

VERSION 1
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NAPIESV
NATIONAL ORGANIZATION
OF ASIANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS
ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

SEXUAL VIOLENCE BACKGROUND, CONTEXT AND TERMS

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDERS
ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE (NAPIESV)
www.napiesv.org

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

GOALS:

1. To learn about the Collective Context: history, oppression, trauma and healing
2. To learn about Sexual Violence in API communities: issues and solutions

Agenda

Sexual Violence: background, context and terms

TIME	TOPIC	NOTE
9:00 – 9:30 am	Welcome, Overview, Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About NAPIESV NAPIESV listening sessions report Curriculum creation and flow of topics 	
9:30 – 9:40 am	Body work – Tools for Well-Being	
9:40 – 10:00 am	Introduction of participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> general question of what they want to learn 	
10:00 – 10:30 am	Disclosure, Boundaries and Agreements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion and participatory 	
10:30 – 11:00 am	Context: Collective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asian Pacific Islanders: who are we? Our history : short overview Group discussion and sharing 	
11:00 – 11:15	Break	
11:15 – 11:45 am	Sexual Violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is Sexual Violence SV in API Communities : issues and resources available 	•
11:45 am – 12:15 am	Trauma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is trauma? What Sexual Assault Does to the Brain? Common reaction to trauma 	
12:15 – 12:45	Oppression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is oppression? What is privilege 	
12:45 – 2:00	Lunch	
2:00 – 2:15	Body work – Tools for Well-Being	
2:15 – 3:00 pm	Identities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex identities 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribed identities 	
3:00 – 3:30 pm	Historical trauma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is historical trauma? • Impact of historical trauma and generational trauma in individual and community 	
3:30 – 3:45	Break	
3:45 – 4:30 pm	Healing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective work • Individual and Collective healing 	
4:30- 5:00	Q & A , close	



INTRODUCTION
OVERVIEW

WELCOME, INTRODUCTION and OVERVIEW

- **About NAPIESV**

The creation of NAPIESV was a result of the lack of resources available for advocates serving API victims of sexual assault.

See www.napiesv.org for more information

- **NAPIESV listening sessions report**

Download the report here <http://www.napiesv.org/resources/napiesv-reports-publications/>

NO ONE CAN TELL OUR STORIES BUT US: A DIALOGUE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITIES

Narrative: *Not to romanticize or demonize*

As APIs committed to ending violence in our communities, we need to be able to tell our own stories and name our own truths. We cannot be forced into narrow assumptions or stereotypes about our culture, ethnicity, race or histories, nor our genders, desires, bodies or families. Our testimonies of sexual violence are diverse, complex and nuanced. There is not one standard API experience of sexual violence.

MIRROR ON THE WALL: HOW DOES SEXUAL VIOLENCE MANIFEST ITSELF IN OUR COMMUNITIES?

There are many ways in which sexual violence takes shape in our communities, particularly the impact of sexual violence. Because sexual violence is so prevalent, the effects of it are widespread in almost every community that we know of, and API communities are no different.

INHERITANCE: QUESTIONS TO ASK OURSELVES

As resilient people who have learned to cope with pervasive sexual violence, in this moment, we must ask ourselves critical questions for what our futures hold. What do we want our children to inherit? What kind of a world do we wish for them? What would safety and justice mean and look like for them and what does that require of us now?

STRATEGIES: COMING TOGETHER and REMEMBERING WHO WE ARE

In order to move forward in addressing sexual violence within API communities, we must move forward together. We must remember our collective legacies of survival, resistance and resilience in the face of fear and erasure. This is long-term work that we are a part of and we will need each other to do it.

WE KNOW WHAT TO DO: SOLUTIONS

When we talk about creating spaces for stories of sexual violence to be shared and learned from, we understand that this requires more from us. These kinds of spaces must be created with utmost care and deliberation.

- **Curriculum creation process**

Listening sessions in five regions

Report

Request from advocates to have a curriculum or guide book

Consultation meeting with consultants

Draft of curriculum

Curriculum testing

Curriculum summit

- **Flow of topics:**

DAY 1:

Sexual Violence: background and context

Child Sexual Abuse

DAY 2:

Youth Sexual Exploitation

Human Trafficking, Militarism and Community Organizing

DAY 3:

Transformative Justice/ Community Organizing

Healing

TOOLS FOR WELL BEING

BODY WORK - Tools for Well-Being



CAPACITAR Emergency Response Tool Kit

Patricia Mathes Cane, Ph.D., Capacitar Founder/CoDirector

Tools for Wellbeing

The health of body, mind and emotions is continuously affected by trauma, violence, weather, diet, environment, daily news, and the challenges of life. The use of simple ancient healing skills can empower us to live with peace and wellbeing no matter what is happening around us. The following Capacitar exercises are offered to be used at times when we feel drained, scattered or depressed. These tools are for all of us, whether we are survivors of trauma, caregivers working with others or persons overwhelmed and stressed by daily life. The challenge is to build these practices into our lives and lifestyle, so they become second nature and can be readily called upon whenever we are aware of traumatic stress, energy drain, depressed feelings or loss of center. Please copy, distribute and use these with yourself and with others. More practices and theory can be found in our manuals and website www.capacitar.org.

BREATHWORK

Breath is the source of life, bringing fresh energy into the tissues and cells to nourish body, mind and the whole person. When we breathe out, accumulated stress and toxins are released. Breathing through a stressful time is an effective way to let go of the tension that accumulates in the body. A few long deep breaths at a difficult moment can completely change the way we handle a situation. Breathwork combined with images of light or nature can promote feelings of peace, calm and focus.

• **Abdominal Breathing** Sit comfortably supported and close your eyes. Breathe deeply and center yourself, letting go of all worries and thoughts. Place your hands on your abdomen, breathe in deeply through your nose and imagine the air moving down through the body into your center within your abdomen. Imagine that your abdomen fills with air as if it were a balloon. Hold your breath for a few moments and then exhale slowly through your mouth, contracting the muscles of your abdomen, letting go of all the tension in your body. Continue abdominal breathing for several minutes. If thoughts come into your mind, gently release them, returning to the image of the air moving in and out of your body.

• **Breathing in Nature** Nature is a great resource for healing and grounding. With feet on the ground, breathe in deeply imagining that your feet are long roots running into the earth. Breathe in earth energy, breathe out stress, tension and pain.

TAI CHI ENERGY EXERCISES



The Rocking Movement

Stand with feet separated shoulder-width apart, hands at sides. Raise your heels and with palms facing upwards raise your hands to the level of your chest. Turn your palms downward and move your hands downward while you lower your heels and raise your toes in a rocking movement. Continue slowly rocking back and forth, breathing deeply. With each move drop your shoulders, relax your arms and fingers. Do the exercise smoothly and slowly. Breathe deeply and imagine that your feet are planted securely on the earth. As you raise your hands imagine that you are able to bring down into body and mind healing energy to cleanse and fill you. This is a very beneficial movement for trauma and depression.

The Shower of Light

With left foot forward, raise your hands up over your head, then move them downward as if showering yourself with light. Feel the energy cleansing and filling your being. Repeat on the right side, with right foot forward. Breathe in the shower of light, and then exhale and let go of any negativity within you. Feel the light cleansing and renewing you. This is an excellent for persons who are depressed or dealing with past wounds of trauma.





Let Go of the Past and Open to Receive

With left foot forward, palms curved softly downward, push your hands outward in a gentle arc, letting go of all tension, negativity, and violence within you. Turn palms upward and draw them back towards the chest, breathing in peace and healing.. Repeat with right foot forward. Breathe out the pain and violence. Breathe in peace and healing.

Fly through the Air

With your left foot forward, your left hand upward, swim or fly through the air. The motion should be free and light with arms and shoulders relaxed. Repeat the movement on the right side starting with your right hand upward. Fly freely through the air letting go of all that weighs you down, feeling light, alive and free. Open your heart to all the possibilities for your life and healing. This is good to release pain in back, shoulders and head.



DISCLOSURES
BOUNDARIES
AGREEMENTS

DISCLOSURE, BOUNDARIES and AGREEMENTS

By Mia Mingus as part of Transformative Justice/ Community Accountability Curriculum

- **Preparation**

It is important to prepare for doing work around Sexual Violence.

Some things to think about are:

Yourself:

How you want to prepare yourself for presenting about Sexual Violence?

What do you need to do to take care of yourself?

Where are your triggers around violence and people's responses to violence?

What kind of support might you need before and after?

Are you prepared to hold disclosures that might happen in the room and after?

How will you handle trauma responses or conflict that might come up in the room?

Participants:

It is always a good idea if possible to give people a head's up about taking care of themselves beforehand. This could be a simple email the organizer of the session sends out as participants RSVP or it could look like the way you open the room up, letting people know that this material may bring up unexpected feelings for them.

It could also look like having a quiet space designated in another room for people to be able to go and sit if needed or having support people onsite whose job it is to support participants if they need.

Or having people who agree to check in with people if they abruptly leave the room. Because there are so few spaces to talk about violence, there can be a lot that comes up with participants and staying aware of this is important as facilitators.

The room /space:

Think about how you want the room and space to feel. What will best support the work you want to get done?

Perhaps having rows instead of an open circle lends itself better to people being able to sit with their emotions and not feel like they are "on display" or vulnerable.

Perhaps having a living thing in the room, such as a plant, or a window in the room helps it to feel less like an office or meeting room.

Maybe you want to clear space in the back of the room for people to be able to stand, stretch or pace or care for their children without having to leave the room/group?

- **Introductions**

Make sure everyone has a chance to introduce themselves. You can do this in a large group or in pairs or small groups, depending on the size of the room and how much time you have.

It is a good idea to have everyone say at least their name, pronouns they use and one other thing (e.g. a fun question, access check-in, what brings them here today or how are you today).

You can also have people include what organization or group they are with, if it is helpful. Use this space as a chance for participants to check-in about how they are.

- **Welcome:**

Welcoming people into the space and the session are important. This is different than introductions and check-ins. Welcoming people includes a greeting and a smile, maybe a “thank you for being here.”

Always welcome people into the room before jumping right in. It lets everyone take a bit of a collective breath.

- **Agreements:**

Agreements are very useful to set at the beginning of the session for many reasons:

They help to set a clear container for the space and time, make sure everyone is on the same page and create a collective touchstone for the room. This is especially useful in case someone breaks the agreements, in which case the facilitator (or other participants) can refer back to the agreements.

They build consent and trust between the facilitator and the participants. This is especially important when you are talking about intimate violence

They let everyone be part of collectively creating the space, which means that participants are more likely to feel more comfortable with participating.

The following agreements have been especially helpful in teaching about Sexual Violence. Offer the following agreements (write what is in bold below) and explain them to the room, take any questions.

Then ask if participants would like to add more. Always end by getting consent from everyone in the room about the listed agreements. If needed, remove, edit or add agreements as necessary, until everyone can agree on all of the agreements for the day.

Take care of yourself: Please do what you need to do to take care of yourself, for example, if you need to step out, stand at the back of the room, draw, etc.

Be thoughtful of disclosures: If you chose to disclose about violence, please do not share graphic details, as this may be triggering for other people in the room.

If you chose to disclose about violence, ask yourself if disclosing takes care of yourself, both now and later. How will you feel after you've disclosed? Also think about if disclosing helps take care of the room; does it help move the content forward?

Confidentiality: What's said in this room stays between the people here. The learnings can be shared, but any personal information may not be shared.

For the people in the room, always ask for consent before bringing up something someone may have shared. They may not want to talk about it at the time, in that setting, with you or ever again

Speak from your own experiences: Please refrain from making generalizations about groups you are not a part of, as well as groups you are a part of. Speak from your own experience and what you know to be true. Use "I" statements and phrases such as, "in my experience" or "For me..." or "For my community..."

This is especially important when talking about violence, as all survivors are not the same and all people who have abused are not the same. All survivors do not feel the same way about the people who have been violent towards them and all people who were witness to violence do not have the same feelings about their experiences.

There are many complicated factors that surround violence and acknowledging them and staying keenly aware of them helps to strengthen the kinds of responses to violence that we'll be able to build.

This is not a healing space, though healing may happen here: Healing might happen in this space for you, but this is not necessarily a healing space. We want to make room for emotions and being our whole and best selves here, and we also want to be mindful that this is a learning space. We value healing in this space and we also want to make sure people are supported in their healing, so want to be clear about the purposes of this space.

We need each other to end violence. No one is disposable: This can usually get filed under agreements like "respect everyone" or "assume best intention" or "don't make assumptions," but I have found that phrasing it like this helps to ground people in purpose, which helps to inform their practice.

We cannot end violence alone, we need each other. Treat each other well and respect people's different opinions and where they are (or aren't). It is not about being right or about being the smartest, most radical person in the room. Practice compassion and curiosity with each other and less judgment. No one in this work is innocent.

CONTEXT

CONTEXT:

1. Discuss the collective context

- API in general
- Collective issues must be addressed collectively – not individually

WHO WE ARE and WHERE WE CAME FROM

YURI KOCHIYAMA STATED "As long as we don't know our history and other's history, there will be no positive interactions or understanding." There is a great need to discover factual information that are not often disclosed in many of today's history books.

Collective history:

Example:

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN

HISTORICAL TIMELINE DETAILS (1600 to 1874)

Our victories, obstacles and leaders http://us_asians.tripod.com/timeline-1600.html

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HISTORICAL TIMELINE

http://us_asians.tripod.com/timeline.html

2. Asian Pacific Islanders: who are we?

- Show map of Asia and Pacific Islands



- Ask participants their home country and/or where their ancestors came from and put marks on the map
- Short overview of migration history:
<http://www.umass.edu/complit/aclanet/USMigrat.html>

From NAPIESV listening session: Conditions surrounding **immigration and immigration status** can also affect an API individual's experience of sexual violence and of seeking services and support, specifically as it relates to work, wages and whether one has a sponsored visa or is undocumented

"With people losing jobs and forced to share a house with other families, what we see is kids that are now around 16 years old [who] have been molested since they were 10 years old." (from one of the advocate listening sessions)

- Rape as a weapon of war

War rapes are rapes committed by combatants during armed conflict or war, or during military occupation often as spoils of war; but sometimes, particularly in ethnic conflict, the phenomenon has broader sociological motives. It is distinguished from sexual assaults and rape committed amongst troops in military service.^{[1][2][3]} It also covers the situation where girls and women are forced into prostitution or sexual slavery by an occupying power.

During war and armed conflict, rape is frequently used as a means of psychological warfare in order to humiliate the enemy. War rape is often systematic and thorough. War rape may occur in a variety of situations, including institutionalized sexual slavery, war rapes associated with specific battles or massacres, and individual or isolated acts of sexual violence. War rape may also include gang rape and rape with objects.

Rape is also now recognized as an element of the crime of genocide when committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a targeted group; however, rape remains widespread in conflict zones. There are other international legal instruments to prosecute perpetrators but this has occurred as late as the 1990s.^[citation needed] However, these legal instruments have so far only been used for *international* conflicts, thus putting the burden of proof in citing the international nature of conflict in order for prosecution to proceed.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_rape

- Groups discussion: share with participants in your group about your individual and community history - add to the map

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

NAMING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

1. What is Sexual Violence?

- Sexual Violence (SV) refers to sexual activity where consent is not obtained or freely given. It occurs any time a person is forced, coerced or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity.
- There are many types of SV. Not all include physical contact between the victim and the perpetrator (person who harms someone else). The range of sexual violence includes:
 - Rape
 - Sexual Assault
 - Incest
 - Sexual Exploitation
 - Unwanted or Inappropriate Sexual Contact
 - Sexual Harassment
 - Exposure
 - Threats
 - Stalking/Cyberstalking
 - Peeping
- Sexual Violence is a crime. It is motivated by the need to control, humiliate, or harm. It is not motivated by uncontrollable sexual desire. Perpetrators of SV use sex as a weapon to dominate and hurt others. Most survivors of SV knew their perpetrators before the assault.

2. Sexual Violence in API communities - Discussion:

- Issues and Resources available
- Findings from NAPIESV Listening sessions
- Exercise: draw circles of home, neighborhood and community. Put a mark where violence happens. Put a mark where Sexual Violence happens.

Findings from Listening Sessions:

- ***"I never told anyone all these years." (Survivor)***
- ***"I didn't want to talk about it because of all of the emotions. You're supposed to be strong by yourself and keep your story to yourself." (Survivor from one of the elders' listening sessions)***

TRAUMA

TRAUMA

1. What is Trauma?

Finding from Listening Sessions:

- *“I had nine siblings and only I came to the U.S. Communists killed my four kids in front of me during the war. I was put in a well and my husband was separated from my other two children and me. My mother in-law helped me and my two children leave and we were able to reunite with my husband in a camp in Thailand. Once we came to the U.S., my husband met a younger woman and left me. I was asked to leave the house and now I live on my own. I gave up my son because I could no longer raise him. It’s hard to get along with others; I am happier to be in the elderly center because of less isolation and I’m able to be with others.”*

“Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life.” — Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*

- The word “trauma” is used to describe experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing, and that overwhelm people’s ability to cope, leaving them powerless. Trauma has sometimes been defined in reference to circumstances that are outside the realm of normal human experience. Unfortunately, this definition doesn’t always hold true. For some groups of people, trauma can occur frequently and become part of the common human experience.

Examples of Traumatic Events:

- Car accident
- Political or domestic violence
- Rape, incest or torture
- Death of family or friends
- AIDS, Cancer, serious illness
- Natural disasters: hurricanes, etc.
- Experiences that cause impotence, helplessness, fear or terror

Sexual Trauma: experiences that have impacts on our sexualities such as incest, rape, molestation, body shaming, bullying.

2. What Sexual Assault Does to the Brain?

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/12/10/how-the-trauma-of-sexual- n 6294546.html>

To understand the mechanics of how memories can become faulty, it's important to understand the way the brain is wired to respond to trauma. The intense fear that comes from experiencing a traumatic event suggests to a victim's body that she is experiencing a threat to her survival, activating the amygdala -- an area of the reptilian brain involved in both fear processing and

stress response. When the amygdala starts sending out alerts, we go into survival mode, putting the brain and body on high alert.

In response to the amygdala's alerts, [the adrenal glands](#), which are chiefly involved in stress response, secrete a flood of opioid-boosting hormones. These hormones, as well as the stress hormone cortisol, are meant to help the individual to cope with the physical and emotional pain of the traumatic situation.

On the one hand, we're hard-wired to try to remember a traumatic event. This makes sense from an evolutionary perspective: we need to live through the trauma, and then be able to communicate the threat to others. But the hormones we release can make it more difficult for the amygdala to work together with the hippocampus to encode and consolidate information, disrupting the victim's remembering of the event, according to Rebecca Campbell, a community psychologist at Michigan State University [who has lectured widely](#) on the neurobiology of sexual assault.

3. Common reaction to trauma

NORMAL reactions to ABNORMAL events.

Personal Reaction to Trauma

Trauma is different for each person. An individual's reaction depends on: personality, family history, emotional makeup, age, personal relations, culture, support system and resiliency.

Trauma such as, incest, rape or abuse of children, destroys the sense of self-esteem and security in the child and can cause serious problems later in life.

- **Fight-Flight- Freeze Reaction**
- In the moment of danger the fight/flight/freeze reaction is a natural and automatic mechanism to help the body survive. This involves:
- **Increase of:** state of alert, breathing, blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tone, and fight/flight reaction.
- **Lessening of:** function of digestive and reproductive systems, immune system and other systems less needed at the time of danger.

Impact of Trauma on an individual

- **Experiencing crisis:** avoiding reminders, intrusive thoughts, hypervigilance, night terrors, body memories, flashbacks, inability to mobilize resources, difficulty sleeping, eating, reduction in awareness, significant impairment in social or academic functioning, suicidal ideations/attempts, sense of a foreshortened future, inability to concentrate, mood swing, numbing out, pretending it didn't happen, feeling shaky and fearful, never wanting to be alone, afraid of everyone
- **Adjustment and Coping (Surviving):** person is *perceived as functioning*, yet internally is experiencing, severe crisis, increase in risky behaviors and use of survival skills, avoiding people, places, activities associated with traumatic event, flashbacks/nightmares, restricted range of affect, numbing of responsiveness, some increase in ability to mobilize assistance and resources, (depending on survival skills), decrease of interest/participation in important

activities, sleep disturbances, perfectionism (attempt to regain control), sadness, lethargy, unable to feel love, joy, self-blame, feelings of worthlessness and undue guilt

- **Integrating Experience:** Incomplete memories of the trauma may remain, May feel pressure to continually disclose assault, feeling detached or estranged from other, efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, and activities that remind one of the trauma (survival skills) are transformed into healthier coping skills, Incomplete memories of the trauma may remain, can find positive aspects of healing process, sees being a survivor as *one* aspect of who they are, may decide to share story with others, may want to advocate for others, finds creative and healthy ways to express residual feelings, finds joy again, knows it was *not* her/his/their fault

Helpful Coping Strategies

- mobilize a support system -- reach out and connect with others, especially those who may have shared the stressful event
- talk about the traumatic experience with empathic listeners
- cry
- hard exercise like jogging, aerobics, bicycling, walking
- relaxation exercise like yoga, stretching, massage
- humor
- prayer and/or meditation; listening to relaxing guided imagery; progressive deep muscle relaxation
- hot baths
- music and art
- maintain balanced diet and sleep cycle as much as possible
- avoid over-using stimulants like caffeine, sugar, or nicotine
- commitment to something personally meaningful and important every day
- hug those you love, pets included
- eat warm turkey, boiled onions, baked potatoes, cream-based soups -- these are tryptophane activators, which help you feel tired but good (like after Thanksgiving dinner)
- proactive responses toward personal and community safety -- organize or do something socially active
- write about your experience -- in detail, just for yourself or to share with others

Most theories and interventions are made to address trauma, not the context

- What if you are already traumatized, disempowered, or marginalized when a new trauma occurs?
- These theories do not address the socialized, internalized, or generational identity



OPPRESSION
PRIVILEGE

OPPRESSION & PRIVILEGE

Sexual violence does not occur in isolation. Victims of sexual violence are affected by many forms of oppression, including racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, ageism, ableism and others. These forms of oppression often compound the effects of sexual victimization, exacerbating the trauma and isolation victims and survivors experience. People of color; people living in poverty; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people; elders; people with disabilities and other diverse persons are affected by sexual violence in unique and devastating ways.

NAPIESV works at **developing a cross-movement analysis**, as well as working to build relationships and partnerships to address sexual violence in API communities. We recognize the importance of recognizing the **connections between sexual violence and other forms of violence and oppression**. And we believe that **to effectively build a movement to end sexual violence within API communities, we must include an extensive range of API communities and voices that can speak to those connections, oppressions and social conditions**. (NAPIESV Listening Sessions Report)

Intersection of oppression

Intersectional theory examines the way race, class, gender and sexuality work together in creating inequality: an interlocking system of oppression

- Add Socio-Economic
- Add Immigration status
- Add skin color
- Add language/accent
- Add education
- Add (dis)ability
- Add Deaf community

Findings from Listening Sessions:

Conditions surrounding immigration and immigration status can also affect an API individual's experience of sexual violence and of seeking services and support, specifically as it relates to work, wages and whether one has a sponsored visa or is undocumented.

What is privilege?

Unearned advantages or benefits bestowed upon members of certain groups. Often invisible to those who have it. Opportunity to be an ally.

PRIVILEGE/OPPRESSOR GROUPS	TARGET GROUPS
Men	Women
Whites	People of color
Straight people	Lesbian/gay/queer Bisexual people
Christians	Jews/Buddhists/ Hindus/atheists/ Muslims etc.
Generic/non-disabled people	People with disabilities
(Young) Adults	Children/Seniors
American born people	Foreign born people
Middle class/wealthy	Working class/poor

IDENTITIES

IDENTITIES

Findings from Listening Sessions:

“When I speak, I have to identify who I am and there is no way to speak freely. Our stories get used for other agendas. This is state violence combined with partner violence.” (from one of the advocates in the strategic dialogue session)

1. Context of complex identities

- Intersectionality
- Multiple identities: We all have multiple/complex identities: Race, gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, immigration status, (dis)ability, language, etc.

Exercise: work individually and share what you feel safe about yourself: race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, (Dis)ability, nationality, religion, immigration status etc.

Exercise:

My Identity:

- Race
- Class
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- (Dis)ability
- Nationality
- Religion

Exercise: using play dough, choose a color to represent each identity, mix all colors you chose: This represent you - a unique individual.

- Select an identity you feel safe to share about with someone at your table
- How has this identity shaped your worldview?

2. Compartmentalization of identities

- Are you this or that?

Findings from Listening Sessions:

Many times the stories we hear are not **representative of the diversity of the peoples nor hold the many complexities** of gender, race/ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, ability and cultural traditions.

- What if you don't fit into "prescribed identities"?

Multiple identities and compartmentalization. Intersectionality of sexism and racism (as well as other identities)

Findings from Listening Sessions:

Isolation and exile faced by many **APIs who do not meet prescribed gender roles and expectations within their communities**, often leave them vulnerable to many forms of violence with little to no support, particularly if they are queer and transgender APIs

A **false monolithic category and does not recognize the diversity of API communities** and the ways in which our different cultures and histories of violence impact our current experiences of violence

HISTORICAL TRAUMA

HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Findings from Listening Sessions:

- individual impact across our communities many times over, as many sexual assault survivors struggle with their physical, psychological and emotional health and often have very little access to culturally competent healing and support services
- result is evident not just around individual trauma but also **around collective and generational trauma**
- ***“I had nine siblings and only I came to the U.S. Communists killed my four kids in front of me during the war. I was put in a well and my husband was separated from my other two children and me. My mother-in-law helped me and my two children leave and we were able to reunite with my husband in a camp in Thailand. Once we came to the U.S., my husband met a younger woman and left me. I was asked to leave the house and now I live on my own. I gave up my son because I could no longer raise him. It’s hard to get along with others; I am happier to be in the elderly center because of less isolation and I’m able to be with others.” (from the elders’ listening session)***
- **as communities continue to remain silent about sexual violence the impact of our responses also takes a toll on all of us** that includes lack of trust, isolation of those in pain, creating a culture of shame and secrets around one of the most common experience of violence, and protecting abusers and blaming survivors as well as their supporters who speak out and we are passing on to the next generation
- ***“Organizations have resettled refugees in certain apartment complexes where there are many single women with children, most of whom got divorced in their home country because of domestic violence before coming to the U.S. There is a dynamic within the community that when the woman arrives, she is a free-for-all and then sexual assault and rape occurs in these close-knit communities. Perpetrators stereotype these women as non-virgins, single status, and free for all.” (from an advocate at one of the listening sessions)***

1. What is historical trauma?

* David S. Derezotez “Transforming Historical Trauma through Dialogue”

- Historical trauma is a reaction to violent experience that challenges the person to develop new ways of thinking and behaving.
- Our current theories suggest that human responses to trauma influence not only the individual across the life span but also the traits of our descendants.
- In a human being, historical trauma seems to be stored in an evolving “memory complex,” which contains many form of information. Each person responds to these memories in unique ways that reflect her own internal and external world.

- Thus we can say that historical trauma is an “ ecobiopsychosociospiritual” process, in that ecological, biological, psychological, social and spiritual elements are all involved.
- Another way to express this is that trauma is a body-mind- spirit-environment process.

2. Historical trauma and generational trauma in individual and community

- Hyper vigilance and the trauma of voluntary or involuntary immigration/migration
- The processes of assimilation and acculturation
- Denial and invisibility of one’s culture/history
- Internment, registration and other forms of forced labor or isolation
- Sex Trafficking, sexual slavery and VAW in war, colonization, and poverty
- Women forced into sexual “relationships” with slave owners, pimps, coyotes, traffickers
- Abusers force pregnancy, disallow safe sex methods, disallow birth control, force sex work

HEALING

HEALING

Healing takes place in the context of the survivor's multiple identities

COLLECTIVE HEALING: Community Organizing, Community Accountability and Collective Healing,

1. Community organizing as a strategy

Findings from Listening Sessions

- Community organizing as a strategy

Importance in **developing a cross-movement analysis**, as well as working to **build relationships and partnerships to address sexual violence in API communities** **remember our collective legacies of survival, resistance and resilience in the face of fear and erasure. This is long-term work that we are a part of and we will need each other to do it.**

- Remembering who we are: use tools we have but often forget, let go things that are not useful anymore. Envision a new way!
- **spaces** to be able to tell our own stories and name our own truths - **breaking the silence** around our experiences of sexual violence and **creating spaces** where we can openly share our stories is vital to our work
- **Envision a new way and embracing the past/history**

2. Transformative Justice/ Community Accountability

Findings from Listening Sessions:

- Importance of **recognizing the connections between sexual violence and other forms of violence and oppression**
- **target the root cause of sexual violence** – not only on the incidences themselves, but also on the conditions that allow for sexual violence to continue
- We cannot continue to individualize acts of violence without connecting them to the larger system in which we live.
- Violence is **systemic** and requires that we organize for major systemic change at an institutional level as well as community and individual levels.

3. Individual and Community healing

Findings from Listening Sessions:

- **Spaces to be able to tell our own stories and name our own truths - breaking the silence** around our experiences of sexual violence and **creating spaces** where we can openly share our stories is vital to our work
- ***“I never told anyone all these years.” (Survivor)***
- ***“I didn’t want to talk about it because of all of the emotions. You’re supposed to be strong by yourself and keep your story to yourself.” (Survivor from one of the elders’ listening sessions)***
- The first step would be **education to reveal the connections between sexual, intimate, communal and state violence to reveal how violence is encouraged and supported through laws, policies, culture and collective practices.**

Healing: **COMING TOGETHER and REMEMBERING WHO WE ARE**

- Many of us **do not know our ancient practices for individual** and **collective healing and wellness**, and we do not want to have to learn it from those who have stolen, co-opted and sold it back to us
- We must **remember and reclaim our spiritual and cultural practices as our own**. In doing this, we also must **reimagine them because we know that many of our practices serve to perpetuate the violence that we want to end**.
- We must also begin to **redefine the meaning of “community,” especially in relation to ending violence**
- **Inclusion** of an extensive range of API communities and voices that can speak to those connections, oppressions and social conditions
- We will have to **build solidarity** with each other not just with other racial and ethnic groups, but within and across API communities as well
- So **few opportunities for API male survivors of sexual violence** to open up about their victimization with one another
“API males need to step up in showing API males how to be a better person – be a role model.” (from one of the men’s listening sessions)
“How API/Asian men are perceived: as emasculated, asexual, very smart, obedient.” (from one of the men’s listening sessions)
- **Elders had mostly been left out of the movement against sexual violence**, so the work of intergenerational building must include them and their experiences of sexual violence, as well as support for them in healing from those experiences. We must relearn and cultivate the transferring of history if we are ever to build a healthy future
- it is not only our elders we must engage, but also our **youth**
- We must **invest in and learn how to support young leadership** in our intergenerational work.
- Value **the important role of healing** in our work

- We must **create spaces that go beyond offering testimonies** and tackles the work of what collective healing would look like for our communities
- What would it mean **to begin healing from not only generational sexual violence, but also from colonization, war, imperialism or internalized oppression?**

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