

Do You Mind? Radical Queer Relationships Workshop

Speaker Notes

Section 1 - Introduction

Slide 1: Do You Mind? Capstone: Radical Relationships Workshop

- *Backdrop to leave on the screen as participants enter the space and grab food if it is being offered.*
- Welcome everyone and thank you for attending the Do You Mind? Capstone: Radical Queer Relationships workshop.

Slide 2: Evaluation Survey

- First, we'd like to take a moment to invite you to participate in a survey that we're doing to evaluate this community resource developed through the Do You Mind? Safer Daring for 2S/LGBTQIA+ Youth program. The survey is being conducted by the Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC). The goal of the survey is to collect feedback on the community resources so that we can understand the impacts of the resources and explore ways we can improve the resources in the future. The survey can be accessed using the QR code and/or link found at the end of the resource. The survey will be completed online using a professional SurveyMonkey account hosted in Canada.
- The survey is confidential and completely voluntary to complete. There will be no consequences if you choose not to complete the survey. If you do decide to participate in the survey, your contributions may help us learn more about how to best support 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth with preventing dating violence and with developing and maintaining healthy relationships.
- The survey will mainly ask you about what you learned by accessing one or more of the community resources, and any suggestions you have for improving it. There is a potential risk that some of the questions may upset you. If this happens, the consent letter at the beginning of the survey will have a link to some resources and services that you can access for support. Only CBRC evaluation and reporting staff will have access to your individual responses, and only de-identified, summary data will be shared with others, including project partners, funders, and the public. You will be able to access some of these summary-level findings on the CBRC website at www.cbrc.net, where they will be published just before or after the study ends in 2028. If you have any questions about this project or the survey please reach out to Wilbur Turner by email at wilbur@checkhimout.ca.
- If you wish to participate in the survey, please click this [link](#).

Slide 3: Section 1 Introduction

- *Facilitators introduce themselves (names, pronouns, educational backgrounds, and a fun fact) briefly.*

Slide 4: Land Acknowledgement

- Before we begin, I would like to take a moment to respectfully acknowledge that this workshop was designed and we are situated on the traditional, ancestral, unceded, and unsundered territory of the Syilx Peoples and the Okanagan Nation Alliance.
- It is important for each of us to consider whose land we are on, especially if we are settlers or guests. While this land is currently occupied by the Canadian settler state, it is important to recognize that the Syilx Peoples continue to assert their sovereignty and uphold their responsibilities to the land. As we delve into the topics of queer relationships, it is important to recognize that a vital part of queer liberation and queer joy is decolonization. Like many Indigenous communities and nations around the world and Turtle Island, the Syilx Peoples have had to face gendered and sexualized violence directly related to the same root causes queer folks face. Our liberation goes hand in hand.
- *[Mention local events/educational opportunities/actions coming up. These will be determined closer to the date of the workshop.]*

Slide 5-6: Workshop Outline and Goals

- Slide 5:
 - This workshop was created by queer youth, for queer youth. We may not have all the answers, but we will do our best to connect you with those who do.
 - The overarching goal of this workshop is to help you learn how to build healthy and fulfilling queer relationships together by:
 - Empowering queer youth to be themselves and look out for each other
 - Educating queer youth on building and fostering boundaries and communities or relationships of care
 - And providing queer youth with tools to protect themselves from and intervene in harmful relationships
 - This is a lifelong learning process, but we are hoping we can give you some information & tools to develop helpful skills and leave you with things to reflect on.
- Slide 6:
 - Before we dive into the workshop, let's go over the workshop schedule.
 - The rest of this workshop is divided into 3 main components:
 - Presentation
 - Speakers
 - Art Reflection
 - The Presentation section can be further broken down into 5 sections:
 - Section 1: Introduction
 - Section 2: Love and Connection
 - Section 3: History
 - Section 4: How does this history show up in relationships?

- Section 5: How do I want to show up in relationships?
- Each of these sections are meant to build off of one another to help accommodate different learning styles and provide a foundation of knowledge and tools for all of you to take away after the workshop.

Slide 7 - Disclaimer and Content Warnings

- This workshop will include mention and some discussion on heavy topics. While we won't be doing deep dives on any of these topics, themes and mentions of racism (especially anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism), sexism and misogyny, heteropatriarchy, homophobia, transphobia, queerphobia, ableism, fatphobia, slavery, genocide, and broader themes of violence and abuse will come up, particularly in Section 3, which will be prefaced beforehand. Again, no details or graphic descriptions will be included.
- Since we will be dealing with heavy topics, we want to remind you that:
 - You are always welcome to step outside if needed.
 - We will have a mental health practitioner available at the workshop if you are in distress and need to talk.
 - You are welcome to do what you need to do to make yourself comfortable, as long as it does not disrupt those around you. This includes using some of the fidget toys we have on hand.
 - There are resources available to you, as outlined in the brochure.

Slide 8 - Housekeeping:

- Bathrooms are located right across the hall. A single stall washroom is available but it requires a key which you can get by asking the staff at the reference desk.
- Code of Conduct:
 - Active listening:
 - Everyone deserves to be heard
 - This means giving the person speaking your full attention, not interrupting and listening to understand instead of listening to prepare a response
 - Respect for all:
 - We want to create a space where everyone feels welcome, valued, and respected. Please be mindful of your words and treat each other with kindness throughout the session.
 - Challenging ideas respectfully:
 - We may have different experiences and perspectives, and that's okay. If you disagree with something, do so by discussing the idea itself, not the person who brought it forward.
 - Asking questions rather than making assumptions:
 - Instead of making assumptions about someone's intentions or experiences, ask clarifying questions. Being curious helps reduce misunderstandings and leads to more meaningful interactions.

- Maintaining confidentiality:
 - Anything you share during this workshop will be kept confidential. The only exception is if someone shares information that suggests they or someone else is at risk of harm. In those situations, we will share the necessary information with the appropriate professionals.
 - We encourage you to share what you learned from this workshop, however, please keep personal stories and experiences confidential.
- Thank you all again for attending. Now we will move forward into our second section of this presentation on Love and Connection.

Section 2 - Love and Connection

Slide 9 - Section Introduction

- To get into the purpose of this workshop, this section will go over what love and connection can look like in the queer community. The ideas and concepts in this section will hopefully demonstrate some of the different ways queer love and connection can manifest.

Slide 10 - Quotes from Queering The Map (and local writers)

- We'd like to share a quote from a queer Palestinian to begin this section- "I've always imagined you and me sitting out in the sun, hand in hand, free at last. We spoke of all the places we would go if we could. Yet you are gone now. If I had known that bombs raining down on us would take you from me, I would gladly have told the world how I adored you more than anything. I'm sorry I was a coward."
- Some local queer folks also had writing to share about love: "If this weren't supposed to be right then his fingers would not fit so perfectly between mine."

Slide 11 - Quotes from Queer Writers

- We've gathered some quotes about love from particularly relevant queer writers with particular literary or historical significance.
 - "I love being asexual because I can still be intimate with someone and not go against what my soul and mind and body desire, and that is to not have sex. There are thousands of ways to get that closeness with someone." (Jade qtd. in Sherronda J. Brown's *Refusing Compulsory Sexuality*, 2022, p. 173)
 - "When we see love as the will to nurture one's own or another's spiritual growth, revealed through acts of care, respect, knowing, and assuming responsibility, the foundation of all love in our life is the same." (bell hooks, *All About Love*, 2001, p. 136)
 - "Too great a love of beauty was often the sign of ungovernable wants and errant ways." (Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments*, 2019, p. 116)
 - "To open our hearts more fully to love's power and grace we must dare to acknowledge how little we know of love in both theory and practice." (bell hooks, *All About Love*, 2001, p. xxix)

Slide 12 - Quotes From Queer Writers

- The thoughts these writers have shared through their writing help illustrate the significance of different kinds of love, and how they are particularly relevant to the queer experience. To queer love means to make it unconventional, to remake it as something more than what you have been told it must be.

Slide 13 - Queer Connection Through Sex and Sexual Intimacy

- Hookup culture has long been part of queer culture. This can involve apps like Grindr, which you may know of, as well as activities like cruising that are often facilitated using these apps, as well as word of mouth and nonverbal signalling. Cruising, the act of nonverbally flagging someone to have queer sex with in a Right Now kind of sense, is often thought of as exclusive to gay men, but it has also been significant to lesbian culture, such as the sapphic leather scenes of the '80s. Queer people find ways to connect with each other when typical cues might not be as safe in broad daylight, and thus cruising made its place in our culture (Street, 2025).
- Things to consider when hooking up:
 - Know what you're comfortable with and what you want.
 - Are you using unsafe or risky sex as a form of self harm?
 - Consent is enthusiastic and ongoing- make sure you are checking in with your partner(s) and yourself before and throughout intimacy.
 - Aftercare is kind to offer and always okay to ask for- what do you or your partner(s) need after the fact? Cuddles, help cleaning up, water, and snacks are great ways to wind down.
- All of these are particularly important to keep in mind if you are engaging with kink as part of your sexual experiences.
- If you or your partners are using substances during sexual activities, get the substances tested as a form of harm reduction. Drug testing can be accessed through Interior Health, and also through This Space Belongs To You. Carrying and knowing how to use naloxone kits if opioids are in the mix won't hurt either.

Slide 14 - Sexual safety resources

- Full panel STI testing requires swabbing of oral, vaginal, and/ or anal bodily tissue, as well as blood testing to do a thorough scan of your body. You only ever have to do what you are comfortable with, but if you are engaging in regular sexual activity, especially with new or multiple partners, it is recommended you get tested every 3-6 months. You will typically have results within two to three weeks once samples have been submitted for blood testing, though results for swabs are usually returned much faster (CDC, 2024).
- Within Kelowna, you can go for a walk- in appointment at Outreach Urban Health Centre, or book an appointment through [Interior Health](#) or visit a Dynacare Lab for on demand testing.
- PrEP, or Pre- Exposure Prophylaxis, is a medication that can be taken as a preventative measure for HIV. You can access this at <http://bccfe.ca>, or by talking to a medical professional to see what would be the best option for you.
- If you experience sexual violence, know that it is not your fault and you are not alone. You can access medical, legal, and emotional support while you navigate the aftermath, including through the following resources, the Elizabeth Fry Society, and the SAFE unit within Interior Health. QMUNITY is an organization that will provide pro bono legal support to queer people within BC as well. You can access support and resources on your own time, however, it is

recommended to tell someone you trust for immediate support. It is also important to note, that while certain biological testing must be completed within certain time frames, you are not required to report to the RCMP just for accessing a physical evaluation.

Slide 15 - Queer love keeps us safe

- Because queer people have historically been forced to, and still often are, forced to live unconventional lives, simply because conventional ways of living were not designed to hold the complexities of humanity, our ways of surviving and persisting to love despite all this have also been unconventional.
- During the AIDS crisis, lesbians took care of gay men while the government neglected the epidemic that was rapidly stealing lives ([XSaraXPoeX], 2020). Queer people, such as Bayard Rustin and Walter Neagle, have adopted their partners because it was the only legal way to be able to care for and have autonomy with each other when marriage has been outlawed for us (Rustin Center, 1982; Lizama, n.d.). Some of the paperwork for this is pictured on the slide (Rustin Center, 1982). The ballroom scene, where much of queer culture today has evolved from even in places without active ballroom scenes, was and is a place for queer people to gather as a community to celebrate defiant and unapologetically queer joy, as well as form bonds of chosen family (Soto, 2024; Plaster, n.d.). Black and brown trans women were and are often the pioneers of such spaces, creating safe spaces out of necessity.

Slide 16 - What is love to you?

- Queer people have always made love their own and defined it on their own terms. What is love to you? You can take this question home to think on as well as you may want to reflect on how it informs your approach to interpersonal and communal relationships. What is love and connection to you? (*Speaker can share something about what love means to them.*)

Section 3 - History

Part 1 - White Supremacy, Evolution, and “Civilization”

Slide 17 - Section Introduction

Draw the connection between how queer love is often “unconventional” because of our heteronormative and heteropatriarchal society and how it’s because of how our society was shaped.

Slide 18 - Disclaimer and content warnings

This section will be covering the majority of the heavy content in a short period of time. As a reminder, your health and wellbeing come first, so please do what you need to look after yourselves. I’ll also note that there is obviously a lot that can be covered under this section and it will not be all encompassing. This section will provide a very basic foundation to where the ideas of sex, gender, and race derived from in the context of our western society on unceded territory to inform the following sections.

Slide 19 - White Supremacy, Evolution, & “Civilization”

- *Ask question:* What does white supremacy have to do with queer relationships?
- *Gage familiarity with the diagram by asking participants if they have seen it before. Some*

may be familiar from early schooling.

- This diagram to the right is to help visualize two theories of evolution: Darwinism and Lamarckism.
 - **Darwinism:** “species change occurs through random variation and the struggle for existence” (Schuller, 2018, p. 35)
 - **Lamarckism:** “organisms’ pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain determines the course of evolution” (p. 35)
- Essentially, Lamarckism states that evolution happens within one’s lifetime and to their offspring rather than over time.

Slide 20 - White Supremacy, Evolution, & “Civilization”

What does white supremacy have to do with queer relationships?

- European nations (such as England, France, and Spain) seeking power and establishing hierarchies amongst themselves and over people and lands they want to exploit (1800s)
 - But how does one decide who is more powerful—who has more status?
- Recall to previous slide’s definitions of Darwinism and Lamarckism
- The adoption of (neo)Lamarckism in the nineteenth century popularized the belief that an individual can change the course of evolution in their lifetime through their actions and behaviour
- (neo)Lamarckist beliefs became popular with the need to define hierarchies and status of who is most important and powerful as it posed a way of determining a criteria *and* argued that people had control of creating future generations that could uphold that criteria

Slide 21 - White Supremacy, Evolution, & “Civilization”

What does white supremacy have to do with queer relationships?

- At this point in time, class hierarchies already existed with royalty, monarchs, upper class, the Church, and wealthy individuals
- These class hierarchies privileged the wealthy, who don’t have to farm or work and have animals and other humans doing work for them (which already creates a hierarchical dynamic)
- But the wealthy elites also had certain physical attributes in common:
 - Less time in the sun and on the land, the paler you are (also less muscular and thin)
 - In addition, wealthy elites were frequently catching tuberculosis (TB) at large social events like galas, balls, and common socialization because they had the time, wealth, and status to do so
 - TB caused a sickly, paler complexion and because it was the wealthy elite class people were already striving to be, whiteness (and thinness) became a desired beauty and sign of being “civilized”

Slide 22 - White Supremacy, Evolution, & “Civilization”

What does white supremacy have to do with queer relationships?

- With the Lamarckist idea that humans as “impressionable” and sensitive, and therefore malleable to change and evolution → Europeans were striving to create the most “evolved” and “civilized” offspring that reflected the attributes of whiteness and thinness that the upper class had unintentionally and intentionally promoted as the most desirable features.

- This ended up informing how people, especially gendered and raced minorities, were able to exist
 - **Gender:** As those expected to give birth to the next generations, those categorized as white women were kept inside (or under the supervision of white men) where they can't be influenced by the outside environment while the men could move through any space without consequence to make sure the women didn't experience heightened emotions / "hysteria" that would be reflected in their children
 - **Race:** White women not being allowed near racialized people (especially men) to prevent "contaminating influences from impressionable flesh" (Schuller, 2018, p. 37)

Part 2 - The Creation of Sex, Gender, and Race

Slide 23 - The Creation of Sex, Gender, and Race

Anyone existing beyond the expectation of whiteness and striving for creating "evolved" and "civilized" offspring, such as racialized people, queer people, disabled people, and anyone who didn't fit into the incredibly specific and narrowed expectations created through the invention of gender and race were seen as against natural law.

The invention of race and gender (especially having happened around the same time and for the same reasons), is part of why it is important to understand "intersectionality," a term coined by Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) to describe and frame the various relationships between race and gender (p. 1265).

- White women policed and confined to maintain "civilized" heritage
 - I specify "white women" here because under the standards for race and gender, Black women (at the intersection of being a gendered and racialized minority) didn't fit into any definition of human under whiteness and therefore were policed differently and much more harshly (Crenshaw 1991; Hartman, 2019).
- Racialized peoples dehumanized and segregated to create a distinct divide and "Other" (hooks, 1992)
 - Similar to the previous point specifying race when talking about the types of oppression women have faced and recognizing the intersectionality at play with race and gender, racialized gender non-conforming (those who didn't fit into the categories of male and female) were especially "Othered" by colonial powers (Hartman, 2019).
- Rules and definitions of what race and sex (gender) is to enforce and maintain the idea of racialized and gendered bodies in the name of "evolution" and "civilization", which is actually code for white supremacy and colonialism as the next slide will explain. In forcing people into such strict categories of gender and race, colonial powers worked towards the erasure of cultures, communities, and identities.

Part 3 - Ideas of Sex, Gender, and Race as Excuses

Slide 24 - The ideas of sex, gender, and race were then used as excuses and justification to colonize and exploit people in order to maintain the capitalistic hierarchies we still see today and are probably familiar with through history.

Ways sex, gender, and race have shown up in colonization is through...

- (White) saviourism: the idea of “saving” and “civilizing” racialized, disabled, queer peoples into whiteness (Cole, 2012; Machado, 2021; Pailey, 2021), which can be seen in
 - Assimilation (e.g. gendered bathrooms, gendered language, gendered spaces, residential schools, the Indian Act, imperialism, invalidation of non-English languages or sub dialects like Rez English and African American Vernacular English (AAVE))
 - Sterilization (e.g. the forced, coerced, or secretive sterilization of Black and Indigenous women and girls, disabled individuals, and queer individuals)
 - Institutionalization / criminalization / policing (e.g. the Ugly Laws, segregation and apartheid, medicalization of queer sexual orientations and gender expressions)
- “Othering” and dehumanizing people
 - (Settler) colonialism justifying genocide and land theft (such as terra nullius) by determining Indigenous Peoples as “Other”
 - Withholding human rights (e.g. the right to vote, workers rights, cultural rights)
 - Invalidation, neglect, alienation, discrimination (e.g. access to gay bars as trans individuals, medical malpractice and abuse, stereotyping and prejudice, deportations, displacement and dispossession)
 - Oppression, policing, violence (e.g. only being seen as trans* if you are medically transitioning/passing, not “queer” enough, physical/sexual/verbal assaults, wage gap).

Ways sex, gender, and race have and continue to play a part in exploitation:

- Slavery and human trafficking
 - Transatlantic slave trade
 - The criminalization of identities and certain acts leading to prison labour
 - Corporations and high demand for mass production supplied by sweat shops, unregulated/unprotected labour, and exploitation of migrant workers (Temu, Shein, Amazon, Okanagan orchards)
 - Circuses, human experimentation, and human “zoos” (furthered Othering and distinction of “us” and “them”, active oppression and abuse of the objectified and Othered)
- Theft and profit
 - Stealing/rewriting of knowledge (e.g. archives only reflecting what those in power allowed to be kept and protected, white-centred and Eurocentric narratives, erasure of Indigenous existence, trans and racialised queer activists being written out of history)
 - Cultural appropriation (e.g. white queer people using AAVE and language/diction/actions from Black (trans)women in ballroom culture, white people drawing from Black and Indigenous styles of dress to form counter-culture styles, queerbaiting)
 - Labour and time (e.g. uncredited and erased labour, lesbian community showing up for the gay community during the AIDS crisis, Black and Brown ballroom culture often uncited and appropriated in white queer spaces, Black and Brown drag performers disproportionately underrecognized)

- Gentrification and slumming practices (e.g. Harlem Renaissance with white people coming and going between the segregated community to enjoy the “Other” at night while going back home to enjoy their gender norms and whiteness during the day, ballroom culture being co-opted by white queer spaces)

While much of these examples may seem solely from the past, many of them still exist today or—at the very least—have shaped our society’s current worldviews and structures of power, which our next section will now delve into.

Section 4 - How does this history show up in relationships?

Slide 25 - Section Introduction

Now that we have an idea of how the ideas of sex, gender, and race were invented, we can now draw connections to how these legacies show up in our lives today

Slide 26 - How does this history show up in relationships

This section will be examining ways to understand and navigate identity policing, discrimination, relationship violence, and red flags in relationships with the help of a case study.

Slide 27 - Identity Policing

Identity Policing is defined as within-community judgment about who counts as “really” gay/queer/trans enough or whose body/race/ability is deemed acceptable. It is experienced in numerous different ways. Oftentimes it is also experienced intersectionally as 2SLGBTBIA+ folks can hold multiple identities. Identity policing is informed by the systems of oppression that decide who is desirable and accepted into the community. It also creates a culture in which relationship violence thrives. We will delve into relationships in a little bit.

Slide 28 - Dating apps as the main stage

- Apps like Grindr function as visibility hierarchies. They have filters and drop-down fields for race and body type, which push users to perform ‘desirable’ traits. It also integrates identity-based categorizing into the platform itself.
- Therefore, profile shorthand like 'not into [race],' 'clean only,' or 'no fats no fems' gets normalized as 'just a preference' rather than named as discrimination.
- These platforms are not neutral. Categorizing who you want to date by race is not a preference, for example. A consistent exclusion of an entire racial group is a pattern. It is discrimination and has real consequences on who is welcome and who is disposable.
- The research term for this is Racialized Sexual Discrimination.
 - RSD furthers white supremacy. It positions whiteness as the default ‘most desirable,’ and anything else is ranked before it.
 - It also results in the objectification of non-white people as they become fetishized rather than valued as full human beings.
 - Moreover, phrases like ‘no fats, no fems’ reflect a culture where fatphobia and gender expression are intertwined. Both body size and femininity are rejected.

Slide 29 - Disability & Desexualisation

- Disabled people experience double discrimination: they are desexualized as society refuses to see them as sexual beings, which is also read as “not really” queer. Thus, they experience two stacked layers of policing.
- Also, sexuality is deemed equal to humanity. Making “sexualization” a standard for deserving respect.
- Why do disabled people have to be sexual beings to be valid?

Slide 30 - Case study

Maria (21 yo lesbian) and Juhi (22 yo bisexual) have been dating for a couple months. Maria, is Afro-Latina and started identifying as a “masc” since that’s what all her queer friends insisted her style was. Maria initiated things with Juhi. Sometimes Maria worries that Juhi isn’t actually bisexual since this is her first experience with a woman.

Yesterday, they got into a fight when Maria said she used to date men before identifying as a lesbian. Juhi said that she can’t be a lesbian. This hurt Maria since she’s identified as a butch lesbian for over a year. She doesn’t wear makeup anymore, and even feels that she always has to top... even though Juhi has expressed she wanted to top sometimes too. How are these dynamics impacting Maria and Juhi’s relationship?

Slide 31 - Reflection

Ask participants to reflect on the elements of the case study from the previous slide.

Slide 32 - 2SLGBTQIA+ Relationship Violence

- Identity policing creates a culture in which relationship violence thrives. Relationship violence is the conscious manipulation and control of one person by another through threats, coercion, humiliation, and/or force. This same core dynamic applies in 2SLGBTQIA+ relationships. This violence is expressed in various ways:
 - Physical: hitting, slapping, biting, restraining, pushing. This is what people most commonly picture when they hear 'domestic violence,' but it's only one form.
 - Sexual: forced sex against someone's will, use of objects or weapons, and demeaning sexual comments.
 - Emotional: manipulation, isolation, humiliation, lying, threats to kill, threats of suicide, racial attacks, and intimidation. This is often the hardest to identify.
 - Financial: creating debt, stealing money, or using money to control another person's decisions and movement.
 - Verbal: insults, name-calling, yelling.
- All of these are forms of control. Any form of violence can escalate. For example, patterns of emotional control often precede physical violence.

Slide 33 - Queering Violence

Some acts of violence are specific to the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

These include:

- Outing: such as threatening to share and/or sharing information about your sexuality or gender identity without your consent.

- Weaponizing community stigma: such as ridiculing your queer identity; turning children against you; using a marginalized identity against you (saying things like "as a trans person, I'm allowed to belittle you", etc.)
- Using gender stereotypes and transphobia: such as claiming you're not a "real" member of any given community; claiming they know what's best for you; blaming behaviour on hormones; inappropriate gendered or sexual statements (saying things like "this is how real women like sex", etc.)
- Undermining 2SLGBTQ+ identity: such as through deliberately not using your pronouns; claiming your identity is disrespectful of theirs; not allowing you to discuss 2SLGBTQ+ topics; offensive remarks about identity ("nobody will believe you because you're trans", etc.)
- Restricting access: Such as through coercion around medical treatments or hormone therapy; hiding or throwing away gender-affirming clothes or other items; controlling finances to pay for gender-affirming treatment at the risk of basic needs not being met. (McCann, 28)

Slide 34 - Slide Reg flags to recognize

- There are early relationship warning signs we want to share so you can identify them before violence escalates.
 - Insists they know your identity better than you do, or that your identity is 'just a phase.'
 - Uses your HIV status, immigration status, or trans identity to threaten or control you.
 - Refuses to use your pronouns or chosen name even after being asked, especially relevant if done in public.
 - Isolates you from queer friends, community spaces, or support networks.
 - Blames your emotions entirely on hormones or mental health, dismissing your concerns without engaging with them.
 - Threatens to 'out' you to family, employer, landlord, or anyone else.
 - Tells you no one else would ever want you because of your identity.
 - Uses community norms like 'real lesbians like or do ____,' 'real gay men like or do ____,' and body standards to shame or control you.

Section 5 - How do I want to show up in relationships?

Slide 35 - Section Introduction

This section demonstrates ways we can better understand certain relationship dynamics.

This will help us identify our needs, wants, and values in relationships, and even in ourselves.

Slide 36 - Relationship Anarchy

Relationship anarchy was coined in 2006 by Andie Nordgren.

What does this mean?

- Relationship anarchy (RA) helps us recognize all the different forms of love and connection we are capable of. It is not limited to polyamory, but it comes from the idea of having more than one partner to satisfy your needs, and respecting the autonomy of each relationship as equally important to a person's life.

Slide 37 - Relationship Escalator

- For instance, Relationship Anarchy defines the “Relationship Escalator” as the societal rules and assumptions of what a relationship “should” look like, including pre-written milestones to showcase a successful relationship.
- This ignores how each person is different, and has their own needs and values. Some people may be happy with this path, and others may not. Instead, it can add pressure to yourself and your relationship, and that way can be harmful.

Slide 38 - Fake Fairness, Mutual Deprivation, and Mutual Satisfaction

- Another concept is “**Fake Fairness.**” Sometimes one can believe that they must sacrifice certain needs or even avoid communicating them out of fear of rejection from their partner. An example she writes is: “You want a hug every day after work, but your partner doesn’t need daily affection. So you decide it’s ‘unfair’ to ask for something they don’t want themselves. No one is allowed to have more. No one is allowed to need differently” (2025).
- Instead of restricting ourselves and pretending we want less. Try asking different questions.
 - Not “What would make this equal?” but “What would make this *satisfying* for both of us?” (Bradley, 2025)
- Bradley explains that instead of accepting “mutual deprivation”, “**mutual satisfaction** invites us to acknowledge that our needs may not match and that’s okay. Fairness isn’t about sameness; it’s about making sure each person gets to be nourished. This might mean negotiating, stretching, or collaborating, but not shrinking” (2025).

Slide 39 - Relationship Anarchy

- All in all, these concepts can hopefully help us find ourselves. For instance, in the worksheet, there is a chart called “The Relationship Anarchy Smoggarboard”. In it, you will find examples of different needs and wants that can apply to different kinds of relationships. What do you find essential for a romantic or sexual connection? What can be negotiated? What are you not okay giving up for someone else? I suggest going through the chart and adding your own things following the next information about needs and boundaries.

Slide 40 - Needs

- So, what will actually help us build these healthy relationships? Knowing and communicating our needs.
- As previously stated, every relationship will look different, and so will each individual’s needs within the relationship. Often we assume that the people we’re in relationship with will have the same needs as us, or that they will automatically know what our needs are. In reality, each person’s needs vary based on their life experience.
- Knowing our needs will help us to understand what allows us to feel safe, respected, connected, and cared for.
- For myself, I really value full honesty in a relationship. I want people to show up authentically, even when it’s uncomfortable for them, or for me.
- I’m going to ask you all now, what helps you feel cared for in a relationship? Digging into this question can help you to figure out a potential need. You’re welcome to raise your hand, discuss with your table, write it down, or write in on the Mentimeter.
- Once we understand our needs, we can start thinking about what helps protect them, and this is where boundaries come in.

Slide 41 - Boundaries

- Seeing needs as informing us on what matters, boundaries are how we communicate and protect those needs.
- Boundaries help us to make our expectations and needs clear within a relationship, they help us stay connected.
- Often, people think that a boundary is about controlling someone else's behaviour. It's actually about communicating what you need and then deciding what you will do to care for yourself if that boundary is not respected.
- An example of this :
 - Going along with my need for honesty in a relationship, I could say that something like,
 - I need honesty in order to feel safe and connected in my relationships. I'm willing to have difficult conversations, even when it's uncomfortable. But if something important is being hidden from me, then I will need to step back and reconsider my position in this relationship.
- I'm now going to ask you to consider the needs you wrote down, I want you to think about what boundaries you could use to help protect and honor those needs.

Slide 42 - Acknowledgements

Thank you all for attending our workshop, Radical Queer Relationships. This workshop was made possible by the Do You Mind? Safer Dating for 2S/LGBTQIA+ Youth initiative and the teams collaborating from across Canada, the Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC), Health Initiative for Men (HiM), and the Public Health Agency of Canada. We greatly appreciate the local support from the Okanagan Regional Library's Kelowna Branch for providing the space to host the workshop, Naked Cafe for catering for our team and providing the food for the workshop, and This Space Belongs to You for hosting our team meetings. The graphic design of our promotional materials, knowledge products, and the workshop slides were put together by Carolyn James and feature the original artwork by Sarah Jones (@honeycupokes). We would also like to thank each of the community groups and organisations that helped promote and spread the word of this workshop to queer youth in the community. And again, a huge thanks to all of you who chose to participate in our workshop.

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Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

Slide 43 - Bibliography

Here is a list of our sources for all of the information we shared with you during this presentation.
(See *Bibliography at the end of this document for the list*).

Slide 44 - Evaluation Survey

As a reminder, here is the QR code for the evaluation survey. It is confidential and voluntary so you do not have to complete this survey, however your feedback is greatly appreciated as it can help us improve future iterations of this workshop going forward.

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