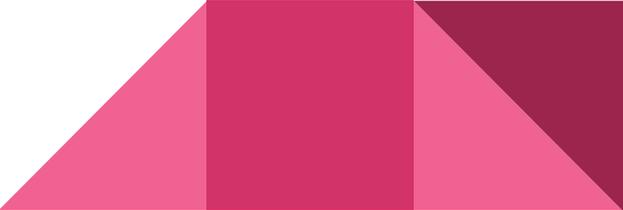


# CARING FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL TRAUMA

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# Trigger Warning

- During this activity we will talk in detail about childhood sexual abuse, rape, and intimate partner violence which may trigger intense emotional responses.
- It is OK to show emotion.
- It is OK to leave this activity right now, at any time, and for any period of time.

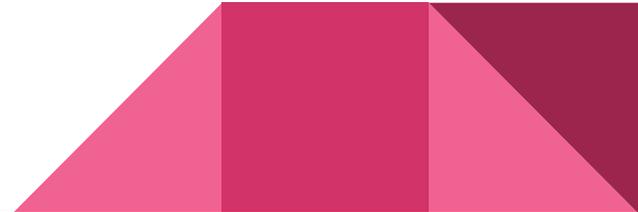


# Another Model: Give her control

- Recognize that sexual trauma is very common.
- Remind ourselves that her fear is legitimate.
- Realize that a principle factor is that she hasn't had control of her body.
- Give her control.

# A Rite of Passage?

- 1 in 5 girls will be sexually abused by an adult before age 12
- 1 in 4 teenage girls and women have survived a rape or attempted rape.



# Abortion and Re-victimization

- Stigmatized socially, politically, and economically.
- Often not covered by health insurance.
- Aggressive protesters.
- A gynecological procedure that may be painful.
- Consequence of sex

# Common Red Flags

- Current or past IVDU.
  - Obesity.
  - Lack of appropriate gyn care.
  - Frequent somatic complaints.
  - Early diagnosis of PTSD, bipolar, depression, anxiety.
  - “Difficult” or “High-maintenance” patient who complains of pain and fear.
- 

# Risk Factors

- Everyone is at risk, but...
- Other adverse childhood events.
  - Parental addiction or mental illness
  - Death or incarceration of a parent
  - Violence in the home
- Participation in foster care or correctional facilities.
- Native girls and women
- Girls and women with disabilities.
- Gay and trans women and men.



# What Constitutes “Trauma?”

- Must it be penetrative?
- Must it hurt?
- Must we call it “rape” or “abuse?”
- Must it be perpetrated by a person?



# The Spectrum of Sexual Trauma

- Torture ←-----→ Misogyny and Shaming



# Triggers

- Emotional
    - Shame
    - Fear
    - Powerlessness
  - Physical
    - Pain
    - Any sensation on certain body parts (genitals, anus, inner thighs, abdomen, breasts, neck, mouth)
    - Shallow breathing or breath holding
    - Muscle tension
    - Tachycardia
- 

# When we are the trigger...

Healthcare providers

Teachers

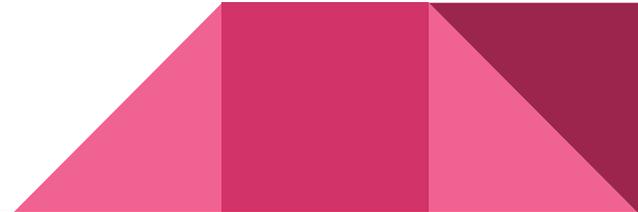
Police Officers

Social Workers



# Emotional Triggers:

- Shame
- Fear
- Powerlessness





# The Shaming of the Poon

- Cultural-Social shaming of female sexuality and female bodies interwoven with a total media obsession with objectifying female sexuality and the female body.
- *Poon* and *Poontang* are common slang words for female genitalia or the act of having sex with a woman.
- Originates from the French *putain*, meaning *whore*.



# Shame

- While guilt is “I did a bad thing,” shame is “I am a bad person.”
- It exists on a very basic level in many survivors of sexual trauma.
- It increases often during pregnancy, desired or not.



# Anxiety and Fear

- She isn't “a hard patient”, her experiences have been hard.
- Having difficulty with gynecological exams is a normal reaction to those experiences.
- Our bodies have memory.



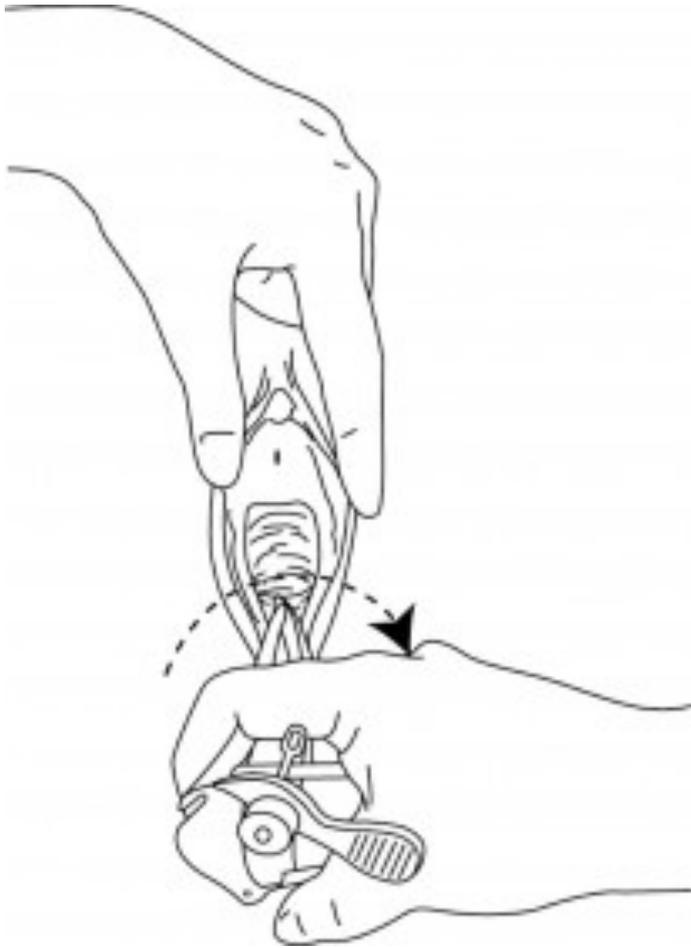
# Power and Control

- The motivation behind rape is removal of power and control, it's not about sex.
- Sex is the weapon chosen to inflict pain, violence and humiliation.
- A medical visit should not create more pain, violence and humiliation.



# Other tips:

- Value her communication
  - Value her participation
  - Will sedation help? Or make her feel even less in control?
  - Avoiding other triggers:
    - “Relax”
    - “Trust me”
    - “Sweetie, honey, darling, etc...”
    - Touch in certain places:
- 



So, why  
would we  
put the  
pokey parts  
up there?



# Thanks to my teachers:

Marissa

Universal Precautions

Destiny

Be creative

Yvette

Sometimes nothing works



Thank you!

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