

"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.

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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.

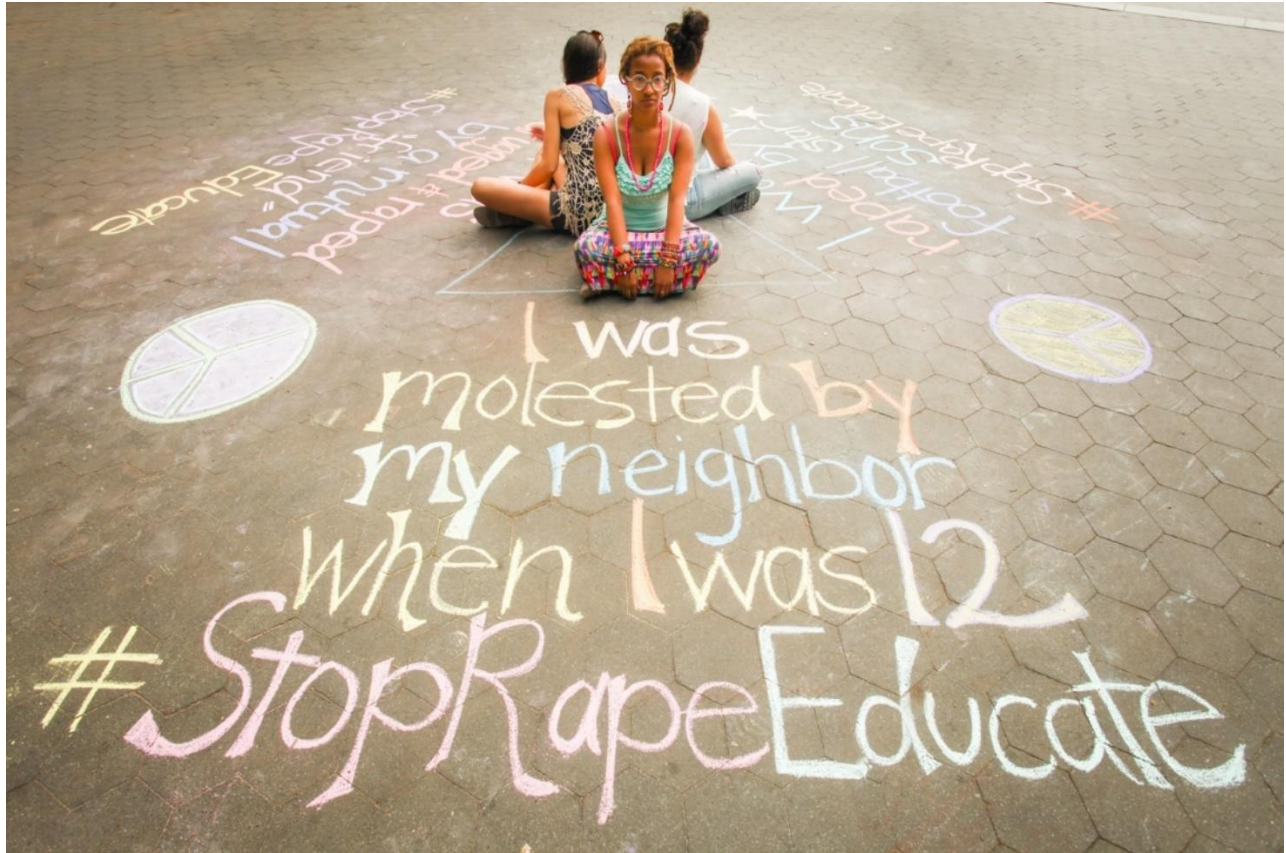


Photo by Justin Munoz, 2015, New York City, NY

"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

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