



Native Women's
Association of Canada

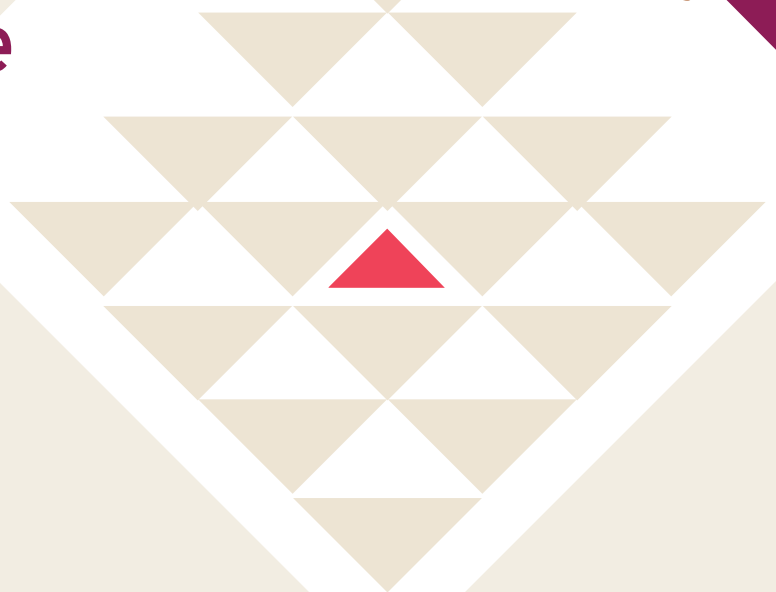
L'Association des
femmes autochtones
du Canada



You Are Not Alone

Facilitator's Guide

A Toolkit for Indigenous
women, girls and gender
diverse people escaping
domestic violence





Native Women's Association of Canada

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) works to advance the well-being of Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people, as well as their families and communities through activism, policy analysis and advocacy.

Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people continue to experience discrimination on multiple grounds, in various complex forms, and from various sources including individuals, businesses and governments.

NWAC's areas of advocacy include, but are not limited to: education, employment and labour, environment, health, human rights and international affairs, violence against women and gender identity and gender expression.

We collectively work to preserve Indigenous culture, achieve equality for Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people, and have a say in the shaping of legislation directly affecting Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people, their families and their communities.

Our mission is to empower women, girls and gender diverse people through increasing their involvement in developing and changing legislation, and by promoting their participation in the development and delivery of programs promoting equal opportunity for Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.

Given the vital role women, girls and gender diverse people have in addressing the complex nature of the social determinants of health and overall well-being, NWAC has positioned itself as a broker for change, improving living outcomes for Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people, and by extension, the community at large. This is done through the facilitation of relationships and the strengthening of partnerships in collaboration with a regional network of affiliate organizations (Provincial Territorial Member Associations PTMA) and with partnerships, where PTMAs are not yet in place.

Note: the word 'women', and the female pronouns are meant to identify with cis-women, trans-women and Gender Diverse people as well as Two-Spirit people's identities.

Disclaimer

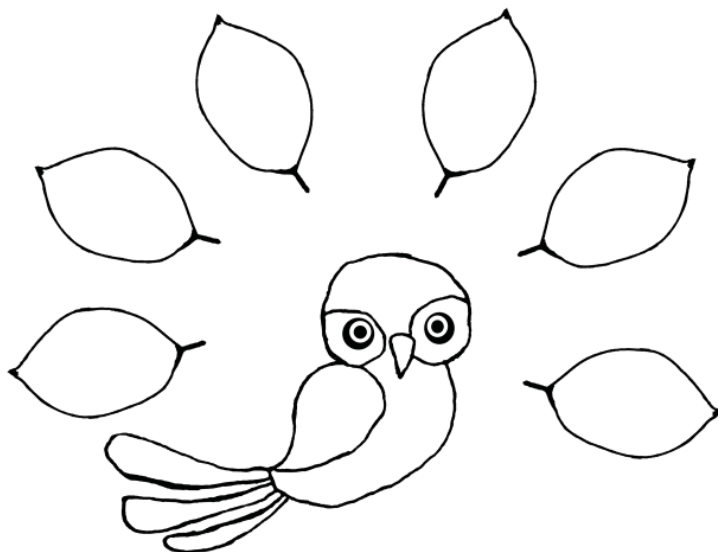
The information, including but not limited to: text, graphics, images and other material contained in this Toolkit are for informational purposes only. The purpose of this Toolkit and Guide is to provide, information, understanding and knowledge of various topics relating to family violence. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. The Native Women's Association of Canada does not recommend or endorse any specific tests, physicians, products, procedures, opinions or other information that may be mentioned in this Toolkit and Guide or any website listed therein. Reliance on any information appearing on this website is solely at your own risk.



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Moving Forward

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Its mandate was to inform all Canadians about what happened in Indian Residential Schools (IRS). The Commission documented the truth of survivors, families, communities and anyone personally affected by the IRS experience. This includes former First Nations, Inuit and Métis IRS students and their families, communities, churches, former school employees, government and other Canadians. The Commission had a five-year mandate to identify changes necessary to establish reconciliation and was supported by a TRC Secretariat, which was a federal government department.

It is important for facilitators working with Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people to become familiar with the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The 94 Calls to Action are recommendations made by the TRC to hold the government, and other services, accountable and responsible for the findings by the Commission and to implement the calls for systemic change.

The volumes of the Commission's report, released in 2015, contain a wealth of cultural information and personal experiences that facilitators can use to increase their understanding of violence in rural and urban Indigenous communities.

The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has now been transferred to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and can be accessed at: www.nctr.ca

The 2017 Federal Budget

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada identifies the following commitments made by the Liberal Government in the 2017 Federal Budget:

Addressing Gender-based Violence

A new national strategy to address gender-based violence by funding \$100.9 Million over five years, starting in 2017-1018, and, \$20.7 million per year thereafter. The Canadian Government is committed to establishing a center of excellence within Status of Women Canada.

Building Stronger Communities

- ❖ \$828 million over five years to improve health for First Nations and Inuit - including support for health services.
- ❖ \$225 million over 11 years to improve housing conditions for First Nations, Inuit and Métis not living on-reserve.

Responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action

- ❖ \$89.9 million the next 3 years to preserve, protect and revitalize Indigenous languages and cultures.
- ❖ \$18.9 million over the next 5 years and 5.5 million over 4 years thereafter to support youth and sports.
- ❖ \$165 million over 5 years to support post-education and skills training.
- ❖ \$120 million over five years to address over-representation of Indigenous peoples in the criminal justice and corrections systems.



About the Toolkit

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is committed to healing Indigenous communities and to empowering women, girls and gender diverse people by helping them to recognize their own inner strengths. NWAC has created the You Are Not Alone Toolkit as a community safety planning resource to address domestic violence against Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.

The Toolkit materials and this Facilitator's Guide provide community and frontline workers with a culturally appropriate framework to engage with Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people who are experiencing violence.

The You Are Not Alone Toolkit includes:

- » Background information on the impacts of colonization on Indigenous communities.
- » How to identify forms of domestic violence and the reasons why we stay in abusive situations.
- » Community safety plans to help women, girls and gender diverse people identify their support network and strategies for leaving an abusive situation.

- » Legal information on topics such as the Matrimonial Real Property Act and emergency protection orders.
- » Practical planning tools such as asset checklists and budgeting tips.
- » Strength-based exercises to empower survivors as they move forward with their lives.

The following supporting resources should be used along with the You Are Not Alone Toolkit published in 2018:

- » The **Who's Who Resource Guide**, which provides listings of domestic violence services available to Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people in each province and territory.
- » **Community Safety Plan** booklet.
- » This **Facilitator's Guide**.

"Violence against Indigenous women and girls will not stop on its own - it will take the collective effort of governments, organizations, and individuals to prevent future tragedies from happening."

-The Honourable Patty Hajdu, former Minister of Status of Women

The Purpose of the Facilitator's Guide

This Facilitator's Guide provides community and frontline workers with enhanced tools and resources to effectively use this Toolkit and provide culturally appropriate services to Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.

The Facilitator's Guide includes:

- » Information on respecting cultural practices and ceremonies.
- » Cultural differences to consider when working with Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.
- » Basics of working respectfully with Elders and Knowledge Keepers.
- » Strength-based learning tools.
- » How to work with the Toolkit in group settings or one-on-one.
- » Workshop outlines with facilitator notes.
- » Worksheets and handouts.

Together we can unite to build a better future by ending violence against Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.

Disclaimer

The information, including but not limited to, text, graphics, images and other material contained in this Toolkit are for information purposes only. The purpose of this Toolkit and Guide is to provide information, understanding and knowledge of various types of abuse relating to family violence. We acknowledge that this Toolkit does not address the specific needs of women escaping violence with their children. The Toolkit's main purpose is to increase the safety of Indigenous women and girls and to help them access the resources they need to leave abusive situations.

This Toolkit is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. The Native Women's Association of Canada does not recommend or endorse any specific tests, physicians, products, procedures, opinions or other information that are mentioned in this Toolkit and Guide or any website listed therein. Reliance on any information appearing in the Toolkit, this Guide, or on the NWAC website is solely at your own discretion.

NWAC works to be inclusive to all Indigenous people, and therefore acknowledges that the cultural traditions herein are not universal amongst all Indigenous people and their unique culture.



Indigenous Women / Gender Diverse



Indigenous people have been devalued and have faced the blunt effects of colonization for centuries. Indigenous people are diverse. There are multiple traditions amongst the First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. It is important to note that not all beliefs are universal throughout these communities, however, our diversity is our strength. One thing all Indigenous people have in common is the years of oppression and discrimination that we have faced.

As Indigenous people, we are fighting to maintain our culture, our lands and our rights. Indigenous culture has deep roots in nature and respect. Traditionally, Indigenous women/gender diverse people were respected and honoured for the roles they had as child bearing mothers, teachers, warriors, governors, healers and keepers of traditional knowledge. Since colonization, every aspect of Indigenous women/gender diverse people was devalued, and sadly our traditional communities were destroyed.

Today, we as women and gender diverse people are fighting back. We need to be proud of who we are. We are women/gender diverse and we are Indigenous. Together we will work towards restoring the values of respect and honour to women, gender diverse people and to all Indigenous peoples. We will work to develop healthy relationships founded on kindness and mutual respect. Together we will become the best version of ourselves that we were always meant to be. This battle is tough and it will take a lot of courage and strength. Remember that we are not alone and you are not alone.



First Nations

According to Statistics Canada, First Nations people represent 60.8% of the total Indigenous population. The total number of First Nations people in Canada is 977,230 which represents 2.8% of the total Canadian population. First Nations people are in every province and territory, and there are over 600 bands throughout Canada. The First Nations people's relationship with the Canadian Government is unique due to treaty agreements. The most populous places in Canada for First Nations people are in Ontario and British Columbia. There is a lot of diversity amongst First Nations people as there are over 50 known First Nations languages.





Inuit



Inuit are traditionally from the Arctic areas of North America. The Inuit population is 65,025, and they represent a total of 3.9% of the total Indigenous population and 0.2% of the total Canadian population. Inuit are diverse people with six dialects of the Inuktitut language.

Domestic violence rates in the territories are the highest in Canada. Statistics Canada states that Nunavut has the highest rate of violence reported by police in Canada. Violence in Nunavut is 10 times higher than the national average.

"Inuit women play an integral role in governing our communities and our society. Inuit women are the links to the past and to the future; Inuit women are the vessels of culture, health, language, traditions, teaching, care giving and child rearing. These qualities are fundamental to the survival of any society."

- Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada (2006): Keepers of the Light, p.1

Métis



According to Statistics Canada there are 587,545 Métis people in Canada. Métis represent 36.1% of the total Indigenous population and 1.7% of the total Canadian population. The Métis people currently reside in all Canadian provinces and territories. However, the Métis People traditionally lived in a large area referred to as their Homeland. This area spread from Ontario to BC as well as areas in the northern USA. The Métis people's traditional language is Michif. Métis people are an Indigenous population with a mix of European (mainly French and Scottish) and Indigenous ancestry, with their own unique identity, history and culture. Métis women are more likely to be victims of violence and abuse when compared to non-Indigenous women. The effects of colonization towards Indigenous women and gender diverse people have degraded their valued roles over time.

"Historical factors including the influence of churches, colonization and the marginalization of the Métis culture through government policies contributed to the relegation of the role of Métis women in their communities over many generations."

- Women of the Métis Nation



Two-Spirit



The phrase 'Two-Spirit' is an indigenous term used to refer to an Indigenous person who has both a female and a male spirit. It can be accompanied by another term to allow a more specific identify for a person e.g. Two-Spirit Lesbian or Two-Spirit Transgender person, or it can be a term used by itself. It is up to the person to choose which labels they identify with.

Two-Spirit has long been a tradition amongst Indigenous people, this was part of their culture until it was slowly degraded and pushed away through assimilation policies. Being Two-Spirit today comes with a lot of additional stigma and discrimination, in the past, however, it was a blessing to have the Creator bless you with Two Spirits.

On June 19, 2017 the Canadian Government passed Bill C-16. The bill aimed at amending the Canadian Human Rights Act and Criminal Code to include gender identity and expression as protected human rights. This is a large step in the healing process for Two-Spirit people, for the first time in Canadian history people cannot be discriminated against because of their gender identity or expression.





LGBTQ2S+



(Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer and Two-Spirit)

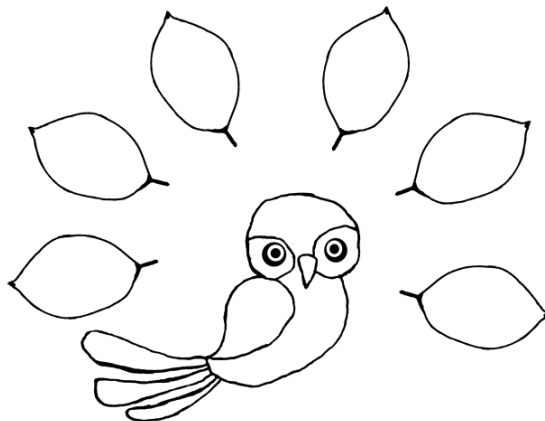
Domestic violence is often considered in the context of monogamous heterosexual relationships, however, it often occurs in relationships involving sexual and gender minority individuals. Domestic violence can take specific forms of abuse that target the specifics of a person identifying as LGBTQ2S+. The statistics generally indicate that physical violence is less prevalent amongst the LGBTQ2S+ community when compared to emotional or psychological violence.

Domestic violence for people in the LGBTQ2S+ community is unique because the abuser often draws on societies current discrimination such as: homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and transmisogyny, to further degrade their partner. These forms of abuse can be outing a person as well as undermining their specific trans or queer identity. In the LGBTQ2S+ community, the abuser will often dehumanize their partners, for example, by referring to their queer or trans partner as "it."

"Transmisogyny is oppression, such as discrimination or violence, directed at transwomen and trans-feminine.

Transmisogyny is rooted in the devaluation of femininity relative to masculinity."

-Rainbow Health Ontario





Domestic Violence and Colonization

The roles of Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people have changed since the beginning of European contact. Once held in high regard as leaders and givers of life, Indigenous women and gender diverse people have been devalued not only because they are Indigenous people, but also because they are women or gender diverse.

In fact, they have a harder time going to school, getting a job and getting access to social services than any other group in Canada. Indigenous people and their children are more likely to live in poverty and suffer from poor physical and mental health. Too often, violence plays a central role in the lives of Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.

NWAC believes that knowing and understanding how colonization, Indian Residential Schools, and racism have impacted family structures is essential to building a better life for future generations. It is important to acknowledge the impacts of colonization and recognize that it continues to exist and affect Indigenous women, men, gender diverse people and their families.

By understanding the intergenerational effects of colonization, we can begin to address current issues and create a better future for Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.²

The legacies of colonization such as the residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, socio-economic conditions like poverty, sexism, racism and discrimination have all played major roles in the breakdown of healthy families and communities for Indigenous peoples.

This is especially noticeable in the high rates of violence experienced by Indigenous women who face life-threatening, gender-based violence, and experience more violent crimes than non-Indigenous women.³

According to Statistics Canada's 2004 General Social Survey, Indigenous women experience much higher rates of violence than non-Indigenous women.

(Gender diversity is not included in the data collection process of Statistics Canada's Surveys.)

Statistics Canada also reported the following findings:

- » Indigenous women 15 years and older are three to five times more likely to experience violence than non-Indigenous women
- » Rates of spousal assault against Indigenous women are more than three times higher than those against non-Indigenous women
- » 54% of Indigenous women reported severe forms of family violence, such as being beaten, being choked, having had a gun or knife used against them, or being sexually assaulted, versus 37% of non-Indigenous women
- » 44% of Indigenous women reported "fearing for their lives" when faced with severe forms of family violence, compared with 33% of non-Indigenous women
- » 27% of Indigenous women reported experiencing 10 or more assaults by the same offender, as opposed to 18% of non-Indigenous women

Residential School System

Residential schools were set up by the Canadian government and run by the churches, with at least 150,000 Indigenous children being forcibly placed into and living at these schools from the 1800s until the last one closed in 1996. The impacts of the residential schools are ongoing, and have disrupted Indigenous families and cultural transmission for generations.⁴

At the residential schools, children were not allowed to see their families, practice their cultures or speak their languages, and were taught to be ashamed of who they were as Indigenous people. Indigenous cultural traditions that respected healthy relationships were replaced by poor health, disrespect and abuse. Non-Indigenous education was taught by unqualified teachers, principals and administrators; many of whom were sexually, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually abusive. Mortality rates at residential schools were estimated between thirty to sixty percent between 1892 and 1907.⁵

As the guardians of Indigenous children, most staff at residential schools neglected the emotional and physical needs of the resident children. As these Indigenous children grew older and started families, their lack of parenting skills, shame and lack of self-worth, and the trauma they suffered at the residential schools affected their ability to form healthy relationships with their children, partners, family, and friends. In this way, the residential schools continue to negatively affect generations of Indigenous families, whether the individuals have direct experience being in the schools or not.⁶

Learn more about the Residential School System

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation: www.nctr.ca

Legacy of Hope:
www.legacyofhope.ca



Respecting the Diversity of Indigenous Cultural Practices

When working with Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people, it is very important to consider the wide diversity of Indigenous cultures, practices, and teachings. Be aware of the variety of individual cultural practices of the person you are interacting with and try to have general knowledge of as many Indigenous cultures as possible.

Being aware of Indigenous histories and communities will help you build rapport and trust. The connection to the land, languages, ceremonies, and roles of men and women and gender diverse people are all teachings to consider when working with Indigenous peoples. Use resources created by and for Indigenous communities, such as this Toolkit and Guide, to educate yourself and other frontline workers.

It is highly recommended that you reach out to Elders and Knowledge Keepers to respectfully ask for their support and teachings when working with Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.

Contact your local Friendship Centre, native community centre, or band office to request resources on specific cultural practices and ceremonies. They may also be able to put you in touch with respected Elders or Knowledge Keepers who may be willing to work with you to support Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.

Grandmother Moon

You know all women from birth to death

We seek your knowledge

We seek your strength

Some are STARS up there with you

Some are STARS on Mother Earth

Grandmother, lighten our path in the dark

Creator, keep our sisters safe from harm

Maa duu? Mussi cho

-Kukdookaa

Grandmother Moon is a teaching about Indigenous women's special connection to our Grandmothers who have passed into the Spirit World. Grandmother Moon provides direction, strength, protection, knowledge, and wisdom as we embrace our sacred place within our families, communities and beyond. She teaches Indigenous people about the sacred role of women and the importance of being at the heart of our nations.

Elders and Knowledge Keepers

Many Elders and Knowledge Keepers are recognized by their communities for carrying the historical, social, and cultural teachings of the people. They may hold the ceremonies, creation stories, songs, prayers, and language of their ancestors. They hold the wisdom of the past and can create new paths for the future.

As a facilitator, Elders and Knowledge Keepers can support you in understanding the values and beliefs of the community and helping people move forward with their lives in a good way. They may be able to offer Indigenous people their prayers, guidance, and teachings on traditional aspects of healing, or assist survivors in navigating through their trauma in order to experience personal growth.

Some of the cultural teachings offered by Elders and Knowledge Keepers may be in their Indigenous language, which may be familiar to people who share the same background.

In a group setting, an Elder can comfort participants who become overwhelmed by their emotions and need one-on-one support. They may be able to offer individual support to women during break times or in a designated quiet, private space during the event or workshop.

Elders and Knowledge Keepers may also be able to aid you in understanding distinct forms of cultural communication, such as verbal, non-verbal, and body language cues.

Working with Elders and Knowledge Keepers

An excellent first step is to ask Indigenous community leaders in your region to introduce you to respected Elders and Knowledge Keepers that might be willing to support your work as a facilitator.

It is advisable to visit with the Elder or Knowledge Keeper before your event or workshop to discuss your intentions and the desired outcome for the participants. Be sure to provide the Elder with clear information about your workshop and the purpose of what you are teaching ahead of time.

It is respectful to offer an Elder or Knowledge Keeper a gift of tobacco when asking for their assistance or insight into a matter, and to provide an honorarium or other gift for their services after the event or workshop. It is important to not take an Elders time and energy for granted, and to ensure they are well supported while working with you.

It is culturally important to give Elders and Knowledge Keepers a gift of tobacco or some other honorarium for their services. There are many who are willing to share as long as respect is given.

Indigenous Cultural Ceremonies

Cultural ceremonies are an important part of healing for many Indigenous communities because it brings families and communities together to support each other.

The healing practices among Indigenous cultures vary from one group to another, so it is advisable to obtain information and practices from the community itself in order to familiarize yourself with cultural ceremonial protocols.

Have information and resources on cultural ceremonies available for Indigenous woman, girls and gender diverse people who wish to make these traditions a part of their healing journey.

Cultural ceremonies are an important part of healing for many Indigenous societies.

Smudging

Smudging is a practice of ceremonially burning sacred herbs, or medicines, to produce smoke that is intentionally fanned over individuals during cleansing, prayer, purification or healing rituals.

The specific ceremonies are culturally diverse, but the intention is almost always cleansing or healing. The smoke may be fanned with a feather or by hand.

Talking Circles

A talking circle is a very ancient method of problem solving used by many Indigenous cultures. A circle symbolizes continuity, no beginning and no end, and assigns no one a prominent position. The talking circle is an effective way to remove barriers; each person is respectfully given space to speak and express themselves with complete freedom, regardless of their role in the community. All people are encouraged to speak honestly about things that are on their minds.

The Seven Sacred Teachings⁷

The Seven Sacred Teachings are universal Indigenous teachings on how to treat one another and how to live a positive life.

These teachings can help both workers and survivors as they work together through difficult emotions. In some communities, these teachings are also known as the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

The Seven Sacred Teachings

1. To cherish knowledge is to know **Wisdom**.
2. To honor all of creation is to have **Respect**.
3. **Bravery** is to face the foe with integrity.
4. **Honesty** in facing a situation is to be brave.
5. **Humility** is to know yourself as a sacred part of Creation.
6. **Truth** is to know all of these things.
7. To know **Love** is to know peace.

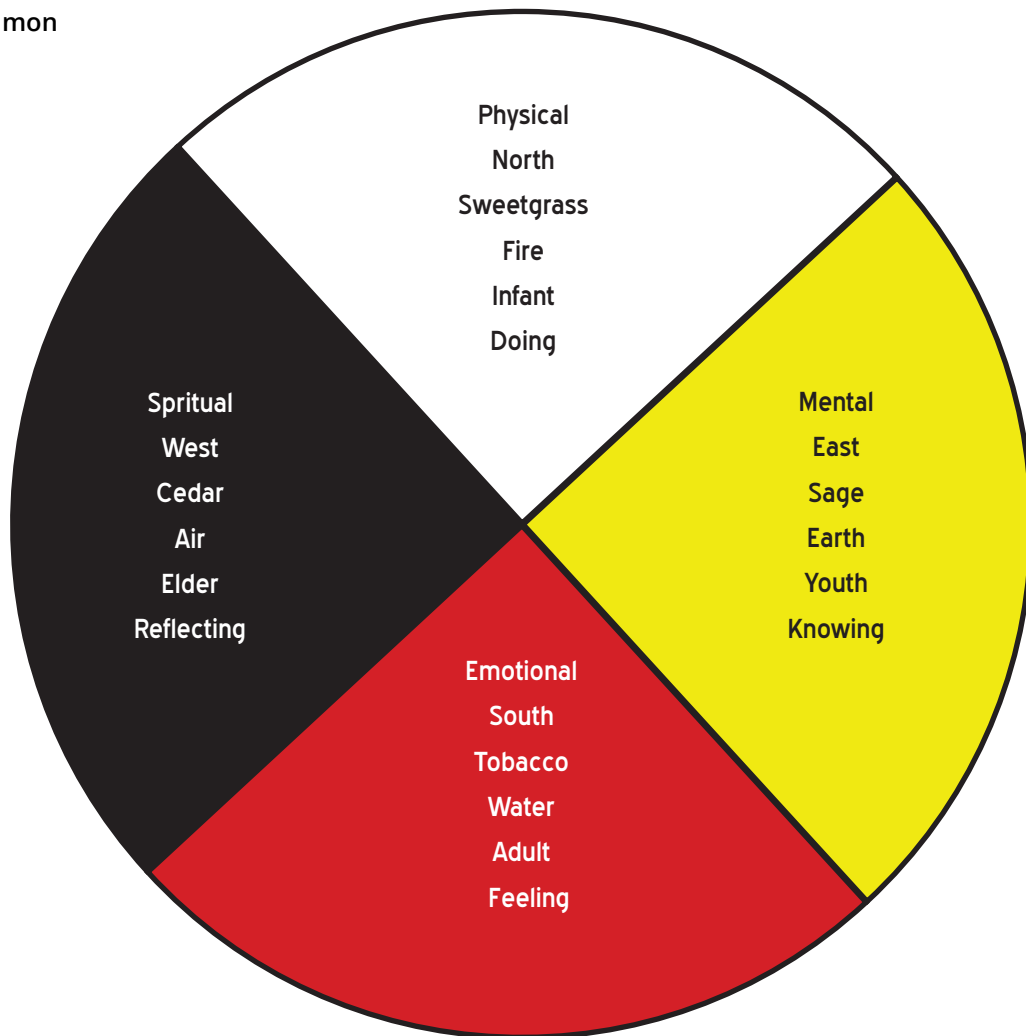
The Medicine Wheel

Indigenous people in Canada view the world in a holistic, universal way that involves looking at life in an all-inclusive manner that includes the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of being. To achieve balance in life, all four aspects must be equally maintained.

A powerful symbol of this worldview is the medicine wheel. Though each nation may have distinct uses and interpretations for the medicine wheel, the common

concept is one of interconnectedness and the cycle of life. The wheel represents many aspects of being and life, with each direction making up an equal piece of the whole. The lines of the wheel do not separate, but rather identify and connect the four directions.

It is important to have an understanding of the medicine wheel, as it creates an environment of acceptance from an Indigenous perspective.



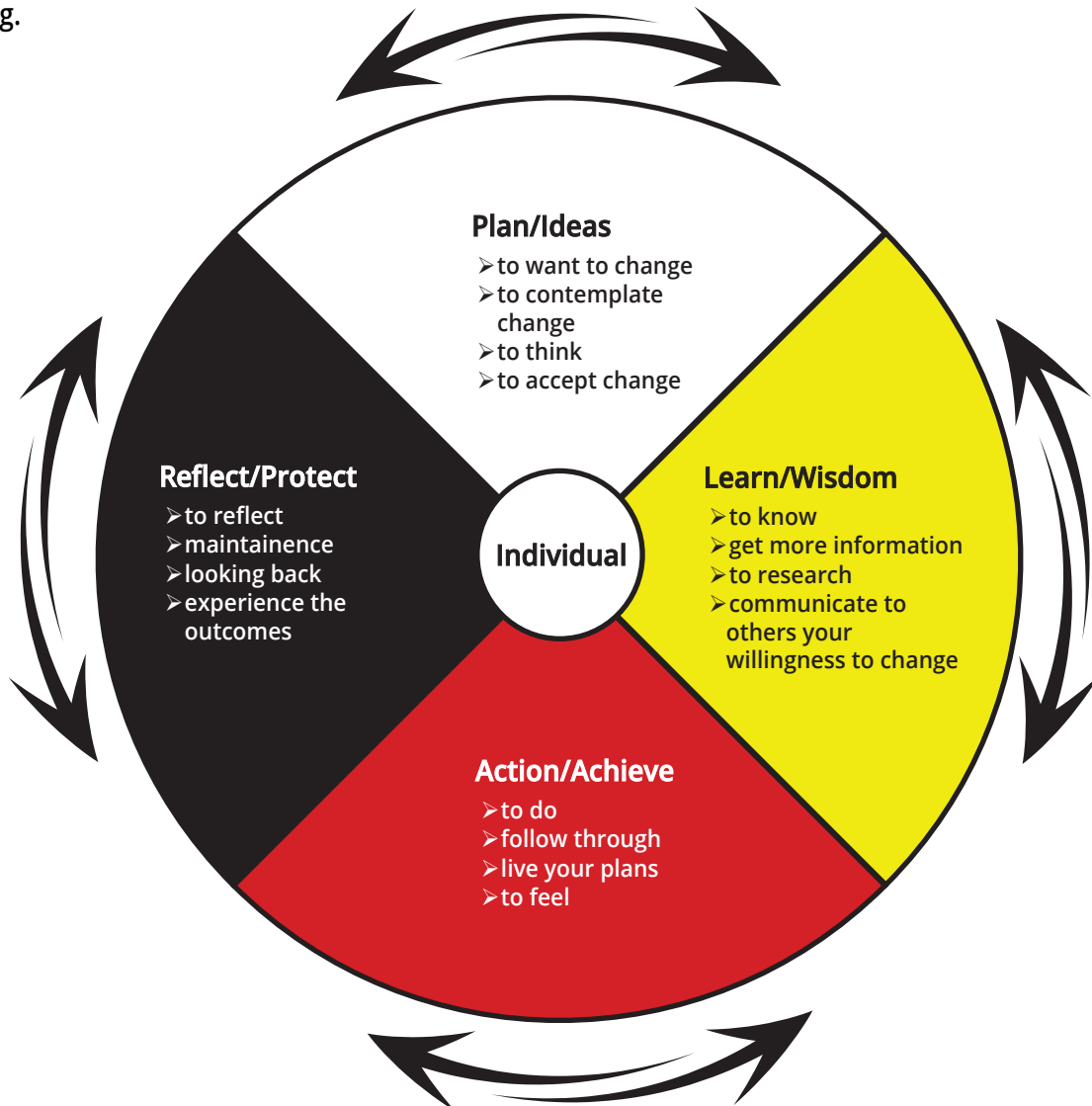
Using the Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change

Elders and spiritual leaders explain learning as a life-long process requiring repeated self-reflection to achieve personal growth and awareness. When working with Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people in crisis, it is important to assist them in making positive changes as they move forward.

The Facilitator's Guide and Toolkit use the medicine wheel as a strength-based learning tool to empower women, girls and gender diverse people to recognize their own strengths and address all aspects of their well-being.

Working with the medicine wheel in this way can play a leading role in helping people contemplate their current reality, shape their future life choices, and build a support system within the community. This balanced learning approach is culturally responsive to Indigenous people, but can be applied to all women, girls and gender diverse people and communities.

Worksheets that use the medicine wheel as a strength-based learning tool are included in Appendix 1.





Working with Indigenous Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People

As a service provider, it is important to recognize the cultural differences and distinct challenges that Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people face that make them more vulnerable to abuse and violence. The Facilitator's Guide will help you increase your understanding of Indigenous people's lived experience and guide you in using culturally appropriate tools to address the issues of domestic violence.

Cultural and social factors to consider:

- » There are many distinct Indigenous cultures with different customs and traditions.
- » Participants may have extensive cultural knowledge and speak an Indigenous language, or they may have minimal awareness of Indigenous culture, language, and traditions due to the effects of colonization.
- » May come from an urban, rural or remote area.
- » May have little or no family in the area.
- » Confidentiality may be a challenge in smaller communities.
- » Intergenerational factors such as residential schools and the Sixties Scoop have affected the families of many Indigenous people.
- » Participants may have a heightened fear of child apprehension due to discriminatory government policies that have targeted Indigenous families and communities.
- » Keep in mind that women, girls and gender diverse people can experience violence in many types of relationships, not just heterosexual or romantic partnerships. Adapt activities as needed to avoid erasure of their experiences.
- » In addition to domestic violence, Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people face systemic discrimination, socio-economic barriers, and other hardships.

Creating a safe, welcoming environment:

- » Use resources created by Indigenous people, such as this Guide, to educate yourself and other frontline workers on Indigenous issues and culture
- » Stay informed and up-to-date on Indigenous issues
- » Provide people with access to culturally appropriate care and resources
- » Engage with respected Elders and Knowledge Keepers in the community to offer cultural teachings, support, teachings, and ceremonies
- » Have a smudging available for Indigenous people who wish to ceremonially cleanse themselves
- » Ensure that participants have adequate time to talk about their situation
- » Foster an environment of respectful listening, encouragement, and validation
- » Consider accessibility when choosing spaces for workshops or groups and make accommodations as needed
- » Provide snacks and drinks
- » As much as possible, make the space warm, comfortable, and focused on positive or healing messages

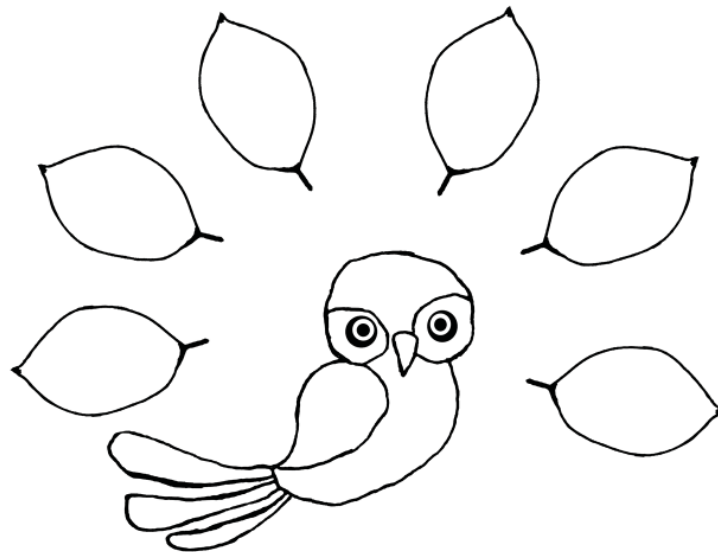
As a facilitator, it is important to:

- » Connect with other Indigenous service providers in your area to share resources and support
- » Accept your limits. You may need to refer participants to external resources, such as counsellors, addictions programs, or mental health services
- » Have a list of emergency contacts and resources, especially those specifically intended for Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people
- » Use the Who's Who Resource Guide included with the Toolkit to help women, girls and gender diverse people access regional programs and assistance. For women who have children, the resources on provincial and territorial family and legal services may be of particular interest
- » Carefully read and understand the Toolkit before using these resources with participants
- » Use the resources and worksheets for each section appropriately, and adapt activities as needed
- » Keep the cultural content and historic context when adapting activities or worksheets
- » Ask open-ended questions to encourage discussion
- » Draw from the medicine wheel teachings to guide your discussions
- » Encourage participants to complete the worksheets as you go through the Toolkit

- » Create community safety plans with women, girls and gender diverse people one-on-one or in group settings
- » Be aware of what you are sharing. Facilitators' personal stories should be shared in the interest of demonstrating compassion, problem-solving, self-care, how to leave an abusive situation safely, or examples of positive outcomes
- » Sensitive topics and issues may arise as you work with Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people and you may feel sadness or anger in response to their experiences. Make sure to find ways to work through your own emotional reactions and engage in self-care to avoid burnout
- » Build up your own support network and find external support with a counsellor or a friend to talk about difficult situations or emotions

“I liked the worksheets — They are organic and intuitive. I feel like they are ones I can and will actually use.”

~ Workshop Participant





Using the Worksheets and Activities

The tools, activities and worksheets included in this Guide are specifically intended to help you support Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people, but can be used with other audiences as well. The workshop outlines include a range of educational and healing activities that have been created to empower and encourage people as they move forward.

As a facilitator, we encourage you to select the activities and worksheets that best address the needs of the women, girls and gender diverse people you are working with, and adapt them as needed. Please do your best to keep the cultural content and historic context when working with an Indigenous audience.

The worksheets do not need to be done all at once, and can be introduced as your participants feel ready. Please feel free to make copies of worksheets and share the knowledge you gain from this Guide and Toolkit with other frontline workers.

**"So wonderful, a great blend of history, workshops, tools, resources and teachings."
- Workshop Participant**

Using the Toolkit in a Group Setting

This Toolkit is a resource that can be used in a group or workshop setting with Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people. The worksheets and activities can be easily used to facilitate discussions and create community supports.

Guidelines for groups:

- » Emphasize that everyone in the group is here to support each other and that this is a safe space to share
- » Encourage non-judgmental attitudes regarding domestic violence within the group
- » Establish rules of conduct at the beginning of any workshop or group activity in order to ensure a safe, inclusive environment for all participants. Topics should include agreement of confidentiality, and

how the facilitator and participants can speak and conduct themselves in a mutually respectful way

- » Remember that a facilitator does not always need to take the initiative in a group setting, nor do you need to have all the answers
- » Facilitators are encouraged to be conscious of their own personal disclosures and accept their own limitations
- » Remember to give time for each participant to contribute and validate their contributions as a way of supporting and encouraging them. Including and acknowledging all participants will create a positive environment. Using a culturally appropriate object, such as a talking feather or stick, to indicate whose turn it is to speak can empower Indigenous people and create a respectful space
- » Respond positively to people who say they don't know what something means by recognizing their courage to speak up and make themselves vulnerable in that particular situation

Using the Toolkit One-on-One

Some people may be reluctant to speak in a group or workshop setting and may need a more intimate space to share their stories and ask for assistance.

Working one-on-one is a very effective way to use the information in the Toolkit. Individual sessions will give you the opportunity to discuss the person's specific safety concerns and guide them through creating their community safety plan, identifying their circle of support and completing relevant worksheets.

Please note that most of the learning activities in the workshops section of this Guide can also be used in one-on-one settings.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SAFETY OF INFORMATION:

Always be diligent about the security of the information people share. Completed worksheets and the information people share can be securely kept on file or in a binder in a secure place in the office and should be destroyed at the person's request. Worksheets are meant as learning tools and should not be shared with anyone.



Workshop Preparation

This section will help you create a safe, culturally-appropriate environment for your Indigenous participants and guide you through the process of planning and running successful workshops.

Creating a safe and inclusive space:

- » Have an Elder or Knowledge Keeper present during the length of the workshop. Observe protocols around offerings and honorariums when asking for Elders and Knowledge Keepers to participate and support your workshop.
- » Have workshop materials and resources ready for participants.
- » Provide a calm, culturally-appropriate environment free of distractions.
- » Have space for participants to gather in a circle.
- » Consider using some traditional items to promote cultural sensitivity.
- » Use a talking rock, stick or feather to ensure everyone has a chance to speak.
- » Gauge how the participants are feeling and adapt the workshop accordingly.
- » Be sensitive to the issues and emotions that may arise during the workshop.
- » Designate a quiet, private space for participants who need to step away from the group due to emotional distress or to receive one-on-one support from the Elder.
- » Provide healthy snacks and drinks, with consideration to participants' food sensitivities and restrictions.
- » Be inclusive of all backgrounds and situations.
- » Consider that participants may need childcare in order to participate. Provide accommodations if possible.
- » Remember the Seven Sacred Teachings are universal teachings for living a good life.
- » The Seven Sacred Teachings are a universal teaching of how to treat one another and how to live a positive life. Working in domestic violence can be very emotional and tiring work. Remembering these teachings can help workers and clients.

Planning a Workshop:

Initial steps

- » Determine your topics, goals, and intended audience for the workshop.
- » If an Elder or Knowledge Keeper is participating, discuss the workshop goals and desired outcomes for the participants beforehand.
- » Book an appropriate room or space for the anticipated size of your group. Be sure to consider accessibility needs of participants.
- » Ensure that participants have ample notice of the time, date, and location of the workshop.
- » Determine your budget and resources. Consider the cost of food, drinks, promotion, travel assistance for participants, accommodations and honorariums for Elders etc.
- » Ask participants if they have any food sensitivities prior to purchasing food and drink.



Promotion of the workshop

- » Determine where and how you wish to promote your workshop.
- » Create an advertising poster or flyer to promote the workshop at the host facility and other appropriate locations in the community.
- » Use local promotional tools, such as the radio, social media, community flyers, and newspapers.
- » Include details such as time, date, agenda, and location in all digital and print promotions.
- » Always include the workshop organizer's contact information.

Making an agenda

- » Review the workshop materials and ensure allotted time is used effectively;
- » Allow time for introductions and personal discussions;
- » Include time for breaks and meals.

Location and set-up of your workshop

- » Ensure there will be enough space and chairs for the group.
- » Consider setting up a private or quiet space where people can go if they are feeling overwhelmed or need one-on-one support from the Elder.
- » Have water, snacks, and tissues available.
- » Make sure the temperature is adjustable.
- » Provide an accessible space and washrooms if possible.
- » Make additional accommodations as needed.

Gathering materials

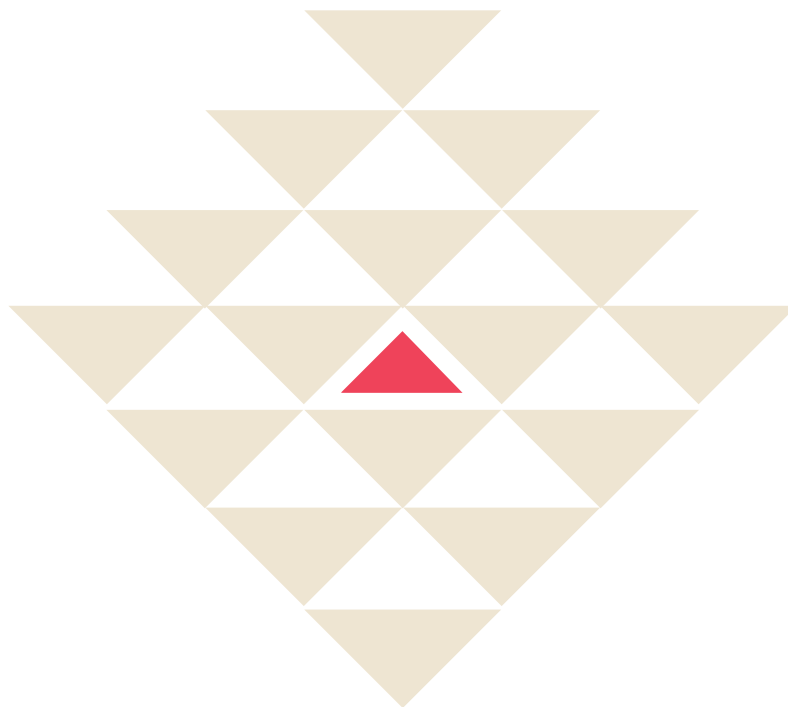
It is a good idea to have these items for your workshops:

- » Flip chart.
- » Masking tape.
- » Markers, pens.
- » You Are Not Alone Toolkits.
- » Photocopies of worksheets and handouts from this Guide.
- » List of resources and relevant community programs.
- » Talking feather or stick for group discussions.
- » Smudge bowl, sweetgrass, cedar, or sage, and a lighter or matches.

Make a list of other items you may need, such as snacks and drinks, taxi/bus tickets for participants, etc. It is important to gather all materials and resources before the workshop.

Adjusting and modifying workshops

Facilitators are encouraged to modify the length and order of their presentations to meet the specific needs of the participants. Multiple workshops may be combined to create full-day events, or may be broken into parts to create a series of shorter workshops.





Workshops and Educational Activities

This Guide includes a series of workshop outlines and learning activities that expand on the topics introduced in the Toolkit. These workshops are one way to engage with Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people in a collaborative, culturally-rich learning environment and empower them to move forward and heal from abuse.

We recommend beginning each workshop by gathering participants into a circle for an opening ceremony and introductions. Have an Indigenous Elder or Knowledge Keeper present whenever possible. When closing, provide time for participants to share their reflections and end on a positive note.

List of Workshops and Learning Activities

Workshop 1: Domestic Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People

The activities in the first workshop help define domestic violence and discuss the historic effects of colonization on Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people.

Activity 1: What is Domestic Violence?

Activity 2: Effects of Colonization on Indigenous Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People.

Activity 3: Mapping Personal Life Histories.

Workshop 2: Are you in an Abusive Relationship?

The objective of this workshop is to educate participants on the forms of domestic violence and warning signs that a relationship might be abusive, and discuss the reasons why people stay.

Activity 1: Identifying Domestic Violence.

Activity 2: Are You in an Abusive Relationship?

Activity 3: Early Warning Signs of Domestic Violence.

Activity 4: Why Do We Stay?

"So many great new ideas to apply to all clients and people, not just Indigenous people."

- Workshop Participant

Workshop 3: Planning to Leave

These activities provide practical resources and safety planning tools for women when they are planning to leave an abusive situation.

Activity 1: Creating a Circle of Support.

Activity 2: Safety Planning Tips.

Activity 3: Creating a Community Safety Plan.

Activity 4: Social Media and Online Safety.

Activity 5: Assets and the Matrimonial Property Act.

Activity 6: Basic Financial Tips and Planning Tools.

Workshop 4: Healing After Leaving an Abusive Relationship

This last workshop gives participants guidance and tips for safety after they leave, as well as tools to help them recognize their own strengths and take care of all aspects of their well-being.

Activity 1: Sharing Circle and Safety Tips for Abuse Survivors.

Activity 2: Self-Care Exercises.

Activity 3: The Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change.

Activity 4: Self-Esteem Exercises.

Activity 5: Healthy Relationships Exercise.



List of Worksheets

All worksheets can be found in **Appendix 1** of this Guide.

Personal Life Histories: This spiral-based worksheet is designed to help Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people to identify experiences that may have either affected them personally, generations of their family, or their community at large.

Are You in an Abusive Relationship?

This checklist is intended to spark conversation and help women, girls and gender diverse people identify different forms of abuse within intimate relationships.

Circle of Support: This worksheet helps people build their own circle of support by recognizing who will be there for them within their family and community, as well as identifying organizations or services that can offer other forms of support.

Social Media and Online Safety

Checklist: This checklist helps participants address the potential security risks of social media and online spaces. Participants need to understand the ways that they may be stalked, tracked, or followed, and should identify who may have access to their social media account(s).

List of Assets: This worksheet guides participants through creating a list of their personal and shared assets, including bank accounts, real estate, vehicles, etc.

Budgets and Spending Plan

Exercises:

Financial insecurity is a major issue for many Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people escaping domestic violence. This skill-based worksheet introduces participants to budgeting and identifying their monthly bills and expenses.

Positive Statements:

This medicine wheel-based worksheet encourages participants to create positive statements about themselves and their lives.

Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change:

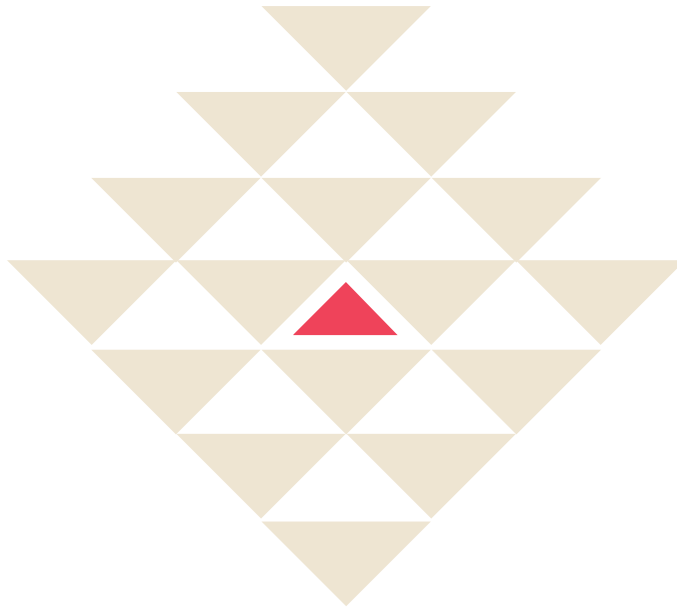
This medicine wheel worksheet provides space for women, girls and gender diverse people to recognize areas of their lives where they may need positive change and the importance of balance.

Goal Setting and Vision for the Future:

This worksheet uses a circular model to help people envision the future they want for themselves and their families by identifying goals and making plans.

"I liked the worksheets. They are organic and intuitive. I feel like they are ones I can and will actually use."

- Workshop Participant



WORKSHOP 1:

Domestic Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People

This workshop introduces the participants to the topic of domestic violence and how it affects Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people. This workshop will also discuss a brief history of Indigenous people and how colonization has contributed to violence against Indigenous people.

Opening Ceremony

Materials: Smudge and prayer

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Have an Elder smudge with participants and have a prayer or opening remarks to create a positive environment. If an Elder is not available, the facilitator or a volunteer can offer the smudge to participants.

Introductions

Time: 15 minutes

- » Ask the participants to introduce themselves with their name and where they come from, and respond to the following question: *"What are you feeling good about today?"*
- » The responses should help the facilitator get a feel for the group's emotional state going into the workshop.

ACTIVITY 1:

What is Domestic Violence?

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Flip chart, markers, Toolkit

Being aware of the different types of domestic violence can help women, girls and gender diverse people identify problematic or abusive behaviour in their relationships.

This introductory exercise is intended to begin the conversation on domestic violence, to educate women, girls and gender diverse people on the forms of domestic violence, and to help people better understand their current situation. Be sure to be compassionate and validate people's lived experiences during this exercise.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Ask the participants to respond to the question: *"What is domestic violence?"*
- » Allow participants to share their answers and write their answers on the flip chart.
- » To get things started, the facilitator can suggest some ideas from page 2 of the Toolkit.

Domestic violence is never the victim's fault.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, GIRLS AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE

Refer to the following notes from page 3 of the Toolkit and ensure that all of these points are discussed with the group. If it has not come up during the group discussion, ask the participants if they are aware of the following information:

The United Nations defines violence against women as: "Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.:
» violence against women is any violent act or threat that is directed at a woman or women.

Domestic violence is a gendered crime because it is most often directed against women, girls and gender diverse people. Most cases of domestic violence involve a male partner abusing their partner or ex-partner, but people can also experience violence in same-sex relationships.

We see gender inequality in the political, social, and economic public domains and this can contribute to the belief that women are less deserving than men. This type of thinking contributes to, and may intersect with, other inequalities such as racism and homophobia.

Ensure the following points from page 2 of the Toolkit are included in the conversation:

Domestic violence can include:

- » Physical abuse
- » Sexual abuse
- » Emotional abuse
- » Verbal abuse
- » Psychological abuse
- » Spiritual abuse
- » Financial abuse
- » Threats of violence
- » Criminal harassment, stalking, and intimidation

Whether or not a couple lives together, domestic violence is when an intimate partner or ex-partner attempts to harm or dominate you.

Domestic violence can sometimes be called intimate partner violence, wife beating, wife battery, relationship violence, domestic abuse, spousal abuse, or family violence.⁹ Domestic violence is not necessarily a single act of violence, but can be a long-term pattern of violent and threatening behavior meant to exert power and control over a partner.¹⁰

ACTIVITY 2: Effects of Colonization on Indigenous Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Toolkit, 2+ copies of Historic Events handout (Appendix 2), pens, note paper

Understanding the legacy of colonization will provide the facilitator and participants with a base knowledge of some of the important events affecting Indigenous people today.

When using the Toolkit and these learning activities, it is imperative that you have a good understanding of how intergenerational trauma has contributed to the high rates of gender-based violence, life-threatening experiences, and systemic racism experienced in Indigenous communities today.

- » Cut the copies of the Historic Events handout into separate event strips and distribute at random to participants. There should be a minimum of two copies of each topic.
- » Ask the participants to find the other people with the same event.
- » Encourage the pairs or small groups to discuss their historic event and what it means to them. Participants will write down a few points from their discussion.

- » Organize the pairs or groups chronologically by event date.
- » Ask for a volunteer to share their group's discussion notes and emotional responses to the historic event.
- » The facilitator will explain how historic events and intergenerational trauma are still affecting Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people today.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

An excellent resource for facilitators is the Final Reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which investigate the effects of Indian residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and other socio-economic conditions (poverty, racism, and discrimination) that have played a major role in the breakdown of Indigenous families and communities.

The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has now been transferred to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and can be accessed at: www.nctr.ca

LEARNING ACTIVITY 3: Mapping Personal Life Histories

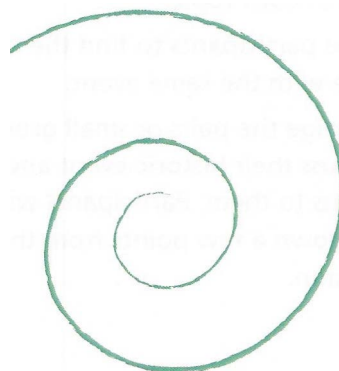
Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Flip chart, markers, Toolkit, Personal Life Histories worksheet (Appendix 1), Historic Events handout (Appendix 2)

As a facilitator, it is important to understand and acknowledge each person's lived experiences and how the historic impacts of colonization have affected Indigenous people and contributed to violence and discrimination. This activity is intended to help Indigenous people visualize their own life histories, and reflect on the effects that intergenerational trauma and historic events may have had on them and their families.

Prior to doing the exercise, the facilitator could choose to lead a general discussion of the types of life events that might affect a person's path or choices.

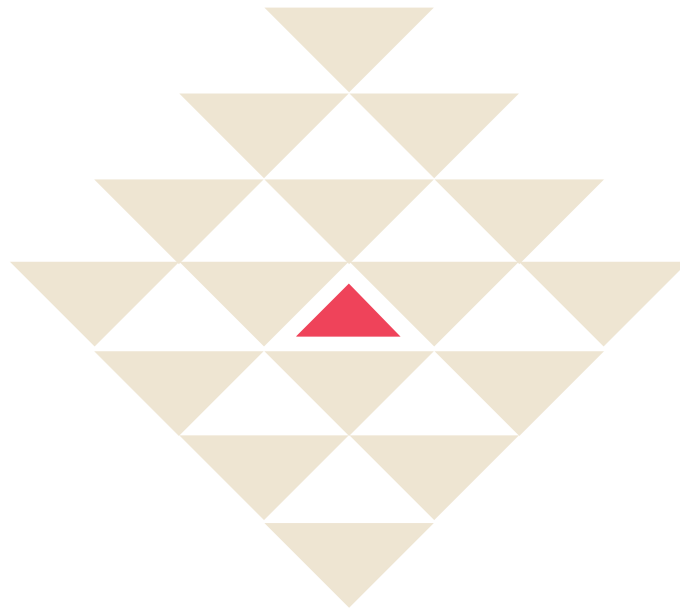
- » Ask the participants to consider the question: ***"What events have been the most influential in your own life?"*** Encourage the participants to reflect on both positive and negative events and how these events may have contributed to their current situation.
- » Distribute the Personal Life Histories worksheet and ask participants to place their name and birth at the beginning of their spiral. Note that the spiral doesn't end and it continues into the future. You may wish to provide larger pieces of paper for people who need more space to create their own life history spiral.
- » Participants can create marks along the spiral to represent positive and negative events from their lives that have affected them in some way.
- » Next, talk briefly about how historic events could have affected the person's family or the Indigenous nation at large. These events may have had an impact on their life history.
- » Provide participants with the Historic Events handout (Appendix 2) for reference and, if possible, discuss past and current events that have affected Indigenous people, such as residential schools, or the Sixties Scoop. These may have already been discussed in Activity 2.
- » Have participants add any relevant events from their family histories or the Indigenous nation to their spirals. If an event happened before they were born, suggest that participants add these outside of their spirals and make connections to their own lived histories.



Workshop Reflections and Closing

During the closing of the workshop, participants should have time to reflect on the activities and what they may have learned. Closing the workshop on a positive note is extremely important, as we do not want women, girls or gender diverse people leaving with negative feelings or thoughts.

- » Gather the participants in a circle.
- » Ask the group to reflect on the following question: ***"What is one thing you learned today that you will carry with you?"***
- » Each participant will have the chance to share their response.
- » Thank participants and invited Elders or Knowledge Keepers for attending and sharing their knowledge and experiences.
- » If there is an Elder present, the facilitator can ask for a smudge or prayer to close the workshop. Otherwise, the facilitator can smudge with participants and offer a closing prayer or remarks.





WORKSHOP 2:

Are You in an Abusive Relationship?

The activities in this workshop guide participants through identifying the characteristics of abusive relationships and warning signs that a potential partner may be abusive.

As a facilitator, it is important that you have adequate emotional support and resources for Indigenous people during these activities, since this may be the first time a person acknowledges that they have experienced abuse.

Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own relationships and reframe the reasons why we stay in abusive relationships. Reinforce the message that the participants deserve better, and that they can create safer futures for themselves.

Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people are strong and beautiful. They are our mothers/parents, our daughters/children, our sisters/siblings, our aunts, and our grandmothers. They are to be loved and treated with respect.

Opening Ceremony

Materials: Smudge and prayer

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Have an Elder smudge with participants and have a prayer or opening remarks to create a positive environment. If an Elder is not available, the facilitator or a volunteer can offer the smudge to participants.

Introductions

Time: 15 minutes

- » Ask the participants to introduce themselves and respond to the following question: *"What are you grateful for today?"*
- » The responses should help the facilitator get a feel for the group's emotional state going into the workshop.

ACTIVITY 1: Identifying Domestic Violence

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Flip chart, markers, Toolkit

This activity can help Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people recognize different forms of domestic violence and identify abusive behaviours that may be occurring in their relationships.

It is important to monitor and validate the emotions of the participants and encourage non-judgmental attitudes regarding domestic violence. If an Elder or Knowledge Keeper is present, they may be able to offer one-on-one support.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Write the title: "Five forms of domestic violence" on the flip chart.
- » Divide the group up into smaller groups, pairings, or allow individuals to work on their own.
- » Give each group a flip chart and marker, and assign a form of violence to discuss: physical, sexual, emotional/psychological, financial, or spiritual.
- » Ask participants to identify examples of their assigned form of violence and write them on their flip chart. For example, physical violence could include hitting, slapping, and pinching.
- » When finished, the facilitator will then ask each group to present their lists.

- » After each group has reported, the facilitator will ask the group if they have any comments or further examples to add to the lists. Refer to page 6 of the Toolkit to add any forms of violence that participants might have missed.

ACTIVITY 2: Are You in an Abusive Relationship?

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Flip chart, markers, Toolkit, "Are You in an Abusive Relationship?" worksheet (Appendix 1)

Victims of domestic violence may often feel they are somehow to blame for their abuse. This activity is designed to support Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people in recognizing problematic and abusive behaviours.

NOTE: This exercise may bring up strong emotions in the participants, so it may be beneficial to have an Elder or Knowledge Keeper present as additional support for people during activities such as this one.

It is important to be understanding and supportive as participants discuss and complete these questions. Encourage non-judgmental attitudes regarding different forms of domestic violence within the group.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Ask the group to discuss the question: ***"How do you know if you are in an abusive relationship?"***

- » The facilitator will ensure a safe space and monitor the discussion so people are able to speak without interruption.
- » During the discussion, the facilitator should refer to page 8 of the Toolkit to raise any points that have not already been mentioned.
- » After the discussion, distribute the worksheets and allow the participants time to reflect and answer. Participants may need emotional support during this time. Due to the personal nature of the questions, this may be the first time the participant confirms that their relationship is abusive.
- » After everyone has completed their worksheets, the facilitator will ask the group if they have any comments or questions. Participants do not need to share their personal responses with the group.
- » Ask the participants if they would like the facilitator to keep their worksheets in a safe place or if they want them destroyed. The questionnaires are meant as a learning tool and should not be shared with anyone.

**It is NEVER your fault
if someone abuses
you.**

ACTIVITY 3: Early Warning Signs of Domestic Violence

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Flip chart, markers, Toolkit, Handout: "Early Warning Signs of Domestic Violence" (Appendix 2)

If a person's partner is exhibiting early warning signs that they might become violent, encourage them to talk to someone they trust before getting more invested in the relationship. Encourage participants to develop a good support system and stay connected, especially if their partner has behaviours that seek to isolate the person or limit access to their friends and family.

This exercise is to help people identify warning signs of abusive behaviour in their personal relationships.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Emphasize that everyone in the group is here to support each another and that this is a safe space to share.
- » Assign a few 'red-flag' behaviours from the handout list to each small group or pair of participants.
- » Have the participants discuss their group's assigned behaviours and brainstorm possible responses to these behaviours. For example, what could a person do if their partner wanted to move into the relationship too quickly?
- » Acknowledge that not all people will have the same experience or responses to these behaviours, and encourage the participants to not blame themselves or others for not seeing these as 'red flags.'

- » Following the discussion period, ask the groups to share some of their feelings and thoughts about the exercise. Discussion prompts could include: *How did you feel while discussing these behaviours? Have you experienced any of these 'red flags' in your relationship? How did it make you feel?*
- » Ask the group: **"Can you think of any other 'red flags' for domestic violence?"**
- » Distribute the "Why Do We Stay?" handout and allow the participants a short time to review the statements. Participants may add reasons that were raised in the initial discussion to their list.
- » Ask participants to get into pairs or small groups.
- » Instruct the participants to work together to make positive, alternative statements for each of the reasons that people stay.

ACTIVITY 4:

Why Do We Stay?

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Pens/pencils, blank paper, Toolkit, "Why Do We Stay?" handout (Appendix 2)

This exercise will help participants reframe the reasons that people stay in abusive relationships into positive statements about why they deserve better and should leave. It is important to emphasize that Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people are valued, loved, worthy and deserving of respectful relationships. It may be difficult for some people to change their thinking on abusive relationships. It takes time, strength and courage for them to move forward.

In this exercise, you may need to provide encouragement and guidance as participants create their empowering statements.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Have participants take turns answering the question: **"Why do people stay in abusive relationships?"** Encourage each person in the circle to identify a different reason.

Example: The statement "You love them, but don't love their behaviour" can be reframed to help people think in a way that reclaims their power and affirms their worth: "I don't love their behaviour and it is not up to me to control how they behave."

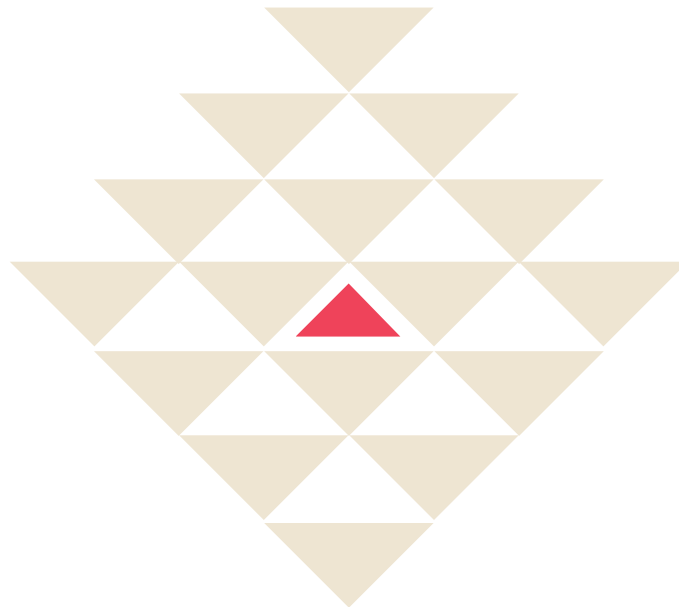
- » Encourage participants to share their empowering statements with the group.
- » If there are some statements that haven't been reframed, or if participants are struggling to create positive statements, the facilitator can collaborate with the group to create them. Focus on using positive adjectives such as: I can, I will, I deserve, etc.

Through building awareness, Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people can create healthy and safe relationships for themselves and their children.

Workshop Reflections and Closing

During the closing of the workshop, participants should have time to reflect on the activities and what they may have learned. Closing the workshop on a positive note is extremely important, as we do not want women, girls or gender diverse people leaving with negative feelings or thoughts.

- » Gather the participants in a circle.
 - » Ask the group to reflect on the following question: *"What is one thing you learned today that you will carry with you?"*
 - » Each participant will have the chance to share their response.
 - » Thank participants and invited Elders or Knowledge Keepers for attending and sharing their knowledge and experiences.
- » If there is an Elder present, the facilitator can ask for a smudgeing or prayer to close the workshop. Otherwise, the facilitator can smudge with participants and offer a closing prayer or remarks.



WORKSHOP 3:

Planning to Leave

This practical workshop is intended to help Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people do some planning before they leave an abusive relationship to reduce the likelihood that they will return.

These activities encourage participants to identify the people and organizations that will support them, and help them consider ways to stay safe when leaving. Additional practical activities will help participants consider what assets they may have and provide basic budgeting tools to improve their financial security.

Opening Ceremony

Materials: Smudge and prayer

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Have an Elder smudge with participants and have a prayer or opening remarks to create a positive environment. If an Elder is not available, the facilitator or a volunteer can offer the smudge to participants.

Introductions

Time: 15 minutes

- » Ask the participants to introduce themselves and respond to the following question:
"Who is your inspiration?"
- » The responses should help the facilitator get a feel for the group's emotional state going into the workshop.

ACTIVITY 1:

Creating a Circle of Support

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Flipchart, markers, pens/pencils, blank paper, color pencils, Toolkit, "Circle of Support" worksheet (Appendix 1, Who's-Who Resource Guide)

This activity is intended to help participants identify family members, friends, community members and organizations that can support them as they leave their abusive situation.

The Circle of Support is a visual representation of a woman's, girls or gender diverse person's support system that can help them see that they are not alone.

- » Gather the participants in a circle.
- » Talk about how important it is for people to have support when they are escaping violence. It is important to identify who a person can trust to advocate for them so they have the best chance of receiving appropriate treatment and services.
- » Explain that an advocate can be a trusted friend, family member, or support worker who can stand by them and offer support without judgment as they navigate through their difficult situation.

An advocate could assist people in getting social assistance or housing, or they could accompany and support the person when they speak to the police or appear in family court.

- » Draw a circle of support on the flip chart. See Worksheet 2 for reference. The facilitator should write their own name in the centre. The first inner ring is labelled "Family", the second is labelled "Community", and the outermost ring is labelled "Nation".
- » Distribute the Circle of Support worksheets to each participant.
- » Go through each ring together as a group, explaining and defining who might be included in each ring. The facilitator can write examples on the flip chart.
- » Give participants time to identify their own advocates and supporters on their worksheets. Encourage participants to include as many people and organizations as possible in each ring. The facilitator may need to assist participants in identifying who might be available to them.

HELPING PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFY THEIR SUPPORTS

The **Who's Who Resource Guide** included with the Toolkit is a good place to find organizations that can provide people with advocates, support, and additional resources specific to their situation.

Who Belongs in the Circle of Support?

Family:

The first ring will be the person's most intimate supporters. This could include a best friend, a close family member, or any person they know and trust that they could call in a crisis situation.

Community: The **community** circle is where you look for help, such as shelters, community centres, or any other available programs. If possible, have the participant include the names of individuals that they know personally within their community supports.

Nation: The **nation** circle is where Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people can go for legal support, social support, and counselling support within their community.

ACTIVITY 2:

Safety Planning Tips

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Flipchart, markers, note paper, pens, Toolkit

Leaving an abusive situation can be very frightening for a person, particularly if their partner has been threatening or violent. This safety-oriented activity should help participants identify strategies to increase their safety and reduce their risk of further violence as they prepare to leave. The tips from this activity will help participants prepare their own community safety plan in Activity 3.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Organize the participants into groups of three or four.
- » Write the following question on the flip chart: ***"What are some safety planning tips for leaving a violent relationship?"***
- » Each group should come up with as many safety tips as they can. Call on the groups to share their tips and write them on the flip chart.
- » Refer to the safety planning tips on page 12 of the Toolkit to ensure these have all been covered.
- » Next, ask the whole group: ***"What are some things to avoid when leaving?"*** Write these tips on the flip chart.
- » Be sure to keep the group conversation on the topic of safety tips and things to avoid. There will be a wide variety of answers, which can be beneficial in guiding the conversation.

ACTIVITY 3:

Creating a Community Safety Plan

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Toolkit, Community Safety Plan Booklets

A community safety plan can help Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people as they prepare to leave an abusive situation.

If a person knows who they can call on in an emergency, safe places they can go, and what they should take with them, they may feel more ready to leave if the abuse persists.

In this activity, the facilitator should guide participants through filling out all of the information in their Community Safety Plan Booklet.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
 - » Hand out a Community Safety Plan Booklet to each participant.
 - » Discuss the importance of creating a Community Safety Plan before leaving, if possible. Ask participants to think about their support network, safe places they can go, and ways that they can stay safe.
- If participants have already completed their Circle of Support, they can use it for reference.
- » Review the items on the Pack a Bag checklist and the Backup Plan checklist with the group. Ask them to consider whether they have any additional things they need to include or issues to consider when leaving.

- » Give participants time to fill in their Community Safety Plan booklet and their Backup Plan information. Provide support and resources as needed.
- » Encourage participants to discretely collect copies of ownerships, bills, and other important documents that they may need after they leave.
- » Caution participants to keep their Community Safety Plan with a trusted person from their circle of support.

The Community Safety plan is a resource for participants to know who to call, what to do, and where to go.



ACTIVITY 4: Social Media and Online Safety

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Toolkit, pens/pencils, blank paper, "Social Media and Online Safety Checklist" worksheet (Appendix 1)

The Internet and social media have become important parts of our lives by allowing us to stay connected with others online. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram allow us to share pictures, posts, and videos. People escaping domestic violence will need to be careful about how much personal information they share online, particularly if their safety has been threatened.

This activity is intended to help participants increase the security of their social media and other online accounts before and after they leave an abusive situation. Participants will be asked to consider what accounts and online profiles they have and how they can manage their accounts to prevent their abuser from accessing their personal information in the future.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Discuss social media usage and online profiles, and why it is important to consider the security of personal information. Have participants share their experiences with online and social media safety after leaving abusive relationships.

SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY TIPS

Change your passwords. Make sure all your passwords are changed after you leave your abuser, so they cannot hack into your account.

Check your privacy and security settings. These settings allow you to control who sees what you post. For example, it is important to turn off location-based services so your abuser cannot see where you are located.

Take action. If anyone harasses or threatens you on social media, keep evidence, remove them from your friend list, block them, and tell someone you trust.

- » Distribute the Social Media and Online Safety worksheet.
- » Have participants identify where they might have online profiles that could be found by their abuser.
- » Prompt participants to include any mobile applications or websites where they might have an online profile. Some examples could include: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, personal blogs, online employee directories, and dating sites.

Know and manage your friends. Social media makes it easy to pretend to be someone else. For example, your abuser may create a new account under a different name or use an account of someone you know to try and contact you. Make sure only the people you trust can see your profile, and be careful who you add and chat with as a friend online.

Keep personal information to yourself. Limit the personal information you post so your abuser cannot find you. Even if you have your abuser blocked on social media, their friends may still be able to see your profile and give them information. Also, be careful what you post on other friends' profiles, as they may be able to see those posts.

- » Have participants use the worksheet to identify their social media accounts and other places where they share personal information online.
- » Ask the participants to consider who may be able to access their personal information through these accounts. Discuss changing passwords and privacy settings, or disabling accounts altogether, to address safety concerns.

ACTIVITY 5: Assets and the Matrimonial Property Act

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Flip chart, markers, pens/pencils, blank paper, Toolkit, "List of Assets" worksheet (Appendix 1)

With the proper information and support, Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people will be able to prioritize what assets are valuable and what they can leave behind. This activity also introduces participants to the *Matrimonial Real Property Act* and explains their rights regarding assets that are shared with their married or common-law partner.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Hand out the List of Assets worksheet. Participants can fill this in and can either keep it with the facilitator for safekeeping or destroy it when completed.
- » Describe the types of assets people might have and how to consider what things are worth to them. For example, some things may have emotional or cultural significance but not much monetary value, such as photographs or spiritual items. Other things may have monetary value, but may not be all that valuable to the person as they move forward.
- » Introduce the *Matrimonial Real Property Act* on page 17 of the Toolkit and discuss rights around shared assets.

MATRIMONIAL REAL PROPERTY ACT

As the *Matrimonial Real Property Act* is a new law, many police officers, judges, and lawyers may have limited knowledge about it and will need to familiarize themselves with these proceedings. It is best to refer to the Centre of Excellence for information on the *Matrimonial Real Property Act*. Although they do not give out legal advice, they can help direct you to the information you may require.

Centre of Excellence for Matrimonial Real Property: www.coemrp.ca

ACTIVITY 6: Basic Financial Tips and Planning Tools

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Flip chart, markers, "Budgets and Spending Plan Exercises" worksheet (Appendix 1)

Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people who are considering leaving an abusive situation may have concerns about their future financial security.

Financial awareness is a critical way to help people feel more capable and prepared to move on. The basic financial tips and planning tools provided in this activity are very general and are intended primarily for people who have limited knowledge of how to track spending and make simple budgets.

The goal of the worksheets is to assist people in determining their needs and wants, and to give them the tools to build secure futures.

BASIC FINANCIAL TIPS

When creating a budget, consider all of the hidden or associated costs. For example, home owners may need to include expenses such as repairs and maintenance, condo fees, and municipal taxes. Car owners should include the approximate monthly cost of maintenance and repairs, insurance, licensing, parking, and gas.

Take into account monthly debt repayment, such as student loans, credit cards, car payments, and other loans.

Whenever possible, a monthly budget should allow for unexpected expenses such as car repairs, dental care, and seasonal spending that may be associated with birthdays and holidays.

Identify expenses that could be reduced or eliminated without much hardship. Cancel unneeded subscriptions or services, reduce eating out or shopping budgets, etc.

Credit is not the same as having money. It is easy to fall into the trap of seeing credit cards as a source of money, but it is very important to keep in mind the cost of repaying the debt and since interest is added every month.

Buying things on installment or payment plans can seem very appealing, but sometimes payment plans come with very high interest rates or penalties.

If a person has joint bank accounts or debts with their abusive partner, they should discuss their situation with their financial institution to transfer or protect their credit cards and bank accounts.

When considering leaving an abusive situation, people should discretely gather copies of ownership papers, bills, taxation and other financial records.

Please note: There are no corresponding materials in the Toolkit for this activity. The financial tips from this section may be copied and distributed to the participants along with the worksheets.

If your participants require additional financial education resources, please seek out organizations or individuals in the community that may be able to provide further services and tools or run basic financial planning workshops for at risk people.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Discuss the fact that people sometimes stay in abusive relationships because they are concerned about their future financial security.
- » Ask the participants if this is a factor for anyone in the circle.
- » Talk about the difference between "needs" and "wants." Acknowledge that participants may have different opinions, and that everybody's contributions should be respected.

- » If a person identifies an addictive substance as a survival need, that is their reality at this time. Monitor the discussion and do not allow shaming behaviour in the circle.
- » Make a list of basic monthly needs on the flip chart with the participants. Prompt participants to consider costs associated with home or car ownership, such as property taxes or maintenance. Remind people to consider monthly payments on debts, such as student loans or credit cards in their monthly expenses, since those are not optional expenses.
- » Distribute the "Budgets and Spending Plan Exercises" worksheets and give participants time to reflect.
- » Ask the participants to consider what else they spend money on and determine which expenses they might be able to reduce or eliminate without much hardship.
- » Be sure to wrap up the workshop with encouragement that the participant can build safer, financially secure futures for themselves. If possible, provide the participant with additional resources to support their learning.

Workshop Reflections and Closing

During the closing of the workshop, participants should have time to reflect on the activities and what they may have learned. Closing the workshop on a positive note is extremely important, as we do not want anyone leaving with negative feelings or thoughts.

- » Gather the participants in a circle.
- » Ask the group to reflect on the following question: ***"Who is one person you will connect with after today's workshop?"***
- » Each participant will have the chance to share their response.
- » Thank participants and invited Elders or Knowledge Keepers for attending and sharing their knowledge and experiences.
- » If there is an Elder present, the facilitator can ask for a smudge or prayer to close the workshop. Otherwise, the facilitator can smudge with participants and offer a closing prayer or remarks.

WORKSHOP 4:

Healing After Leaving an Abusive Relationship

Leaving an abusive relationship is often the most dangerous time for an Indigenous women / gender diverse person, and they may not know what to do to heal after they leave. This workshop is designed to help people determine their needs after leaving, learn how to identify healthy relationships, and provide self-care exercises to assist in healing.

Opening Ceremony

Materials: Smudge and prayer

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Have an Elder smudge with participants and have a prayer or positive statements before opening to create a positive environment. If an Elder is not available, the facilitator or a volunteer can offer the smudge to participants.

The most dangerous time for a person in an abusive relationship is when they are leaving and after they have left.¹¹

ACTIVITY 1:

Sharing Circle and Safety Tips for Abuse Survivors

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Talking stick, rock or feather, Toolkit

There may be continued danger after Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people leave abusive relationships, and they need to know how to stay safe.

The sharing circle exercise will give people a chance to speak and share their experiences of what has happened since they left their abusive relationships.

After the talking circle, the facilitator should review and discuss the safety tips on page 16 of the Toolkit with the participants to help them increase their safety and access legal and community supports.

Be sure to address the specific safety concerns raised by participants in the circle.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Pass the talking stick and give each person the opportunity to introduce themselves, share their experiences of what happened after they left the abusive relationship, and identify any ongoing concerns about their safety.

- » After all of the participants have shared their stories, the facilitator can share information from page 16 of the Toolkit about ways they can increase their safety and how to access various types of support.
- » Review the regional resources from the **Who's Who Resource Guide** and add others that may be helpful to your participants.

SAFETY TIP TO SHARE WITH PARTICIPANTS

Refer participants to page 16 of Toolkit

Get support from an Indigenous group, a women's group, or an advocate and ask them to help you through your situation.

This could include asking them to help you figure out child custody, what to do about the home you left, or going to the police.

Do not tell them your location. You may want to consider blocking their phone number, or getting a new phone and/or phone number. Also, be sure to change any services you share with your ex-partner, such as a joint cell phone plan, cable, or hydro. Consider deleting and blocking them from social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Be careful at work, at home, and in the community. You may want to consider telling your boss, your co-workers and your children's school principal about your situation. You should also provide them with a picture of your ex-partner so they know to watch out for them. If possible, consider changing the children's schools altogether.

Make sure all your banking information, bills, and accounts are in your name and change your address. Let the bank know you are no longer with your partner and ask them

to set you up with a new account. Change your address so your mail goes to your new home instead of your old address where you can't access it safely.

Contact an Indigenous group, women's group, or an advocate to help you go through police and court processes. This may include asking for a peace bond or restraining order. It is important to get support as these processes can be complicated and vary in each province and territory. Many people have gone through this to protect themselves and their children, and you can do it too!

Family law is something you will have to consider when leaving your partner.

Family law deals with parenting arrangements, separation and divorce, division of property and debts, restraining orders, and child and/or spousal support payments. In Canada, family law is different in each province and territory, it can be difficult to understand, but do not give up! Talk to someone you trust and get help with family law issues.

The **Who's Who Resource Guide** contains a list of supports for Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people. As well as other resources such as legal services that you can share with the participants.

ACTIVITY 2: Self-Care Exercises

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Flip Chart, markers, pens/
pencils, blank paper, Toolkit

It can be difficult to have a positive outlook when experiencing or healing from violence. Acknowledge that it is normal for people to feel sad, stressed or angry during this challenging time.

This activity is intended to help people find ways that they can take time for themselves and engage in self-care activities that heal and build positive self-worth. In this exercise, people will work together to identify self-care activities that can take care of all aspects of their well-being.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle in pairs or very small groups.
- » Write the following question on the flip chart: ***"What can you do for self-care after you have left an abusive relationship?"***



- » The facilitator will ask each group to discuss the topic and make a list of 10 self-care activities they might propose to a good friend who is in crisis.
- » Write a few examples on the flip chart to get the conversation started, such as: take a bath, go for a walk, visit an Elder, read, go to the movies, or talk to a counsellor.
- » Have each group share their list and write the suggestions on the flip chart.
- » Encourage participants to give themselves the same level of compassion and care they would want for a good friend or family member.

When you are feeling overwhelmed, consider the major obstacles you have overcome and what you are capable of. Look at these ways you can take care of yourself and find positivity on this healing journey. You deserve to be treated well.

ACTIVITY 3:

The Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Worksheets: "Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change" and "Goal Setting and Vision for the Future" (Appendix 1)

Being able to see the potential for the future and having a plan on how to make desired changes can make a big difference to a person when leaving an abusive situation.

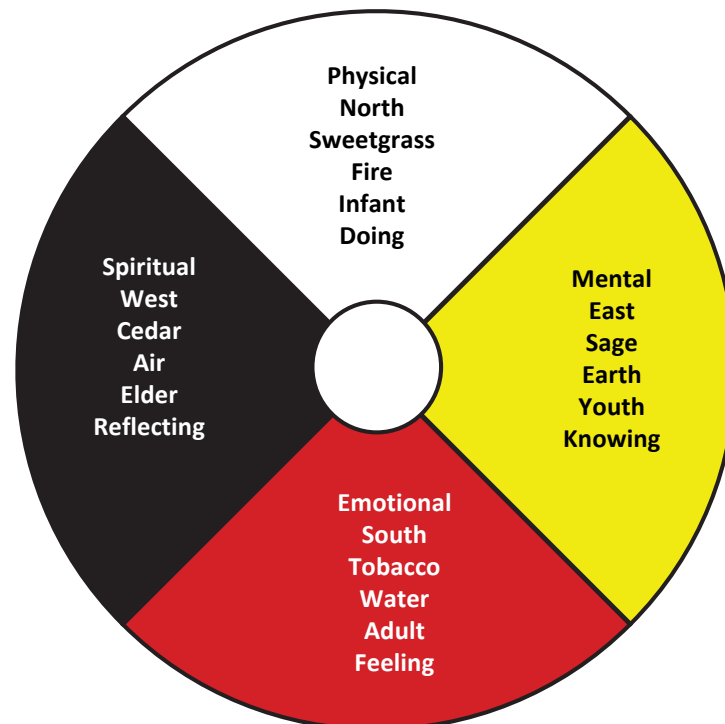
These worksheets are intended to help people create an action plan for change, and also, to encourage people to reflect on what they want from life and to see their own strengths and accomplishments.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Discuss the significance of the medicine wheel and how important it is to balance all aspects of one's self when healing and moving forward.

Encourage participants to think about what positive changes they want to make in their lives and how they might improve their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Help them see that their futures hold many possibilities, and that they have the power to make their dreams into reality.

- » Provide participants with both worksheets and tell them that these are tools that they can use to work towards change.
- » Assist people in identifying what knowledge they might need or steps they might need to take to reach their goals.
- » Allow participants time to share their goals, plans, and reflections with the group, if they wish.



ACTIVITY 4:

Self-Esteem Exercises

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Flip chart, markers, pens/pencils, blank paper, Toolkit, "Positive Statements" worksheet (Appendix 1)

An abusive relationship can be very damaging to a person's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, which can affect their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. The medicine wheel is one healing tool participants can use to think positively about these four different aspects of themselves.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Refer participants to page 17 of the Toolkit and ask them to write down 10 qualities they like about themselves, or 10 positive actions they have taken to feel better after leaving their abusive situation.
- » Encourage participants to share their positive statements or actions with the group, and thank all who share.
- » Talk briefly with the participants about using the medicine wheel as a tool to think positively about all aspects of their lives and to consider healing actions for each area of their well-being.
- » Give each participant the Positive Statements worksheet and ask them to write positive statements about their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects.

ACTIVITY 5:

Healthy Relationships Exercise

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Blank paper, markers, colored pencils, Toolkit

Some Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people may have been surrounded by unhealthy relationships from a young age and may not have a strong understanding of what makes a relationship safe and healthy.

This activity is intended to help participants identify the characteristics of healthy relationships and reinforce that they deserve relationships that make them feel safe and happy.

- » Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- » Provide blank paper and art supplies for the participant to draw or write words in response to the question: ***"What is a healthy relationship?"***
- » Participants will take turns sharing their art and words with the group.
- » Discuss the healthy relationships information provided here and on page 22 of the Toolkit.

Negative self-esteem contributes to feelings of depression and anxiety.

A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP INCLUDES:

- » Honesty
- » Trust
- » Acceptance
- » Mutual respect
- » Respect for your family and friends
- » Supporting each other
- » Friendship
- » Being yourself
- » Good communication
- » Feeling safe and secure
- » Equality
- » Laughing together

SIGNS THAT A PERSON IS IN A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP:

- » Their feelings are considered.
- » Their opinion is respected when making decisions.
- » Their family and friends are treated with respect.
- » Their decisions are supported.
- » There is respect for each other.
- » They feel safe in their relationship.
- » They can go out with their friends without their partner.
- » They can participate in activities and hobbies they enjoy.

Workshop Reflections and Closing

During the closing of the workshop, participants should have time to reflect on the activities and what they may have learned. Closing the workshop on a positive note is extremely important, as we do not want people leaving with negative feelings or thoughts.

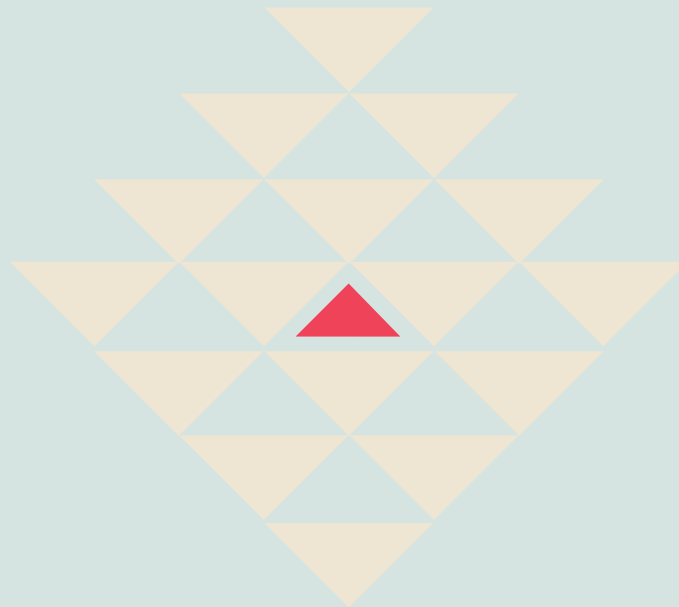
- » Gather the participants in a circle.
- » Ask the group to reflect on the following question: ***"What is one self-care activity you will do for yourself, starting as soon as possible?"***
- » Each participant will have the chance to share their response.
- » Thank participants and invited Elders or Knowledge Keepers for attending and sharing their knowledge and experiences.
- » If there is an Elder present, the facilitator can ask for a smudge or prayer to close the workshop. Otherwise, the facilitator can smudge with participants and offer a closing prayer or remarks.

You deserve to be
treated with respect.
Never settle for
anything less.



Appendix 1: Worksheets

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FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Personal Life Histories

As a facilitator, it is important to understand and acknowledge the historic impacts of colonization on Indigenous people and how they have contributed to a person's lived experiences of violence and discrimination. This worksheet is intended to help Indigenous people visualize their own lived experiences, as well as intergenerational trauma and historic events that may have had an effect on their lives and families.

In the centre of the spiral, start with the person's birth. The participant should represent personal events along the spiral that have affected them in some way.

Participants can create marks on the spiral to represent the positive and negative events. The spiral doesn't end as it continues into the future. The diagram helps people visualize the patterns in their lives, and how those patterns may have affected their life's path.

Then ask the participant how much they know about Indigenous history and whether they can think of historic events that may have affected their lives or families.

Provide participants with the Historic Events handout (Appendix 2) for reference and, if possible, discuss past and current events that have affected Indigenous peoples, or events that participants or their families may have lived through, such as residential schools, or the Sixties Scoop.



USING THIS WORKSHEET WITH GROUPS

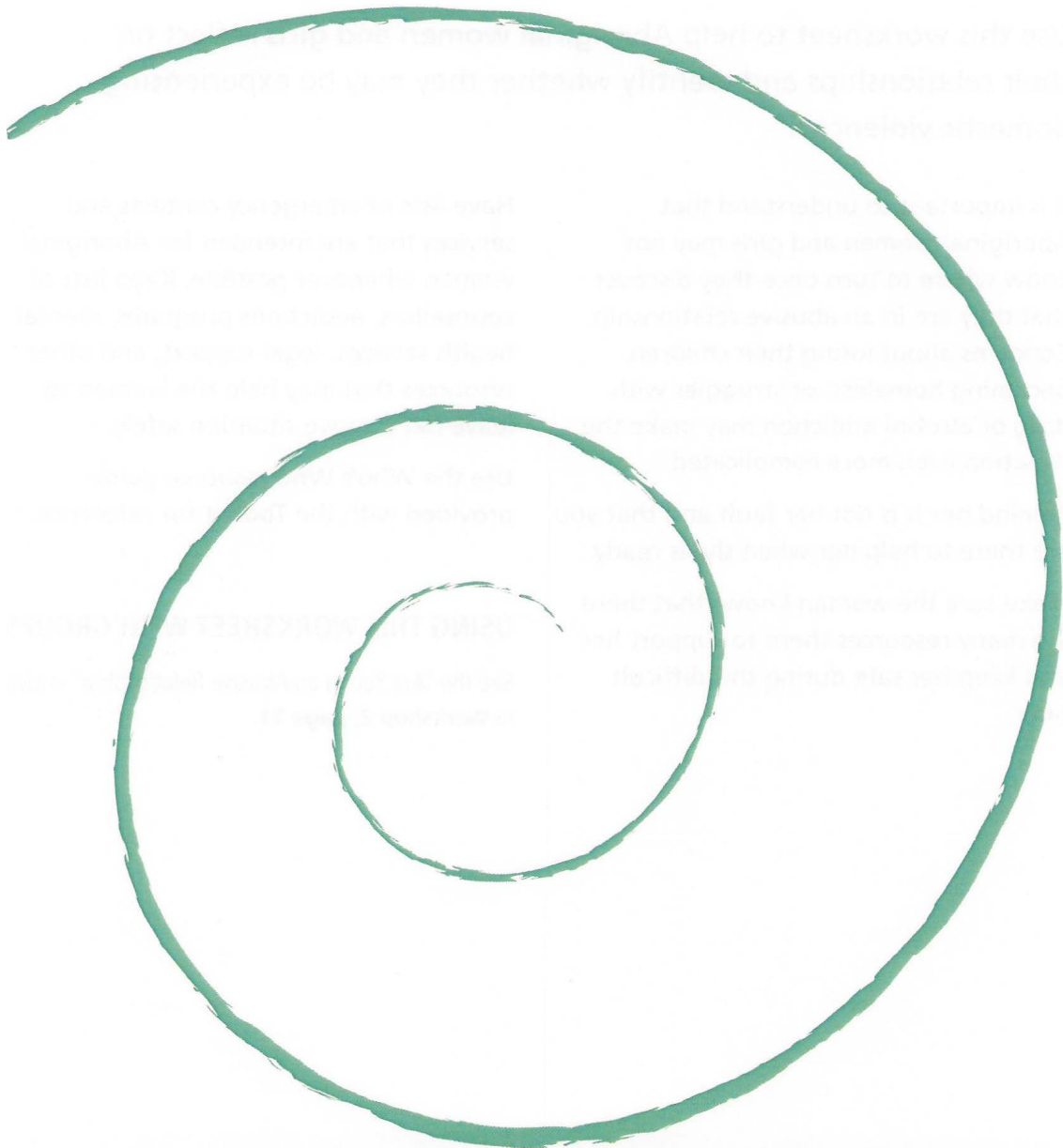
See the "Mapping Personal Life Histories" activity in **Workshop 1, page 32**

WORKSHEET:

Personal Life Histories

In the centre of the spiral, begin with your birth. Create marks along the spiral to represent positive and negative life events that have affected you in some way. Think about how these events may have brought you to where you are today.

Next, think about major events in your family and in Indigenous history, and add any that affected your life path to your spiral. If an event happened before you were born, write it outside of your spiral.





FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Are You in an Abusive Relationship?

Use this worksheet to help Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people reflect on their relationships and identify whether they may be experiencing domestic violence.

It is important to understand that Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people may not know where to turn once they discover that they are in an abusive relationship. Concerns about losing their children, becoming homeless, or struggles with drug or alcohol addiction may make the situation even more complicated.

Remind them it is not their fault and that you are there to help them when they are ready.

Make sure the participant knows that there are many resources available to support them and keep them safe during this difficult time.

Have lists of emergency contacts and services that are intended for Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people whenever possible. Keep lists of counsellors, addictions programs, mental health services, legal support, and other resources that may help the person to leave their abusive situation safely.

Use the *Who's Who* resource guide provided with the Toolkit for reference.

USING THIS WORKSHEET WITH GROUPS

See the "Are You in an Abusive Relationship" activity in **Workshop 2, page 34**.

WORKSHEET:

Are You in an Abusive Relationship?

Sometimes people don't consider their relationships to be abusive because their partner is not like this all the time, or because their partner is apologetic afterwards. However, you deserve to live a life free of violence and threats. It is important to consider the impact of abusive behaviour on your well-being. If you are concerned for your safety, or for your children's safety, it is important to take action.

Answer these questions honestly. Indicate those that apply to you:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do you feel nervous when you are around your partner? | <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner threaten to harm pets, you, your children, or other family members? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do you watch what you are doing to avoid making your partner angry or upset? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you try to please your partner rather than yourself in order to avoid being hurt? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner force you to have sex with them? | <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner keep you from going out or doing things that you want to do? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Are you afraid of voicing a different opinion than your partner? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you feel nothing you do is ever good enough for your partner? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner make fun of you and/or embarrass you in front of others? | <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner say if you try to leave them, you will never see your children again? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner believe your answers when they ask you questions? | <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner say that if you try to leave, they will kill themselves, your children, or you? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is your partner jealous? Does your partner constantly accuse you of cheating? | <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner always have an excuse for their behavior, like: "I was drunk," "I'm stressed because of my job," or "I was just joking"? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner tell you that they will stop hurting you when you start behaving yourself? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you lie to your family and friends about what is really happening in the relationship? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have you stopped seeing your friends or family because your partner doesn't want you to? | <input type="checkbox"/> Does your partner always promise to change and say that this will be the last time they will harm you? |

If you have discovered you are in an abusive relationship, not knowing where to turn is normal.

Untreated or unrecognized mental health issues or addictions may make abusive situations even more challenging or volatile. If these are factors in your relationship, there are resources you or your partner can access.

Healing may include seeking out counselling or addictions services, or speaking to trusted Elders or Knowledge Keepers in your community.

Do not be afraid to reach out for support.



FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Circle of Support

Use this worksheet to help Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people identify their own support system, which may include their family, community, or organizations that will be there for them during difficult times. This worksheet is a visual aid to help a people realize that they are not alone, and that there are people and communities around them that can support and protect them.

First, ask the participant to place themselves at the centre of the innermost circle on the Circle of Support worksheet.

Family and Friends

Ask the participant to write the name of the person closest to them in the circle labeled Family. This could be their mother, sister, aunt, or a close friend. This should be a trusted person they can contact right away in an emergency. The participant should then add to the circle any other people they know that will stand by them and support them during hard times.

Community

The next circle is a place for people to identify the Community resources they can access, such as emergency shelters, therapists, or counsellors. Ask participants to write in the resources they are sure of, such as support groups or safe places they can go.

Nation

The outermost circle is the Nation support system, which can include legal supports such as lawyers and police. People may need guidance with this circle as they may not be familiar with this area of support.

If the participant needs help identifying supports in their community or nation, it may be a good time to review the Who's Who resource guide included with the Toolkit.

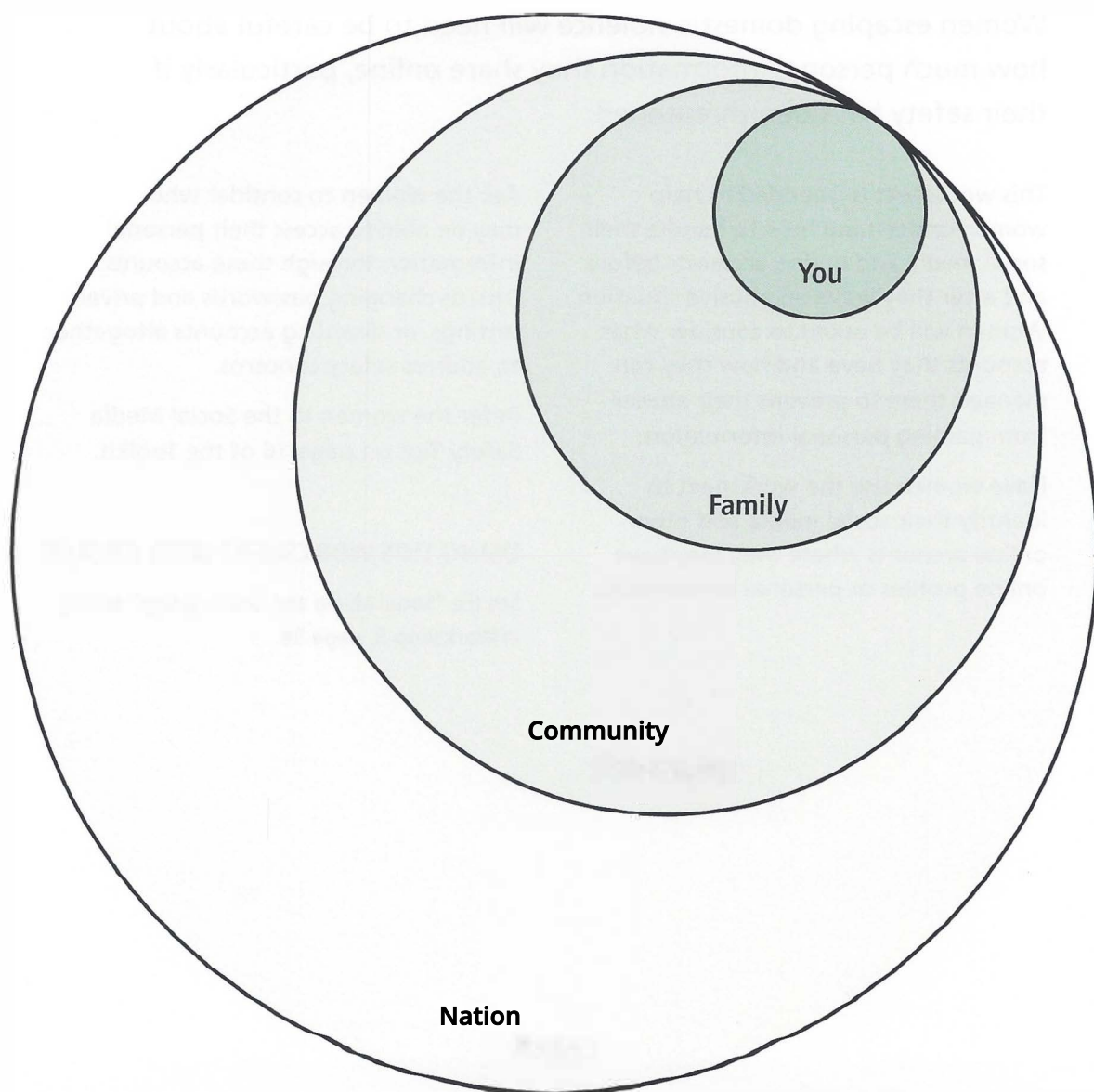
USING THIS WORKSHEET WITH GROUPS

See the "Creating a Circle of Support" activity in **Workshop 3, page 39**.

WORKSHEET: Circle of Support

Use this worksheet to help you see who will be there for you during this difficult time.

Put yourself at the centre of the circle. In the FAMILY ring, write the names of the people closest to you, these could be trusted family members, an Elder, or close friends that you could call in an emergency. In the COMMUNITY ring, identify who in your community could help you. Include counsellors, trusted people in your community, safe places you can go, or supportive groups. In the NATION ring, include larger supports such as lawyers or police.





FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Social Media and Online Safety Checklist

People escaping domestic violence will need to be careful about how much personal information they share online, particularly if their safety has been threatened.

This worksheet is intended to help participants understand how to handle their social media and online accounts before and after they leave an abusive situation. Participants will be asked to consider what accounts they have and how they can manage them to prevent their abuser from gaining personal information.

Have participants use the worksheet to identify their social media and other online accounts where they may have online profiles or personal information.

Ask the participants to consider who may be able to access their personal information through these accounts. Discuss changing passwords and privacy settings, or disabling accounts altogether, to address safety concerns.

Refer the participant to the Social Media Safety Tips on page 43 of the Toolkit.

USING THIS WORKSHEET WITH GROUPS

See the "Social Media and Online Safety" activity in **Workshop 3, page 16**

WORKSHEET:

Social Media and Online Safety Checklist

When leaving an abusive situation, it is very important to consider how your online activities and information you share could affect your safety now and in the future.

Write down any social media or online accounts where you might have a profile or share personal information.

Include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, blogs, dating websites, snapchat and geo-tags. Also consider any mobile apps that display personal details or that track places you visit.

Be sure to use the social media safety tips on page 16 of the Toolkit to secure existing accounts and when setting up any new accounts in order to protect your personal information.

NOTE: Do not write down any personal passwords on the worksheet.

SOCIAL MEDIA/APP/WEBSITE:

User profile/account name:

My profile/personal information is:

Public Friends only Private

I have done the following to keep my personal information safe:

- Changed my password
- Changed my privacy and security settings
- Blocked or unfriended people as needed
- Disabled the account

SOCIAL MEDIA/APP/WEBSITE:

User profile/account name:

My profile/personal information is:

Public Friends only Private

I have done the following to keep my personal information safe:

- Changed my password
- Changed my privacy and security settings
- Blocked or unfriended people as needed
- Disabled the account

SOCIAL MEDIA/APP/WEBSITE:

User profile/account name:

My profile/personal information is:

Public Friends only Private

I have done the following to keep my personal information safe:

- Changed my password
- Changed my privacy and security settings
- Blocked or unfriended people as needed
- Disabled the account



FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

List of Assets

This worksheet will support Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people to identify what assets they may have.

When deciding to leave an abusive relationship, it can be overwhelming to consider material assets, but with the proper information and support, women, girls and gender diverse people can prioritize what to take with them and what they can leave behind.

Their list should also include any pets, as they are sometimes a reason why people do not leave abusive situations.

It may be helpful when starting this exercise to have participants create practical categories for their lists, such as household items, electronics, personal effects, bills, ownership papers, etc.

Participants may require multiple copies of the Assets worksheet if they are making separate lists.

Take into consideration that it may be difficult for people to determine the worth of an asset. Some things may have emotional or cultural significance but not much monetary value, such as photographs or spiritual items, while other assets may have monetary value, but may not be all that useful or valuable to the person as they move forward.

During this exercise, encourage people to discreetly collect copies of banking information, credit cards, official documents, bills and ownership papers for future reference, especially if there is a possibility of requiring a court order or police escort to obtain their personal property.

Introduce participants to the *Matrimonial Real Property Act* on page 17 of the Toolkit if it is relevant to their situation, and discuss their rights around shared assets.

Participants can leave their worksheets with the facilitator for safekeeping or destroy them. It may not be safe for the them to bring them home.

USING THIS WORKSHEET WITH GROUPS

See the "Assets and Matrimonial Property Act" activity in **Workshop 3, page 44**.

WORKSHEET: List of Assets

It can be overwhelming to think about your belongings when leaving an abusive situation. This worksheet will help you make a list of your assets.

If it makes it easier, create different lists to group your assets by type. For example, make lists of property, vehicles, pets, household items, electronics, personal effects, bills and important papers.

Consider whether you want to take something with you or leave it behind. Leave completed worksheets with the facilitator or with someone you trust.

Type of Asset: _____

Asset	Worth	Who owns it?	Keep or let go?
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Type of Asset: _____

Asset	Worth	Who owns it?	Keep or let go?
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____



FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Budgets and Spending Plan Exercises

Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people who are considering leaving an abusive situation may have concerns about their future financial security. Financial awareness is a critical way to help people feel more capable and prepared to move on.

The financial tips and planning tools provided here are very general and are intended primarily for people that have limited knowledge of how to track spending and make simple budgets.

These exercises can assist people in determining their basic monthly expenses, identifying needs versus wants, and figuring out ways to reduce or eliminate unnecessary spending.

When making a budget, it is important for people to determine needs vs. wants. A need is a basic expense, something a person cannot do without, such as housing, food, and transportation. A want is an extra expense, something a person can live without.

If a person identifies an addictive substance as a survival need, that is their reality at this time. Support their decision, offer to provide them with addiction resources if they want them, and move on with the exercise.

When talking about basic monthly expenses, prompt participants to consider costs associated with home or car ownership, such as property taxes or maintenance. Remind them to also consider monthly payments on debts, such as student loans or credit cards in their monthly expenses, since those are not optional expenses.

For the Spending Habits exercise, ask participants to consider what else they spend their money on and determine which expenses they might be able to reduce or eliminate without much hardship.





USING THIS WORKSHEET WITH GROUPS

See the "Basic Financial Tips and Planning Tools" activity in **Workshop3, page 44**.

Please note: There are no corresponding materials in the Toolkit for this activity. The financial tips from this section may be copied and distributed to the participants along with the worksheets.

If participants require additional financial education resources, please seek out organizations or individuals in the community that may be able to provide further services and tools or run basic financial planning workshops for at-risk women/gender diverse people.

BASIC FINANCIAL TIPS

When creating a budget, consider all of the hidden or associated costs. For example, home owners may need to include expenses such as repairs and maintenance, condo fees, and municipal taxes. Car owners should include the approximate monthly cost of maintenance and repairs, insurance, licensing, parking, and gas.

Take into account monthly debt repayment, such as student loans, credit cards, car payments, and other loans.

Whenever possible, a monthly budget should **allow for unexpected expenses** such as car repairs, dental care, and seasonal spending that may be associated with birthdays and holidays.

Identify expenses that could be reduced or eliminated without much hardship. Cancel unneeded subscriptions or services, reduce eating out or shopping budgets, etc.

Credit is not the same as having money.

It is easy to fall into the trap of seeing credit cards as a source of money, but it is very important to keep in mind the cost of repaying the debt and the interest that is added every month.

Buying things on installment or payment plans can seem very appealing, but sometimes payment plans come with very high interest rates or penalties.

If a person has joint bank accounts or debts with their abusive partner, they should discuss their situation with their financial institution to transfer or protect their credit cards and bank accounts.

When considering leaving an abusive situation, people should discretely gather copies of ownership papers, bills, taxation and other financial records.

WORKSHEETS: Budgets and Spending Plan Exercises

Budget Exercise

When making your budget, it is important to determine needs vs. wants. A need is a basic expense, something you cannot do without, such as housing, groceries, and transportation. A want is an extra expense that you can live without.

My Basic Monthly Expenses

Identify the cost of your basic monthly needs in this worksheet.

Monthly	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Groceries												
Rent/Mortgage												
Heat/Electricity												
Phone/Internet												
Transportation												
Medication												
Clothing												
Personal Hygiene												
Childcare												
Entertainment												
TOTAL												

*If you own a house, include the cost of property taxes and water bills.

**If you own a car, include all associated costs, such as maintenance and repairs, parking, insurance, licensing, and gas.

Next, add up all of your sources of monthly income. If your income is unreliable, make your budget based on the amount of money you are reasonably sure you will have each month.

MY MONTHLY INCOME: \$ _____

Spending Plan Exercise

Depending on your situation, there may be expenses that you can reduce or cut out altogether. Consider eating out habits, monthly subscriptions, and spending on "wants" that may be a drain on your finances.

The money you save by eliminating unnecessary expenses can help you reach your goals, navigate unforeseen expenses, and save money for the future.

Ask yourself:

- » How much money do I have?
- » Where does my money go?
- » How can I reach my goals?

My Spending Habits

Use this worksheet to look at your expenses and find ways you can change spending habits to build a more secure future.

Expenses	Monthly Cost (\$)	Reduce or eliminate



FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Positive Statements

An abusive relationship can be very damaging to a person's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, which can affect their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. This worksheet encourages Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people to develop positive self-esteem and self-worth.

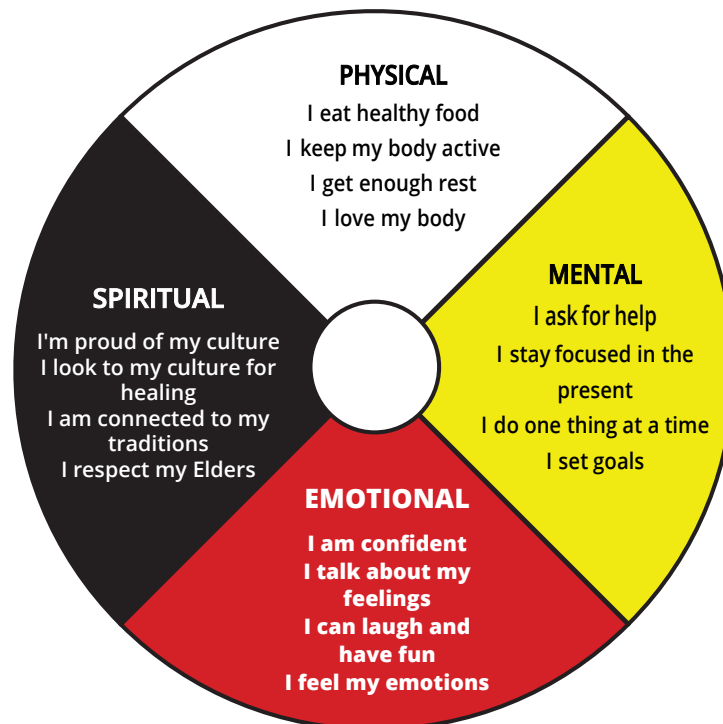
Ask participants to fill out the medicine wheel worksheet with positive statements about themselves and their life.

See the medicine wheel below for examples on positive self-esteem and self-worth statements.

Participants can find this worksheet on page 21 of their Toolkit.

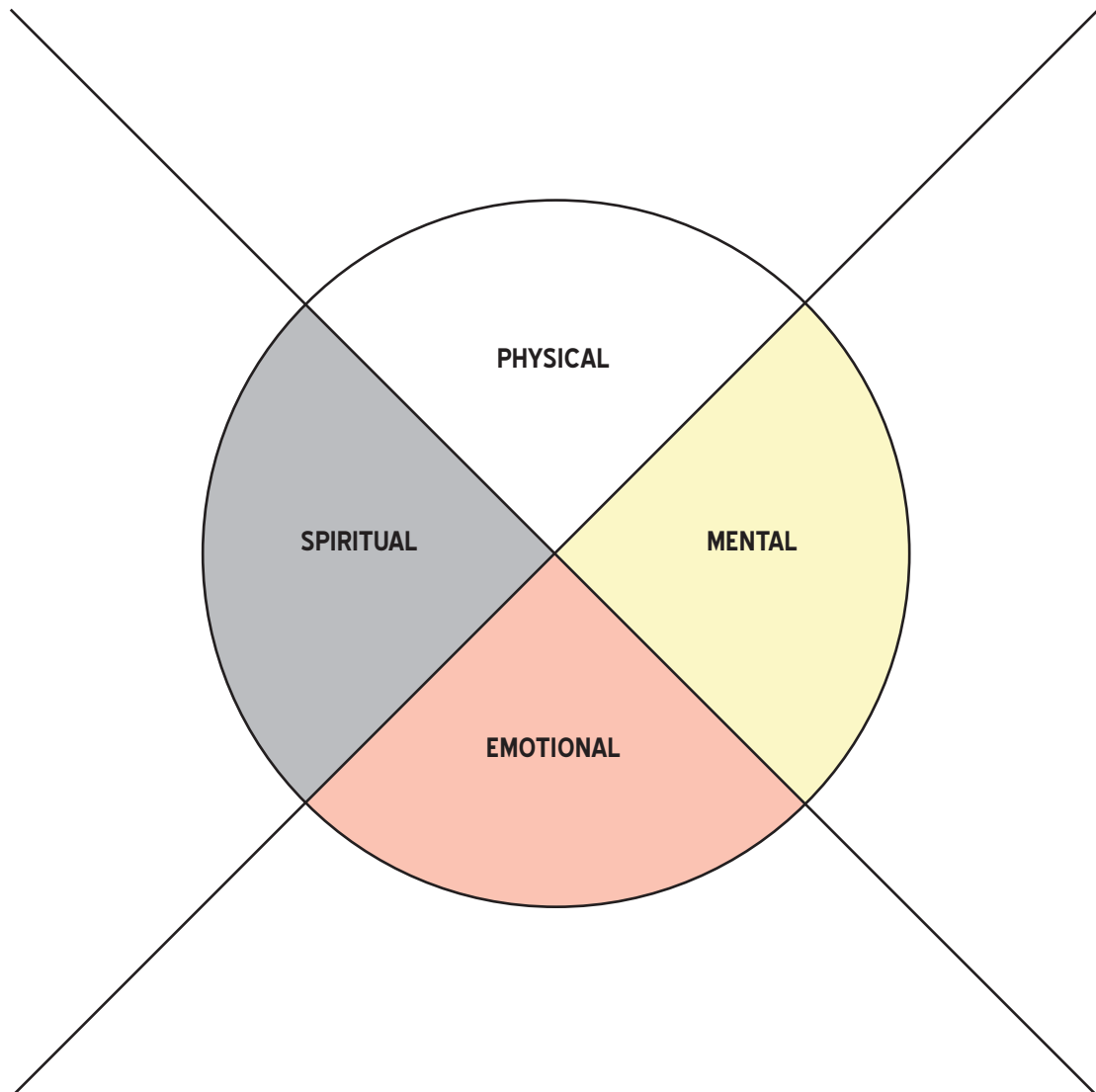
USING THIS WORKSHEET WITH GROUPS

See the "Self-Esteem Exercises" activity in Workshop 4, page 51.



WORKSHEET 8: Positive Statements

Fill out the medicine wheel with positive statements about yourself and your life.





FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change

The medicine wheel creates a holistic understanding of self. It seeks to harmonize all aspects of a person by balancing the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of their life.

Using this medicine wheel-based worksheet will help women, girls and gender diverse people determine what positive changes they could make in their lives, and create achievable action plans. Review the following with a blank medicine wheel and ask what changes the participant would like to make.

Discuss the following areas of the medicine wheel model:

Action

This direction of the medicine wheel symbolizes the physical. This is a place where the participant can begin to take positive action toward change. Here, participants can identify their ideas and goals for their future.

Changes may be small or large, but it is important for participants to first identify what they want before they can consider the steps between here and there.

Learn/Plan

Learning is a very important process in life as it opens up endless possibilities. This direction - one of knowing and understanding - asks the participant to consider what information they need, who can help them, and what steps need to be taken to reach their goals.

Connections with family, friends, communities, and organizations are necessary for people to grow and improve their self-worth. A clear action plan, along with a flexible timeline that leaves room for the challenges of daily life, can help people to manage their objectives and goals.

The next worksheet, called "**Goal Setting and Vision for the Future,**" may be helpful for this planning stage.



Feeling/Sensing

This direction is all about the emotional. How does working toward this change feel? Making changes can allow participants to open up to opportunities and improve their lives. Changes can be emotionally difficult, but having a goal to work toward can make it worthwhile.

It is important for participants to listen to and acknowledge their emotions through all stages of their change process.

Reflection

This direction is a spiritual place, a place of reflection. People need the opportunity to look back on the obstacles they have overcome and to recognize and appreciate their own strengths and resilience.

It is also a time to acknowledge what is working, what is not working, and what further work needs to be done. Reflection may come with the need for further action or new plans, continuing the cycle.

Arrows

The arrows indicate movement in either direction - the turning of time. People may make a plan, move forward with learning, and then go back to modify their plan. This is a natural process.

Moving along the wheel can visually demonstrate a person's current position in their change process and help them determine whether this is what they actually want or if further reflection is necessary.

USING THIS WORKSHEET WITH GROUPS

See the "Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change" activity in **Workshop 4, page 50**.



WORKSHEET:

Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change

Use this medicine wheel worksheet to help you consider changes you may wish to make in your life as you move forward. Consider that change requires a balance of all aspects of your being, not just action.

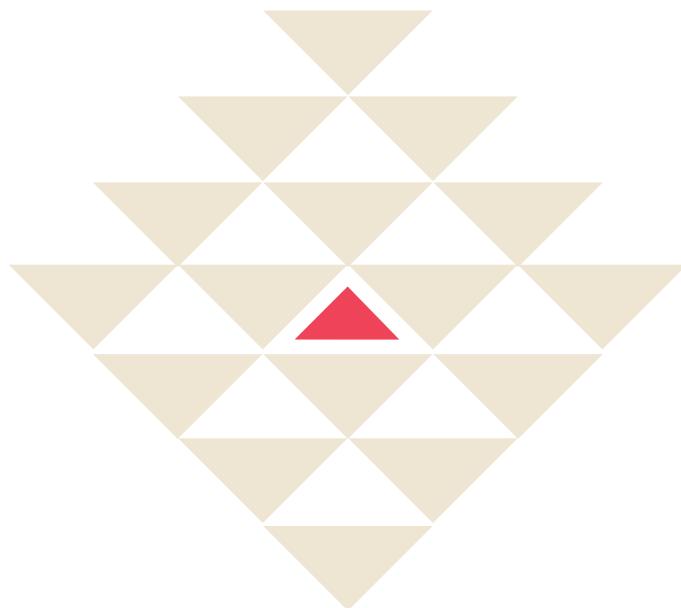
Action: What change do you want to make? What do you need to do to make this change? What actions can you take? Are you following through with your plans?

Learn/Plan: What information do you need to know to make this change? Who can support you? What plans and steps can you take?

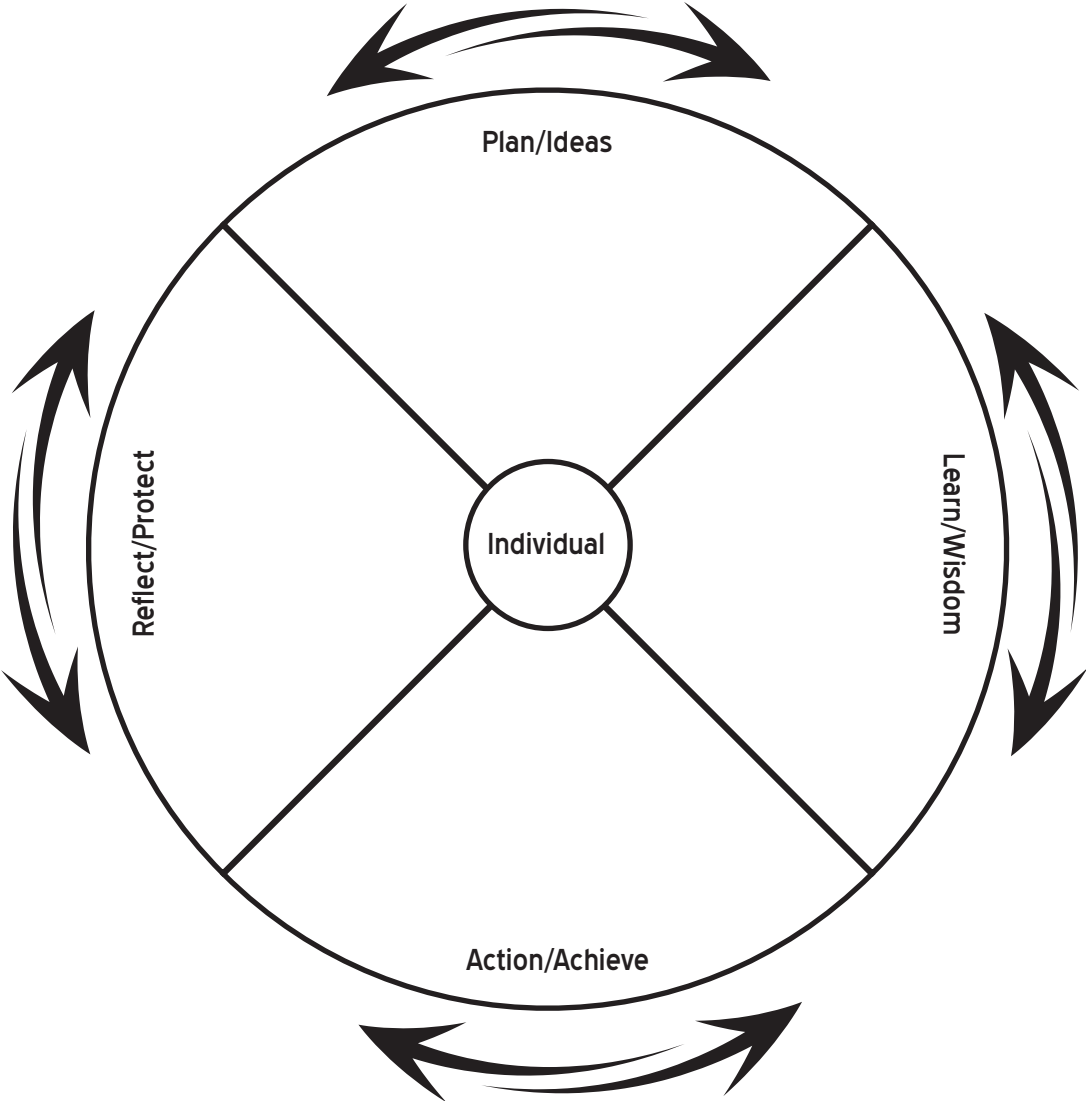
Feeling/Sensing: What are your emotions telling you? How does making plans for change make you feel? How do you feel about your plan or progress?

Reflection: What are your reflections on this change? What have you overcome so far? How can you monitor this change? How can you maintain the changes you have made? Are there adjustments that need to be made?

The arrows around the wheel symbolize that there is not always a set beginning and end to a change, and that each step is as important as the next.



WORKSHEET:
Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change





FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:

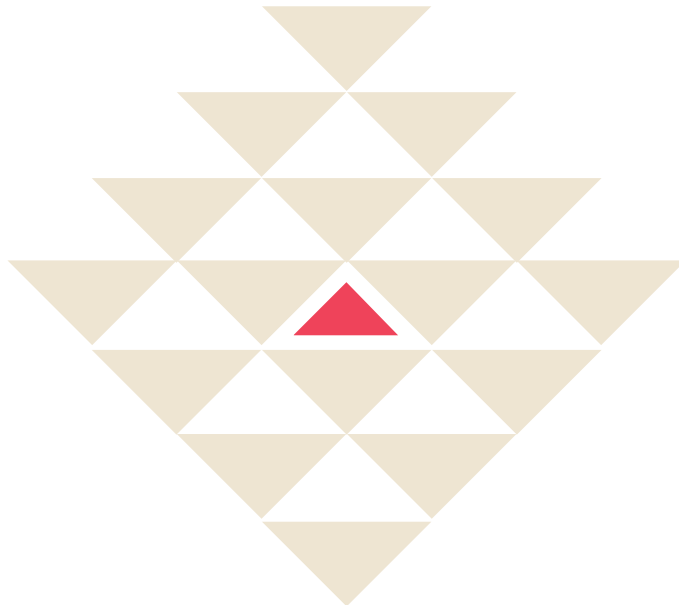
Goal Setting and Vision for the Future

This worksheet is designed to encourage Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people to see the possibility of a brighter future for themselves and their family.

Practical steps in the planning process can encourage a more positive way of thinking and help women to understand that a positive future is obtainable. The participant can continue to use this worksheet as a reflective tool for themselves and their family in the future.

USING THIS WORKSHEET WITH GROUPS

See the "Medicine Wheel as a Tool for Change" activity in **Workshop 4, page 50**.



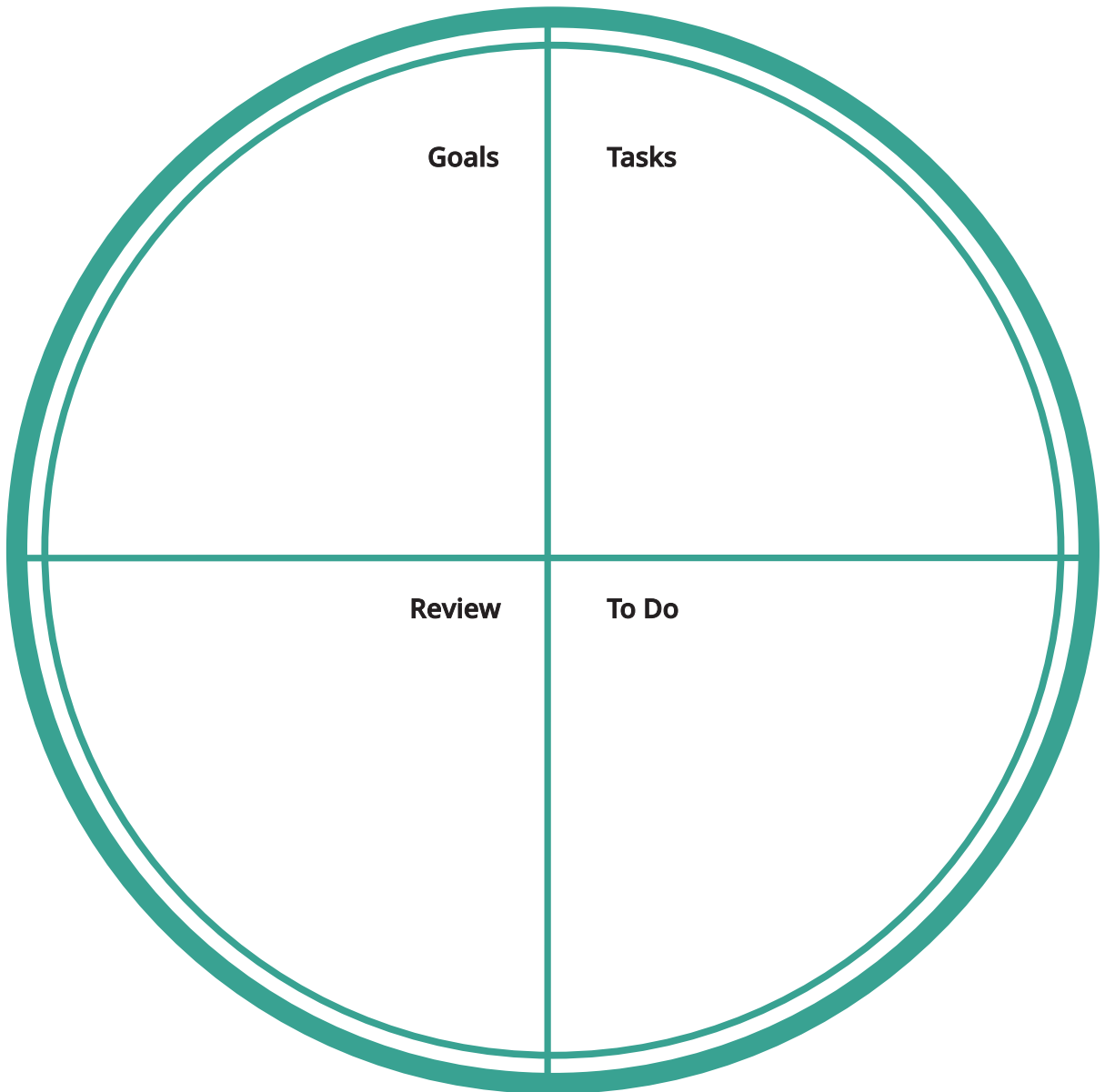
WORKSHEET:

Goal Setting and Vision for the Future

Let's see what possibilities your future can hold!

Think about what you want for yourself and your children. Set some goals for the future, and then identify what you might need to know or gather before you can take action.

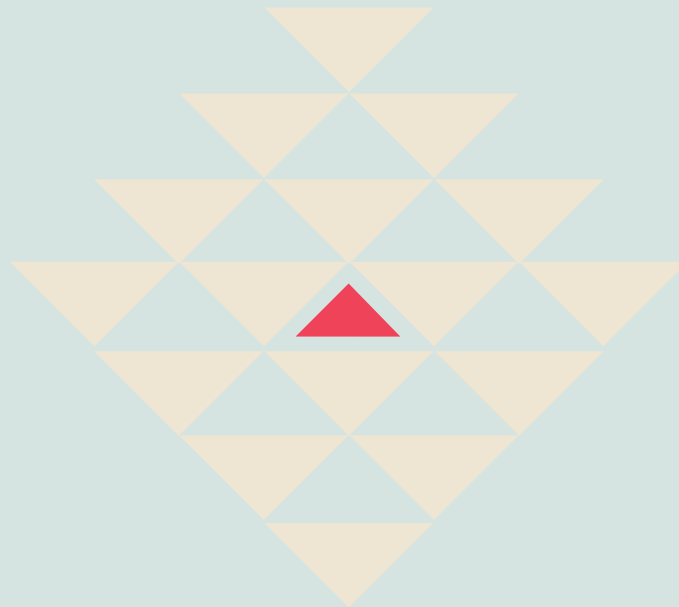
Create a detailed to-do list of actions you can take, and then reflect on your accomplishments. You can make it happen!





Appendix 2: Handouts

Historic Events Timeline	80
Early Warning Signs of Domestic Violence	82
Why Do We Stay?	83



Historic Events Timeline

The timeline below shows just a few of the many historic and recent events that have had profound and long-term effects on Indigenous nations, communities, families, and individuals.

European Contact

1850 First treaties signed with the Crown.

1876 The Indian Act is passed, essentially extinguishing any remaining self-government for natives and making them wards of the federal government.

1870s The first residential schools open. Their painful legacy is still felt today.

1885 The Indian Act is amended to prohibit traditional Indigenous culture practices.

1951 Major changes to the Indian Act to remove a number of discriminatory rules, including a ban on native consumption of alcohol, although it is only allowed on reserves.

1960 First Nation people are given the right to vote in federal election without losing their status.

1960s Dramatic increase in the number of Indigenous children taken from their families by child welfare agencies. This period is referred to as the **Sixties Scoop**.

Historic Events Timeline Continued

1985 The federal government passed Bill C-31 which changes the Indian Act to extend formal Indian status to Indigenous women who had previously lost their status by marrying a non-Indigenous or non-status Indian.

1990 The **Oka Crisis** was a land dispute between a group of Mohawk people and the town of Oka, Québec. It began on July 11, 1990 and lasted until September 26, 1990.

1996 The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) issued a five-volume, 4,000 page report that covered a vast range of issues. Its 440 recommendations called for sweeping changes to the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments in Canada.

2008 Prime Minister Stephen Harper makes a public statement of apology on behalf of the federal government for the residential schooling policies. In the same year, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established.

2010 Bill C-3 is passed, amending the Indian Act to ensure that grandchildren of Indigenous women would have status, an attempt to eliminate gender inequality.

2015 The final report on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is released, including 94 Calls to Action to address the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation.

2015 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announces a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Early Warning Signs of Domestic Violence

Possible 'red flags' are if your partner:

- ___ Wants to move into the relationship too quickly.
- ___ Wants to know where you are all the time.
- ___ Expects you to be with them all the time.
- ___ Doesn't want you to visit your friends or family.
- ___ Gets upset or angry when you socialize without them.
- ___ Disrespects women by saying things like, "all women are sluts."
- ___ Puts down his ex-partners by calling them "crazy," "whores," or "bitches."
- ___ Makes you feel guilty for being successful.
- ___ Gets upset if you don't text or call them back right away.
- ___ Makes you believe that any request is too much.
- ___ Blames everyone but themselves for their actions.
- ___ Has poor communication skills and is unwilling to talk about serious issues.
- ___ Angers easily then apologizes quickly, and this behaviour keeps happening.
- ___ Showers you with compliments and gifts then abruptly stops.
- ___ Treats other women badly or sexualizes them by making inappropriate comments.
- ___ Makes racist remarks toward Indigenous peoples, or people of colour.

You deserve to be treated with respect. Never settle for anything less.

If your partner exhibits many of these "red flag" behaviours, you should consider talking to someone you trust before involving yourself further in the relationship.

Stay connected with a good support system and be sure to participate in healthy self-care practices to avoid getting involved with a partner who is abusive.

HANDOUT:

Why do We Stay?

- You love them, but don't love their behaviour.
- You doubt your ability to start a new life, find a new home, and raise your children by yourself.
- You're afraid that they will harm or kill you, your children, other family members, or themselves if you leave.
- You feel guilty about "breaking up the family" or you feel guilty because they can be kind sometimes.
- You're worried about leaving your community or your culture behind.
- You believe their promises and apologies.
- You hope that they will change and start treating you well.
- You don't have enough money to support yourself and your children.
- You're worried that you won't find another person who will want to be with you.
- You feel like you don't deserve to be treated better.
- You believe that children need both partners in their lives, even if one of them is violent.
- You believe that you should "make it work" and stay committed to a relationship, even if it's abusive.

ENDNOTES:

- ¹ Native Women's Association of Canada, "Community Resource Guide What Can I Do to Help the Families of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls?" *Native Women's Association of Canada*, 2010, http://www.nwac.ca/sites/default/files/imce/2012-02-14_NWAC_CommunityResourceGuide_full_e.pdf
- ² Native Women's Association of Canada, "Community Resource Guide What Can I Do to Help the Families of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls?," *Native Women's Association of Canada*, 2010, http://www.nwac.ca/sites/default/files/imce/2012-02-14_NWAC_CommunityResourceGuide_full_e.pdf
- ³ Ontario Native Women's Association, "Breaking Free: A Proposal for Change to Aboriginal Family Violence," *Ontario Native Women's Association*, 1989, http://www.onwa.ca/upload/documents/breaking-free-reportfinal_1989-pdf.doc.pdf
- ⁴ Native Women's Association of Canada, "Arresting the Legacy: from Residential Schools to Prisons," (toolkit, Ottawa, Ontario, 2011).
- ⁵ D'Arcy Rheault, "Solving the "Indian Problem": Assimilation Laws, Practices & Indian Residential Schools," *Ontario Métis Family Records Center*, 2011, <http://www.omfrc.org/newsletter/specialedition8.pdf>
- ⁶ Native Women's Association of Canada and Justice for Girls, *Gender Matters: Building Strength in Reconciliation* (Ottawa, Ontario: Native Women's Association of Canada, 2012).
- ⁷ Native Women's Association of Canada, "Community Resource Guide What Can I Do to Help the Families of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls?," *Native Women's Association of Canada*, 2010, http://www.nwac.ca/sites/default/files/imce/2012-02-14_NWAC_CommunityResourceGuide_full_e.pdf
- ⁸ UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (A/RES/48/104)*, 20 December 1993, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>
- ⁹ NWAC Violence Prevention Toolkit, 2007
- ¹⁰ Women Victim of Abuse Protocols, *Government of New Brunswick*, 2013
- ¹¹ Canadian Women's Foundation, "Fact Sheet: Moving Women out of Violence," *Canadian Women's Foundation*, 2014.
- ¹² Parliament of Canada, "The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples," 1999, <http://www.loppar.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/prb9924-e.htm>



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