

Webinar Transcript for [“How Do We Use Restorative Justice to Transform a Culture of Sexual Harm?”](#) presented by the Zehr Institute for Restorative Justice

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Moderator: ...in the chat box where you can use the chat box when invited by our presenters who will be asking you some questions. Do not use the raise hand feature. We don't use that here. It's not going to be seen by everyone so that we can answer anything that you might need. So our host today is Johonna Turner and I'm going to turn it over to her. Again, if my slides will cooperate.

Johonna: Hello everyone. Good afternoon, good evening, and good morning depending on where you are in the world. My name is Johonna Turner. I'm a faculty member at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University and I'm also a faculty associate with the Zehr Institute for Restorative Justice. I'm really excited to welcome you all to today's webinar which presents us with an important question: how do we use restorative justice to transform a culture of sexual harm? So today's topic we're bringing together two issues that we don't often bring together and that is restorative justice and sexual harm. You are going to hear some perspectives that are probably going to be very fresh and innovative, inspiring, but perhaps also challenging as we continue. So I just want to invite you to keep that in mind as we proceed. I'm also excited to present our three guests for today who are all doing important work that really grapples with this question so I'm going to go ahead and present those guests to you.

So our first guest -- these guests are presented in no particular order -- nuri nusrat. I am really excited to introduce nuri to you. I've known her for some years now. For the past few years nuri collaborated with communities across California to implement pre-charge restorative justice diversion programs that attend to victim-identified needs and support young people who have been arrested by using dignifying processes for all affected. Prior to this at the Federal Public Defender Death Penalty Project, nuri assisted attorney's presentations of their clients' life histories. In the past she's also worked on cases regarding people denying disability benefits, people facing removal from the US, and on record expungement. Nuri's family history inspires her to empathize with and support people harmed and people who have done harm. Before I introduce the next guest I also wanna mention nuri is based at Impact Justice in Oakland, California and is just a really

incredible person. Nuri, did I pronounce your last name correctly? I did okay? Fantastic.

Our second guest is also at Impact Justice. I was really excited to recently have the pleasure of meeting Jenny. Jenny Poretz has over four years of experience working with and supporting young people directly impacted by the criminal legal system. Most recently Jenny worked at Community Works West as a restorative justice community conferencing practitioner. She's also facilitated restorative dialogues that provided a transformative space for young people to be accountable for their actions and repair the harm caused. Jenny has also worked as an intake interviewer in court liaison at Esperanza, an alternative to incarceration program for youth in New York. She's worked on a suicide and crisis hotline and continues to gain experience organizing for racial and economic justice. These are just a few of the highlights that Jenny brings from her work history to the conversation.

And last but certainly not least I'm also excited to present Robert Howard. Rob is a dynamic inspirational speaker, restorative justice trainer, and practitioner group facilitator and a conflict mediator. I also had the pleasure recently of meeting him. Since 2005 he's been facilitating multiple youth and community human relations programs. He's been a speaker and presenter at numerous conferences and workshops nationwide including the National Conference on Community and Restorative Justice as well as Mediators Beyond Borders conference. Starting in 2012 Robert served as a restorative justice coordinator at Reid Continuation High School facilitating countless RJ trainings. In addition to that for school employees and communities across the state of California, he started Love LLC, a company whose aim is to produce quality educational and entertaining music and products for young children. He is quite a jack-of-all-trades. He enjoys making music, videography, and shooting portraits.

Another thing I'll tell you about these guests - both Jenny and nuri work with young people around sexual harms so they're particularly in and out of high schools and involved in the community and Rob is continually talking with young people about sex in the work that he does with young people in schools and through restorative justice processes. So I'm really excited to present them to you all. Before I hand it over to them, another thing that I just want to share is again there will be a couple of opportunities in which the presenters will invite you to engage in the conversation and we're asking you to use the chat feature for that. No doubt as they present you will have some questions and so you will present those questions using the Q&A feature at the bottom of your screen when questions

come up for you and I will give you the opportunity. I will ask those questions and our guests will field those questions at the end of their presentation.

Today we are also commemorating the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination. I think it's really incredible that we're having this conversation today with that in mind. After this webinar next week you will have the opportunity to, in addition to the Q&A today, to really talk face-to-face with our presenters because we're having an online seminar that will be next week at the same time. We're encouraging you to register to guarantee a spot for that opportunity. It's \$36 per registrant. You'll find more information and a sign-up on the Zehr Institute website. With no further ado, nuri, Jenny, Rob passing it over to you.

nuri: Hi everybody! So before we start I know it's virtual but I just wanted to try and ground ourselves because sex is often a difficult conversation for people or a conversation that we just don't have generally. So if you can, everybody, just however you are sitting, if you can put your feet on the floor and just take a couple of seconds to breathe. And so the way I want you to breathe is to first breathe into your belly and then up into your lungs and then up into your heart. And when you release your breath, release from your heart, then your lungs, and then your belly. And take two more breaths on your own time. Thank you for breathing and remembering to breathe.

So Johonna did a very kind and lovely introduction of all of us but I also wanted to just orient us around why we do this work and so I'll go first. So why do I care about sexual harm? Why do I care about using restorative justice to address sexual harm? Both my parents are child sexual abuse survivors and I think that if I really think about why I do this work it's that I want a way forward that my parents didn't have the opportunity to have and the way forward for me looks like healing and accountability and stopping the harm while also making space for love and there's space, my mom loved the person that harmed her and did until she passed and so I think that honoring her wisdom and agency rather than pathologizing her for loving that person is something that feels important to me.

Jenny: So, it's always so hard to come after nuri, she's says such wise, beautiful things. But I think I do this work for a bunch of different reasons, specifically around sex, because of experiences that I've had personally with varying degrees of sexual harm and also because nuri is amazing and she does this work and anything that she asks me to do I will gladly do and follow her wise leadership. Over to you, Rob.

Rob: I'm passionate about doing this work for a couple of reasons but what comes to my mind today is that I think I'm privileged to have experienced the life that I have that many of the people who were around me when I was younger or even in college they didn't follow the same path and what that looked like was support and mentors and seeking and gaining information. So the work that I do with young people or communities is focused in supporting people getting to a better life, a better way of being with others, with each other. And myself as a sexual harm survivor, I feel like it's part of my responsibility to support not just the healing work, but the informative education so that there is less harm, but there's more hope and happiness and peace.

nuri: So really quickly before we actually get into content, I just want to talk about our orientation. So you know, we're going to talk about some things that we've done but we also have a lot of questions, like we don't have all the answers. I think as a society we're trying to figure out how to talk about sex and how to grapple with harm and so the same thing is going to be evident here. Also, our orientation is towards healing and towards problem-solving and towards accountability to survivor identified needs. That feels really important to say that survivors deserve to have that agency recognized and have people be accountable to them. But also that we simultaneously care about everyone that's been impacted whether that's the bystanders, the survivors, or the person that has done harm and we want healing for everybody so that we can get to the root causes and stop harm from happening, right? And so I don't know that that's a way that we always talk about sexual harm and so if that's difficult for some folks if you need to leave, if you need to take care of yourself, I just want to say that please do so. Yeah.

Jenny: We also just want to be very transparent that we are not the only people out here doing this work, thinking about this work, especially as it comes to you know different approaches to talking about sexual harm and addressing sexual harm and we just might be getting the most visibility but other folks that are doing great work that we do want to make sure to uplift are Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective and Hidden Waters in New York City and there's so many other folks so we're here 'cause we get more visibility but there are other folks out there definitely doing this work as well.

nuri: Ok so now we're going to move into an activity. So as Johonna was saying, you all have a chat window. And in the chat window, you can respond to everybody or you can just send it to panelists so I'm asking if you can respond just to the panelists. So when you were told, like not the first time that you learned about sex, because for many of us that experience was not positive or was harmful,

but what are some messages that you got about sex when you were younger, about whether you could talk about sex, whether you could think about sex, what are like 3 to 5 messages that you got about talking about sex or thinking about sex when you were young? And if you feel comfortable share some of those with us in the chat window. I'm going to share some of them out loud but I won't read the names that it comes with. So take your time to do that. I'm going to look and see if any actually come.

So I'm going to start reading some of them and feel free to keep responding. I know for myself I literally thought my parents only had sex three times which is to have me and my brother and my sister and that otherwise it was something that was like we never talked about, would have been terrible to talk about, and was shameful and dirty and things for married people. And some of the other folks have said: sex is something secret. It's private. There's a sense of shame, a sense of hiding our developing bodies. It's to be not spoken about. It's something that's saved for marriage. Women and girls are supposed to be passive about it and that men and boys are supposed to be active. That it's something to feel embarrassed about. Only to talk briefly about. Shameful. Dirty. And hidden. And then there's some awesome ones that people said that – sorry, I just have to scroll down to find the beautiful one -- but I was really, oh, that it's great if you're – whoops, not the one -- but married otherwise it's not something you discuss. But one says sex is normal and healthy and then there was something, I can't find it, but someone said something about sex being beautiful and natural and I am very happy that that's a message they got.

And so why did I have all of you share this? Like I think the point is that you know like these are the messages that we are constantly like getting about sex, that it's shameful, it's dirty, it's something like, so it makes it hard to have a discussion about sex period. So for me like I didn't know what healthy sexuality was, or positive sexuality, because it was like shameful and dirty and hidden and terrible and things no other people do that I wasn't supposed to do so it was hard enough for me to have a conversation about like positive sex. So then it makes it even more difficult oftentimes to have a conversation about like sexual harm or to identify someone that's been sexually harmed or has done sexual harm, right? And so um part of this work really feels like it's learning how to have just conversations about sex, period, so that we can also allow space for people to talk about like positive sexuality and ways that sex has been used as the harm and a tool for oppression, right?

Jenny: Yeah and I think we also just want to be very transparent again like talking about sex can be a lot harder for some folks, especially some folks who have experienced sexual harm, sexual assault, have been shamed, you know all of that, so just want to acknowledge that as we continue, that is something that we do recognize.

nuri: So thank you for sharing folks, and I actually can't wait to go back and read more of them. So we're about to actually get into the presentation so before we do that I just want to say that we have all agreed amongst each other that we're just going to jump in on each other's presentations so it's not that we're interrupting each other if someone's like, "oh hey! I have this to say," um and so, you know, why do we use the word sexual harm? Like, what is this term and I think it feels relatively new, at least in my world, and I think you know when thinking about this I was really just like trying to sit with like, "why do I use it?" because it's just kind of like, it's instinct now, and part of it is that it allows for the spectrum of all of the way sexual harm happens and it doesn't require someone to like, I was trained as a lawyer, so it doesn't require someone to like prove it legally or like go with the legal definition. It really allows for the person that was impacted by the harm to define it for themselves rather than defining it by outside terms. And it also encompasses like the spectrum of all of the ways sexual harm shows up, right? Also, I'm having some technical difficulties. I have notes, so I sometimes forget what I'm supposed to say. Also, our orientation is towards like that survivors deserve for people to be accountable to them and that we want to orient around their needs, but also that care, empathy, like I was saying before, and healing like are something that we really want for everybody, including those who have done sexual harm, so we can really stop sexual harm. And that just feels important to say. And so Rob is going to talk about some ways that we think about sexual harm like that guides our work and moves us forward and working around sexual harm and working with young folks.

Rob: Uh yeah, so for me I come from human relations, pan-Africanism, education, also doing a lot of community work. And when I transitioned from human relations training, anti-oppression work, into restorative justice, I completely saw through it, that there is systems of oppressions that are based on identity and culture, right? And with that comes power, privilege, harm, consequences. So with sexual harm, I immediately thought about how depending on the situation, sex can be used and has been used to perpetuate different systems of oppression because oppression connects to power and identity. So, for example, as a heterosexual cisgender black male, there are some things about my identity that I guess I'm, I get benefits from, and there's other aspects of my identity that targets me, right? Or people that look

like me or identify similar to me. And what, for me, seeing how it's intertwined, like we can't talk about systems of oppression without looking at how sex shows up. Who has power, agency, or voice? Who gets believed? Who doesn't get believed? Who gets to avoid consequences or conversations? These are all part of the work for me.

nuri: Cool. Okay so now we're going to go into some stories about the work we've done and like we said like I'm going to come up with like probably more questions than answers and if you hearing my story also have more questions that is cool too I think that's part of it and being comfortable with the discomfort of not having like a clear answer feels really important in this work. And also everyone's experience is unique and different so there's no one-size kind of "fits all" approach, right? But I'm going to talk about a case that we got where a boy, a cisgender boy, had touched a cisgender girl at school without her consent and um we got the case because it was being diverted to restorative justice in lieu of the criminal legal system and I got to facilitate with this amazing brilliant woman named Ashley George who I think is just the best of everything. And so you know we, a lot of this work is about prep, like before ever seeing if anyone wants to sit in a circle, it's like preparing both sides to be, "is this something you want to do and can we get you to a place where this will be actually something that meets some of the survivor needs and meets the needs of the person that did the harm to be accountable?" And so we met with the young boy that touched the girl multiple times and the first time we met with him like, "Okay, so like, why did you touch her?" And the answer was kind of like, "I don't know," right? Just like over and over, which I think is like actually like a human response and when I've talked to many grown-ups too, I feel like I've gotten that same answer in my own way, and so part of the prep you know is working with that young person to get them to a different place and so I just said like, "You know, if I was a survivor that would be a really unsatisfying answer to me and it would probably make me mad and I also wouldn't believe you cuz, like, you could have touched many other girls but you chose to touch me so like I think there's a reason," right? And so, eventually we kept talking, we kept talking, um we met with him again and part of the way I do it is like without shame but like with accountability so like I really want to hear what you have to say and like we're going to unpack accountability but I'm not going to shame you while you're telling me these things, which are different, right? Shame and accountability. And so the next time we met he finally admitted like, "oh I touched her because I liked her," and my co-facilitator Ashley, she was like, "Okay. So like could you have a conversation like could you go back to your guy friends and go tell them like, 'hey I really like this girl?'" And the boy immediately started laughing like it was so obvious the answer is no that it was laughable to him. And we were like, "well,

could you go tell them like you touched someone, or like you had sex with someone?" And it was like, "yeah, obviously, I could tell them that," right? So we had a conversation with him about like, "why do you think that it was easier for you to touch her then it was for you to ask her if she liked you or to tell her that you liked her or to have a conversation," right? And so I think like some of the lessons that I learned so like what felt important to me about that is that yes this young person is absolutely accountable for harming this girl and to listen to the impact and to get to a place of empathy before even coming to the circle and simultaneously like he is not the sole cause or the creator of those lessons. Like, why do we live in a society or in a country where boys aren't allowed to say "I like this girl" but it's easier for them to touch them? Or people can't have conversations about whether they like each other, it's easier to touch someone without their consent, right? Like, he isn't the creator of that and so part of like he is accountable and also we're accountable to transform the conditions and the messages that we're giving around sex and power and privilege which you know as a cismale he had with regards to her and so something else that it taught me is that like consent is not a part of conversations that touching and sex happened before a conversation and when I think about like my old life there are many times where like sex happened before I ever had a conversation about what sex should look like between me and a person that was consensual, right? But that also like talking about like feelings is less normalized than talking about desire and conquest when it comes to sex. And so like it feels important to say that sexism is, the interpersonal harm in this situation was really important to talk about and like was the reason that we were there, and a young person needed to be accountable for that harm right, and that this interpersonal harm is intimately connected like Rob was saying to structural violence and like the lessons that we learn. And that's not an excuse for harming, but we also have to like do the work to transform the messages and the structural violence that creates these ideas in our heads. And so now I'm going to turn it over to Rob to tell a story about some of the work he's done.

Rob: Thanks. So at the first school that I did restorative justice at, it was a continuation school. It was a lot of the "throwaway kids" -- kids who were suspended or expelled from other schools in districts, some "gangbang kids," kids who have been connected to juvenile probation -- and I was super focused on building a healthy community where folks got along better at least was respectful, tolerant to each other. And shifting those norms at the school, they had a lot of stereotypes about what it meant. Imagine what that would look like at a school that's the continuation school for bad kids in the hood like Long Beach or Compton or Oakland or whatever hood pops up in your head. This one was in Long Beach.

So, in circles, they started loving coming to circles, and it was just “kick it after school” as opposed to going home or going to the park sometimes we just kick it after school. So we circle up or they’d circle up without me and I saw the need to create some groups so I created an after-school group for boys and then one of our co-facilitators did an after-school group for those who identified as girls or females. And in those circles sometimes they talked about relationship and hearing them talk made me aware that we should talk together, right? And one of those circles we talked about relationships like why get in a relationship, when should you get in a relationship, what makes you say yes it's time to you know make this person a partner or girlfriend or boo or whatever. And I remember a large majority of the people who identified as male or boy in that group, not all cisgender, not all outwardly or personally identifying as heterosexual, it was a little bit of a hot debate. That conversation led to the conversation and the circle another day about sex like when did you first have sex was the question one of the youth asked and they were like in a circle with each other so they felt comfortable like it wasn't like a timid conversation even if I was a part of the circle they felt like they could be vulnerable and really shared. And I wasn't there to judge them or to be the expert in the room so I'm there to share my story and listen to theirs as well. In that circle, it made me think of how many times I'm in social justice spaces talking about healthy masculinity, patriarchy, misogyny, sexism, where males are identified as a group that has power and historically have used that power abusively. But the why, or what part of the story these young boys got connected to, it was a lot of them were molested by older women, older girls taught harmful things by older males who are, I don't know where they got their messages because they weren't in the circle to tell us their answer, but really harmful experiences that were a part of why they had this attitude, perception, or speech about the female body, sex, sexuality, what their expectation was of what a man was supposed to do and how he's supposed to act around other women. And when we started talking about what that was like personally to like with my story, I was molested by a girl who was four years older than me, when I was under the age of 12. A lot of them were like, “Oh yeah. Me too.” And the irony is that a lot of the harmers that I connected with in restorative justice, people who were responsible for doing harm to someone else, they are held accountable by a system, sometimes restorative justice, but they're not ever in a system or a circle that holds the system or the person that harmed them that started. For example, if I was molested, where's my circle from my harm when I was harmed? All right? That happened, right? But for whatever reason there is this response when I did wrong and that's where I'm supposed to learn my lesson. I could learn my lesson though, I believe, before I've done harm. If there was healing there for me and the person that did harm to me, we both get to learn a lesson, as opposed to just throwing punishment consequences. One person gets to

be labeled a victim, one person gets to be labeled person responsible or the perpetrator. There's lessons before the harm. And one of my frustrations is that with restorative justice sometimes the idea is let's just respond to harm, crime, or conflict. As opposed, to using restorative justice to heal but also to prevent and to learn as a preventive method, to learn and grow and mature and connect, building empathy and understanding with those of the same identity and other identities and, same culture and other cultures, and from that that circle grew over two years. Many of those young men grew up to be fathers, some have daughters, two of them I know personally still connected over Facebook and over my phone and visiting, have been married. But we really had to work around, I wish I could tell you the details, but the idea of what a man and a woman are and what a sexual relationship looks like, the terms they use, the ideas about that, like, that came from not a harm circle but preventive work in the community building dialogues

Jenny: Awesome. So, my last job I was working at Community Works West. I was a facilitator doing youth diversion cases. So a young person was arrested and instead of going through the traditional legal system their case was diverted to the organization that I was working at. And some of those cases that I got were around sexual harm and they were all different but I think some themes that came up for me or things that I started noticing as I started doing more cases around sexual harm was that whether it was a survivor or a family member or a community member, whenever we would come together in a space to address this one moment of sexual harm that had happened, it would so often transform into, like, someone would use that space to transform it into talking about all these other moments of harm, around sexual harm, so you know, putting a lot of weight on this to our process that we have to address this one instance of harm, to have it hold all of the other experiences that someone in the circle had had around sex and sexual harm. And all of that to say, like, that's very relevant and that's you know necessary for healing and that the good thing about restorative justice is that it can hold that, but it shouldn't have to hold that all the time. And so what I noticed is that when we, because we don't give people um the opportunity really to talk about sex ever, when we do create a space that's safe and like meant to talk about sex, people take that space and use it to talk about all these other moments rather than the moment that we're there for. So that kind of leads us into our next topic, which is about other big takeaways that we had and I think my big takeaway from all the cases that I've done is that, the moment of sexual harm or after someone has caused sexual harm, can't be the first time that we're talking about sex and like something that Rob actually has said a lot is that it's actually harmful to only talk about sex after sexual harm has happened. So we need to learn how to talk about sex with each other, with young people, with our elders, and we need to really look at the

messaging that we all receive around sex because they're not explicit and so we're really more like digesting all of these messages about sex but we're not really unpacking it.

nuri: Yeah, and something that makes me think of that Rob also spoke to, is like we're also getting messages about sex that are fundamentally like a part of structural oppression, right? Like, who has power to say yes like Rob was saying? Who has power to say yes to sex? Who's supposed to want sex? Who are we scared of when it comes to sex? Like all of that like I think when I think of like my work and restorative justice I'm constantly thinking about how can we dismantle systems of oppression through like these interpersonal harms, right? And part of that here feels like unpacking the messaging so like when I was talking to the young person like, "why do you think it's okay to touch someone, to touch a girl?" And like I said, that's not, he didn't create that, but like maybe I could help. He can help me see and I can help sit with him to like unpack where that message comes from and then we started talking about sexism but not like those words. Like, "Do you think other guys think that? Why do you think so," right? And so, isolating these things just to sex often like doesn't actually unpack the messaging that is about power, that is about privilege. Some other takeaways that we get?

Jenny: Yeah, so Rob, do you want to talk about harm as multi-layered?

Rob: I'm sorry my mic was on mute because I was listening to how awesome that part was. Yeah, harm is multi-layered. What comes to mind is in the moment that we're talking about one specific harm it feels complex and I don't want to over complicate it but we're not usually just talking about that one harm or that one circle of people involved in that story. We're thinking also about the macro. Where is this connecting to other people, other cultures, other harms? So it is multi-layered with that as well and at the same time trying to focus on both parties. The person who was harmed, giving them what they need as a community member in support of their healing, and the person who did the harm. It's really hard for me whenever I've had a question asked about harm, or time when I've harmed somebody else, or been in circle facilitating when someone has done harm to focus only on what they did and not why they did it. Like, what has happened to you that created that to be okay or what made that moment real for you? It usually connects back to some other harm. So it's hard to just sit in this one place where we're in two possible situations at the same time. So it's complex, it's multi-layered. There's power. There's agency. There's a lack of consequences. There's a privilege to be able to avoid consequences with some identities or cultures. There's so much there that yeah, it's multi-layered.

nuri: Also, can you do the next one, Rob?

Rob: Yeah. Shame causes stagnation. For me, shame stops us from talking. There's no voice. There's no honesty. When -- I have a son. He's eleven -- whenever he feels shame about something, he's not the same kid. He's another version of himself. He's not talking about what happened, why it happened, how he felt. He's not talking. He just feels bad. And that is a natural consequence sometimes but forcibly putting shame as a consequence on someone would stop us from talking more. So, for me, not talking for years about being molested was because even though I was the victim of that moment, I felt shame about what happened to me. So there is no healing. How can I heal? I don't even have access to other people who can help me in my healing journey because I'm not talking about it. I don't want to talk about. I don't want to hear it. I'll change the channel if that topic comes up. I'm uncomfortable. There's this shame that is separating me from potentially healing.

nuri: Something that makes me think of is that was there was a time that I did harm, not sexual harm, but I harmed someone that I cared about really deeply and I was so ashamed like I was stuck in shame and I realized at some point that that shame was actually preventing me from being accountable because it was all about me. Like, how ashamed I felt, how I was worried about what people would think about me and I kept beating myself up which like you know even still I'm like well I did something bad, I should be beat up because I've internalized some punitiveness, but like I couldn't be accountable to that person because I was all about myself and it was once I was willing to like move past the shame and be like okay like I did this thing I'm a human being I did this thing and I want to be accountable I was actually able to like show up for that person but the shame like made me, like Rob was saying, separate into myself and I was a different person. Some of these people know.

(37:31) Jenny: And I think just going along with that too is just like being able when you're doing this process or even just when you're interacting with anybody, being able to really see everybody's full humanity and like their dignity in whatever. So like nobody is you know as bad as the worst thing that they've done. And like take that when you're when you're dealing with or when you're interacting with people who have caused harm, people who have experienced harm.

nuri: yeah and I think that in this society it's easy to conflate that with saying that what people did is okay. What I did to the person I harmed was not okay. But like

shaming me like I was able to be accountable and that's different from shame and that I think sometimes needs to be teased out especially when we think about punishment and then I think also like on the flip side Rob had mentioned this when we were prepping is that vulnerability, transparency, and honesty are actually transformative. And like the work that I've done with people that have caused harm like when they're able to name it and like unpack both why and take full accountability like there is a transformation that happens and also I'm finding out like what are the root causes and like part of Rob's story that I love is when I first started thinking about trying to do sexual harm cases with between young people through restorative justice, Rob told me, he was like, "nuri um, like you have to find out where people learned about sex. Like, how can you address the root causes if you don't ask people like, 'how did you learn about sex and where did you learn about sex?'" And he told me that story about the circles and that's really something that I some of the things I do with Sonia Shah like she has a group for people that've done harm. And we find that like a both we unpack both their accountability but also like when were the times that they harmed and how do they think those impact how they chose to do harm, right? So the next takeaway is ample time to prep. Like I was saying with the young person, it took, first we have to get past the fact that sex is shameful and you're talking to like a grown-up who's a dork about sex. Like, that's already awkward enough, right? But then like we also have to like unpack the layers of shame and cultural conditioning and cultural messaging, right? Like, I don't think he in the first times me and Ashley met with him, I don't think he like, his immediate thought was like, "oh, like, guys do touch girls without their consent and guys don't talk to girls about liking them," but like we had to get to that place and so you need enough time to prep and that's why we can't say like this needs to happen in a week or a month. Like, you have to sit with people to be able to unpack all that but also like find out like from the survivor what did they want? Survivors have agency, right? Survivors have wisdom. And I think the criminal legal system doesn't necessarily recognize that but, what do they want from the process? What do they want for themselves? What's important to them? And same for the young person or the people who have done the harm. Like, who do they want to be in this world? And how would being accountable like help them be that person? And like, can that be a motivating force, right? And also finding out from folks like some of the details like if you come to a circle, who sits where? You ask the survivor, like, "Who sits where? Do you want to be in the room for it," like first, all that kind of stuff so that they can predict and prepare for what's about to happen.

Jenny: Okay, cool. And this next one, be consistent with survivors, that's definitely included in prep. I think a lot of this is all really included in the prep process but be

consistent with survivors. It's pretty much what it sounds like, you know? If you say you're going to call, call. You know? Call even if you don't have an update, even if the process isn't really moving forwards, like call, check-in, how are things, you know survivors are human beings and they like to be in relationship, or maybe they don't, but let them decide. And then be consistent with how you follow up.

nuri: And then political education is necessary. So I think that in restorative justice circles I've kind of heard like some debate about this like if it's really from the community, do we ever offer any resources to like help people understand or do we just go based on what they're listing? So, for me, I'm saying this is for me, this felt really important. So when I was talking to the young person that I keep talking about um about consent and then I've also done some other cases like I don't think that any of us -- I am still learning what consent is for myself, right? -- so like I don't think they knew it and from my conversations with them it was pretty clear that people had some different ideas about consent. And so I brought in resources to be like hey let's watch this video about like what is consent or like, let's watch, yeah there's this awesome video that I think is by MTV, where it's like trans males who formerly identified as or presented as cisgender females talk about like the difference between the power and privilege they felt -- the lack of power and privilege they felt as in female bodies -- and then how being in a male body transformed it. So we'd watch stuff like that to like really unpack this, right? And I think something that Rob said when we were preparing for this, is that the person that's done the harm and the survivor like everybody needs tools, support, and agency. And for the people that have done the harm like we want them to be able to care about what happened to the survivor and care and like understand why they did it and understand the impact and want to be accountable. And so everyone needs resources for that. Like some of that is literally just sitting with people and asking questions and really listening, but some of it is also like there's another case I did and the person that was harmed wanted the person that harmed her to listen to this podcast called "The Heart" (I think) on consent and it was a four-part podcast and she was like, "From my experience with this person, they didn't understand what consent was and so this is important to me." And that was part of what we did, right? And so political education means like kind of unpacking the messages that we're getting around sex.

Rob: I just want to add one thing about that. With the group that I had, it taught me and encouraged me to continue doing the same work to ask, no matter what identity or group, have you ever wanted to say no but said yes? And why? And that question leads to so many other things. But in that moment, empathizing with the time where they wanted to say no to an adult, over sex, in a peer pressure situation

that, we should be able to say no and you should have been able to say no and let that be enough, right? Empathizing and understanding that that was wrong when for whatever reason you felt like you had to or your no wasn't respected when you actually did say no, no one respected it. Somebody did what they wanted to do anyway. And from that, empathy opens up the other side of the conversation of have you ever or if you ever hear someone saying no, how should you respond to that? Because why would I care about your no when no one cared about my no? No one showed up to even -- I couldn't talk about it, right? This is the first time I've been talking about it. So for many of the young men and young people in my circles that I've had over the years that moment of, "have you ever said no and it was disrespected?"

nuri: Thank you, Rob. That actually makes me think of, so I have a nephew, my sister had a baby, and I like think about how much kids are taught not to honor their bodies or not to listen and that adults have power over their bodies and so he's a year old now and I try to set him to pick him up so like I'll put my arms out and only if he puts his arms up like pick him up and if he doesn't, I'm like, "Oh, that's your body. Like, you don't want to do that." But like I just think of like how from like childhood like we've been taught that our no, when it comes to somebody with more power than us, doesn't matter, right? So thank you, Rob, I love that.

Jenny: And that now, not only just like about our body, but like you know as kids we're like, people tell us to smile, or like why aren't you smiling, or all of these things that like we don't necessarily know why not but if someone who's older than is telling us to do it, then we have to do it. I think that goes along with their consent.

nuri: And then the other thing is that I think there's a lot of focus on restorative justice interventions like a face-to-face dialogue between the person that's been harmed and the person that harmed them and their supporters, right? And like, that is absolutely an avenue that can happen. Both. And I think Rob has been able to be a part of that. But I think that some of the critique about restorative justice is that it requires the person that's done the harm to be willing to be accountable and that it makes the survivors healing depend on that person and so I want to say like actually that is not something that needs to happen. Survivors, one of the cases that me and Ashley did actually was so brilliant. The survivor did not want to meet the person that harmed her, but Ashley was like, "Well, would you want something else? Would you want like a healing circle with your friends?" And the survivor totally wanted that, right? And so some survivors don't ever want contact with the person that harm them and they have agency and they know what they need and so

we honored that, right? But there's other options. Like, there can be circles, healing circles with just survivors. There can be, some of the survivors that I've talked to really wanted to make sure what happened to them never happen to anyone else, so there could be like circles around political action. It's just not, the face-to-face dialogue is not the only thing we should prioritize, and as Jenny and Rob have so like beautifully spoken about prevention, I think there's so much attention on like the face-to-face dialogue after harms happened, but I think that all of us in our work have learned that prevention, like number one, going back to number one, full circle, that prevention is like actually the most important. So like what are ways that we can unpack power and privilege and harm and sex before that happens and so we can do circles like Rob did where we're just talking about like what it is to be a human in this world and where we learned about sex and where we learned about relationship and do that work, right? And so...

Rob: Can I add just one thing that -- what you just said nuri reminded me of another school I was working at. Two students, different grades, the girl was in a younger grade, a year younger than the boy. They lost their virginity to each other in a relationship. The relationship ended and he harmed her by, I want to say he shared photos that he got from her when they were in a relationship, in class, which is completely harmful. But when I spoke to the young girl about her needs, I came with the condition, "I want to bring you guys together," and luckily I didn't push it or force it. She was like, "I don't want to talk to him about this. I think I really just want him to learn his lesson." So that conversation led to, "What would that look like?" And she felt like me, another staff member at the school, and some other males needed to be in a circle and have a conversation about sexual harm and consent and sharing videos, either showing someone a picture or sending it out to people that you knew. Like, she really wanted him to learn a lesson, but to be able to tell the truth if he's not hearing it, doesn't get it, doesn't agree. And she trusted that that is, that could happen, and that's what she said that she needed. So that's what we did.

nuri: Anytime Rob talks, me and Jenny are just like, that's awesome. We're like writing notes down. Something that that makes me think of that's not on here and that Ashley, that I keep talking about who's not here, I should just have her come in to this webinar, so often reminds me of is that so much a restorative justice work is about ourselves, right? And so if I'm not constantly like checking in with myself about like when I'm talking about sex like about my own experience with sexual harm, with sex, period, and how my shame and all of those things then I'm not going to be, at least for myself, I'm not going to be a good facilitator, right? And so like there's definitely been cases where the young person doesn't want to bring this

thing up and I'm kind of like, I'm not saying that what Rob did is wrong at all, but like I have an agenda when I'm coming like, oh I really want to know the answer to this question, I really want to want to know why this person did this particular thing, and then the survivor doesn't want to know that thing and doesn't care and I'm like in my head I have to grapple with myself, like, "Oh, so she doesn't want to know it so like I could take power over her and be like I want to know that," but that's not what this is about. So there's something inside of me that needs an answer to that question and so like what does that say about me and what is that like does it relate to something that I've experienced or done or whatever, right? And so much about this work is really unpacking how we feel about sex and how we feel about the things that have happened to us, the things that we participated in, and really constantly going back to that, rather than just being like an outward facing thing we do with others or to others, right?

So, that's our webinar. What I want to say to close, and I want to see if Rob and Jenny have anything to close, is that this is just the beginning, right? Like we are all like, I think this work comes from experiencing things and really reflecting on our lives and working with folks around this and uncovering answers together so this is the beginning. The criminal legal system in my experience does not, has not met the survivors needs that I've gotten to talk to and work with. It's based on legal definitions, it doesn't attend to healing. And so restorative justice is another alternative. I'm not saying it's the only way, but it is a way that asks, that respects the agency of survivors and asks them how they've been harmed and what their needs are and allow them to define the harms for themselves. Or, not allow them, that sounds "power over" -- asks them what the harm was, right? And then next week we'll be also, I think there's like Johonna mentioned it in the beginning, there's a separate little webinar if folks have questions so that's like more about like the nitty-gritty but also we wanted to open it up to questions now. And I don't know, Rob and Jenny, do you have anything you want to say to close before we do that?

Jenny: Sounds good. Rob?

nuri: So do you all have any questions?

Johonna: Yes we have received some questions and I'm going to ask them. But first of all let me just thank you all for a really powerful and enlightening presentation. It was really illuminating and so helpful at a number of different points and I'm not going to take time to highlight them but I'm just going to go straight to the questions that have come in so far and I also have some questions I'll add to this,

but let me just start first with questions that have come in. I mean some of the participants are just really thanking you all, saying this was really rich with insights, really digestible, really also just very practical, easy to understand, and I would add radical in the way of getting to the roots, right, in the in the best way.

So let me just start with the one basic question, someone who is a mental health counselor and is working, a mental health counselor in training, and is working with adults who've been have been convicted of sexual offenses, is wanting to know if your work is only with young people or you have any experience working with adults as well?

nuri: So I would tell you to look at the Ahimsa Collective website. Sonya Shah has done a lot of groups with grownups who have done sexual harm but and not face-to-face dialogues with them and the victims. It's more kind of unpacking the sexual harm that folks have done and trying to get them to a place of internal accountability. But there hasn't been space to do dialogues.

Johonna: Thanks for that. And our April 18th webinar will actually be featuring a couple of folks from the Ahimsa Collective. We're going to have a conversation around um survivors, the role of survivors in restorative justice work, not specifically talking about sexual harm, but I would definitely encourage you all to come to that conversation. We'll probably also have more folks on in our fall webinar series too. We've been talking about that.

nuri: Can I add one thing I forgot? Thank you Johonna. You remind me that some of their work was bringing survivors together with people that have caused sexual harm, but not of the direct crimes. So like, not the survivor of the crime and the person that did it, but survivors and people that have done sexual harm.

Johonna: Thank you. You all have really spoken to this question but I'm wondering if you could speak to it more directly. One of our participants has appreciated the story sharing and would like you to just speak more directly to a specific insight you can offer on working with trans kids using restorative justice and around issues of sexual harm.

Rob: I do it. I'm a part of a camp in the state of California called the Boys and Men of Color camp, BMOC for short. And there was a, there was a year that we had a really intentional push to open up applications to gender non-conforming youth, to not, to learn from them but also offer space to be together in community in ways that maybe we're not in community in our actual communities throughout all the

different hubs and cities around California. And we did have experiences with students who identified as trans and so yeah that that popped in my mind immediately when you asked that question. Is there something more specifically that like around restorative justice and what we did? It wasn't like harm circles but it was building community intentionally across identities, cross cultures, so that there was an opportunity to talk about anything. Yeah.

Johonna: Thanks for speaking to that. Are there any things that you do differently or any particular insights in those conversations Rob?

Rob: I believe that having the right people, the right people make everything better. So we didn't, like, who am I to talk about all identities? I don't have all identities. I don't know everything about every community or culture. So reaching out to allies, community leaders, youth, elders, Babas, whoever, who might be able to present and also ground us to our values in community was something that I do differently now. So even inviting sometimes grandmas and grandpas, aunties and uncles, to certain circles, harm circles too, but community building circles. That circle is way different and I think gets better impacts with the right people.

Johonna: Sure thanks for speaking to that. This next question could in some ways be related to what you just spoke to in terms of the right people. I think it also does relate to when you talked about the, one of the principles that you all highlighted is that having work, such as circles, survivor circles, just for survivors, that it doesn't always have to be a face-to-face dialogue involving the person who's done the harm and the person who's experienced the harm. And so in some cases, in which the survivor doesn't want any contact with the person who's done the harm, can you also talk about some additional examples of work you've done with the person who has done the harm who still wants to heal and transform themselves even if they don't fully understand what they did and how they harm the other person?

nuri: Do you have something, Rob?

Johonna: Does that make sense? Did you understand the question?

Rob: Yeah. I think I got it.

Johonna: So, working with those who have done the harm when they, the person who's survived the harm, doesn't want any contact with that person. How do you kind of help that person to heal and transform?

Rob: So I've specifically, all my trainings, all my workshops, everything, I'm grounded and rooted in the idea of thinking of harm through both lenses, both sides of the coin, maybe. One side is, think of a time where you've done harm, or something you've done either intentionally or accidentally, harmed somebody else, right? And think of a time where you were harmed by somebody else, something they did or said intentionally or unintentionally. And using that to talk about harms, needs, and then obligations or commitments, which is like the restorative justice circles. Sometimes you see like the Venn diagram thing, harms, needs, and then obligations is in there, and getting to healing is by addressing all those with empathy, understanding, and honesty. So if the person does not need to talk to the person who did the harm, that person who's done the harm has needs, but we're maybe going to go a different route. We're not going to land at that spot of a restorative conversation between those two parties. I may have a surrogate. I've done that before. I did a circle around the harm of cheating right and what that looked like. So I haven't done it around sexual harm, but I've seen that model as an example. Does that make sense?

nuri: Also, if you look at Hollow Water in Manitoba, Canada and Hidden Water in New York City, they do circles with folks that have just done harm so like people who have done harm and the person that facilitates the circle is ideally someone that's done harm and has moved to a place of really understanding their accountability. And so there, I think that we should be offering like ways for people to unpack harm they've done even if survivors don't want it and then something else that just came to mind, which was why I clapped, was in Germany there's this place called, this thing, entity, called project Dunkel thought. This is kind of a sidenote tangent, but if people fear that they are going to do sexual harm or if they've imagined doing sexual harm they can call this number and get help before they've done it. And I think that like honestly moving forward if we're really talking about prevention like, how many people are allowed to admit that like, "I think I might do sexual harm, where I have feelings or thoughts about this?" And so that's like I think like revolutionary in many ways and that we could get to that place would be awesome but like at this moment I think it can be really just circles of folks that have done harm. And also like if folks aren't in a place to actually acknowledge that they've done harm, like what would it be like to just start those circles that Rob started like where did you learn about sex and like let's move to accountability but first like naming it, like grounding it ourselves could be a thing and I'm not saying that that's an excuse for the harm at all.

Jenny: And I think also like on the flip side, so having circles with folks with who have caused the harm but also being able to have circles with folks who have

experienced harm but don't necessarily want to be in like, in direct relationship with the person that caused them harm. So having those sort of like same circles that nuri was talking about, like you don't have to be in the space where the person caused the harm in order to like really heal and be in circle with other survivors and really talk about healing and experience that in your own way.

nuri: And that's also a way for us to learn because needs are dynamic, right? What I need when I'm immediately harmed and what I need like a year later are different and so if we actually sit with people and allow them to like navigate that process like whether they're people that have done harm or people that are survivors like we're going to know better how restorative justice can actually meet those needs long term rather than be just like this isolated one-time thing. Like how can we support them over time and be accountable and transforming and survivors and healing and how are they define hearing for themselves.

Rob: Yeah, healing is a journey. So like what I need now when you ask me today is not going to be the same thing in two years or after that one part. I'm arriving and pursuing healing so that's not rigid, it's fluid. So having a continuation of a conversation like checking in, we talked about that in the takeaways, knowing that the conversation isn't done but this one might be over, right? Like there'll be another opportunity where you get to ask or be asked, "what else do you need or what do you need now?"

nuri: And if folks want tools on accountability a lot of transformative justice and community accountability folks have been thinking about it, so I think of Creative Interventions, the Storytelling and Organizing Project, INCITE! women of color, Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective, there's a whole bunch of -- Philly Stands Up -- a whole bunch of resources online that you could look to also.

Johonna: Really glad that you mentioned those resources nuri, and actually one question came in on that, it's later on in the deck, but I'm going to go ahead and mention that now since you mentioned transformative justice. I'm always asking if any of you, not only use the language of restorative justice but also transformative justice, and how do you know, do you see them as synonymous? If you could speak to that briefly and also point you, Emily and others, to a previous Zehr Institute webinar where we have done a webinar on transformative justice and some of the differences between the transformative justice framework and restorative justice but still definitely you all can speak to that question from your own perspectives.

nuri: Rob did you want to go first?

Rob: Oh yeah, I'll go. I saw you nodding and was just trying to give space.

nuri: I was like, nodding for you.

Rob: Yeah, for me, I look at transformative justice as transforming systems, culture, and people. So restorative justice, when I first picked up restorative justice was presented, I was like well what about all the other moments, like we're having a circle about this moment and restoring from here and then rippling out healing, rippling out understanding, rippling out relationships with that one circle. But I think for me, transformative justice is intentionally looking at transforming not just this moment but further out systems, people, culture.

Jenny: I think also, just my experience of restorative justice versus transformative justice and some criticisms from transformative justice folks is that, "RJ doesn't interact with systems, systems of oppression and has no issue like operating as a circle within a square or it does and transformative justice is really trying to move the healing process outside of any existing systems of oppression and really focusing more on how to find healing in the community accountability and how to find healing in the community rather than through the court system or the police.

nuri: So, me and Rob, like we text about this all the time and I think it's something he spoke to in when he was talking. It's like, if we start like if through restorative justice, we are acknowledging that this harm happened and like the moment of accountability starts at this harm for this person that is held accountable and that none of the other harms that person experienced are ever attended to but we're telling them as a society when you do harm you will be held accountable, but for all the things that have happened to you where you've been harmed there's no accountability than we are also playing into like systems right of power and privilege and oppression and who gets to be a victim and whose a victim, whose survivorship is like elevated to a level and so I grapple personally and it feels weird to say this like at the Zehr Institute because I really love restorative justice but I grapple personally with like does restorative justice have the world view? Because it has these questions like, how have you been harmed, what do you need, whose obligation is it to meet these needs, and I'm like, ok, well in those, in that, how do we also transform oppression? Like, do we have a radical liberatory world view that's like, "and we have to end racism and homophobia and transphobia?" Like, is that part of those three questions or does restorative justice need like some grounding to actually become liberatory rather than a thing that's done and so,

something that I just put out to all of you that are out there is like, how do we, in a moment of interpersonal accountability, also address systems? And so like, I've had survivors come in that are totally racist, right? And the thing is about sexual harm and so how much, and I think I've gotten like questions from RJ people about like, so for me in that moment am I also teaching them that like we live in a world where racism exists and you're engaging in that and that like that plays into also your perception of this person in the situation or am I really just there asking, how were you harmed, what do you need? And so I'm not telling you that I have an answer but I really think about how, in these individual interactions, can we be addressing structural oppression because otherwise I'm letting, not that I'm letting anyone do anything, but for me it feels like, well then I'm just here, like, complicit in something that is simultaneously sometimes oppressive and meeting the needs of someone that might be engaging in oppression at the same time and like not that they do it in the circle but I don't know how to like get into it but like I really just think about that and I think transformative justice has thought a lot about the systems of oppression and like not wanting to engage with them and I think that together we could think of like well then how do we actually address it in an individual moment? Some of that is political education, but like how far do we go with that, right?

Johonna: Absolutely. I couldn't, I cannot agree more. And I'm really just so thankful that you, that you name those things. We have about 10 or more -- they're coming in as I speak -- questions on the desk so I'm going to leave it to you all, to either listen to the questions briefly and then pass on those [garbled]. So this question about transformation so how, and to what extent do you deal with, and I'll use the language this person asked, patriarchal players in the community? This person used an example from India, many instances where community intervention has backfired for example forcing, and to use the language that they use, the abuser to marry, I think the person who was abused, to marry the person who abused them, exposing to them some more abuse. But in the school's context for example, I could imagine, where some adults for instance don't recognize that what has happened is harmful perhaps because of their own patriarchal perspectives. So how are, what are some ways that you engage with those dynamics? And those other people, right, the community itself, that also enable or excuse what has happened.

Rob: So, I can relate to this totally. [garbled]. Check, check, mic check. No echo. Good job. Okay, um, so having someone who has the insights and maybe see the layers as a part of the facilitation or the restorative justice response. If I have a young person, the principal's like, "yeah, let's call the mom and have them come in here," and I'm like you might want to call the grandpa cuz the mom, I already

talked to the mom, the mom might not be able to make this better in circle. Or talking to the principal, they think this is the thing that they need to see as a consequence, and like let me talk to you more about that, let's look at maybe what could happen other than the thing that you foresee happening. It might cause more harm. And if the person I'm working with is mindful of that and empathetic to that, then we're not pushing towards a response or consequence that creates a new harm. Now if our goal is to reduce harm and to provide healing opportunities, hopefully in the prep before the moment, looking at, "well, what do you think you need? What do you want to see happen next?" That's what I use in schools from the model of what happens in communities.

nuri: That is a really real question and I think like part of it is like how to unpack hundreds of years of patriarchy within certain, within communities, right? And so like I don't think what I'm about to say is the same at all but when one of the cases we had, the dad of the young man who had harmed totally normalize it. He's like, "Okay. I slap woman's butts like, that's just a normal thing to do, like, so, what he did isn't bad," and so like I started just asking questions like how would you feel if that happened to your daughter? And like what do you think this message sends and like ultimately I think we made a decision not to bring that person to the circle but if everybody in my, let's say it's my family or my community, thinks that same way and I'm never going to get them to think this was a harm, like I think we would love to think with you about like how, what do we do? I don't know. So sorry that there's no answer but it really is like in a moment how are we trying to transform all of the messaging and conditioning and I don't know.

Jenny: And I think that there's probably not going to be just one answer too. I think that's like what's coming up is that there isn't just one answer so it's an ongoing discussion and conversation that definitely should be had.

Johonna: Absolutely. And I think that you did, you did even speak to some aspects of that earlier with political education in the role that that takes and that's definitely something that I know is very much highlighted as part of transformative justice work and we definitely need to bring that more into restorative justice, the role of political education on a community wide scale.

This question is related to that um, where did the question go? Let's see. Here it is. How would you bring restorative justice practice to curbing harmful language in classrooms that teach sexual health education?

Rob: How would I bring restorative justice to classrooms that teach sexual – say that last part again?

Johonna: Sex ed classes. How you, basically, you know there's some harmful language is happening in sex ed classes, how could a restorative justice approach, framework, analysis, etc. be utilized in that context?

Rob: I think that any harm is something that you can use a restorative practice with. Looking at the moment that happened, those harmed, on the people who've done the harm, everybody in the classroom is impacted directly when something like that happens in the classroom but I can't from one moment say, "This is how you're all harmed." Giving them opportunity to have voice, to talk about, did they feel harmed when this happened? There is a situation happening I think in this year at the school I'm working here and the person who was harmed the most was the adult in the room by the language that was used and that was their direct response, was like let's reach out for restorative justice. And so we had to have a conversation about well, why did you feel harmed when these other people in there, in the room at the same moment, it didn't impact them the same way? And what do you need? What would you like to see happen next to be, as a, to help make things as okay as possible moving forward? And what they needed was to be heard. They needed some checks and balances on words without word policing. That's what happened this year, an example that I had.

Johonna: Thanks. Thanks for speaking to that Rob. nuri, and Jenny, is there anything that you want to add to that? No. Okay. Thank you. Another question that's come up and I think this question is especially coming up not only because of the need that we experience as adults in the workplace but also because of the conversations that are so pervasive right now in the media and the kind of the public sphere around sexual harm and particularly sexual harassment and sexual violence among adults in the workplace, we recognize that most of your work is with young people, with youth. Are there any insights that you could draw from your work that would contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of sexual harm in the workplace and what could be done to address it using restorative justice to change the culture in the workplace among adults? Any lessons that we could kind of extract?

Rob: I feel like I'm talking a lot.

Johonna: You have a lot to contribute.

Rob: Yeah, so I love working with young people but one of my frustrations working with young people is that the work can't live with young people. It has to be the adults. And some of the things that young people do, good or bad, is taught and practiced by the adults. So any time and every time I can think of ways to do very similar work, have the same goals with adults, or systems, I run to that. I've done trainings with companies, businesses that have like HR issues, and that's the first thing that pops into my mind is like when that happen. I don't want to keep talking. I know I'm on a panel. I can keep talking.

nuri: You have more experience. Can you just say what that looked like in action?

Rob: Like, okay, yeah, good question. I'm like all right, so what I tell you? So what'd it look like was we did a restorative justice training. So before we talked about the harm, we talked about culture and we talked about identity. We talked about harms, being harmed, and being the harmer person, and it allowed us to build relationships, to be able to talk about that harm. It was an entry point so that it lands in a real place. Sorry, the gardeners are doing gardener things right here. Sorry, I don't know if you can hear that. Yeah, it was a three-day training that we did one day a week for three weeks consecutively, meeting with the same group consistently.

nuri: And I think that something that Rob kind of named right now that just feels important is like we have to care about each other, right? Like, so empathy, like Ashley always reminds me like that those four quadrants of the circle and the first two are really like about getting to know each other, setting group norms and values, and community building. And you can't just rush to the harm. And so that's like the same thing we're thinking about like the workplace and adults are more difficult. Workplace makes it more complicated because there's power and there's people who are supervisors and then honestly I feel like sometimes people actually don't want to solve the problem. And so what I think Rob said is so real, like, we have to first, you're doing the work even if you're just trying to create empathy and like unpack, like create relationship, because otherwise the other stuff isn't going to happen and then yeah and I know that's not like the most satisfactory answer.

Rob: A place where there's also a history of power and abuse and harm. It could be a job, a workplace. What gets brought to circle? Who gets brought to circle for what they did? Who doesn't? Who will never get checked? Is the boss going to get checked? Or is the new person? Is it this race? Is it this gender? Is it this position? Like, all these different things are part of the thing and for me when I'm harmed I want to be heard and respected. So how do we get to a place where I'm heard and

respected? We have to have some ground and we have to have some community building. You have to have some relationship building, some normalizing conversations, so that we can have a real conversation about whatever.

Johonna: Thank you for bringing that. You've just made it really clear. I think some, just, you know, important kernels that we can take away and apply to many other contexts. There's a question that came up about the college context and what we can apply, and I think some of what you said can also be applicable there as well. We are, our participants, you all have asked some incredible questions and we're not going to be able to get to all of them. I want to encourage you all again, those of you who can, to come next week to the seminar that we're offering so you could just have more face to face conversation around the questions you have and restorative justice and sexual harm not only with the our incredible presenters but also with other participants who've come who also bring I know a lot of insight as well.

So maybe I'll ask one more question before we wrap up. This question is actually, you all mentioned earlier this word accountability, and we often use that word accountability in restorative justice, but sometimes we don't define it. I was just looking through the Creative Interventions toolkit that you mentioned I think earlier, nuri, in terms of transformative justice work and they have a definition of accountability that includes recognizing, acknowledging the harm, stopping the harm, taking steps so that it wouldn't happen again. How do you all define accountability in the work that you do?

Jenny: I mean, I think that that sounds great. Another thing that Ashley George has so wisely, has imparted on me, I think is that, to me, accountability is love. And that like if you love someone then you show up for them in the ways that you want to be showed up for. And if you cause harm, that you're there for them in the ways that you need someone to be there for you and that accountability is oftentimes thought of as this like really harsh, intense thing where it's like kind of equated with punishment and to me like if I love someone, I'm going to hold you accountable, I'm going to ask you to like you know meet me where I'm at, where I'm going to tell you my needs and I'm going to ask you to like meet me there and yeah to me that's love.

nuri: yeah I think about like loving accountability often – oh, sorry Rob! – so a couple of things. One is like when I think about like actually coming to the circles we've done, like you absolutely have to be able to understand the harm that you've caused, take responsibility and be able to empathize, like how this must have

impacted the person, and then what I also say is like through restorative justice principles, like it's not that is part of accountability, but the rest is up to the survivor to define for themselves because they have, they know what accountability to their needs means and like it is through the circle that we're going to find out what they need and then the person is accountable to the things that show up. Which are totally different. But also like for me when I think about just like loving accountability is like I am telling you I love you so much that I want you to be your best self, that I want to be my best self, and so it is what I am fiercely holding you in community and saying you belong in this community and I believe in you that we can actually get accountability and it can't be like - this separation and exile that I ever think I'm going to get anything from you and then I think Rob has...

Rob: Yeah so the punitive model I was taught is holding accountability, holding someone accountable, is holding their feet to the fire, of a consequence, right, a punishment. If I say, "hey I'm trying to lose weight," my friend, my accountability partner, is helping me do what I said I was going to do and through restorative justice, I think the model is, "restore to what?" is a question I ask a lot, like to restore to what -- it's our core values, our community, and our best selves. So me being my best, with each other, right? So holding me accountable to being in community. You know you're in space with other humans, that's accountable to who and to what.

Johonna: And there you have it folks. There you have it. Yes. So any last words nuri, Jenny, Rob? You all have brought so much wisdom, power, insight, creativity, and yes love, to this conversation and those are things that we don't often get in a conversation about restorative justice and sexual harm. Any other kind of words you want to say to wrap up our time together?

nuri: The thing I'll say is like we were super scared about this webinar because it's really scared to talk about sex and the stakes feel so high, like if we say the wrong thing we're harming someone and so I wanted to say to you like we all have inner work to do but that it is absolutely possible to figure out how to do this work by grounding in yourself and asking people what they need. And it like I just want you to know there's so much possibility and that it is totally natural if like fear is the first thing that comes.

Rob: Yeah, I don't know everything. I do have ideas and I do have some practices but I have way more hopes and questions and I use both my hopes and my fears to guide our work moving forward and I'm all ears for other people's ideas questions

or suggestions so I'm constantly reading and in conversation, like I'm constantly hitting nuri up, like, yeah what about this? I have a question! And other folks that I really respect their ideas so that's what building community hopefully is a byproduct of that like oh I got somebody I could talk to and ask questions and bounce ideas off.

nuri: and I think what Rob said like if we ever stop questioning then then I would be like maybe I'm not doing this right so like this work is naturally going to result in more and more questions rather than answers and that's good that means you're doing it right.

Johonna: thank you all and I'm so excited and hopeful that I can be in a part of this expanding community with you all and just to continue to learn from your work and your experimentation. I think in the conversation you really impressed upon us the importance of doing this work in community but also with the spirit of experimentation, to trying some things out. So we're going to wrap up there with the presentation and the Q&A. I will ask you all presenters and also the participants if you all can just stay with us for about three or five more minutes as we hear some announcements on what's coming up, more information about the seminar next week where you can continue to talk with the presenters, but also some additional announcements related to this conversation and others through the Zehr Institute. Mikayla is going to bring those announcements for us. Thank you all for joining in this conversation and thank you again to all of you those of you who present nuri, Rob, Jenny powerful cannot thank you enough. Thanks Mikayla.

Mikayla: Hi. Thank you this was this is an amazing webinar and thank you all so much for participating. My name is Mikayla Waters-Crittenton and I'm a graduate student here at the Center for Justice and Peace Building in Harrisonburg, Virginia. I work as a graduate assistant for the Zehr Institute and I just have a couple of announcements for you all. So first my computer doesn't like me. But first the upcoming webinars - our last webinar for the spring semester is going to happen on April 18 and we hope you can mark the date and join us for the conversation on centering survivors. So Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience, otherwise known as STAR, is a research-based training program that combines theory and practice from multiple fields and it's designed for individuals and organizations whose work brings them in contact with populations dealing with historic and current trauma. If you're interested in learning more about that, please do visit the link on the bottom of the slide and you can find information on the upcoming trainings on our website. So our future SPI Courses, for those who don't know SPI is our Summer Peacebuilding Institute. So sexual harms and changing the narrative

will take place from May 24th to June 1st 2018 as an intensive course and it'll be taught by Carolyn Stauffer who actually was on the webinar with us today. You can learn more about that at emu.edu/cjp/spi/courses or you can type it in on the website if you don't remember that link. So the Restorative Justice graduate certificate is a certificate that can be completed in 18 credit hours and you can do it through a number of courses offered through SPI or and as well as courses that are offered throughout the regular semester. If you are interested and want to find more information or register for courses please do visit our website, the website is listed below. Restorative Justice and Education - so if you're interested in that intersection between restorative justice and education we offer a Master's in Education with a Restorative Justice Concentration. We also offer a 15 hour graduate certificate in Restorative Justice in Education and that can be used by a variety of professionals working in the educational setting. There's also a Master's Degree in Conflict Transformation and along with that this fall marked the beginning of CJP offering a Master's Degree in Restorative Justice. The curriculum is practice-based and it's ideal for individuals looking to be reflective practitioners within their chosen field. And last but certainly not least is the Zehr Institute website which is available as a source for upcoming events as well as a repository for past webinars that are linked to YouTube. So the recording for tonight's webinar will be available within the next 48 hours. That does conclude all of my announcements and so here is Dr. Johonna Turner with a few closing comments.

Johonna: Thank you, Mikayla. I just want to thank you all again for tuning into this very important conversation. A lot of stories were shared. A lot of lessons were shared and also the need to continue to be in community in this conversation so I just want to encourage you all to take, one, share this conversation with others as Mikayla said, this webinar will be posted to this Zehr Institute website, and also engage in conversation about these topics not only sexual harm but also about sex with both adults and young people that you know. And thank you again Rob, nuri, Jenny, so much gratitude for this conversation and the stories that you shared, the vulnerability that you offered, and just the deep insights that you gave us throughout this time together. All of you who joined us - have a wonderful evening, afternoon, morning, wherever you are in the world.