

Celebrating 30 Years With 30 Pearls Of Wisdom

1. “Consent is not the absence of ‘no’, it is the presence of ‘yes’.” - Source unknown

Also known as affirmative consent. Agreement to something should not be assumed. Rather, it should be clear, unambiguous and voluntary.

2. The values and tactics behind oppression and partner abuse are identical

The tools that are used to maintain power over people and communities through oppression are the same ones used by abusers to control their partners. We cannot hope to end partner abuse in isolation – we must address oppression as a root cause.

3. Abuse is not an isolated incident

Partner abuse is a systematic pattern of behaviors where one person non-consensually uses power to try to control the thoughts, beliefs, actions, body, and/or spirit of a partner.

4. Partner abuse is a choice

Abuse is not caused by addiction, mental illness, past experiences of abuse, or stress. Abuse happens because abusers choose to use tactics of oppression to control their partner.

5. Anyone of any gender can be abusive

LGBQ/T people experience partner abuse at a rate equal to or higher than straight cis-gender communities – from 25-33% of relationships. For bisexual women that rate is 2.6 times higher and for transgender individuals its between 31-50%.

6. Abuse is not just about physical violence

It’s about controlling the other person(s) without their consent. People who abuse can use physical, emotional, economic, sexual, cultural and identity tactics to control their partners.

7. Mutual abuse doesn’t exist

Partner abuse is never mutual. The kind of control that defines partner abuse cannot be held by two people over each other. Even if survivors fight back, that action is to protect themselves or to regain control over their own lives, not to try to control their partner.

8. SM is not abuse

Sadomasochism (SM) refers to consensual power exchange. The most basic difference between SM and abuse is consent. In SM all partners involved can freely negotiate—expressing desires, setting limits, renegotiating and even withdrawing consent.

9. Polyamory is not cheating

Polyamory is a form of consensual non-monogamy (also referred to as ethical or responsible non-monogamy). It is consent that differentiates healthy polyamorous relationships from cheating and/or abuse.

10. You don’t have to be in multiple relationships to be polyamorous

How a person identifies their sexuality does not change based on who they are dating or not dating. Polyamory is an internal sense of a person’s identity and exists whether a person is dating one-person, multiple people or no one.

11. “Solidarity is informed, intentional, reoccurring sustainable acts of service” – Lourdes Ashley Hunter

Solidarity is not an identity to be claimed, it is the actions a person takes to show up and support oppressed communities and individuals. To be in solidarity, these actions must be ongoing and accountable to those communities.

12. Cultural appropriation is not appreciation

Cultural appropriation is the act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own without respect and an understanding for the community’s experiences of oppression. The differences between appropriation and appreciation are knowledge, respect, and permission.

13. All bodies are whole

We receive endless messages about our bodies that are ableist, ageist, white-supremacist, fat-phobic, and cis-male centered. We must resist these messages and remind ourselves and each other that all bodies are whole and worthy of respect and love.

14. Disabled Black and brown transgender women spearheaded Pride

Marsha P. Johnson, a Black disabled transgender activist, and Sylvia Rivera, Latinx transgender activist, were the leaders of the 1969 Stonewall Riots. LGBQ/T Pride parades are a direct result of this bravery.

15. Survivors are the experts on their own lives

Everyone is the expert on their own lives because it is their life—survivors are no different. Survivors use the skills of surviving every day. They can assess the risks they face and make their own choices.

16. Gender expression is not gender identity

Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender, which may or may not correlate with a person's assigned gender. Gender expression is how a person expresses their gender identity through mannerisms, behavior, appearance, and/or interests.

17. Tarana Burke started the #MeToo movement

Tarana Burke created the #MeToo campaign over 10 years ago to connect the nuance of sexual violence in communities of color to the existence of systematic oppression and white supremacy.

18. "No human being is illegal." Elie Wiesel, Author, Nobel Peace Prize Winner, and Holocaust Survivor

Referring to un-documented immigrants as "illegal" is dehumanizing. This dehumanization causes anti-immigrant violence and fuels government policies separating and caging children.

19. The experience of oppression does not negate the experience of privilege

People can hold both privileged and oppressed identities. A wealthy, queer, transgender white woman experiences transphobia, homophobia, and sexism and also benefits from race and class privilege.

20. Respect the pronouns

Using a person's correct pronoun does not challenge your gender - it affirms another's. Ask everyone their pronouns and share yours with others. The more we openly share pronouns, the more we will normalize the practice and accurately refer to people.

21. Legal name isn't necessarily someone's real name

Many transgender people and some gender non-conforming or non-binary folks may choose to go by a name different from the one on their documents. Regardless of whether they are able to get their documents amended, this new name is their real name.

22. Bearing witness is a form of survivor support

Rather than trying to problem solve, often the most supportive response to a survivor is to simply listen -- to acknowledge their pain, let them know that you are there for them, and that they don't deserve what is happening to them.

23. People > Their experiences

People may share with us important insider knowledge from their community. This sharing is a gift to be honored. We cannot then ignore the person and just take what they can offer. People and communities deserve to be seen as their whole selves.

24. Black Lives Matter

Today, young black men are 21 times more likely to be shot by police and black women experience much higher rates of sexual violence and partner abuse than their white counterparts. #BlackLivesMatter reclaims power for the black community.

25. Survivors are all around us

Whether they are out about their experiences or not, survivors are your coworkers, the people you share your commute with, your doctors, your friends, and your family. There are survivors present everywhere you go, and their voices are welcome, valued, and essential.

26. Transgender rights are human rights

Transgender people are parents, children, neighbors, co-workers, friends, and family. In the U.S. and around the world transgender rights are being taken away, and transgender women are being murdered at an alarming rate. This is a human rights concern.

27. "In order to do coalition work, you have to cultivate an enthusiasm for people being mad at you" - Marsha Saxton, disability rights activist

You'll make mistakes -- you'll try to lead when you should follow, you'll think there is an answer and that you have it, and you're likely to hurt those you're trying to be in solidarity with. When they get mad, be humble and try again.

28. Survivors do not have to leave their relationship to get support

A survivor may want to leave their partner because of the abuse while also loving their partner and wanting to stay to see if they change. Regardless of what they decide, all survivors deserve support without judgement.

29. Leaving an abuser can be the most dangerous time

When a survivor leaves the relationship where abuse is happening, the abuser can feel out of control and escalate to use more dangerous tactics, creating a greater risk for the survivor. Statistically, leaving often increases a survivor's danger.

30. Everyone deserves to be safe

By safety we mean that you have the freedom to be yourself in your relationship and can make decisions about your life, your time, your body, and how you exist in the world. This feeling of safety should extend to your emotional, physical, financial, cultural, spiritual, and sexual well-being.

Paint the Town (La) Red is at China PEARL!

Celebrate our 30 th Anniversary with us!

May 2, 2019 6pm-10pm

at China Pearl Restaurant

theNetworkLaRed

Survivor-led organizing to end partner abuse
Dirigida por sobrevivientes • Movilizando para acabar con el abuso de pareja

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