possibilities can begin to open up. You may begin to look at people as possible allies, and find allies in unexpected places. You may not find people that are involved in a long-term team, but individuals may still serve a useful role even if it is a small or short-term role. We call ourselves Creative Interventions because creativity is often just what is needed. There is no set recipe, but creativity, flexibility and a little help from resources like this Toolkit may make some form of intervention possible: something that may help you reach at least some of your goals.

See Section 4.C. *Mapping Allies and Barriers* to help brainstorm about who can help – and what possible roles they may play.

I am involved in an accountability process as an ally and sometimes I find myself with a lot of negative feelings towards the survivor of violence. I have to admit that I actually like the person doing harm more than the survivor. Is this normal?

It is possible for us to dislike the survivor of violence. Survivors are not perfect people. They are imperfect like anyone else. Sometimes we expect them to be the

"perfect victim" – beyond guilt, always following through with what they say they're going to do, appreciating us if we are helping them. Sometimes we are angry because they have mixed feelings for the person doing harm and may seem to go back and forth between fearing them and defending them, sometimes making it difficult for allies to know what to do. Sometimes the effect of abuse and the difficulties of an intervention can make those who have experienced violence feel afraid, angry, disappointed, frustrated, exhausted, confused and other emotions that can appear unpleasant to the rest of us.

Sometimes people who cause harm have used personal charms or personal power to hide their abusive behavior or to excuse it.

It is important to learn more about common dynamics regarding interpersonal violence like domestic violence and sexual assault so that we can normalize what may look like confusing attitudes or behaviors on the part of the survivor and the person doing harm. It can also help to explain the confusion that allies often feel. And it can help to explain our feelings about the person doing harm. Doing what is right to address, reduce, end or prevent violence does not necessarily mean that we "like" the survivor and "hate/dislike" the person doing harm. It does help to be clear about our goals and to understand the sometimes complicated dynamics about violence and interventions to violence.

See Section 2.2. *Interpersonal Violence: Some Basics Everyone Should Know* for more information and support around these types of confusing feelings. They are natural but can mislead us into doubting the survivor or siding with the person doing harm.

See Section 2.3. *Violence Intervention: Some Important Lessons* for more information about the dynamics of interventions.

See Section 4.E. *Supporting Survivors or Victims* for more information about providing support for survivors under many different conditions.

See Section 4.F. *Taking Accountability* for more information about supporting accountability for people doing harm under many different conditions.

I am being asked to involve myself in a community-based intervention, but I'm honestly not sure who is the victim and who is person doing harm.

Sometimes it is not clear who is the survivor or victim of harm and who is the person doing harm. Someone may be lying; the survivor may also take actions that are harmful; and, in some cases, the harm is "mutual" – that is, the harm can be relatively equal on both sides. Often times interpersonal harm takes place behind closed doors, in private. We may not "see" what happened and may feel like it's one person's word against another's. We do not have a foolproof way to be able to tell who is the survivor or who is the person doing harm. But we also do

not expect that the survivor will be a "perfect survivor" – that they may also do things that appear abusive – or they may be doing things that are violent, sometimes in self defense.

We are looking at "patterns" of power and control. We are looking at who may be in a position of power that gives them more control, that may make them more able to manipulate power, that may make their abuse excused, and that may make them more able to hide their abuse. Therefore, male privilege remains a frequent power dynamic in excusing male violence against women or girls. Citizens or people with permanent residency often use their more stable status in the U.S. to control and violate people who may be undocumented or who may be dependent on others for their immigration status or their well-being. People with higher income or status may use this against those with less resources. Same for able-bodied people violating people who have disabilities. People using homophobia and transphobia or the fear or hatred of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ) people may take advantage of this vulnerability to threaten and abuse LGBTQ people.

However, violence does not *always* go in the directions we just named. It is possible for someone in a more vulnerable position in society is the person who is more abusive within a relationship. Dynamics of power and abuse tend to follow these dynamics, but not in every situation.

These dynamics may play into our confusion about who is the survivor and who is the person doing harm. Understanding these power dynamics may help us to be able to better understand the dynamics of abuse.

See Section 2.2. *Interpersonal Violence: Some Basics Everyone Should Know* for more information and tools that might clarify the dynamics of violence including who is the survivor and who is the person doing harm.

See Section 4.A. *Getting Clear* and Section 5.6. *Distinguishing between Violence and Abuse* written by the Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse that might help clarify confusing dynamics of violence including who is the survivor and who is the person doing harm.

I am involved as an ally in an accountability process but I feel a lot of reservation about what we are doing and why. I don't know if I can support this process any longer.

Although most people involved in violence intervention generally want the violence to end and for people to heal, people often disagree about the best way to achieve this. This Toolkit tries to take into account the fact that many people enter an intervention thinking that they want the same thing but actually having very different opinions on the details of the goals and the best way to get there. Also, even the smoothest intervention often involves strong emotions, including fear, guilt, and blame, which can make us feel a lot of doubt. We may feel like

we're on a rollercoaster of emotions. We may change our mind about what we think.

While this Toolkit supports a collective process, each individual will have their own sense of what is right, what they believe, and their own personal limits about how or if they want to take part in a process. This can be as simple as having time limits – how much time they're willing to spend on a process and times of the day that they have available. This may be deeper in terms of their belief system about how things should be handled.

This Toolkit encourages people to be thoughtful and true to themselves and others about what are their guiding principles, goals for what they want the intervention to achieve, and personal limits or what we call "bottom-lines." It also encourages people to discuss these with each other and find group decisions that may actually change someone's mind and educate them about the dynamics of violence and the positive possibilities of group action. It relies on the belief that group discussion and action can make a better outcome than those of a single person or the chaotic actions of a group that does not communicate with each other. It is best to get these frank discussions out in the open sooner than later so that decisions can be made based on clear communication. It may still be possible that people will decide that they cannot take part in a process because they simply do not have the time or energy or because their disagreements are too deep. It is also possible that people can still take a role but may need to shift and take a role that better suits their abilities or their belief system.

See Section 4.C. *Mapping Allies and Barriers. Who can help?* to think more about what kinds of roles might be a good fit.

See Section 4.D. *Goal Setting* to think about the group goals and individual goals, and to see how these can come together into a common set of goals that everyone can support.

See Section 4.G. *Working Together* to identify problems and to help figure out positive ways to work together as a team.

I am a survivor of violence and have asked some people to help me with an intervention. But I am so frustrated with them. Isn't this *my* intervention? Why aren't they doing what I want them to do?

There can be many reasons why people end up in disagreement about a community-based intervention. The tools in this Toolkit help with processes to acknowledge disagreements or different points of view and still coordinate efforts behind some agreed-upon goals. This also means that community members may have perspectives and goals that are different than those of the survivor. This may be a healthy set of differences that when discussed can actually lead to a better, more effective process.

On the other hand, this may be a reflection that at least some allies do not understand the dynamics of violence or do not value the unique perspectives of the survivor. While some types of domestic violence or sexual assault resources say that they put the survivor's needs at the center no matter what, this Toolkit promotes a process that puts the perspective and experiences of the survivor at the center of an intervention without necessarily saying that whatever the survivor or victim says or wants is what everyone else must follow. While this may indeed be the dynamic in some interventions, we support processes that can make room for discussions about how decisions will be made. It may be necessary for allies to listen to each other and gain an understanding of each other's perspectives. Allies need to listen particularly well to the perspectives and experiences of the survivor. And the survivor or victim may also need to acknowledge and understand those of the allies. In this approach, there is also a place for people to take into account the perspective of the person doing harm and make room for their perspectives, needs and well-being without supporting or excusing acts of harm.

See Section 4.D. *Goal Setting* to think about the group goals and individual goals – and to see how these can come together into a common set of goals that everyone can support.

See Section 4.E. *Supporting Survivors or Victims* for more information about supporting survivors.

See Section 4.G. *Working Together* to help figure out positive ways to work together as a team.

I am the survivor of violence. Finally, people are recognizing and doing something about the violence. I've had enough of the violence and just want them to carry the burden of the intervention. Shouldn't community accountability mean that I can turn it over to the community?

In our experience, it is difficult to carry out an intervention without some involvement of the survivor. Exceptions may be in the case where the survivor is a child and it is inappropriate as well as dangerous for adults to put the burdens of an intervention on the child. The balance of how much the survivor is involved can be challenging, especially when the survivor and the community allies don't agree about the level of involvement.

There are many reasons that it may be helpful for the survivor to be involved include the fact that they may best know the harms that have been done. Others may choose directions that unintentionally endanger a survivor or lead to actions that are completely unsatisfactory to a survivor.

We have found that survivors choose many different ways to be involved. Some want to make all the decisions. Some want to be completely left out. Some only

want occasional reports about what is going on or may want to make decisions about certain things. Some may completely disagree with the intervention.

See Section 4.E. *Supporting Survivors or Victims* for more information about how to think about and plan for different levels of survivor involvement in an intervention.

I am involved in a process of community accountability and feel like the person who did harm keeps trying to get out of accountability. Aren't we just letting this person manipulate the process?

In this Toolkit, we present accountability as a *staircase*. The first step on that staircase is stopping violence, or stopping it *enough* to be able to take the next step. It is difficult for someone to take responsibility in the middle of violence or in the middle of a cycle of violence that keeps continuing over and over again. It is difficult to ask for change and expect change to be lasting within a pattern or cycle of violence.

This Toolkit encourages us to take resistance into account. As we will repeat, we need to create systems **flexible enough** to allow for the expected process of dodging and delaying accountability and **strong enough** to withstand and diminish these tactics over time.

We actually expect that people confronted for their patterns or acts of harm will try to avoid accountability. Think about times that you may have been accused of something. Even if you did what you were accused of doing, you may have been resentful that someone brought it up. You may have tried to make excuses. This is not to underestimate the damage that the lack of accountability can do or to say that minor harms are the same as serious types of violence that people may have committed. This is to help us understand and anticipate very likely forms of resistance so that we can be prepared and we can improve our process. In this Toolkit, we have no sure way of ensuring accountability. In fact, we are only beginning to understand this process and have included all of our knowledge so that others can benefit from what we learned and can build upon it. Our general viewpoint is that we must build processes that both expect resistance and can contain and reduce it over time.

The flip side of this is to build processes that can connect to the perspectives and well-being of the person doing harm. How can we connect to their values? How can we connect to what they care about? Can we imagine keeping people doing harm in our communities without excusing or minimizing whatever harm they have done? What would it take?

See Section 4.F. *Taking Accountability* for more concrete information on accountability processes.

I hear a lot about Restorative Justice and Transformative Justice. Is this the same thing?

Many people are beginning to talk about alternative types of interventions to violence. Terms such as restorative justice, community accountability, community-based responses to violence and transformative justice have many overlapping principles and sometimes refer to the same types of processes. Restorative Justice, in particular, has been around since about the 1970s and has been developed as a way to approach many different types of harms – especially in New Zealand, Australia, and Canada. It has been used less in looking at domestic violence or sexual assault although it has been used in some cases. Restorative Justice has often been developed in collaboration with the criminal justice system. This Toolkit and many others who are talking about these types of alternatives are smaller scale and do not connect with the criminal justice system. Many are also opposed to the criminal justice system because that system is not "just," is violent, itself, and/or takes away the possibility for processes based on connection and care – instead, relying more upon punishment.

Many people using this Toolkit may be comfortable with the term Transformative Justice that has been used more frequently in social justice spaces. This Toolkit is well aligned with the principles of Transformative Justice.

In general, this Toolkit is more practical in nature and does not get into a lot of discussion about different forms of justice. However, Creative Interventions has been generally very involved in promoting these alternatives in part because of its concern regarding social justice and the harms of the criminal justice system.

See the Creative Interventions website at www.creative-interventions.org for more information and links to other organizations carrying out these discussions.