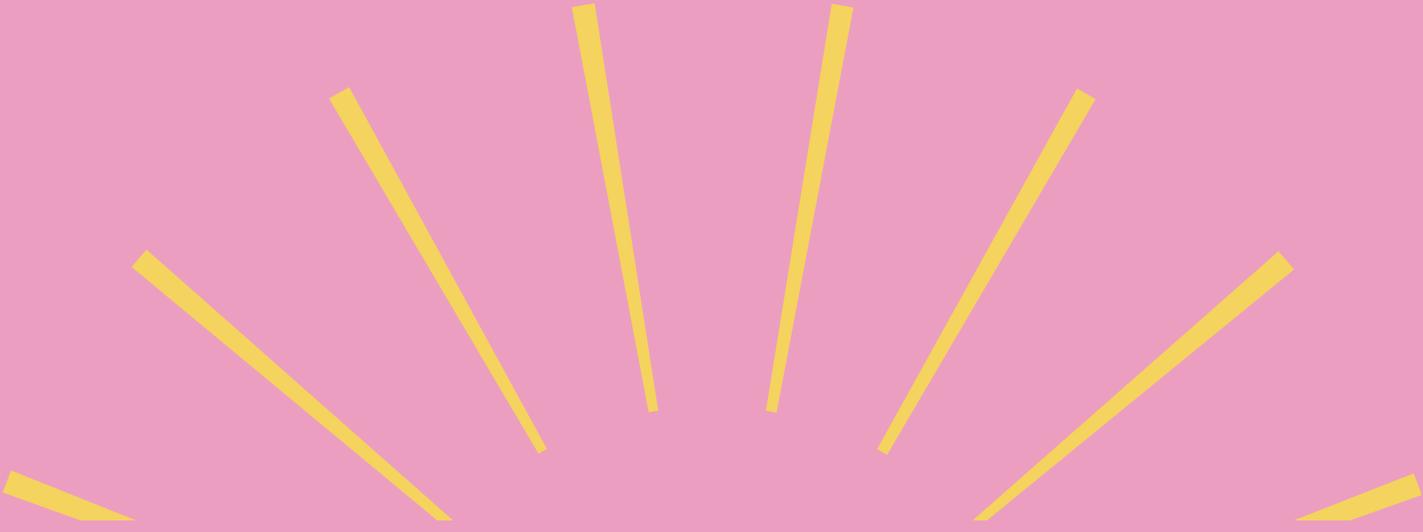
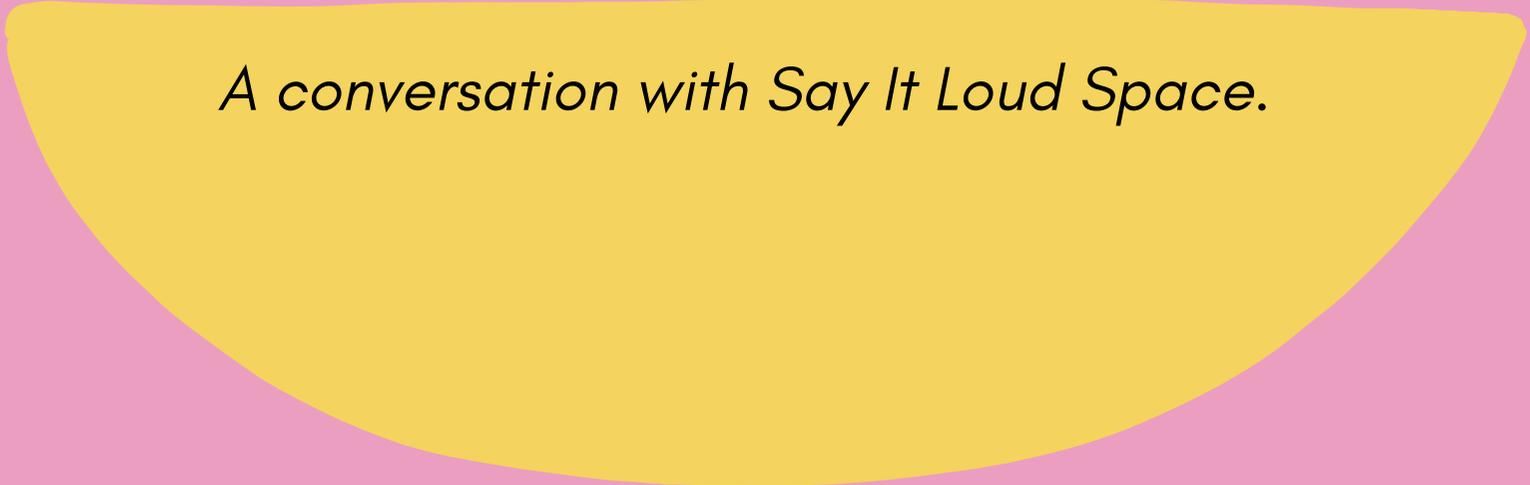


A QUEERSEX ED COMMUNITY CURRICULUM ZINE



THE IMPORTANCE OF NON-CLINICAL, PEER-LED SPACES IN
HEALING FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

COMMUNITY & HEALING



A conversation with Say It Loud Space.

CW: DISCUSSION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA

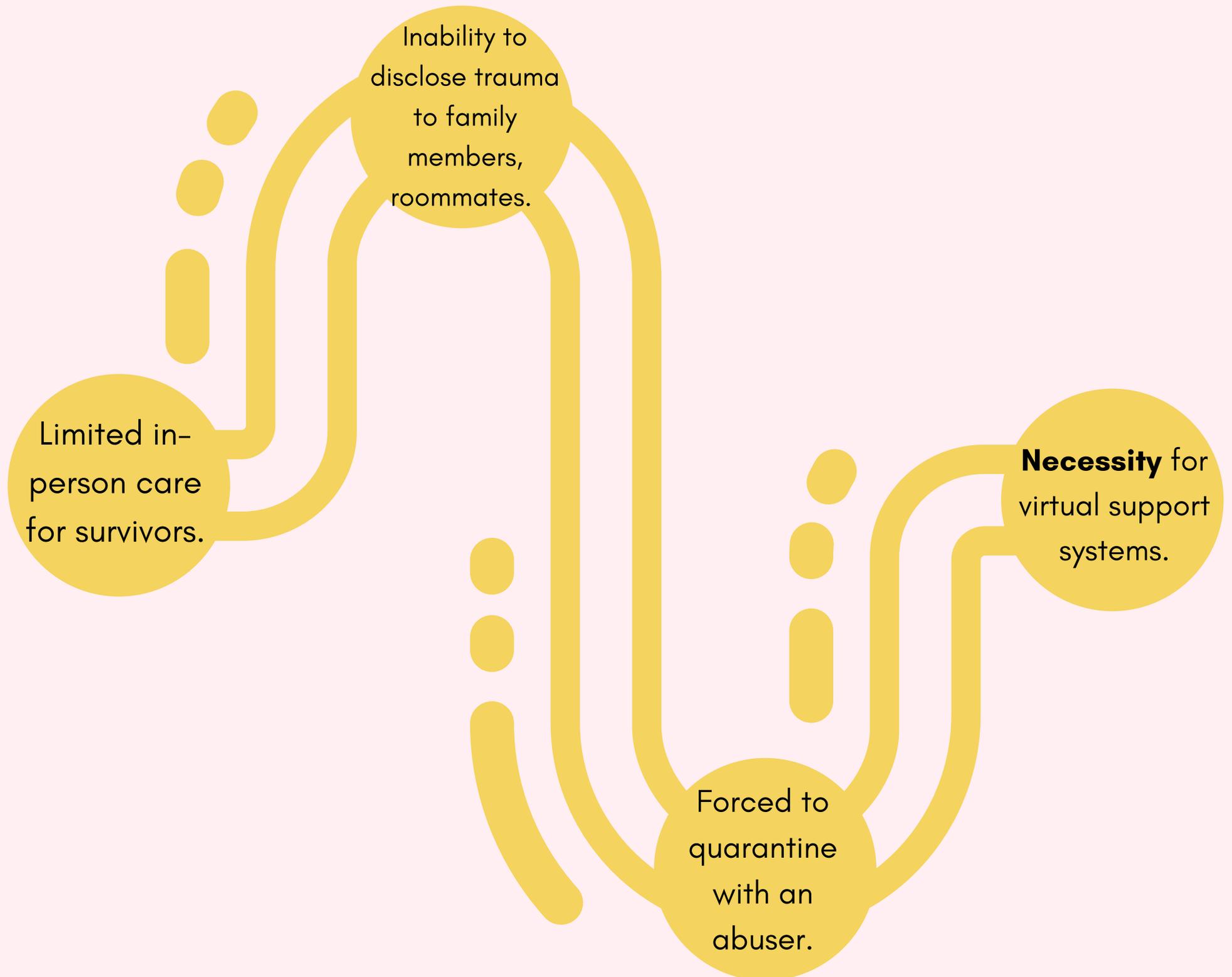
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@SAYITLOUDSPACE

SUPPORT DURING A PANDEMIC:

Community listening spaces are crucial during a lock-down.



MEET SAY IT LOUD:



SAY IT LOUD IS A **LISTENING AND SUPPORT SERVICE**. THEIR SOLE FOCUS IS TO **PROVIDE SPACE**, TO **LISTEN TO SURVIVORS**, AND TO **EDUCATE**.

What is a listening and support service?



Listening and support services offer a space for survivors to talk about their experiences with trauma and understand the context of sexual violence in society outside of clinical or legal institutions, like police and the court systems.

MEDICALIZATION OF ASSAULT

There are **limited** options and resources for survivors of sexual violence. *The options are typically to:* report it to an institution, go to the hospital or crisis center, or call and report it to police.

These clinical, legal, and institutional experiences can be incredibly damaging, even **retraumatizing** to the victim due to systemic misconceptions about sexual assault.

“WHEN IT'S CLINICAL, SOME EXPERIENCES CAN BE OVERLOOKED BECAUSE THEY DON'T FIT INTO A CERTAIN BOX.” - MERIEL, SAY IT LOUD

For masculine-presenting folks, queer and trans people, and BIPOC, experiences with sexual violence are often **trivialized** or **ignored** by the governmental institutions meant to deal with the aftermath of sexual violence.



WHY ARE COMMUNITY-BASED ALTERNATIVES IMPORTANT?

OFTEN, EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE ARE IMMEDIATELY MEDICALIZED AND LEGALIZED, BRINGING BOTH VICTIMS AND THEIR STORIES INTO THE REALM OF INSTITUTIONS LIKE *HOSPITALS* OR *COURT SYSTEMS*.

IN THESE SPACES, SURVIVORS ARE TOO OFTEN **RETRAUMATIZED**, DUE TO THE *OBJECTIVE* OR *CLINICAL* (AND TYPICALLY APATHETIC) NATURE OF THESE SPACES.

VICTIMS MAY BE:

- ASKED TO **REPEAT THEIR TRAUMA STORY** MULTIPLE TIMES,
- FORCED TO BE IN **CLOSED SPACES WITH THEIR ABUSER**
- **INTERROGATED** OR **PROSECUTED** FOR THEIR OWN ASSAULT DUE TO HARMFUL POLICIES AND PRACTICES OF VICTIM-BLAMING.



MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Myth: Sexual violence is an individual issue

Reality: Sexual violence is a societal issue.

The myth that sexual violence is an individual issue perpetuates rape culture by limiting the policies, education, and societal response to assault and violence. This is a problem rooted deeply in our patriarchal, capitalist, and racist society, and it requires critical and intentional uprooting.

Myth: Sexual violence only happens to women.

Reality: Sexual violence is an intersectional issue.

It is a myth that sexual violence only happens to women. It can happen to anyone, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. The intersectionality of someone's identity can be deeply entangled with their experience with sexual violence.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TERMINOLOGY

Survivor or Victim

*"They are a **survivor**." or "They are a **victim**."*

Some folks prefer the term "survivor" because it promotes a narrative of healing and recovery after a traumatic experience. However, some folks prefer the term "victim" because it communicates the severity of the crisis of sexual violence.



Story or Experience

*"That is their **story**." or "That is their **experience**."*

The term "story" tends to have the connotation of being fictional and insinuates that an individual's trauma is consumable. These ideas perpetuate the rape myth that sexual violence is an individual issue. Terms like "experience" can be used to avoid these connotations.

RESOURCES FOR SURVIVORS

- **Domestic Violence Support hotline:** 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or live chat at <https://www.thehotline.org>
- **Resources by state:** This website is an archive of resources to support people in situations of domestic violence, organized by state. <https://www.womenshealth.gov/relationships-and-safety/get-help/state-resources>
- **Financial Help for People in Abusive Situations:** This website offers tips, support, and instructions on how to secure your finances while escaping abusive situations. <https://www.moneygeek.com/financial-planning/resources/financial-help-women-abusive-relationships/>

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Note: Say It Loud & QSECC want to be transparent we're not discouraging folks from going to the police to report an assault or going to the hospital to receive immediate care. We want to be clear that these are often important steps for victims of assault or violence. We offer these community-based alternatives to promote the fact that there are other options to turn to instead of or alongside those more traditional options.