

"Everyone can learn from this book, not just survivors of sexual assault." -An Anonymous Consentopian

CONSENTOPIA

A CONSENT EDUCATION MANUAL

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This eBook contains information that is intended to help the readers be better informed on health care and sexual assault recovery. It is presented as general advice. Always consult your trusted healthcare professional for your individual needs.

The methods describe within this eBook are the author's personal thoughts. They are not intended to be a definitive set of instructions. You may discover there are other methods and materials to accomplish the same end result.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1- Introduction.....	page 3
Chapter 2- Welcome to Consentopia.....	page 9
Chapter 3- Times Pop Culture Got Consent Wrong.....	page 14
Chapter 4- Enthusiastic Consent.....	page 18
Chapter 5- Apprehensive Consent.....	page 23
Chapter 6- Asking for Consent.....	page 26
Chapter 7- A Message to Survivors	page 34
Chapter 8- Healing the Mind	page 39
Chapter 9- Healing the Body.....	page 42
Chapter 10- Healing the Spirit.....	page 45
Chapter 11- How to Get to Consentopia.....	page 48
A message from the Author	page 54

Chapter 1: Introduction

Consentopia, the magical land that everyone is talking about! What's the big deal with this place and why does it matter? As a survivor of molestation and rape, living in a place like Consentopia would have saved me from a world of pain. Consentopia is a utopian society where sexual violence does not exist. It's a place where people communicate and respect each other's boundaries. This introduction will explain a little bit about my background as a survivor of sexual assault, activist, and consent educator.

The first time I experienced sexual violence, I was twelve years old and it was at the hands of my neighbor. Since I was so young and all his words were so sweet, I had no idea that I was a victim of sexual abuse.

In the eyes of a child, I believed that I was in a relationship because the perpetrator told me he loved me. I had no idea that I was being taken advantage of.

I had been warned about rape and molestation my entire life. Everyone always made it seem like older men were the predators. No one ever warned me about those sweet-talking seventeen-year-old boys. Even when they did, I glamorized the attention so much that even when I was uncomfortable, I just smiled through it. "Smiling through it", I learned, is a subconscious self-defense mechanism that many people use to suppress their true feelings.

I continued to smile through it each time I was sexually assaulted by different friends and trusted individuals. I have been sexually assaulted more times than I can count. You'll read about many of those experiences in my memoir. Until then, below is a list of significant life events that inspired this book.

TRIGGER WARNING: *Please skip this part if reading about sexual assault is triggering for you.*

Age 12- molested by neighbor

Age 13- raped at summer school

Age 17- raped on my birthday

Age 18- raped by cousin

- moved to France for college (and also to escape slut-shaming and rumors)

Age 21- raped by friend after a party

Age 22- failed suicide attempt that led to my spiritual journey

- started doing yoga and meditation
- moved back to USA
- came out of the closet
- raped by ex-girlfriend
- began doing psychic readings on myself (with an oracle card deck that I was given) to understand more about my life path

Age 24- passed same-sex marriage in three different states while working for the Human Rights Campaign

Age 25- raped by a “friend” who targeted me because I was lesbian

- wrote, directed, and starred in feminist theatrical pieces
- raped by roommate in New York City
- founded the organization #StopRapeEducate
- began learning about consent and sexual health

Age 26- raped during #StopRapeEducate World Tour

- immediately turned to spirituality for strength, healing, and empowerment
- decided to change the name from “#StopRapeEducate” to “Creating Consent Culture”
- retreated to nature to heal my mind, body, and spirit
- dug deeper in my research on consent and holistic treatments for trauma

Age 27- raped during a threesome

- received a life-changing long-distance reiki session
- began the practice of clearing my chakras and energy field daily
- healed myself with art therapy, music therapy, movement therapy, and medicinal cannabis

Age 28- began clearing my chakras and energy field daily

- raped by a shaman in California that I went to for healing
- experienced my first soul retrieval with a healer and eventually went on to complete seventy more soul retrievals on myself
- was told by a psychic that the trauma I experienced was so that I could make the world a better place

Age 29- became a Certified RaSekhi (KemetiC Reiki) Practitioner to heal myself and fellow survivors

- gave hundreds of psychic readings and dozens of RaSekhi cleanses for survivors of sexual assault around the world within the first six months of 2018



Photo by Nikki Silvers, 2016, Santa Rosa, California

“I can no longer count the times I've been raped (the more you learn about what consent REALLY is, the more you realize you didn't give it) & it was just eight months ago that my body was brutally violated, but, I've managed to keep my sanity in the following ways:

- ☆ 1. Forgiveness. A few days after Shakir raped me in Cape Town, I prayed under the glorious full moon and released ALL negative emotions about the incident and blessed all people involved.
- ☆ 2. I know that it is NEVER a survivor's fault, allowing me to release blame for myself.
- ☆ 3. Staying in the present moment is the key to happiness. If you're busy worrying about the future and feeling sad about the past, then you will live in a constant state of suffering. Being Present allows me to be One with the Universe, and, in that oneness, I am perfectly happy and safe.

☆ 4. Staying focused. Living in sadness gives power to the rapist. I released his hold over me when I forgave him and haven't looked back at it since. I have a purpose and destiny to fulfill in life and I know that nothing can get in the way of that.

☆ 5. Commit to healing. Healing is a process. I have committed to healing so that I can grow into a dynamic diva.

☆ You can do it! I know because I did. I believe in you!”

-Originally published on Instagram June 30, 2016

Chapter 2: Welcome to Consentopia

In Consentopia there's no such thing as violence of any kind, and certainly not sexual assault! In Consentopia, women, people of color, and LGBTQIA folks are treated fairly at all times. There's no sexualization, fetishization, or eroticization of women, children, men... let alone inanimate objects (like BANANAS, for example).

Everyone walks around with a sense of security in Consentopia. You never need to worry about safety issues. You never need to wonder how much skin is too much.

Day by day, people are waking up to the reality that things need to change. We need to change the fact that many women and girls feel unsafe around men. We need to change the fact that little girls are being sent home from school for showing "too much skin" (a roundabout way of sexualizing female children). We need to change the fact that every two minutes, someone is raped in the United States of America. We need to change the fact that in 33 states rapists can sue their victim for custody rights. We need to change the fact that 97% of rapists never spend a day in jail. We need to change the fact that most survivors feel unsafe to speak up and report a crime.

This e-book will demonstrate ways we can create a better world by establishing a culture of consent, or, in other words, Consentopia!

More and more people are talking about consent every single day, so much so, that depictions in the media are even changing. We are in it to win it when it comes to consent!

To start, let's address the fears that most people have in regard to using consent. In the past few years as a consent educator, I have gotten a lot of push-back on the implementation of verbal consent in the bedroom. Tons of people believe that adding verbal consent to their sex life will take away from it, ruin the mood, and make sex even more awkward than it already is.

From research I've done inside and outside of the bedroom, I have found that verbal consent only spices things up! Being a survivor of sexual assault, it always meant so much to find a partner who actively asked for consent each time we had sex. Just hearing words like, "Can I touch you here?" or "How do you like that?" always got my juices flowing. When I decided to try it out myself and start verbally asking others for consent, I realized that it turned my partners on quicker than ever!

Using consent in the bedroom increases pleasure because it builds trust, creates a stronger bond between you and your partner(s), and also it demonstrates respect and compassion.

With that being said, does consent ruin the mood? The short answer is "no". The long answer is: only if you have convinced yourself that it will! *wink*

And, let's be real: if the mood is all you're worried about when it comes to sex, you've got your priorities messed up because nothing ruins the mood like rape. You can quote me on that!

Consent should be your main priority in the bedroom. Consent can make or break the mood. Focus on consent **first!**

There are two unique ideas I would like to introduce to the consent culture conversation. First, I would like to discuss consent in regard to energy. (As an energy healer, this is critical!) Secondly, I would like to discuss consent and unwanted commentary.



[pomelomela](#):

Even the most sexed up man in all of history knew that taking advantage of women was never ok.

Have you ever been in the middle of minding your own business when someone came along with negative energy that threw your whole day off? Whether it was complaints, attacks, or frustration...you didn't ask to be on the receiving end of bad vibes.

In order to create a culture of consent, we must hold *ourselves* accountable for problematic behavior. This includes our demeanor and the vibrations we send out into the Universe.

When you are pissed off and need to vent, find a person who *consents* to holding space for you. You can also channel those emotions into writing, sports, art, music, meditation, and spiritual practices.

Refrain from carelessly spreading negative energy to others carelessly. Find a way to speak to someone (whether it be a friend or therapist) who can be there for you and truly help you.

Often times, we take our anger out on others. From now on, express your emotions in a manner that empowers you and the listener(s). When you are irritated for no reason, stop, slow down, and check in with yourself. Ask yourself: Why am I angry? Is that *really* why I'm angry? How can I channel these emotions in an empowering manner? What will uplift me the most right now?

Focus on *solutions* instead of allowing yourself to fall into self-loathing or self-sabotage, that way, the people around you will not become victims to toxic energy.

The first step toward consent culture starts with holding yourself accountable for your thoughts, actions, energy, and words. The more you put out positive energy, the more you receive in return.

I have a friend who has an alarm set for every day at 1:11pm. The message that pops up when the alarm rings is, “What were you just thinking?” It’s a way of holding himself accountable for his thoughts so that he can improve his way of thinking and break negative thought patterns.

What is the energy of consent culture? Love. When you emanate the energy of love, you attract it. When you shine your light, it reflects onto others. Putting consent culture in the forefront of your mind means *you are putting love on a pedestal*.

When it comes to consent and energy, always be sure to emit the highest vibration possible. This means refraining from judgement, negativity, and egoic thoughts of separation. By letting love lead your life, you are bound to attract an abundance of positive circumstances.

Next, I would like to address consent and unwanted commentary. Before you start preaching about “freedom of speech”, you should know that your right to free speech protects you from *government* censorship. That’s what freedom of speech is about. Just because you have the *right* to say what’s on your mind, doesn’t mean that you should communicate violently.

The number one targeted community of people who receive unwanted commentary on a daily basis are women. Women are constantly receiving unsolicited advice, told what to do, how to act, what to wear, when to speak, and how to exist by men.

The control of women began when Europeans arrived in Afrika. They saw beautiful, voluptuous naked women walking around with exposed breasts and immediately sexualized them. Natives were given garments to cover up. They declared the natural state of a woman’s body “indecent”. They vilified and sexualized breasts, while completely overlooking their main function: to nourish babies.

The colonization and brutal rape of Afrikan women changed the Motherland forever. Eventually, men of all backgrounds began to sexualize women leading to a greater problem: the emergence of rape culture and the patriarchy.

This change did not happen overnight. From generation to generation, rape culture trickled down and eventually it became a lifestyle.

We see the glorification and objectification of women everywhere in the media. Women’s bodies are used to sell everything from cars to hamburgers, even though it has been scientifically proven that sex *doesn’t* sell.

As they say, if the product was any good, they wouldn’t need a bikini model to push it to the public.

As pioneers of consent culture, it's our duty to find ways to educate young boys and girls about consent so that they grow up to be respectful individuals. When you fail to educate children about consent and send them off into the world, you are directly contributing to rape culture as a parent, whether you intend to or not.

Every child should learn that their body is THEIRS. Let them know that they are safe to communicate with you about their sexual experiences, consensual or not.

Talking about sex should not make you squeamish. Sex is the most important thing that people need to learn about, but, are rarely educated on. Instead of waiting for our school systems to catch up, parents and parental guardians must start *now* in educating the future generations on consent culture.



Photo by Ana Harff, 2016, Buenos Aires, Argentina

“A LESSON ON CONSENT: I’ve always been a nudist, but, after getting raped in 2015, I started spending even more time in the nude to reclaim my body and heal.

The first thing I did after the assault was go to the jungle of South Africa where I skinny dipped in waterfalls with strangers and swam naked in the Indian Ocean. Men I didn’t know saw me and the other women naked. They didn’t stare, harass, or even touch us. They got naked, too, and we all swam and had fun!

SEXUALIZATION IS A CHOICE. Men are not helpless beasts with no control over their sexual appetite.

You can choose to respect someone, or, you can choose to submit to your lower self and sexualize them.

A lot of men think they don't have a choice due to cultural programming. How many times has a man sexually assaulted/harassed you (in one way or another) and made the excuse that he "couldn't help it"?

We know you can do better, men, and we **will** hold you to a higher standard.

What's interesting is that I'm over here being naked to heal and reclaim my body, yet, my dad had the nerve to tell me to stop posting nude pics online.

Parents need to learn and understand that your child's body is THEIR BODY. You have NO RIGHT to tell anyone what to do with their body and it doesn't matter who you are!

This is my freedom. This is my healing. If you don't get it, you don't have to. This is not about you.

This is about overcoming the worst of the worst and you're not helping by dictating what someone else should do with their body...especially if you're speaking to someone who has been raped."

-Originally posted on Instagram December 12, 2016

Chapter 3: Times That Pop Culture Got Consent Wrong

A few moments (among thousands, possibly millions) when music got consent wrong:

1. *“Shut up and sleep with me / Come on why won’t you sleep with me?”* -Sin with Sebastian

Why it’s wrong

This song is really pushing it. First, he takes away his partner’s right to speak, as if that’s a romantic gesture, *which it’s not* (no matter how many times you’ve seen this depicted in movies). Second, he continues to insist on his pursuit by demanding an explanation as to why his partner does not want to have sex. No one ever owes an explanation about why they don’t want to. It’s every person’s right to say “no”.

PRO TIP: It’s always best to accept rejection gracefully. If your partner is not interested in having sex, suggest a non-sexual activity or ask them what they wish to do instead. When you allow your partner room and space to say “no” without pressuring them, this builds trust, which for many, is a huge turn on. Be patient. Good things are always worth the wait.

2. *“I know you want it”* -Blurred Lines by Robin Thicke

Why it’s wrong

Even though it’s 2018, people still think it’s hot to assume someone wants to have sex with them. Well, here’s a wake-up call: ***that has never been hot!*** It’s impossible to know if someone wants it *unless they say they want it.*

PRO TIP: Instead of assuming that someone wants to have sex, just ask them. If you’re single and dating, you can slip in consent with a new partner by being upfront about your intentions while also mentioning that verbalizing consent is very important to you. What does consent look like for you? Do you prefer to be verbally asked each time? Do you like an occasional surprise? Even if this is the case, consent doesn’t stop there. Consent must always be ongoing, meaning that a partner can change their mind at any time.

3. *“Please excuse me, I don’t mean to be rude, But, tonight, I’m fucking you.”* -Tonight (I’m Fucking You) by Enrique Iglesias

Why it’s wrong

On this one, I would say it depends on the context. If it’s your partner or friend-with-benefits, this would definitely be a hot sext to send. However, if this is said to a stranger, that’s when this crosses the line. Even if it’s someone you know, this type

of declaration about your intentions is not the best way to communicate because asking for consent should be a conversation. As long as there is consent, it's a-okay.

PRO TIP: There's a fine line between sexual prowess and sexual harassment. Don't cross it. Use good judgement and have high regard for others when communicating to obtain the best results possible out of every relationship.

4. *"I don't want your ho, just want that cookie from her / She tried to resist, so I took it from her / How are you gonna tell me no? You must not know who I am."* -I made it by Rich Homie Quan

Why it's Wrong

It doesn't matter who you are, how much money you have, or what you do-- you are never entitled to ANYONE sexually. When Donald Trump made his famous "grab them by the pussy" statement, he stated that because he is rich, he can do whatever he wanted to women. A lot of men with money assume they can get away with rape and murder, and unfortunately, they sometimes do.

Having money does not give you a right to violate someone's consent, no matter how "badass" you think you are. What makes someone attractive is not their money, but, how much love and kindness they bring to the world.

PRO TIP: I mean, it's common sense: don't rape and don't brag about it. Boasting about rape is despicable. Rich Homie Quan and everyone who worked to help produce this song should be ashamed of themselves!

5. *"I like you just the way you are/Drunk as sh*t dancing at the bar/I like it and I can't wait to get you home/So I can do some damage."* -Just the Way You Are (Drunk at The Bar) — Brian McFadden

Why it's wrong

Targeting drunk girls at the bar is not only creepy, it's downright predatory because alcohol takes away someone's ability to truly consent.

PRO TIP: Instead of accidentally hurting yourself or someone else, refrain from mixing sex and alcohol. The fact of the matter is, they don't mix. If you want to have a drink with a love interest, keep it minimal and wait until you've sobered up before getting frisky.

A lot of people claim that they “need” alcohol in order to get it on. People who feel this way need to realize that using alcohol to feel comfortable having sex is a toxic coping mechanism. Instead of numbing the pain, address it. What feelings/memories are you trying to suppress with booze?

“You gotta feel it to heal it,” as they say!

6. *“Girls: Tell me more, tell me more, was it love at first sight?
Guys: Tell me more, tell me more, did she put up a fight?”* -Summer Nights by Olivia Newton John & John Travolta

Why it’s wrong

This line comes from the famous American musical, *Grease*. I’m curious as to why the writer of this line thought it was okay to casually ask if the main male character raped the main female character, as if it was a juicy piece of gossip. Not only is it disturbing that this question was even asked, but, it’s almost as if the guys asking are hoping for a “yes”.

I also want to use this as an opportunity to say that rape and sex are two different things. In fact, they are polar opposites.

In order to establish a culture of consent, we must stop blurring the lines of rape and sex. They are two different worlds of their own. Sex means that consent was given. Sexual assault means that it was not.

People need to call it what it is. Sex is sex. Rape is rape.

PRO TIP: Whether this line was intended as a joke or not, it’s not funny. Rape is not a “hot topic” to discuss. If you seriously believe that someone you know is a sexual predator, encourage them to get help. Never make jokes about rape. Rape jokes will never be funny.

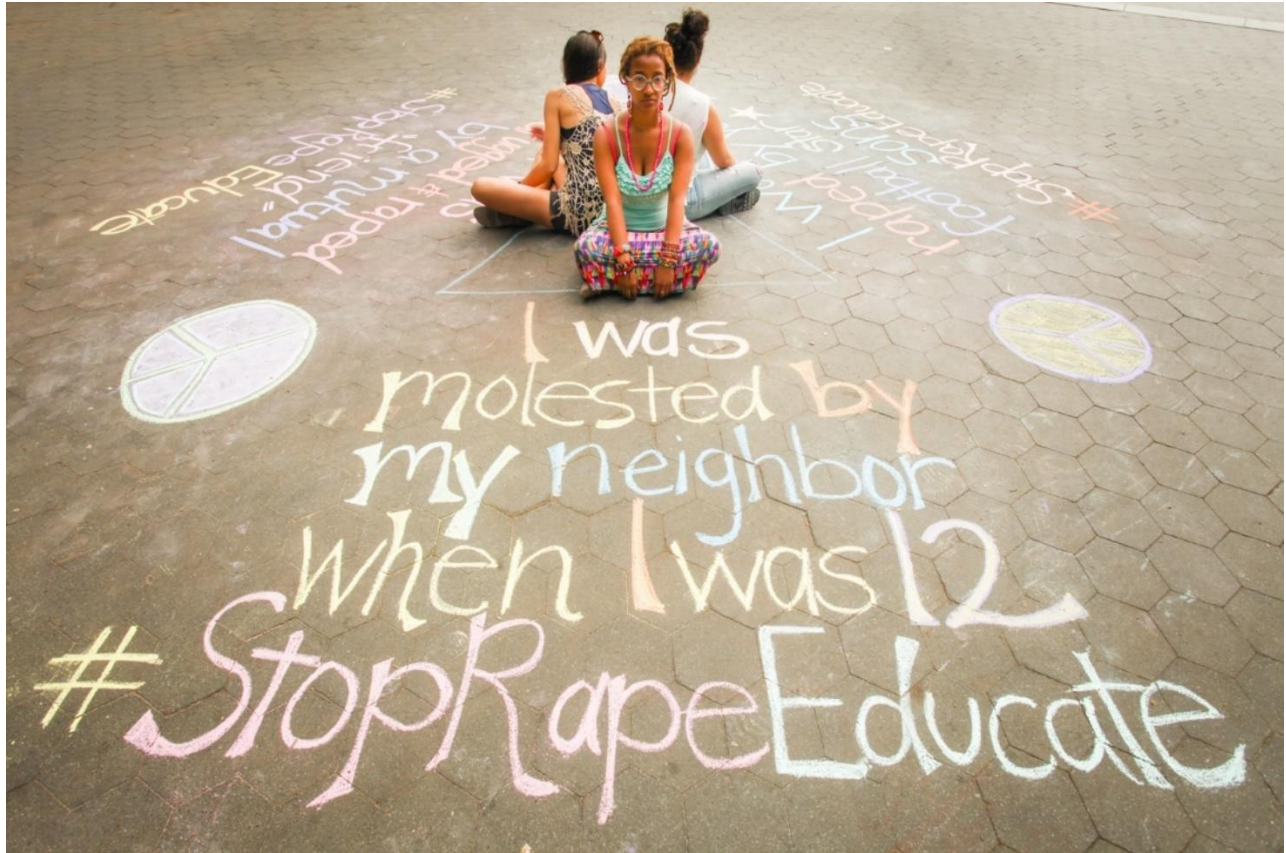


Photo by Justin Munoz, 2015, New York City, NY

“I have survived the worst of the worst, but, now, I’m here to inspire! You can heal! You can overcome! You can thrive!”

– Originally published on Instagram May 20, 2015

Chapter 4: Enthusiastic Consent

There are two types of consent: *enthusiastic consent* and *apprehensive consent*. Since each of these types of consent are so complex, I'm going to explain them separately:

Enthusiastic Consent

Often referred to as "affirmative consent", for some, this term can be off-putting. You don't have to sign a legal document or throw confetti in the air to establish consent. Enthusiastic consent simply means that all participating parties, without a shadow of a doubt, fully consent.

There are several traits that make up enthusiastic consent. Let's take a closer look:

Enthusiastic consent is sober.

A person under the influence of drugs or alcohol cannot consent because they are not in a clear state of mind to engage in sexual activity with someone. Drugs and alcohol are often used by sexual predators to prey on victims.

I was sexually assaulted by my own cousin when I was eighteen. He gave me an ecstasy pill and then he watched my every move. The first chance he got, he followed me into the bathroom and assaulted me for several hours.

In many cultures around the world it is deemed socially acceptable to mix alcohol and sex. Nightclubs and bars worldwide offer free entry and free alcohol to women, to attract paying male customers like bait. Men swarm these places because they know the women will be drunk by the time they arrive, offering them an easier shot at taking someone home.

How can we safely mix alcohol and sex? Well, my advice is: just don't. Some people can hold their liquor very well, while others, have one sip of beer and are on the floor. When you are just getting to know someone, it's even more important to get to know their alcohol tolerance and limits.

One way to mix alcohol and sex is to party it up at night, and then have sex in the morning when the booze has worn off. That way, you can be sure that you and your partner are sober enough to consent. You can still take a hot new fling home, but, instead of a one-night-stand, you'd be having a one-morning-stand!

I worked in a lesbian night club in New York City for a year. On a slow Sunday night that I'll never forget, the most beautiful girl in the world sat at the bar falling off the stool, too drunk to even sit.

As soon as I caught her eye, she was all over me, kissing my cheek, hugging and grabbing at me. She slurred all the sexy things she could think of in my ear. She persisted and insisted on going home with me, but I refused. She was not in a position to consent, and, as the least drunk

of the two, it was my responsibility to take care of her. No matter how much she thought she was consenting, no matter how much she thought she was okay to have sex, her drunkenness told me otherwise.

If a drunk person is coming on to you, be the bigger person and reject their advances. Give them your number and suggest meeting another time. If you yourself are drunk and horny, consider waiting until you sober up a bit or enjoy some self-pleasure. Alcohol lowers our inhibitions and can often create blocks in our chakras (particularly the throat) that prevent us from expressing ourselves fully when under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

Your sexual and mental health can be uplifted to higher and higher levels by refraining from mixing alcohol and sex.

Enthusiastic consent is informed.

Informed consent means that all parties are *aware* that sexual activity is going to take place. You should always be upfront with partners about your relationship status (single, married, etc.) and sexual health status.

Before having sex with someone, talk to them about your intentions. Open and honest communication with that person will give you the opportunity to learn if they are interested in you. For example, you have a crush on someone and invite them over for a hangout session, instead of making a surprise move, focus on the present moment while you get to know each other.

Even though TV and film depict people pouncing on each other without a word, this is not the proper way to initiate sex, especially with a partner you're still getting to know. If you want to have sex with someone, ASK FIRST!

Communicate! Communicate! Communicate!

In other words, don't say to someone, "hey come into this broom closet" and then surprise them with a kiss, when they assumed they were just going to sweep...ya dig?

That's what informed consent is about. People need to know what they are signing up for. Make your intentions clear. Ask them about theirs. Discuss your sexual likes/dislikes and, then, have fun!

Just remember to be open and honest. Doing so it lets your partner know that although you're attracted to them, safety and comfort are priorities for you.

Instead of saying, "Wanna watch Netflix and chill?" state clearly, "Wanna watch a movie and maybe fool around?" There is no need to create an ambiguous code when there are dozens of ways to inform someone of your intentions. *Some people actually want to watch Netflix and chill*, not get felt up without their consent. If a person says, "yes" to "Netflix and chill" or if

someone says “yes” to going home with you from a bar, don’t assume they want sex. Consent cannot be assumed.

If you are polyamorous, it is your responsibility to inform partners if you are already in a relationship or married. If you purposefully withhold this pertinent information, you are preying upon someone who would not otherwise consent, if given the full information. Unless you have an understanding with your partner that involves a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy, you should also inform your primary partner that you are sleeping with other people. If your partner has not consented to you being with other people, it’s cheating. The basis of polyamorous relationships is CONSENT.

Enthusiastic consent is ongoing.

Consent must be ongoing: from foreplay to intercourse and from intercourse to conception. You can be completely naked on top of someone and still say, “no”. Your “no” should always be respected. Even if you’re already in the middle of having sex, you have every right to stop at any point. It’s never too late to ask your partner to stop. They must always respect your wishes when you say no, just as you must always respect their “no” when it is given.

Consent to one act is not consent to all. Consent to kissing is not consent to sex. Consent to oral is not consent to penetration. Consent to vaginal sex is not consent to anal sex. You never owe any one anything, under any circumstances, and vice versa!

The moment you deny consent, your partner should immediately stop!

The moment your partner denies consent, hands off!

You are welcome to communicate ways to feel more comfortable, but you do not owe anyone an explanation about why you don’t want to have sex with them. It’s not your job to explain. That’s the whole concept behind, “no means no”. “No” is a complete sentence all by itself. It should not have to be said twice. One “no” should suffice to get the point across.

Enthusiastic consent is freely-given.

Although movies romanticize rape culture by writing in scenes where the Princess refuses her suitor who keeps trying until she says, “yes”, it is NEVER acceptable to convince, pressure, or coerce someone into being with you.

Because so many films depict this as romance, boys grow into men who pressure and manipulate women and girls into sexual activity. People who do this see absolutely nothing wrong in their behavior. It can be extremely traumatizing to have someone persist until consent is given. *This is not true consent.*

If a person says “yes” to sexual activity because they were pressured, urged, or intimidated, it is sexual assault. Why? Because they didn’t not *freely* consent to the act. They

only said “yes” because they felt unsafe and afraid. They did what was necessary to survive the violence at hand.

It’s not *their* job to do anything different, it’s your job to make them feel safe. It’s *your* responsibility to ask questions and read body language. If you have *any* indication that they are not TOTALLY into it, then stop and ask them what they would rather do instead.

Enthusiastic consent is mutual.

Just because your partner wants to have sex, doesn’t mean you have to engage. We are all different. Your partner may be super horny, while you’re thinking about the next day’s tasks. It’s totally fine to let them know you are not in the mood to have sex.

In regard to heterosexual relationships, this needs to be said: sex is not just for men and their pleasure. You do not have to have sex with your partner just because they want to.

Sometimes we may force ourselves to be with someone sexually because we don’t want to hurt their feelings. *Your right to feeling comfortable and safe is more important than their feelings.*

Remember, it’s your body, your choice.

Enthusiastic consent is among adults.

Children cannot consent to sex. I repeat: CHILDREN CANNOT CONSENT TO SEX!

Even if a child says “yes” to a sexual act, not only is it morally wrong, it is illegal and punishable by law.

When I was sexually abused as a twelve-year-old girl, I said “yes” to something that I knew nothing about. I was not mentally competent enough to know what I was signing up for. I knew nothing about sexual health, balancing emotions, or how to keep myself safe.

The legal age of consent varies from country to country. In U.S. states, the age of consent ranges from 16 to 18.

To learn more about the age of consent in your area, be sure to do some research on your local laws.



Photo by Justin Munoz, 2015, New York City, NY

“Today, while chalking, a man carrying a “Jesus saves” sign came up to me and said, ‘Women are going to get treated the same way they dress. Life is like a candy store. Imagine how a kid feels when he can’t have any candy. He might want to steal some.’ He then compared his analogy to life and stated that, ‘When men see women dressed like whores, they naturally desire sex.’”

-Originally published on Instagram May 22, 2015

Chapter 5: Apprehensive Consent

Apprehensive Consent

The following is an excerpt of my Huffington Post UK article, “When “Yes” is Rape” published June 2016.

Apprehensive consent is a “yes” that is given when someone is coerced, threatened, or pressured. Imagine someone holding a gun and threatening someone for sex. Now, take the gun away and imagine the same scene: a menacing glare, threatening words and gestures, making the other person feel unsafe and uncomfortable. And if we still take it down another notch, to a couple making out when one decides they do not want to go further and is pressured until they cave. All of the above scenarios are examples of sexual assault. Rape can happen in the subtlest of ways.

Some argue, “learn how to speak up for yourself. Just say ‘no.’” But, sometimes “no” is ignored and it becomes impossible to say when someone feels like they have no choice. The context in which consent is given is the most important part and needs to be taken seriously by us as individuals, by court officials & police, and by the whole of society.

Many of you know about the natural defense mechanisms fight or flight, however, not many know about dissociation or the freeze (or immobility) response.

Disassociation is a natural defense mechanism that detaches you from the traumatic event that is taking place. When a survivor dissociates during an attack, it doesn’t mean that they liked it or were accepting of it, it means that their body was trying to protect itself by blocking out the experience.

The first time I was sexually abused when I was twelve years old I completely disassociated from my attacker. I felt as if I had an out-of-body experience and as if I was watching the entire scene from the ceiling.

This detachment from reality is called dissociation.

The second defense mechanism I’d like to discuss is called the freeze response. The freeze (or immobility) response causes the body and voice to become paralyzed. I experienced this and lived with the guilt from it [the first time] I was sexually assaulted by a family member during my first year of college. I was completely caught off guard when we were watching a movie in his room like we always did, when suddenly, he started feeling me up. Terrified of what would happen next, I let him have his way because I felt coerced, pressured, and threatened, even though he didn’t use force or intimidation. He didn’t have to say a word for me to feel that my life was at stake. Out of nowhere, my throat tightened and voice froze, I wasn’t able to say anything at all, let alone utter “no”.

These two natural primal responses are the main reasons that most survivors don’t fight back, scream, or run during an assault. Because their primal state is taking control, they have no

say in the situation. This does not make it any less of a rape. If you consented apprehensively, dissociated, and/or could not say no, it was not your fault.

Understanding these defense mechanisms helps us create a culture of consent by helping us shift our focus back on the offender, where it belongs.

These explanations help us have more compassion for ourselves as survivors and for others who have experienced sexual assault.

Don't let all this new information about consent get you down. Even as I write, I'm thinking, "I've apprehensively consented more times than I can count", and, I blocked many of those experiences out of my memory. Learning about consent is bittersweet, but, when we differentiate apprehensive consent from enthusiastic consent, it helps us identify sexual assault and understand past situations.

Inability to Consent

It's important to include the dozens of situations in which sexual consent is not possible.

1. When Someone is in a Position of Authority
 - a. This includes, but, is not limited to: sexual involvement with children or minors, teacher-student relations, healthcare workers and patients, correctional facility officers and prisoners, employee-employer relationships, etc.
 - b. On the surface, two consenting adults that work together and are dating could seem harmless. I'm sure someone is reading this now saying, "My parents met at work!" However, when one of those people is in a position of authority, they could potentially cause financial and career ruin, if things go awry.
2. When someone is unconscious. This includes people who are sleeping or those that are comatose. These people cannot consent for obvious reasons. No explanation necessary.
3. When someone is mentally incapable of consenting. This includes people with certain mental disorders and disabilities. Mental disorders can include Dissociative Disorder or Alzheimer's disease.

Sexual elder abuse occurs at the hand of retirement home employees and by spouses or relatives of the elderly. If a person does not have the mental capacity to consent, they should be left alone.



Photo by Nikki Silver, 2016, Santa Rosa, California

“Sure, I love being naked, but I'm no sex icon or temptress. As a survivor of multiple rapes, (and even being the strong, badass, warrior woman I am today) it takes time for me to get intimate sometimes.

I'm sure someone out there is saying "you can't get intimate with people, but, you can show your body off online to thousands of strangers?!"

The answer is YES. My body is not made for sex. I am not a sex object. The human body is a masterpiece and being naked does not equate to sex.

There are tons of reasons to be naked, including no reason at all!

I love being nude because I feel natural and free. It allows me to love myself-- ALL of myself, stretch marks, gut, belly hair, scars, & all.

No more hiding. I am not ashamed! “
-Originally Published on Instagram in summer 2016

Chapter 6: Asking for Consent

In this chapter, you will learn how to ask for consent. By the time you are done reading, you will be equipped with the tools to bring Consentopia to your bedroom! I assure you, asking for consent is fun and easy!

Below we will explore a few times in which pop culture actually got things right in regards to consent.

Here are some quotes from songs that have already started the consent conversation:

1. “Whips and chains excite me.” -S&M by Rihanna

Telling your partner what turns you on is an excellent way to start a conversation about consent. Be sure to discuss and explore the nuances of kink. The lyrics state that whips and chains are a turn-on. The person speaking has not yet clarified *how* they turn her on.

Does she like to be whipped or does she prefer to do the whipping? Is she more of a voyeur who prefers not to participate, but, is more turned on by just watching? These are the kinds of questions that would need to be explored in a deeper discussion about consent before engaging in BDSM (bondage, dominance, sadism, masochism), whether you’re an amateur or experienced kinkster.

The famous BDSM mantra is “safe, sane, consensual”. To assure safe kinky sex, it’s important to discuss trauma, triggers, safe-words, fetishes, STD status, and hard/soft limits before playing.

2. “Lick me like a lollipop.” -Lollipop by Lil Wayne.

Giving an order is not how you ask for consent; however, I chose this example because this can be an effective manner of communicating what you want. Imagine a couple is already in the middle of sexual activity and one of them says, “lick me like a lollipop.” This is a perfect time to state what you are interested in. Expressing a fantasy or desire is a wonderful way to let your partner know what turns you on.

Be aware that your partner can deny sex at any time. Stating a desire is not the same thing as giving a command. Depending on the tone, intonation, and intention, this same phrase can imply two different things. When saying “lick me like a lollipop”, in a soft, sexy manner, it is simply the expression of a fantasy.

If someone says the same thing while yelling or using a threatening tone of voice, this is when it crosses the line into the zone of sexual assault.

3. “I’m a slave for you” -I’m a Slave for You by Britney Spears

These five words show that the person is giving their consent to do whatever their partner desires. Although it’s quite clear that she’s consenting, it’s important to clarify

what this actually means. Does it mean she is consenting to relinquish her freewill completely? Is she consenting to be a slave just for the day? The week? For life? How much is this person actually consenting to? What are their limits, safe-words, etc.?

There is so much that needs to be discussed before giving away your power to someone. The basis of all kink and BDSM relationships is CONSENT, which means that even if someone says they would like to give up all their power, they still have a right to revoke consent at any time.

Get as kinky as you want. Just be sure to clarify with your partner(s) what this type of kink looks like for you.

4. “Let a n** inside.” -Inside by Jacques**

A command is not consent, we know that. When you listen to this song, however, the way it is sung, it certainly does give the feeling that the person being serenaded has an option to respond however they please. These are just the words he is using to make his intentions clear: he wants to get inside. The person receiving the message has a right to say, “yes” or “no” at any time.

5. “If it feels this good gettin’ used/ Well keep on using me ‘til you’ve used me up.” - Use Me by Grace Jones

This song perfectly demonstrates *ongoing consent*. “If it feels this good getting used” implies that sexual activity has already begun and is presently taking place. It’s so good Grace Jones had to sing about it! In the next phrase, “Keep on using me ‘til you’ve used me up” relays that the person is enjoying the activity taking place so much that they would like to keep going. In other words, Grace Jones is saying, “Don’t stop! Gimmie more!”

Our bodies get so sensitive during sex, that things can feel amazing one minute and awkward the next! It’s important to check in with your partner’s comfort level. All the same, never hesitate to express yours!

Asking your partner if they want you to keep going *is always a good idea*. Telling your partner to keep going, go faster, or slow down are some easy ways to give ongoing consent while specifying your needs.

6. “Voulez-vous couchez avec moi ce soir?” (Do you want to sleep with me tonight?) -Lady Marmalade by Christina Aguilera feat. Lil Kim, Pink, and Mya

This is a very clear and direct manner to ask for consent. After getting a “yes” or “no”, there are still more questions to ask. What kind of sex? Their place, yours, or somewhere else? How do you want it? What turns them on? What are your limits?

Getting the first “yes” still requires more information from your prospective sexual partner. This is an excellent start to having a fun night of hot sex!

7. *“Let’s talk about sex” -Let’s Talk About Sex by Salt n Peppa*

Hell yeah! Just talk about it. Have a conversation before engaging sexually with someone. If you’re in a long-term relationship, it could be a good idea to have multiple conversations about your sexual desires to be sure that you’re on the same page. Communication is the basis of consent. Start asking questions or bringing up the topic of consent, boundaries, and past trauma in your relationships. This is how we win!

8. *“Have it your way*

If you want

You can decide

If you’ll have me

...I won’t stop until you tell me” -How does it Feel by D’Angelo

The singer is letting his prospective partner know that they have a choice. He vocalizes that she is safe to communicate her needs, which ensures trust and shows how much he respects her wishes. This is the way it should be, always!

9. *“I’m askin’ you, baby, to get it on with me” -Get it on by Marvin Gaye*

This is a very smooth and sexy way to communicate with your partner before sex. Once you’ve stated your intentions, make your request. If they say yes to sex, enjoy! If they say, “no” accept the rejection gracefully and ask them what they would rather do instead.

10. *“Pull up to it, don’t drive through it,*

Back it, up twice, now that fits nice,

Grease it, spray it

Let me lubricate it” -Back up the Bumper by Grace Jones

Clearly, this one knows how to get down and has no issue giving instructions. Communicating your precise sexual needs is always important, especially when engaging in anal sex, which this verse is about. The words, “grease it, spray it, let me lubricate it” are intended to instruct the suitor on how they would like to be penetrated. It’s always good to be clear with your suitors so that you have the maximum amount of pleasure. Bringing consent culture in the bedroom = pleasure. It really does!

11. *"Lick it now, lick it good"* -My Neck, My Back by Khia

This girl likes to be licked all over! The lyrics continue on to say, "lick my pussy and my crack". Although these may be considered explicit lyrics, it demonstrates perfectly just how precise you should be when talking to your partners about what you want. It's important to get clear on *everything*. Remember, have a state of non-attachment to the outcome of expressing your desires. No one is obligated to satisfy them.

12. *"Good booty / If it's tight it's alright / If it's greasy, it makes it so easy."* -original lyrics of Tutti Frutti by Little Richard

This is another song that you might not have known was about anal sex. The original lyrics to Tutti Frutti, which were only sung in live appearances, are what you see written above. Little Richard and his band were unable to sing the real lyrics when they recorded the song.

Who knew there were so many songs about anal sex and lube?!

13. *"Do you want it on the floor? Do you want it on the chair? Do you want it over here? Do you want it over there?"* -What's Your Fantasy by Ludacris

This is one of the most sexed-up songs of the century and it's a funny little jingle that the singer uses to explore new and fun places to get hot and heavy. When discussing fantasies with partners, be sure to listen to them with a non-judgmental perspective. The last thing you want to do is kink-shame someone. That is a total turn-off. Have an open mind when discussing desires and if they are into something you don't want to try, just let them know (tactfully) that you're not interested.

14. *"If it's cool with you I'll let you get naked too It could be a dream come true Providing that's what you are into"* -If You're into It by Flight of the Concorde

What is amazing about this song is that the person singing makes sure ("if it's cool with you") and *doubly* sure ("providing that's what you're into") that their partner is enthusiastically consenting to sex. His questions help ensure that consent is indeed ongoing and freely-given.

15. *"It's time for some mind sex, we ain't got to take our clothes off, yet*

***We can burn the incense and just chat
Relax, I got the good vibrations
Before we make love let's have a good conversation*** -Mind Sex by dead prez

This guy wants to take his time and get to know his lover before having sex. He clearly states his boundaries in an eloquent and almost dreamy manner. His words and the love behind them are a huge turn-on. It's always okay to wait.

16. "I ain't ever did this before" -Wet Dreamz by J Cole

This is a ballad of two virgin lovers. The person singing is relaying to their partner that it's their first time having sex. Although you're never required to discuss your past sexual history with others, it could be a good idea to tell your partner if you are a virgin because this is a part of *informed consent*.

Although some argue that we should eliminate the concept of virginity all together, I must admit that careful consideration should be given before having sex for the first time. Before having sex, people should be educated on consent, sexual health, and how emotions are affected by sex.

Saying it Right

In my Huffington Post article entitled, "35 Sexy Ways to Ask for Consent", I listed some fun and enticing phrases that can give you the words to say to bring consent to the bedroom.

Try these phrases below:

1. "Are you sure you're ready for this?"
2. "Do you want to have sex?"
3. "How far do you want to go?"
4. "Do you have time for a quickie?"
5. "Can I go down on you?"
6. "Do you want to go back to my place and have sex?"
7. "Can I help you out of that?"
8. "Do you want me to help you unzip?"
9. "Do you want to make out?"
10. "Do you want to just cuddle?"

11. "How do you like that?"
12. "Are you alright?"
13. "Do you want me to keep going?"
14. "Do you want me to stop?"
15. "How do you want it?"
16. "Is it okay if I touch you down there?"
17. "Are you horny?"
18. "How does that feel?"
19. "Can I kiss those sweet lips?"
20. "Can you put on protection, first?"
21. "Do you want me to wear a condom?"
22. "Can I taste your sweet nectar?"
23. "Do you want to do it from the back?"
24. "Wanna try anal/reverse cowgirl/etc.?"
25. "Can I be your first?"
26. "Wanna give it a go?"
27. "Would you like to...."
28. "Can I put it in my mouth?"
29. "Do you like that?"
30. "Are you okay? "
31. "Have you ever fantasized about...?"
32. "Does oral/anal/penetration, etc. turn you on?"
33. "Is it okay if I touch you here?"
34. "Wanna have morning sex?"
35. "Can we try something new?"

When reading this list, many people realize that they already are using these phrases. It's easy to get in the groove of consent culture when you realize how much people are already practicing it.

When we hear the word "consent", many people think that it only refers to sex, however, consent is something that is certainly used outside of the bedroom, too!

You can (and should) ask for someone's consent to take their picture, to share their personal information (such as phone number or address), and to hug or touch them. Consent is something that can be applied to any and all aspects of life. It's simply a matter of asking for permission.



“12 things every rape survivor needs to know

1. The abuse was NOT your fault!
2. ...Not if you went with them
3. ...Not if you were under the influence
4. ...Not if you were dating or married
5. You are worthy of love, respect, and all the best!
6. If your loved ones did not support you when you got raped, still know that you deserve support!
7. Self-care is not selfish.
8. Beware of self-sabotage. It can come in the forms of food, sex, drugs, alcohol, self-harm, flirting with danger.
9. Healing is possible!
10. Many survivors experience traumatic amnesia. You can get your memory back as you heal, if you allow.
11. People in the LGBTQIA+ community face sexual violence more than heterosexual people. We should support our LGBTQIA+ brothers, sisters and non-binary friends with unconditional love and support.
12. True justice is healing. Focus on your healing. That’s all that truly matters YOU CAN DO IT!!”

-Originally published on Instagram February 4, 2018

Chapter 7: A Message to Survivors

It doesn't matter who you are, what you were doing, where you were at, what you wore... It doesn't matter if you drank or did drugs, sexual assault is **never** the survivor's fault. The only person responsible for sexual assault is the person who committed it.

Refrain from blaming yourself. The person who did this to you was in the wrong. They never should have sexually assaulted you. You were completely innocent and still are.

Sexual abuse survivors can often feel unworthy of love or support. Let me be the first to tell you that you deserve BOTH. Talk to someone about what happened to you. If you're not ready for that, or if you don't get the response you want, write about it. Reclaim your power and voice by expressing the horrible things that were done to you. They are not your secrets to hide. They are not your burdens to bear.

Stand tall and know that you are not alone, as a survivor. Most of the people who surround you are survivors, but, no one's talking about it. It's time to change this. Sharing your story can create healing in such powerful ways. It will help you let go of pain, set you on a path to recovery, and allow you to own your power.

Take your time when it comes to speaking up and, remember, there's no rush. You can share your story however you want to: in your own private journal, by talking to a trusted friend or family member, signing up for spiritual coaching or therapy, or by making art out of it!

Channeling your pain from abuse into art is a great way to heal while creating something amazing! You can do poetry, music, painting, dance, or any other art form that you enjoy. There are so many creative, natural, and virtually free ways to heal.

The path to healing is like riding a roller coaster, you will have ups and downs. This is all normal. There's no "quick fix" when it comes to healing deep-rooted trauma. It takes time, and, that's okay.

Healing from rape is a beautiful process. You will have moments where you need to cry it out, write it out, and dance it out. Whenever you feel down, just remember to pick yourself back up. Time *does* heal all wounds. You will absolutely conquer this. You CAN and WILL heal. Put in the work, and you'll get the results.

Why wait to heal later when you can heal now? You're already aware of how the assault is affecting your mind, body, spirit, and relationships. Resist the urge to self-sabotage. You deserve to heal RIGHT NOW.

Healing and consent go hand in hand because in a healed world, with healed people and healed minds, there is no rape! Healing is critical in order to thrive in Consentopia because as the saying goes, hurt people hurt people. Some survivors go on to hurt others, but, with healing intervention, this can be prevented.

A part of healing means changing your mentality about the situation. Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault or rape. Becoming a survivor takes conscious effort. It's a decision that one makes when they're done with the days of victimhood (self-blame). It means you're ready to step into your power by holding the attacker accountable and/or acknowledging that it was sexual assault.

You can step into your power as a survivor at any moment. All you have to do is tell yourself, "I'm a survivor!" You can make it as simple as that, or, do something special for yourself, to celebrate your rebirth as a survivor.

Becoming a survivor means that you have realized that trauma does not define you. You are more than your past experiences. It means you're ready to heal and own your power.

What does this look like to you?



Photo by Tadeo Bourbon, 2016, Buenos Aires, Argentina

“You know you’re healing when you’re able to admit that you’ve been an abusive asshole in the past. It is NEVER okay to abuse someone, verbally, emotionally, or other

My incredible partner helped me realize the ways in which I was abusing others.

It makes me aware of how much rape survivors continue cycles of abuse as they navigate life unhealed.

I had no idea that my parents abused me until I became an adult and started learning about enlightenment and compassionate communication. I had no idea that I had absorbed energy from rapists and abusers until I started spewing out hatred at total strangers.

[I am now dedicated to] practicing compassionate communication.

This post is for all the rape survivors with twenty-foot walls surrounding them, with their guards high and on the defense constantly.

I know that being rude to others makes you feel temporarily empowered, but, guess what? Your words and actions are truly a cry for help for the trained trauma eye.

Next time you bite someone’s head off...just don’t.

Hurt people hurt people. You don't get excuses just cuz you were raped. The rape was not your fault. Healing is STILL your responsibility. Your life will be hell if you don't do something about it.

Owning abusive behavior helps me in all my relationships. Choose patience and compassion over anger and rage. This transmutes negative energy into Divine Love and we all know that's what the world needs.

Here's to radical change!"

-Originally published on Instagram January 4, 2018

Chapter 8: Healing the Mind

There are dozens of ways to heal from sexual assault. I will separate the healing into three categories: mind, body, and spirit, since this is the Afrikan way.

Westerners perceive sexual assault as something that only affects the mind and body. In Afrikan and Indigenous traditional medicine, we acknowledge that trauma from sexual assault can also affect the spirit.

Healing the mind begins with checking in with your thoughts. What are they mostly revolving around? Worry? Fear? Regret? Blame? Stress? Anger? These are all normal emotions to have if you're a survivor of sexual assault. It's important to channel these emotions in constructive ways. For example, for a number of years, I had anger issues. I took my anger out on friends, family, people I was dating, and total strangers. I had so much unexpressed anger towards the people who raped me that I took it out on everyone else who I crossed paths with.

I had to heal my mind to address the anger. I did this through forgiveness and by shedding the programming of rape culture. First, I forgave myself, then, I forgave the abusers. Forgiving myself meant accepting the fact that I was not to blame for the sexual assault. It meant that I reclaimed my innocence in each and every abusive situation. I did this by telling myself, "I am innocent. I am not to blame. It was not my fault. I claim my innocence. I reclaim my power NOW!"

I have been using positive affirmations since 2013 to reprogram my subconscious thinking patterns. Positive affirmations have worked wonders in healing from sexual assault, in my experience. I constantly had feelings of unworthiness that stemmed from past abuse. Now, I can see my true beauty and worth since I have successfully changed my thought process.

Healing the mind means making the switch from "victim mode" to "surviving and thriving mode". This does not mean you deny your true emotions. All of your feelings are valid. It simply means when a trigger comes up, choose self-care over self-destruction. This is how you go from victim to survivor and then eventually, to thriver!

Ways to Heal the Mind After Sexual Assault

Mindfulness

Meditation

Positive affirmations

Setting boundaries

Talk/group therapy

Journaling

Breathwork

Private or social nudism

Activism

Educating yourself on consent

Sharing your story

Hypnotherapy

Helping fellow survivors

Utilizing consent culture in everyday life

Plant medicines (cannabis, psilocybin, ayahuasca, etc.)

Communing with nature, the Universe, righteous Ancestors, guardian angels (for people of European descent) and Spirit Guides (for people of African or Indigenous decent)

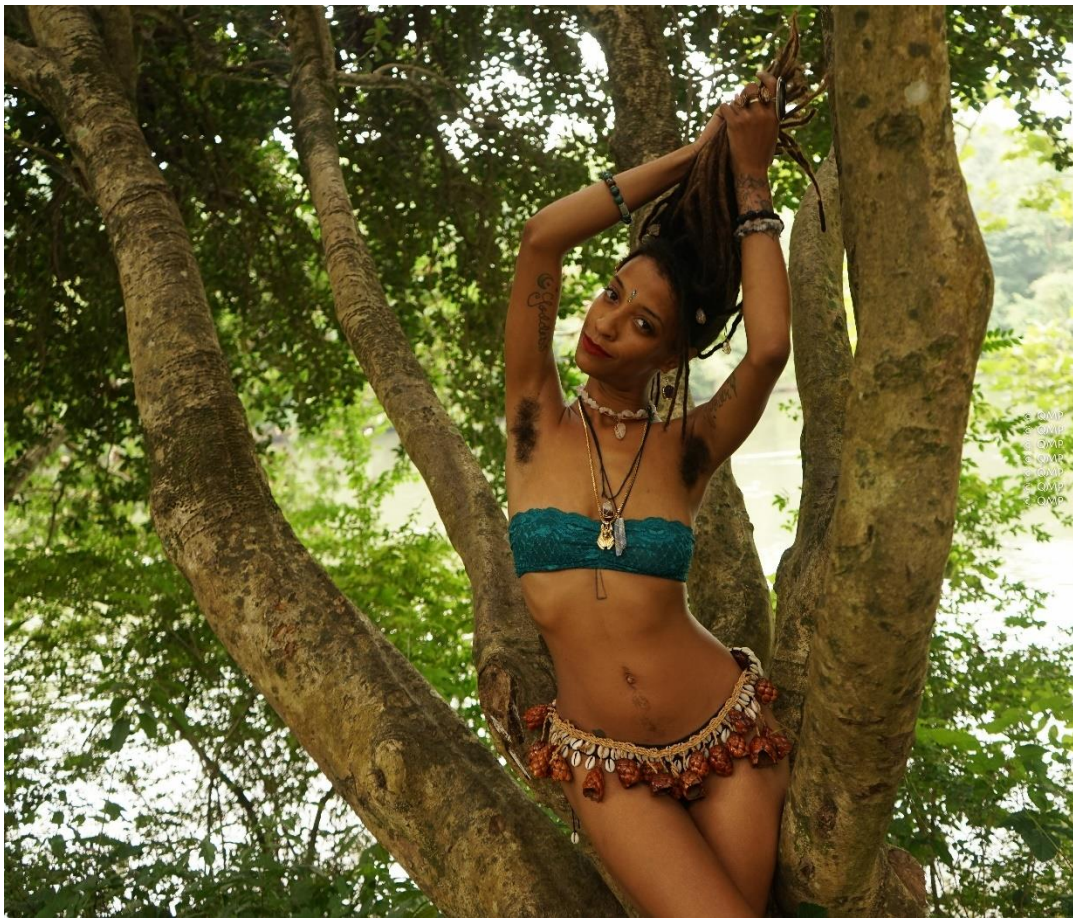
Self-care and TLC (bubble baths, vacation, setting boundaries with other people)

Practice saying “no”

Change of hairstyle, living space, or wardrobe (reinvent yourself! Once you start to heal, it’s the beginning of your rebirth. This happens both inside and out for some of us.)

Get to know triggers and avoid them

Visualization



Shot by PeteShawn, 2018, Atlanta, GA

“Since I got raped last month, I’ve been spending more time naked in public with strangers. (Yes, you heard that right!) Not only do I enjoy the freedom I feel being nude in nature, but it’s also to prove the point that nudity does not equate to sex or rape. I skinny dipped in a few waterfalls and swam naked at night in the Indian Ocean. I was with men and women of different backgrounds and ages, and, GUESS WHAT? I didn’t get raped. This proves the point that clothing/nudity do not cause rape, only rapists do. The man who attacked me would have done so regardless...I’m a liberated, body positive naturist. If I want to swim naked or shower with a stranger, that’s exactly what I’ll do! Most people are not rapists. Most people have self-control. I’m not putting myself in “dangerous situations”. I’m being the change I wish to see in the world: a world where women are safe and free to live how they please. By exposing the female body in a non-sexual way, we systematically desexualize it. So, I’m gonna keep rockin’ my birthday suit! Which reminds me...my birthday is in three days!”

-Originally published on Instagram December 26, 2015

Chapter 9: Healing the Body

Healing the body does not refer to healing physical injuries endured during rape or sexual assault, it means *reclaiming* your body as your own. Reclaiming the body is critical for all survivors of sexual assault. Having someone overpower you requires that you re-establish a positive relationship with your body in order to heal.

Reclaiming my body has been so transformational in my healing. I have used most of the ways to heal listed below and I highly recommend you do the same!

Ways to Heal/Reclaim the Body After Sexual Assault

Dance

Yoga

Exercise

Modeling

Sex with someone that empowers you

Sex work (only for survivors who are truly healed and empowered. Never go into the field of sex work while you are still hurting)

Masturbation/Self-pleasure

Kick-boxing

Karate

Swimming

Sports

Celibacy

Eating foods that empower you

Exercise



Shot by PeteShawn, 2018, Atlanta, Georgia

“Virginity is a social construct meaning that humans invented [this concept]. We can redefine it at any time. I personally believe that we should redefine the word “virgin” to mean someone who has never had consensual sex... You can reclaim your virginity at any point in time through prayer, meditation, or by simply stating “I’m a virgin” or, “I reclaim my virginity NOW!”

“Self-compassion is a process, especially if you’ve been abused, bullied, or raped. How do you build yourself back up after you’ve been torn down? I say, there are many ways to build your confidence and self-image. First, you must break free from the abuse and surround yourself with people that love and support you. Don’t be so hard on yourself. It’s easy to blame yourself and self-destruct, but you don’t deserve the abuse from others nor from yourself. Next, start living [and leading] from spirit. Do anything and everything that makes you happy. Be creative, work hard toward your dreams, make music, sing, dance, play, spend lots of time in nature. Drop bad habits. Stop caring and start living. Fuck the beauty industry. You don’t need to do anything to be “prettier”. You are already perfect.”

-Originally posted on Instagram July 25, 2016

Chapter 10: Healing the Spirit

Spiritual healing after sexual assault is important, but, rarely discussed. Why is this important, anyway? The first and most obvious way in which the spirit is affected during a traumatic event is when soul loss occurs.

When a person experiences trauma, their soul detaches and goes to a safe space. This is called soul loss. The soul stays fragmented, in that safe space, until you get those pieces of your soul back in the shamanic practice called a soul retrieval.

After completing seventy soul retrievals on myself, I was astonished at how dramatically my life changed. I had lived with a broken soul for so long that once I healed, it was as if I became a new person! I noticed that my demeanor, attitude, and outlook on life changed. I became more intuitive, creative, and grounded. I began writing books and songs, again. I also began to dream more regularly at night.

Healing the spirit after rape will unleash your talents and put you in alignment with your dreams and soul mission. Read the list below to explore a variety of holistic ways to mend the spirit after trauma.

Ways to Heal the Spirit After Sexual Assault

Soul retrievals

Art (painting, drawing, pottery, jewelry-making, etc.)

Travel

Music

Yoni steam

Grounding

Forgiveness

Energy work

RaSekhi (Kemetic Reiki)

Animal therapy

Release ceremony

Emotional Cord Transcendence Ceremony

Prayer

Communing with nature and/or Spirit Guides

Calling upon your righteous Ancestors for healing

Past life regressions

Plant medicines



“Once upon a time, humans lived nude in nature. Someone thought it would be a good idea to sexualize the naked body and we suddenly began hiding ourselves out of fear, shame, [and obligation]. I believe there is nothing sexual about nudity. We can get back to the old times when everyone was naked and they didn’t shame or hurt each other. They lived in harmony with nature. Some cultures still do. REVOLUTIONIZE YOUR MIND. Nudity does not equate to sex. Nudity does not equate to sex. Nudity does not equate to sex.”

Chapter 11: How to Get to Consentopia

Do you want to live in Consentopia? Me, too! We can make it happen and here's how:

1. The first secret of the Consentopian Club is to TELL EVERYONE! This is not information you should keep to yourself. Everyone should start talking about consent culture. We have to spread the word to make Consentopia a reality. It's not enough for survivors to learn about consent because we are not the ones responsible for sexual violence in the first place. EVERYONE needs to know about consent! Tell your friends, family, colleagues, about Consentopia. Shit, tell strangers, too!
2. Start using the tools in this book to implement consent culture in everyday life. What does this mean? Simple: start asking for consent in everyday situations such as asking before touching someone. If the concept of consent is new to them, they might be surprised. However, you can explain to them that you're simply establishing a culture of consent, a world where people ask and listen to the needs of others *before* taking action. Be sure to let them know that you got this information from your last visit to Consentopia and invite them to join us here (by sharing my website and the Consentopia ebook link with them.)

THIS IS HOW WE WIN!

3. Use this book to help you navigate consent in the bedroom. If you are still getting used to verbalizing consent in a sexual setting, refer back to the lists in this book to help you find the words to say to your partner(s).
4. Start a consent club! This is a wonderful way to get more people to Consentopia. How does this work? It's up to you! Your club, your rules. Consent clubs can meet at a school, library, park, religious institution, or home and can involve discussions on consent and sexual assault. It's important to get the conversation started when it comes to consent. A club is the perfect way to get people's thoughts in alignment with consent culture by discussing the values of Consentopia on a weekly or monthly basis.
5. Start a book club where you read Consentopia in additions to other books/articles that shed light on consent.

6. Make consent a part of your lifestyle. Get creative in extending compassion and respect towards others while implementing consent culture.
7. Teach children early about consent. Ask them before hugging and teach other adults to do the same. When they say, “no”, allow the child to maintain that right instead of chastising or scolding them for having boundaries. Children have as much of a right to consent or deny consent as any other person. If we really want to establish Consentopia, we must educate our future leaders on consent as early as possible.
8. Hold yourself accountable when you disrespect someone’s consent. Apologize. Make amends. This type of accountability will help others see how important consent is to you. When you lead by example, they will see how much consent culture benefits them, too. They will learn that their voice and boundaries are important. This can create a world of healing for those who had not yet realized this.
9. If you see someone’s “no” being ignored, do what you can to help out.
10. Send prayers up for the consent culture shift. No matter what you believe in, prayer always helps. This cultural change may not happen overnight and there may be pushback from people who are set in their old ways of rape culture. Let us keep in mind that rape culture does benefit millions...the patriarchy to be exact. Let us stay unified on the frequency of love as we move forward so that consent culture can outshine the darkness allowing us to live happily, ever all.



Photo by Reese Foster, 2017, San Diego, California

“When did you realize it was rape?”

Most rape and sexual assault survivors experience confusion as far as WHAT rape actually is. People have been calling me a liar for YEARS about my own sexual assaults saying that “the story keeps changing”

Here’s the truth: when I started activism in 2014, I only counted a few sexual assaults:

1. Being molested when I was twelve

2. Being raped by the same person at the age thirteen

3. And getting raped on my 17th birthday.

I didn't know much about rape, sexual assault, or consent in 2014. Feminism introduced consent to me.

The more I studied consent, the more I realized that most of my sexual experiences were not consensual. I would read a survival story and be like, "damn that happened to me, too. That's rape?"

Lack of education, fear, traumatic amnesia are all reasons why people JUST DONT KNOW if they have been raped are not.

THATS OKAY! It's not your fault no one educated you and it's definitely not your fault you were raped.

I now count about twelve rapes, but, my heart knows there have been more than just those. I have not yet confronted them bc I have suppressed so much trauma in my subconscious mind...I know it will arise when I am healed enough to confront that pain.

So, has my story changed? Absolutely. The number of rapes grew with my awareness, unfortunately. And get ready for more, because when I'm ready I will be sharing the details in my memoir when it is published.

Love, strength and healing to all the survivors out there."

-Originally published on Instagram January 6, 2018



Photo by PeteShawn, 2018, Atlanta, GA

“Women want to show off their bodies AND still be respected?!!’ FUCK YEAH, that’s exactly what we want!”

-Originally posted on Instagram December 25, 2016

A Message from the Author

If you got this e-book for free, I ask you to please support my work as an independent advocate for survivors of sexual assault so that I may continue to be a pioneer in the consent culture movement.

Selling books and offering psychic readings and reiki sessions is how I make a living. Please allow me to continue sharing my Divine Talents by contributing to my mission financially. All independent activists, artists, healers, and underdog geniuses deserve to be compensated for their energy and expertise, especially when providing you with priceless information.

You can make a contribution in any of the following ways:

1. PayPal- amber@ambertheactivist.com
2. Venmo- @ambertheactivist
3. CashApp- \$herisatakhit
4. Patreon- This is a tool for you to make monthly contributions toward creating consent culture. You can help out by giving as little as \$1!
www.patreon.com/herisatakhit
5. Book a psychic reading with me to get more understanding about your past, present, and future.

Types of Readings that I Offer:

Love Readings- find better understanding about your relationships. Learn how to attract and keep a partner or find a new one

Life Purpose Readings- get a clear idea of what you are meant to be doing in this lifetime so you can jump straight into your destiny and start living your wildest dreams!

General Readings- a combination of any of the above (at no extra charge)

Ancestral Readings- (contact a deceased relative or to get to know your ancestry)

Medium Readings- (contact a deceased loved one)

2019 Forecast Readings- get a clear picture of what your year will look like, what moves to make, and what to avoid

For reviews from my clients, go to www.instagram.com/herisatakhit and click the black dot at the top in the Highlights that says “Reviews” to see in my client testimonies. All sessions take place over Skype or over the phone. First timers, LGBTQIA folks, all genders, and international clients welcome.

6. Book a Kemetic Reiki cleanse to clear away the energy of abuse and trauma. Reiki is the ancient art of energy clearing and is recommended for any person who has ever suffered abuse or trauma. Read more about it on my website and feel free to contact me for bookings an inquiries.
7. Book me for a workshop at your school, organization, or university. I offer ten different workshops centered around consent and holistic recovery. For prices and booking, please visit www.ambertheactivist.com/workshops.
8. For appointments, send an email to amber@ambertheactivist.com with “BOOKING” in the subject line or you can DM me directly on Instagram @herisatakhit

About the Author

Herisa Takhit (formerly known as Amber the Activist) is a psychic medium, Certified Kemeti Reiki Practitioner, artist, entrepreneur, and humanitarian. Born in Akron, Ohio, she has been on the move ever since leaving Ohio at the age of seventeen to live independently.

In 2011, Herisa graduated Suma Cum Laude from the University of Paris (a.k.a. La Sorbonne), where she obtained a degree in French as a Second Language. Later that year, Herisa relocated to New York City where she began her career in social justice with Marriage Equality USA and the



Human Rights Campaign. For two years she worked as the boots-on-the-ground to successfully legalize same-sex marriage in Delaware, Rhode Island, and New Jersey.

In 2014, Herisa was sexually assaulted and the NYPD responded poorly. One officer even said, "Are you sure he meant 'no'? Maybe he thought you meant 'yes'."

In response, Herisa founded #StopRapeEducate, focusing her efforts on educating the public about sexual violence through chalk art. Six months later, Herisa took her feminist chalk art messages from Washington Square park all the way to London, Spain, and South Africa for the first annual #StopRapeEducate World Tour.

Two days before Herisa was supposed to leave South Africa for Australia, she was raped by a South African man. In an act of bravery, minutes after the incident, she documented the aftermath of the assault and posted the details along with a teary-eyed selfie on Instagram to her 20,000 followers at the time.

One month later, Herisa was contacted by Marie Claire and her interview with them went viral. Herisa was bullied, harassed, threatened, blamed, and shamed by millions of people around the world, after experiencing the most violent attack of her life. Refusing to cave to the patriarchy in any type of way, Herisa continued her career as an activist and it was after this catalytic moment that she shifted her focus to the one and only solution to ending sexual assault once and for all: consent culture!

Creating Consent Culture was born in January 2016 and is aimed at normalizing consent, communication, and supporting survivors while teaching safe boundaries, respect, and holistic healing for survivors of sexual trauma.

Today, CCC has support of millions worldwide!

In early 2018, Herisa became a Certified Kemetic Reiki Practitioner, a gigantic step in her spiritual journey. She now lives in Atlanta where she works as a Rape and Trauma Specialist for survivors offering remote and in-person healing sessions to survivors around the world.

In April 2018, Herisa changed her name from "Amber" to a Kemetic name from her Ancestors.

"Herisa Takhit", means "serving the Divine brings me joy and success." Herisa is now committed to doing just that and sees advocacy for survivors as a way of serving the Divine.

Follow her social media pages to continue the Consentopia conversation: @herisatakhit & @creatingconsentculture
