

THIS BOOKLET
IS A GUIDE FOR
USING THE CARDS



Digital Version

30 cards for recognising abusive behaviour & building respectful relationships between intimate partners

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St Luke's
Innovative
Resources

Welcome to the Digital Version of



St Luke's Innovative Resources is delighted to bring you the interactive, versatile, digital version of this conversation-building resource, first published as a hard copy card set packaged in a polypropylene box.

You can:

- swipe through the digital cards, one at a time
- swipe through a row of thumbnail images at the bottom of the screen
- bookmark/tag images
- write, scribble or draw on the digital cards—you may want to circle a relevant statement or scribble notes as a card is discussed



- add and drag notes anywhere on the images
- highlight, draw and write in multiple colours
- take a screen shot and access the image in your photo gallery
- send the image to the person you are working with so they have a copy
- print the image and mail it to the person so they have a hard copy
- save the image in your files as a record of your conversation.

How can I use this digital tool remotely with groups or individuals?

If you are running groups or meetings using Skype, Zoom or other similar video conferencing tools, you can use our digital cards and tools in a number of different ways.

A good place to start is to give the group or person some time to get to know the cards:

- The facilitator can share their screen, and scroll through the images so everyone can see.
- Point out the different features of the card set including the types of images, the format of the words (if any), the suits (if relevant) and any other unique features.
- Show them some of the features such as the scribble and text tools.

Deliberate Selection

- As you scroll through the cards, invite the person or group to pick cards that jump out at them for any reason. Perhaps it is the image that catches their attention. Perhaps it is a word or a question, or some other quality of the card. It may be a card they are curious about, or would find most helpful to focus on, or think is very important, or it may be a card that matches something they are thinking about or experiencing at the moment, or even a card that expresses something they have never thought about before.
- As the facilitator, you may wish to choose one or two cards to prompt an activity or discussion.

Random Selection

An alternate way of getting activities started is to select images randomly, for example:

- Ask each person to close their eyes and randomly say, 'Stop!' as the facilitator swipes through the images.
- Or ask each person to choose a number between 1 and X (X being the number of cards in the set). This is the number of their randomly selected card.
- Or use the timer on your phone set to a chosen interval—5 seconds, 10 seconds, etc. Stop on the image that is on screen when the timer dings.

Many videoconferencing tools allow you to put people into groups using 'breakout' rooms. So you may want to invite two or more people to discuss what a particular card means to them, and then come back to the whole group.

Some questions for reflection and conversation

Whether you use a deliberate or random selection method, you can then build the conversation by inviting each person to read or comment on their card, if they wish.

Facilitators can then ask individuals or groups questions like:

- What does this card mean to you?
- Have you thought about the topic on the card before?
- On a scale of 1-10 how important is this to you?
- Can you think of a time when this card was particularly relevant? What happened?
- When this is happening, what is the effect?
- When this is not happening, what is the effect?
- Do you know anyone who is really good at this?

In the booklet written especially for the card set you have chosen, you will find a lot more information. It includes the purpose of this card set, its origins and practice base, things you should take into consideration before using the cards, and many creative ideas for using the cards. Please adapt the suggestions to the digital environment.

**Don't hesitate to call us for support
in using this digital resource.**



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ISBN: 978-1-925657-14-2

St Luke's Innovative Resources acknowledges the Jaara people of Dja Dja Wurrung country, the traditional custodians of the land upon which our premises are located and where our resources are developed and published. We pay our respects to the elders—past, present and future—for they hold the memories, traditions, cultures and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and other First Nations peoples. We must remember that underneath this earth, upon which we so firmly stand, this is, was and always will be, the traditional land of First Nations peoples.



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INTRODUCTION

Family violence is a serious yet often hidden crime. It is a fundamental violation of human rights and is unacceptable in any form, any community, or any culture. Led by the efforts of specialist services and individuals speaking out courageously about their experiences, family violence seems to be finally emerging from the shadows. As the general public begin to have conversations more widely about it, people are beginning to be more aware of the drivers, patterns and devastating effects. We are learning about the underlying power dynamics and attitudes, particularly towards women, that give rise to it.

What is family violence?

The Victorian Government of Australia (Department of Health and Human Services 2012) defines family violence as:

'... behaviour that controls or dominates a family member and causes them to fear for their own or another person's safety or wellbeing.'

The Department's website (2019) gives the following definition:

Family and domestic violence is any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour that occurs in current or past family, domestic or intimate relationships. This includes not only physical injury but direct or indirect threats, sexual assault, emotional and psychological torment, economic control, damage to property, social isolation and any behaviour which causes a person to live in fear.

The term '*family violence*' encompasses violence that might occur between family members, such as violence between siblings or across generations, in addition to violence between partners ...

Family violence is predominantly, but not exclusively, perpetrated by men against women and children. Violence can occur in any kind of relationship including lesbian relationships and against older people and people with a disability. Family violence perpetrated against older people is referred to as elder abuse.

<https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/what-family-violence>

As conversations and research take place, we are seeing an inevitable shift in the language around violence occurring in the family. Currently, it is often referred to as *'domestic and family violence'* or simply as *'family violence'*.

Traditionally, *'domestic violence'* has been used to represent violence between people who are or were intimate partners. *'Family violence'* is preferred by some communities, for example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, because it reflects that violence occurs between intimate partners but also amongst other family members (e.g. children and parents) and so better represents their understanding and experience of violence.

Phillips & Vandenbroek 2014

The term *'family violence'* also reflects that at least half of all abusive partners also use violence against their children (*Pagelow 1992*).

Family violence is often seen as belonging to certain groups in the community. However, we know that this is a myth. The report on an eleven-year trend analysis of the Victorian Family Violence database by the Department of Justice (2012) confirms that family violence occurs in all areas of society, regardless of location, socioeconomic and health status, age, culture, gender, sexual identity, ability, ethnicity or religion.

Vulnerability

Sometimes factors that increase vulnerability can intersect to increase the impact of family violence. These may include disability, poverty, pregnancy, low literacy, and being part of a marginalised or disempowered group. This is often referred to as *'intersectionality'*.

For example, people experiencing family violence and disadvantage as a result of their socio-economic status may have fewer resources and opportunities to seek services, so they often end up experiencing a greater depth and duration of poverty and isolation. When people leave a violent relationship, they may be forced to leave their job, family home, friends and other sources of emotional and financial support. They may also choose to



stay in the relationship for longer as they believe they would have no way to financially support themselves and their children should they leave.

In this way, the intersection of family violence with other sources of disadvantage can push people deeper into vulnerability.

As the Council to Homeless Persons (the peak body representing organisations and people in Victoria, Australia with a commitment to ending homelessness) reports in their family violence fact sheet, '*Over half of the women and children who attend homeless services do so to escape violence.*'

People can hold different cultural ideas about the meaning of asking for help—ideas about shame, embarrassment and fault, for example—and this can also lead to greater vulnerability. What the person believes it says about them if they ask for help, who the person thinks is to blame for the abuse, how severe they think the abuse needs to become before seeking help, and who is an appropriate person to ask for help—these can all be influenced by culture.

Cultural values and norms influence not only people's perception of intimate partner violence, but also the way in which people seek and experience assistance (**Fernández 2006**).

Matthew Parsons from Rainbow Health Victoria at La Trobe University, Australia says that it is important to apply an '*intersectional model*' to understanding and responding to family violence when working alongside LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) people.

While same sex couples experience similar levels of intimate partner violence as heterosexual couples and similar levels of homicide (**Gannoni & Cussen 2014**), there is added vulnerability because they are less likely to present to services. Trans and gender diverse people are likely to experience higher rates of intimate partner violence, and they are even less likely to present to services (**Valentine 2015**).



There are many reasons that LGBT people may be reluctant to access services including:

- previous experiences of discrimination or prejudice when accessing services.
- fear of not being taken seriously or not being believed—service providers may practice under the false assumption (consciously or unconsciously) that same-sex or gender diverse couples can't experience family violence (e.g. 'girls can't hurt girls').
- shame—often LGBT people have been on a long journey with family, friends and community to have their sexuality or gender identity accepted so they may be reluctant to admit there is family violence in the relationship.
- reluctance to show the broader LGBT community in a negative light, when the LGBT community has fought so hard to have their relationships respected and celebrated.

Shame and fear of not being taken seriously can also impact on heterosexual men reporting family violence at the hands of a female partner. While data indicates that the majority of family violence is perpetrated by men, women can also be perpetrators of violence. Other reasons heterosexual men may not report family violence include the following:

- They think they will not be believed.
- They worry people will think they have done something to deserve it.
- They are concerned people will think they are 'weak' or that they are not 'real men'.
- When they have talked about family violence in the past, people have laughed or underplayed the seriousness of their experiences.
- They worry about being perceived as anti-women or that people will think they don't take violence against women seriously.
- They believe that family violence services are only for women experiencing family violence.



As a community, we need to take all forms of family violence seriously. Accordingly, these cards use the non-gendered term 'intimate partner violence' so that they can be used to have conversations with anyone experiencing violence perpetrated by a partner.

Power and control

Whatever form the abuse takes, whoever uses it, and against whom, it is always about power and control. In strengths-based practice this is referred to as 'power-over'. Andrew Shirres, part of the development team for these cards and facilitator of 'Strengths Approach to Practice' training, draws on Wayne McCashen's work to identify some key characteristics of power-over:

- Violent or non-violent coercion
- Knowing what's best for others
- Telling people what's wrong with them
- Telling people what to do and how to do it
- Blaming, labelling or classifying people

- Excluding people from decision-making or limiting their participation
- Isolating and marginalising people
- Blocking choice
- Constraining self-determination.

(Adapted from McCashen 2017)

Drivers of family violence against women

The data indicates that while anyone can be a victim or perpetrator of family violence (clearly a form of power-over) it is most likely to be committed by men against women.

Consider the following statistics:

On average one woman a week is killed by a current or former partner.

(Bryant, W & Bricknall, S 2017)

1 in 4 women have experienced emotional abuse by a partner since the age of 15.

(ABS 2017)



1 in 5 women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.
(ABS 2017)

1 in 6 women have experienced stalking since the age of 15.
(ABS 2017)

Nearly 40% of women continued to experience abuse while temporarily separated from their partner.
(ABS 2017)

Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, identifies four key drivers of violence against women. These four drivers echo the list of power-over characteristics very closely:

- Condoning of violence against women
- Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence
- Rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity

- Male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women.

With these drivers in mind, Our Watch says that actions to prevent violence against women include:

- Challenging the condoning of violence against women
- Promoting women's independence and decision-making
- Challenging gender stereotypes and roles
- Strengthening positive, equal and respectful relationships.

Power-over behaviours and the known drivers of family violence are reflected in the topics explored in the **No Room For Family Violence** cards, including decision-making, freedom, stereotypes, equality, sexuality, labelling, isolation, control, and more.



Why do the cards focus on intimate partner violence?

Family violence can occur in any family relationship and can include child abuse, elder abuse, sibling abuse and child to parent violence.

However, the most common form of family violence is intimate partner violence. It is not only the pervasiveness of intimate partner violence but also the potentially deadly impact of this form of violence that influenced our decision to focus on intimate partner violence in this card set.

When intimate partner violence occurs within a family setting, children are also exposed to trauma, stress and patterns of behaviour that may adversely affect them for the rest of their lives. The myth that a person can assault their partner but be a good parent has persisted but we know any form of family violence impacts children in the home and that partners who use violence against their partners are also likely to use violence against their children. By choosing to focus on intimate partner violence, we are also hoping to open up conversations about the impact of family violence on the whole family.

While the focus of the **No Room For Family Violence** cards is on intimate partner violence, many of the topics are relevant to all forms of family violence. As such, they may be adapted to start conversations about family violence in many settings and in a variety of ways.

This resource sets out to create conversations where everyone can learn to recognise abusive and respectful behaviour in an intimate partner relationship, and start to articulate **what they want MORE of, what CONCERNS them** and **what they want NONE of**.



WHO IS THIS CARD SET FOR?

Origins in family work

The **No Room For Family Violence** cards grew directly out of family services work experienced over many years by the lead author of this card set, Phil Watson.

Phil and teams working for a large organisation offering family services throughout the state of Victoria, Australia, estimate that 80% of families accessing family services are experiencing some form of family violence.

However, family service workers say that families rarely talk about family violence when they initially present for a service. To begin with, a family may access the service because they need support in relation to housing, challenges getting kids to school, mental health issues, behavioural issues, conflict between siblings, financial distress, and so on.

Often it only emerges later that family violence is present. In many cases, the person accessing the service may not even be aware that what they are experiencing constitutes 'family violence'.

Many people still believe that unless physical violence is present it is not family violence. It is not uncommon to hear people say, '*But he doesn't hit me.*' These cards were developed to support family workers to have conversations with families about the range of factors that constitute family violence.

Who will use these cards?

While this card set was initially conceived with family workers in mind, it is also intended to be used in a range of other settings.

Having conversations about family violence can be challenging and uncomfortable. Often people avoid these conversations as they are fearful of making the situation worse or because they don't know what to say. Drawing on the experience and wisdom of family service workers who regularly have conversations with families about family violence, the cards provide a range of prompts to support respectful and constructive conversations.



Some settings in which these cards can be used:

- Family work
- Community work
- Family violence services
- Family violence prevention and education
- Sporting clubs
- Service clubs and youth clubs
- Parenting education and support
- Police force, army and navy
- Prison system
- Counselling and therapy
- Coaching and mentoring
- Schools, universities and other tertiary organisations

- Community houses and refuges
- Medical and mental health services
- Waiting rooms and reception areas
- Social work education and training
- Services for men, women, couples, youth and parents.

We hope that these 30 cards will create dynamic, open conversations about intimate partner violence and respectful relationships in a wide variety of settings, including those where such conversations may never have taken place before.



STRUCTURE & LANGUAGE

No Room for Family Violence consists of:

- 30 cards
- divided into 3 colour-coded suits: **MORE**, **CONCERN** and **NONE**
- 10 different 'domains' or areas of a relationship where abusive or respectful behaviour can be seen.

The suits: **MORE**, **CONCERN** and **NONE**

There are 3 suits in this card set: **MORE**, **CONCERN** and **NONE**. Each suit has a signature colour and icon, corresponding to the colours of a traffic light.

The **MORE** suit (green) names behaviours and qualities that help build strong and respectful relationships. Each card in this suit features the heading: **'What I want MORE of'**. People can interpret this in a variety of ways. For example, they may want something that has never been present in their relationship, or that used to be present but has disappeared and they would like it again, or it may be something that is going really well

already and they want it to continue. A respectful relationship is not simply the absence of abuse; this suit names some key things that would be happening instead. (See p. 34 for activities focussing on this suit.)

The **CONCERN** suit (orange) names a range of behaviours, some that are clearly intimate partner violence, and others that are possible flags or indicators of family violence. On its own a particular behaviour may or may not be of concern, but patterns of behaviour are worth careful consideration. Each card in this suit features the heading: **'What CONCERNS me'**. The purpose of this suit is to meet people where they often are: concerned but unsure. They may not be in a place where they can clearly name the behaviour as intimate partner violence. The **CONCERN** suit encourages open exploration with a person by acknowledging and respecting the place of uncertainty they may be sitting in. That is why this suit uses questions rather than statements.

This suit is not intended to name things that are *'not quite as bad'* as the **NONE** suit. Intimate partner violence comes in many forms, none of which



is acceptable. There is no continuum of 'better' or 'worse' implied.

(See p. 36 for activities focussing on this suit.)

The **NONE** suit (pink) names behaviours that are patterns of intimate partner violence. Each card in this suit features the heading: **'What I want NONE of'**. It encourages the person to identify their bottom lines; to clarify and articulate for themselves what is unacceptable to them. It opens the way for conversations about the effect on them and their family, and actions they can take to stay safe. It is important we challenge some of the myths about family violence and ask questions that help people reflect on their partner's behaviour and words. While **NONE** may at first glance sound negative, it is in fact an empowering stance of strengths, self-esteem and worthiness. *(See p. 37 for activities focussing on this suit.)*

The domains

There are ten 'domains' in this card set, representing key indicators of abusive or respectful behaviour within intimate partner relationships. While these domains are not necessarily the only areas where power and control can play out, they have consistently been identified as important arenas of intimate partner violence.

The 10 domains are:

Communication

Freedom

Sexuality

Decisions

Honesty

Turning points

Equality

Other people

Finances

Safety

There are three cards in each domain: **'What I want MORE of'**, **'What CONCERNS me'**, and **'What I want NONE of'**.

The language

Users of the cards will notice that both the **MORE** suit and the **NONE** suit use statements in the first person ('I', 'me' or 'my'). They also use the present tense. For example, 'I can trust my partner', 'My partner believes what I say' or 'My partner takes it out on me or the children when stressed.' These statements describe a situation that the person using the cards wants or doesn't want. This sentence structure has a kind of certainty which is intended to help people picture the behaviour, and perhaps more clearly assess where they stand in relation to it.



The **CONCERN** suit, however, uses questions as a way of reflecting and acknowledging what a person may be unsure or concerned about. Many of us come to conversations about family violence feeling confused and uncertain. We may not know what our bottom lines are. We may not be clear about what constitutes intimate partner violence. Using questions may help to allow for that place of uncertainty.

People using the cards will also notice that we have not used the pronouns 'he' or 'she'. This is because we wanted the cards to be inclusive of people of different genders. While the data shows that most intimate partner violence is perpetrated by men against women, it can be perpetrated by anyone of any gender and within all types of intimate partner relationships.

For a complete list of cards arranged in their domains, please see the section on p. 19.



REMINDEES FOR CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR CONVERSATIONS

As many facilitators and practitioners know, simple tools can be surprisingly powerful, especially when they are designed to open up reflection and conversation about our personal experiences. This is something to take very strongly into consideration when using this particular card set, since it is designed to initiate conversations about what abusive, as well as respectful, behaviour can look like in intimate relationships. The cards can be used with individuals or in a group setting.

These cards encourage respectful '*straight talk*'; their purpose is to identify abusive, power-over behaviour in intimate partner settings openly, clearly and transparently. Many people define physical violence within a relationship as abuse, but they may be unaware, or less aware, of other forms that intimate partner violence can take. Because these cards encourage greater clarity about what constitutes abusive and respectful behaviour, it may dawn on people while using the cards that what is actually occurring in their own relationships (or in those of people they care about) can be defined as family violence.

Strong vulnerabilities and raw emotions can surface for *anyone* using the cards, whether or not they have lived experience of family violence. Memories, thoughts, images and concerns can unexpectedly arise, sometimes evoking painful and even overwhelming feelings. Conversations about intimate partner violence may feel confronting, even when facilitated skilfully and respectfully. This is especially so if a participant has experienced family violence in the past or is experiencing it now. And a facilitator or practitioner will not necessarily know if this is the case for a participant or client.

Of course, the sensitivity and skill of the practitioner or facilitator are crucial when introducing any tool, especially a tool like **No Room for Family Violence**. Before you begin, please consider a range of factors that can help create safe spaces for conversations using these cards, such as:

- **Your own reaction to the cards:** Try using the cards yourself first. What did you notice? What worked? What was challenging? What memories or feelings arose?



- **Your knowledge of the cards:** Get to know what is on all the cards. Are all the cards appropriate? Are there any that you may want to leave out? Do you understand the vocabulary on the cards? Do you understand how each card relates to intimate partner violence?
- **Read the booklet:** This booklet contains background information drawn from direct practice wisdom, plus suggestions and ideas for using the cards. It will help facilitators assess what activities they may want to try with the cards, and will highlight things to keep in mind.
- **Your knowledge of those using the cards:** Consider literacy levels and cultural background of the people you will be using the cards with. Are the cards mentally, emotionally, developmentally and culturally appropriate? Keep in mind that people experiencing intimate partner violence often feel shame and even guilt—no matter how misplaced this may be. They may be experiencing grief, as they mourn the potential or actual end of a relationship, or the loss of cherished hopes and dreams they may have had for the relationship. They may also be feeling exposed, confused, unsafe, anxious and fearful for themselves, their children or for other family members. Please remember that in

any group gathered for any reason at all, there are likely to be Indigenous participants, and participants of diverse heritage, gender and sexuality.

- **Plan B:** Sometimes an activity with the cards simply doesn't work—and this may not become obvious until you are right in the middle of it. Be prepared to adjust it or abandon it altogether and go to Plan B. Cards simply may not be the best option at the time.

Some suggestions for groups

While the suggestions below primarily apply to group settings, they are also useful reminders for any conversation about family violence:

- **Advance notification and permission:** Please consider if notification should be given, or permission sought, in advance of the conversation. For example, if a conversation using the cards is going to take place with a group of young people who are under 18 (such as in a school setting) is parental consent or notification required or advisable? Whether participants are adults or young people, please consider notifying them of the topic in advance of the conversation. For some people, it



may feel disrespectful to find themselves participating in a conversation about family violence without prior notice, especially in a group setting. In other circumstances, a person may be legally required to have such a conversation, or the topic may arise spontaneously in the course of a counselling session, so advance notice is not always applicable. Careful considerations such as these are the responsibility of the facilitator:

- **The safety of the setting:** Is there likely to be respect in the group? How will people's confidentiality, privacy and dignity be respected? How will people be supported if the cards elicit strong emotions or disclosures? Consider making emergency and specialist services numbers available to all participants as a matter of course, so that no one has to feel they are exposing themselves by asking for these.
- **Group rules or guidelines:** It is useful if participants co-create and agree to uphold group rules before the conversation begins. That way there are agreed standards of behaviour and reminders to return to if needed. It is useful to ask participants beforehand what they think would help them to feel safe during the conversation.

- **Flags of feeling unsafe during the session:** It is also useful to ask participants what they will do if they feel unsafe during the session. Ensure that participants are aware that they can leave if they need to, and if they need to touch base with someone in a break or at the end, that the facilitator or some other qualified person will be available.
- **Planning the activities:** What activities will you do with the cards? (The booklet has lots of suggestions you can adapt.) Will any additional materials be needed for the activities such as pen and paper?
- **Timing and pacing:** Is it the right time and place for these activities? Is there enough time for the activities to take place without rushing? Will you plan a mix of activities to take into account different learning styles?
- **Being inclusive:** How will you ensure that everyone gets a turn and that quiet voices in the group can be heard?
- **Opting out:** How will people be given the option to 'pass', if they wish to? No one should be pressured to 'share' or participate.



- **Following up:** Is any follow up or feedback needed after the session? Does anyone's response to the cards indicate they may be in an unsafe situation or need some further help or support? Because of the sensitivity of the topic, please consider checking in with each participant after the session as a matter of course, if feasible. The facilitator may not be aware that someone in the group has had a strong reaction, either during or after the conversation. Also, participants' feedback about using the cards will help facilitators in planning future sessions.

If you believe a person is in danger, get support for them immediately. If you are unsure about the best service, ring a local family violence service, police station or 1800 RESPECT (in Australia). See Emergency Contacts section at the end of this booklet for additional services.

Supporting safety by starting with the MORE suit (green)

Another way you can create safety when using the **No Room for Family Violence** cards is to start with the ten green cards from the **MORE** suit.

These cards name respectful behaviours and encourage people to talk about what they want in a relationship.

Even in abusive relationships, the perpetrator is unlikely to be abusive all of the time. In 1979, Dr Lenore Walker noticed that family violence often follows a common pattern or 'cycle of abuse'.

The entire cycle may happen in one day or it may take weeks or months. It is different for every relationship and not all relationships follow the cycle—many report a constant stage of siege with little relief.

<https://www.domesticviolenceroundtable.org/domestic-violence-cycle.html>

She suggests that the person may be abusive at times, then cycle into remorse (and sometimes denial) and then pursuit. It is during the pursuit stage, or the 'honeymoon' stage, that the abuser might exhibit more positive and loving behaviours towards their partner. <https://www.whiteribbon.org.au/understand-domestic-violence/what-is-domestic-violence/cycle-of-violence/>



People often say about someone experiencing family violence, 'But why don't they leave?' Sometimes they don't leave because it's not bad all the time, and they simply want more of the positive aspects and less of the abuse. They may believe that the violence will stop, or it may feel easier to stay in an abusive relationship than to leave. This may be because they have been isolated and lost their support networks, or they have very limited financial resources and feel they have nowhere to go. Or they may fear for their own and their children's safety even more if they leave.

Whatever the reasons for not leaving, many people experiencing family violence may be more likely to share their concerns if they can also talk about the positive aspects of their relationship or partner. Starting with the green cards helps build rapport and provides opportunities for the person to talk about what is important to them in a relationship—what they would like **MORE** of.

Starting with the **MORE** suit also enables the conversation to focus on what the person's preferred 'picture of the future' looks like and what strengths and resources they can draw on to help them get there.

This strengths-based, solution-focused approach helps people explore their hopes and develop a vision for how they would like things to be.

Using the green cards first does not mean that behaviour is sugar-coated, minimised, excused, or that 'straight talk' is avoided.

As a family services practitioner observed:

When trialling the **No Room for Family Violence** cards, one woman explained she could not find anything in the green cards that she had in her relationship, and this realisation was a catalyst to her ending the relationship.

In some cases, you may choose to only use the **MORE** suit.

Supporting safety by not blaming

While developing the card set, consultation and input was sought from a range of practitioners with expertise in supporting people experiencing family violence. Several practitioners noted that it was important not to blame either the perpetrator or the person experiencing family violence.



One experienced practitioner noted:

Working with people who have experienced family violence, I became increasingly aware that initial support often failed. It didn't fail because the support workers were uncaring or ignored the issue, but because they were often highly critical of the person's partner.

Certainly, we need to clearly name behaviour and keep people accountable, but when it comes to working with people experiencing family violence, the rule must always be safety first. When we engage in insulting a partner or making someone feel like they have to leave the relationship before they feel ready, we are not providing safety. Love is not like a tap you can turn off simply because someone treats you badly.

Neither is fear something you can dismiss simply because a support worker or friend tells you it will be okay. It is also not useful to blame someone for remaining in a violent relationship. They may do so for a variety of reasons. They may fear that leaving will mean putting their life (and their children's lives) at risk. They may believe they can change their partner. Or perhaps it is the expectations of family, community or culture that are keeping them in the relationship. They may still love their partner who is *'not always abusive'*, or they may stay because they have been so damaged by the abuse they believe they deserve it, or they believe they will never find love elsewhere.

Couples counselling is one intervention that is not recommended by professionals trained in family violence for people who are experiencing family violence. This is because in the course of such counselling one person may disclose information that could cause them to be targeted by their partner after the session, putting their safety at risk.

When having conversations about family violence, safety is paramount. Safety includes physical safety but also psychological safety. The person experiencing family violence understands their situation better than anyone else. By supporting the person to be in the driver's seat of the decision-making process, we are more likely to create the conditions for them to make meaningful and constructive changes in a safe way.

You are warmly encouraged to view our free video on 'Reminders for Creating Safe Spaces for Conversations'. This video contains expanded material on things for facilitators to consider when creating respectful conversations, especially in groups.



THE COMPLETE SET - CARD BY CARD

In this section you will find the full set of 30 cards, grouped in their domains, with information about each card.

Communication

Respectful communication is the cornerstone of a healthy relationship. When our partner listens to us and shares their thoughts and experiences using inclusive and affirming language, we feel heard and validated. When communication is characterised by verbal abuse, criticism, insults, labelling, swearing, ridiculing, spreading malicious gossip, slander or name-calling, we are likely to feel ashamed and humiliated. Silence is also a form of communication that can be used to marginalise someone or undermine their confidence.

communication



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

- My partner listens to me.
- My partner speaks respectfully to me.
- My partner speaks well of me to others.

MORE

© Dr Lorna Ince-Davies - Relationships 2019

This card describes a relationship where we can trust our partner to listen and speak respectfully, both in public and in private. And we can trust them not to talk about us disrespectfully to others.

communication



WHAT CONCERNS ME

- Does my partner give me the silent treatment?
- Does my partner put me or the children down?
- Does my partner deliberately say things to hurt me?

CONCERN

© Dr Lorna Ince-Davies - Relationships 2019

It is of concern when a person uses words to hurt, belittle and intimidate their partner or family members. This may include insults disguised as 'humour', or silence to manipulate and control.

communication



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

- My partner uses silence to control or hurt me.
- My partner uses sarcasm and jokes to put me down.
- Yelling, insulting, name-calling, shaming, ridiculing or ...

NONE

© Dr Lorna Ince-Davies - Relationships 2019

This card allows a person to name aspects of verbal abuse and clearly identify them as unacceptable weapons of power and control.

Decisions

Decisions are one arena where we see power dynamics at play. How much our partner values our opinion is revealed by their behaviour, not just their words. Sharing decisions reveals a sharing of power. It shows a respect for the partner's preferences and views. It also means that there are less likely to be 'winners or losers' or resentment about who was at fault as both partners share in decisions that affect the family.

decisions



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

My partner values my opinion.
My partner supports my decisions.
I'm an equal part of decisions that affect our family.

MORE

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We all want to have our opinions, preferences and values acknowledged by our partner. When we make decisions together we are each demonstrating that our partner's opinions, preferences and values are important, and the direction the family takes is our joint responsibility.

decisions



WHAT CONCERNS ME

Does my partner often say I'm wrong or stupid?
Does my partner treat me more like a child than an equal?
Does my partner make big decisions without talking to me?

CONCERN

© 2018 LEARNS EXPOSURE VIA REVISIONS 2018

It is of concern when one partner believes that the only opinion that matters in the relationship is theirs, or when they see their partner as incapable of making good decisions.

decisions



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

My partner tells me what to do.
My partner becomes angry when I question their decisions.
My partner ignores or undermines my desires and decisions.

NONE

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This card enables people to name power and control exercised through decision-making.



Equality

Relationships in which the contribution of both partners is valued equally are more likely to be respectful and validating. Data indicates that primary drivers of family violence are inequality and gender stereotypes. Rigid gender roles and binary stereotypes of masculinity and femininity are strong contributors to power-over behaviours. Male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women are also indicators of increased risk (*Our Watch 2015*).

equality



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

- My partner treats me as an equal.
- My partner and I share the load fairly.
- My partner and I encourage our children to be free of gender stereotypes.

MORE

© 2015 LIAISON INNOVATION - RESEARCH.COM

This card describes a relationship where equality and the sharing of tasks is based on fairness not stereotyped roles. Potential of family members is not limited by gender stereotypes.

equality



WHAT CONCERNS ME

- Does my partner have rigid views about gender or sexuality?
- Does my partner think cleaning or caring for children is not 'their job'?
- Are my partner's friends disrespectful to me, their own partners, or others?

CONCERN

© 2015 LIAISON INNOVATION - RESEARCH.COM

It is of concern if a person has rigid views about gender identity and traditional roles. It is also an indicator of increased risk if your partner has close friends with such views, or allows others to treat you disrespectfully.

equality



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

- My partner puts themselves before me or the children.
- My partner uses religion or culture to 'put me in my place'.
- My partner believes that gender determines roles and worth.

NONE

© 2015 LIAISON INNOVATION - RESEARCH.COM

Lack of equality within a relationship often means one partner makes the decisions and the rules, and sets the priorities. Gender, religion and culture can be used to reinforce one partner's perspective and keep their partner 'in their place'.

Finances

Making financial decisions together can be a source of empowerment, connection and joy—getting your first house together, buying birthday presents for your children, going shopping for a family meal, for example. However, money can also be a source of power and control. Financial abuse can include hiding debt or assets, closely monitoring a partner’s spending and limiting access to funds and resources. A person may put debt into their partner’s name or encourage them to take financial and legal risks (for example, pressuring them to falsify information or apply for benefits to which they are not entitled).

finances



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

- My partner and I share responsibility for the children.
- My partner respects my role at home as a valuable contribution.
- My partner and I share control of finances and agree on big purchases.

MORE

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This card describes a relationship where there is shared responsibility for and control of finances, where both parties in the relationship are valued for their contribution regardless of whether they are in paid or unpaid roles (such as caring for children or older family members).

finances



WHAT CONCERNS ME

- Does my partner get angry when I talk about money?
- Do I know what my partner spends money on and how much?
- Does my partner hide income, debts, assets or bank accounts from me?

CONCERN

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It is of concern when financial control or monitoring is exercised by one partner over another, or when finances and financial decisions can't be discussed openly and respectfully.

finances



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

- My partner denies me access to, or controls, the money.
- My partner makes me responsible for debt, damages, fines ...
- My partner makes me beg for food or other things for the family.

NONE

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Financial abuse may take the form of one partner controlling money and resources in the present. It may also include a partner taking out loans or incurring debt in the other person's name, falsifying information or sabotaging their attempts to study or work, all of which can take years to recover from.



Freedom

In a healthy relationship, people feel free to express themselves and have their own opinions and interests. They feel supported by their partner to spend time with family and friends. In abusive relationships, controlling and coercive behaviours can be used to significantly reduce a person's sense of freedom. It can be hard to see at first; it may begin with a slow wearing down of a person's confidence and self-esteem. It may begin with criticism and monitoring where the person is and who they are with. The purpose of this controlling and coercive behaviour is to keep the partner captive and scared to leave.

freedom



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

- I am free to be me.
- I am free to have my own time and space.
- I am free to have my own opinions and interests.

MORE

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The relationship upholds autonomy, and freedom of identity and expression.

freedom



WHAT CONCERNS ME

- Does my partner control my use of the car or phone?
- Does my partner make it difficult for me to see family and friends?
- Does my partner agree to mind the children, then refuse at the last moment?

CONCERN

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Whenever someone stops their partner engaging in the normal activities they did when they first met, there is reason for concern. The victimised partner is likely to lose confidence, experience guilt and growing isolation as they lose contact with family and friends. Often the abusive partner expresses uncontrolled jealousy and accusations of cheating.

freedom



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

- My partner controls what I and the children do.
- My partner controls the money, medication, transport or ...
- My partner controls the time I spend with friends and family.

NONE

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Power and control is exerted by limiting a person's access to resources that enable them to engage with the wider world of friends and family. Mistrust, suspicion and control characterise the abusive partner's behaviour. The person's self-determination and ability to seek help are undermined.

Honesty

Trust is a fundamental part of any healthy relationship. When people trust each other, they are likely to give each other the benefit of the doubt and work through challenges in caring and respectful ways. In abusive relationships, trust and honesty are often compromised. Abusive behaviours may include 'gaslighting' (a term taken from a play and a movie) where one partner seeks to undermine the other partner's perception of reality. They may do this by moving or hiding things, or by disputing their interpretations or memory of events.

honesty



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

- I can trust my partner.
- My partner believes what I say.
- My partner respects my views and version of events.

MORE

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Honesty builds trust and is expressed in many ways in a relationship including being believed, validated and respected.

honesty



WHAT CONCERNS ME

- Does my partner lie?
- Is my partner charming in public but different at home?
- Does my partner say I'm imagining things, exaggerating or over-reacting?

CONCERN

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It is concerning if a person cannot trust their partner to tell the truth and support them, whether at home or in public.

honesty



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

- My partner cheats on me.
- My partner tells me I'm crazy.
- My partner undermines my judgement, confidence or memory.

NONE

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Gaslighting occurs when a person actively seeks to undermine their partner's belief in themselves, their judgement, their perception, and even their sanity.



Other people

As humans, we are social animals. Whether we are introverts or extroverts, we rely on a broad range of relationships for support and meaning. In a healthy relationship, people support each other to spend time with others. In abusive relationships, isolation from family and friends is often used as a form of power and control. They may control someone by limiting access to a phone, transport, medication, money and in some cases, even clothes. They may try to convince their partner that they are the only person they need. This isolation often coincides with increasing jealousy.

other people



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

- My partner encourages me to learn and grow.
- My partner encourages me to spend time with others.
- My partner is respectful towards my family and friends.

MORE

© Dr. Lianne Fitzpatrick, Relationships 101

Loving someone means we want them to thrive and flourish. We all need space to grow and share with family and friends. Part of loving someone is knowing we cannot meet all their needs and supporting them to develop and maintain key relationships.

other people



WHAT CONCERNS ME

- Do I find myself defending my partner's behaviour to others?
- Does my partner repeatedly ring or text when I'm not with them?
- Does my partner make it difficult for me to socialise without them?

CONCERN

© Dr. Lianne Fitzpatrick, Relationships 101

Controlling partners often try to sabotage their partner's connections with others. Sometimes presented under the guise of 'caring', the victimised partner becomes increasingly isolated from the supports, different perspectives and protection of friends and family.

other people



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

- My partner accuses me of cheating.
- My partner undermines my relationship with others.
- Isolation—being denied access to people, money, transport, phone ...

NONE

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Isolation is often used as a weapon of power and control. Family, friends, neighbours and colleagues bring perspective and support. When access to wider networks is limited, a person loses these protective factors. Other vulnerabilities arising out of disability, age, immigration status, literacy, and diverse gender and sexual identity can create even more isolation.

Safety

Feeling safe within a relationship is crucial. Physical abuse and threatening behaviours include things like choking, punching, kicking, threatening children or pets, threats with a weapon, destruction of property, reckless driving, poisoning, burning, and being deprived of liberty, food or hygiene. The impacts can include injury, disability, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), scaring, disfigurement, ongoing health issues and death.

safety



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

My partner values and respects me.

I feel safe with my partner physically and emotionally.

I can be myself, make mistakes or disagree without being scared.

MORE

© 2016 U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of the Census

Healthy relationships aren't without conflict, but conflict is navigated in respectful ways. In healthy relationships we know we are valued and safe, and can disagree without being afraid.

safety



WHAT CONCERNS ME

Am I 'walking on eggshells' with my partner?

Does my partner hurt me when they're 'just kidding'?

Do I feel safer with my partner when other people are around?

CONCERN

© 2016 U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of the Census

There is reason for immediate concern when someone in the relationship does not feel safe. This card invites people to explore signs that they are concerned about safety.

safety



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

My partner breaks or destroys things.

My partner hurts or threatens me, the children or pets.

Strangling, hitting, pushing, stalking, imprisoning, dangerous driving, or ...

NONE

© 2016 U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of the Census

This card unequivocally names instances of physical aggression as family violence. Strangling is listed first because it dramatically increases the chance of further abuse or death—by up to a staggering 800 per cent <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2573025/>. The ellipsis (three dots) at the end of the third statement on this card indicates that this is not an exhaustive list of physical violence.

Sexuality

Sexual intimacy can be a source of deep connection and sharing within a relationship. However, it is also an arena where power and control are enacted. Rape or sexual assaults that take place outside an intimate partner relationship are commonly recognised as sexual abuse but they may not be readily recognised as such within a partnership. It is important to know that any sexual activity without consent is part of sexual violence. This may include unwanted touching, exposure to pornography, forcing sex acts, forcing sex without a condom, causing pain during sex, degrading sexual comments and sexualised humour. Because of shame, embarrassment and cultural views about sexuality, sexual violence is often hidden and may not be disclosed readily.

sexuality



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

- I feel safe to say no to sex.
- My partner respects my gender identity, sexuality and unique body.
- My partner wants to share closeness and affection not just sex.

MORE

© 2018 University of Queensland Health Services

In a healthy relationship, sex is an intimate expression of care and closeness that is consensual and respectful of a person's identity and body.

sexuality



WHAT CONCERNS ME

- Does my partner put their needs above mine?
- Does my partner criticise my body or appearance?
- Does my partner make it a problem if I say no to sex?

CONCERN

© 2018 University of Queensland Health Services

When one person consistently puts their needs above their partner's there is cause for concern. The partner may be concerned about what will happen if they say no. They may also experience comments that are critical of their body and they may feel pressured to do things that make them feel uncomfortable.

sexuality



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

- My partner reveals private information or photos.
- I have no choice about what happens in our sex life.
- Force, blackmail, sexual assault, shaming, rape, coercion or ...

NONE

© 2018 University of Queensland Health Services

Control, dominance and objectification are forms of power-over expressed and enforced through sexual abuse. Sadly, this card does not represent an exhaustive list.

Turning points

Turning points or times of change can be exciting ... and they can be times of heightened pressure. In a healthy relationship partners support each other to navigate turning points together. In an unhealthy relationship turning points can quickly become flashpoints for abuse. The most dangerous point in an intimate partner relationship is when one partner chooses to leave. Other occasions for escalating intimate partner violence can include pregnancy and birth, unemployment, trouble with the law, illness, a new job, moving house, a death in the family. While these pressures may be contributing factors, they are not the cause of family violence, nor are they excuses. Abuse is the result of one person exerting power and control over another.

turning points



WHAT I WANT MORE OF

- My partner and I work our way respectfully through changes.
- My children and I are safe regardless whether or not my partner and I split up.
- My partner supports a fair division of finances and assets regardless of roles.

MORE

© 2014 Lakeshore Institute for Research on Women

This card describes relationships where people can trust each other to work their way respectfully through changes and hard times, even when the relationship is coming to an end.

turning points



WHAT CONCERNS ME

- Am I constantly on guard?
- Do I wonder how long before my partner gets abusive again?
- Does my partner's behaviour get worse at big times like pregnancy or ... ?

CONCERN

© 2014 Lakeshore Institute for Research on Women

Whenever a partner does not take responsibility for their abusive behaviour, they may look to minimise, normalise or excuse their behaviour by blaming their partner or other factors such as being tired, stressed or drunk.

turning points



WHAT I WANT NONE OF

- My partner takes it out on me or the children when stressed.
- My partner is abusive, promises 'never again', then does it again.
- My partner threatens to harm me, the children, pets or themselves if I leave.

NONE

© 2014 Lakeshore Institute for Research on Women

This card encourages people to clearly name times of escalating abuse. Without intervention, partners can assume that the cycle of violence will begin again. As with all the cards, this is not an exhaustive list but invites participants to be clear about what they want none of.

IDEAS FOR USING THE CARDS

Please read the section on p. 13 about creating safe spaces for having conversations before you use these cards with others.

This section of the booklet contains lots of ideas for activities using the cards. These ideas are not 'instructions'; they are possible activities you may wish to consider. We hope they will spark your imagination for ways you would like to use the cards.

These ideas are general suggestions for how the cards can be used in a variety of settings. (In the next section, we will explore how the cards may be used in specific settings like schools, teams, supervision, social work education and with people who have used family violence.)

Feel free to adapt these ideas

Please adapt these ideas to your style as a practitioner or facilitator, and more importantly, to the needs of the person or people who will be using the cards. Some of the activities presented in this section may not be appropriate for particular people, circumstances or settings. Always be guided by your own discernment and practice experience, and that

of respected and experienced colleagues. With a small tweak from you (or a complete re-vamp) an activity may work so much better than implementing it strictly as presented in this booklet. Draw on your own learning about using cards and resources as you try out different activities.

In addition, it is part of 'reflective practice' and the ongoing professional and personal development of any practitioner to respectfully consider feedback given by participants during or after the activities. They know how the activity was for them.

And finally, please make sure you have read the section on p. 13 about creating safe spaces for having conversations before you use the cards with others. You are also warmly encouraged to view our free video, '[Reminders for Creating Safe Spaces for Conversations](#)'. This video contains expanded material on things to consider when facilitating conversations, especially in groups, and especially when the topic is potentially challenging.



When should I introduce the cards?

A resource introduced at the right time can be catalytic. It can support the person to describe their situation very quickly. It can open up fresh insights and ways forward in a relatively short space of time. Sometimes a person struggles to find words and by pointing to a card, they can let you know that something they can't even say out loud is happening.

It is always important to listen to the person as they share their story. If introducing a card set might interrupt that flow, then it is best not to introduce it at that point. Always be guided by the person sitting in front of you and your own sense of what is happening for them in the moment.

The more you experiment with using the cards, perhaps in simple, small ways to begin with, the more confident you will become about the way various activities are likely to work, and the more tuned in you are likely to become about time and place to introduce a tool.

It is respectful to seek the person's permission to introduce the resource, perhaps asking them if they would mind if you introduced a resource

others have found useful. It is important to make it genuinely possible for them to say no from the start, or to bail out of using the cards at any point.

It is often advisable to establish a connection and get to know the person's situation a little first before introducing a card set in a one-on-one situation. Moments when the conversation seems to be stuck or stalled can be great opportunities to introduce a card set.

Sometimes, if you know that you are going to have a conversation about family violence with someone, you might prepare a couple of potential activities you could introduce if the right opportunity arises. Trust your own judgement about whether to try them or not.

Other times, you might be quite deliberate about structuring a conversation around the cards. This may be useful if the person is unsure about whether what they are experiencing is family violence or if you want to have a conversation about what healthy relationships look like. Having a resource that explicitly names the features of family violence can function to validate the person's concerns or fears, and provide them with a way of identifying what they would like instead.



As mentioned in the section about creating safe spaces for conversations on p. 13, make sure you are familiar with the cards prior to using them. Please also consider other points in that section including the ones about literacy levels, about cultural background, and about having a Plan B so you can abandon an activity if it is not working. These considerations will help you decide whether introducing the card set is appropriate.

As conversations about family violence often arise unexpectedly, it can be good to have the card set handy and a few activities up your sleeve. While an endless variety of activities can be built around these cards, they all fall into two broad methods: *'Deliberate selection'* or *'Random choice'*.

Deliberate selection

This method involves spreading the cards out on a table or other flat surface and inviting an individual (or group) to look them over and make a selection based on a question or other prompt. Some activities may involve picking more than one card—or even a series of cards.

The cards can also be displayed on a wall, window or noticeboard. Spreading the cards out on the floor is another possibility. People can get a bird's eye view of the cards, walk around them or follow a line or meandering path of cards. If you are inviting people to pick up a card from the floor, take care that everyone involved can bend down comfortably.

Activities that involve movement such as walking or shuffling cards can open up different pathways to learning, particularly for those who favour a kinesthetic learning style.

Random choice

Activities using random choice bring a quality of serendipity into the room. It is amazing how meaningful and poignant random selections can be for people. Time and again people see synchronicity and significance in *'their'* cards. Random choice activities can also open up unexpected learning and fresh insight because people interact with cards they may not have chosen deliberately.



Here are some random choice ideas:

- Shuffle and deal one or more cards to each participant. Ask for a volunteer to shuffle and deal. Or participants can take turns to shuffle and deal.
- It is useful to give people the option to put a card back into the deck and chose another randomly, if they wish. This helps to keep people safe because it allows the person to reject a card they may not want to speak about at this time.
- Place all the cards in a bag or container and invite participants to pick a card 'blindly'.
- Place a card randomly on each person's seat before they enter the room.
- Form pairs. Each participant randomly selects a card for the other.

Spread the cards out face down—that is, text side down. People then randomly pick a card. They will know if they are picking a card from the '**MORE**' (green), '**CONCERN**' (orange), or '**NONE**' (pink) suits

because the suit name appears on the back of each card in its signature colour. But they will not know which of the ten cards in each suit they are choosing.

Starting with a random choice activity

One possible starting point is a random selection activity such as:

- Place all or some of the cards (just the green ones, is a good idea) into a bag, box or hat and invite participants to select a card at random. Or place a card randomly on each participant's chair before they enter the room. The prompt for the discussion could then be a simple question such as, 'What does this card mean to you?' or 'How do you think this card relates to respectful or disrespectful behaviour?'

Starting with a spread of all the cards

Or you could begin by inviting participants to spread all the cards out on a table and take time to look them over. You may want to point out some of the features, such as the colour-coded suits (**MORE**, **CONCERN** and **NONE**), and the domains (finances, sexuality, equality, and so on).



Give them time to read some of the cards in more detail. You may suggest that they only read the first of the 3 statements on each card for now, until they find a card they would like to select in response to prompts such as:

- Pick a card that catches your attention or stands out for any reason.
- What drew your attention to this card?
- What does this card mean to you?
- Pick a card you can use to speak about something you value in a relationship.
- Pick a card that represents something you are thinking about at the moment.
- Pick a card you think most people would recognise as family violence.
- Pick a card you think some people may not recognise as family violence.
- Pick a card that describes something about a present or past relationship you have experienced or witnessed.

Choosing cards according to suit

If you decide on starting with just a few cards, a very simple way to preselect cards is to focus on a particular suit. The suits are: **MORE** (green), **CONCERN** (orange) and **NONE** (pink). There are ten cards in each suit and the colour-coding makes it easy to select just those cards. For a description of the purpose of each suit, please see p. 10. This will help you make decisions about when you may want to focus on a particular suit, rather than using the whole deck of cards. Always consider starting with the green suit.

If you do choose an activity that focusses on a single suit, consider inviting the person or group to pick out all the cards of that particular colour and lay them out with fronts (text side) facing up. If someone is colour blind, you can invite them to select according to the circle icon—that's the big, bold face on the top right-hand side of every card. Each suit has its own icon, pictured on the next page.





MORE suit



CONCERN suit



NONE suit

Involving participants in activities like sorting cards supports their active engagement with the cards and gets their hands and arms moving physically. Movement and tactile handling helps people relax and assists them in getting to know the cards.

Using the **MORE** cards (green)

This suit is the go-to place to start.

The **MORE** cards are useful for people to explore what they do want, what they want to develop in their relationship or what they want to get back in their relationship. Having positive aspirations helps the relationship keep a healthy focus.

Since a respectful relationship is not simply the absence of abuse, this suit helps people describe what will be happening instead; it will support the person using the cards to articulate more clearly to themselves and to others what behaviours they want to be taking place.

- Pick 3 cards for behaviours you highly value in a relationship.
- Why are these important to you?
- Were these behaviours valued in your family growing up?
- Which cards show behaviours you noticed in the close relationships of adults around you when you were growing up?
- Which cards show behaviours that were not considered important, or were missing, in relationships you witnessed as a child?
- Pick 3 cards for behaviours you think you do well in a relationship.
- What are some practical examples of how or when you do those things?
- What other strengths do you bring to a close relationship?
- Pick one or more cards for things your partner, or a past partner, or someone you know, does well.



- Pick a card for something you would like you and your partner to focus on more at this time in your relationship.
- Pick cards for things you think you and your partner do well together.
- Are there other cards you would like you and your partner to get better at?
- What can you do to support that improvement?
- What would you like your partner to do?
- Do you feel comfortable discussing this with your partner? What would be a good way to go about discussing this with your partner?
- Do any of the cards represent things you and your partner struggle with at times?
- Randomly select a card. Pick a statement from the card. How important is this to you in a relationship?
- How do you think this behaviour enhances a relationship?
- Pick a card each week, and focus on this aspect of your relationship.

- Do any of the cards represent things that are more important to you now than they used to be?
- Do any of the cards represent things that are less important to you now than they used to be?
- Do any cards describe things that used to happen in your relationship but no longer happen as much or at all?
- How did this change come about?
- Would you like more of this again now?
- Select a card randomly. When this is present in a relationship, what is the effect?
- When this is absent in a relationship, what is the effect?
- What supports this behaviour in a relationship?
- Sit down with your partner and, together, choose cards that you think are going well in your relationship, and then choose cards that each of you (or both of you) would like to focus on.



Using the CONCERN cards (orange)

The **CONCERN** suit helps people identify behaviours they are concerned about. These behaviours or patterns of behaviour may be family violence or may be symptoms of other things, but all are indications that the relationship needs attention.

Sometimes people are unsure about whether a behaviour is ok or not. They may have a niggling feeling or a sense of discomfort around a behaviour but they may not feel comfortable raising it. They may be worried they will be judged as being 'picky' or as overreacting.

A strong focus of public health is to make people aware of the symptoms of chronic and serious illnesses so we can receive treatment early and make a full recovery. The earlier we identify illness by recognising its symptoms, the better the treatment. Similarly, supporting people to identify signs of abuse can save a great deal of pain, injury and potentially, death. Relationships often start with partners showing their best behaviour to each other; the concerning behaviour may not be obvious immediately. How do we establish if our relationship is healthy?

- Pick cards that relate to things you may be concerned or unsure about in a current relationship.
- Which ones are you most concerned or unsure about?
- How often does your partner behave like this?
- How does this behaviour affect you?
- What emotions do you feel when your partner behaves this way?
- What thoughts do you have when your partner behaves this way?
- Do you feel unsafe?
- What happens in your body when your partner behaves this way? Sometimes our '*body signals*' (such as tight tummy, tense shoulders, shaking or trembling) will let us know when we feel unsafe, even if we are unsure.
- Thinking about past relationships, do any of the cards represent things you were concerned about at the time?
- How did you handle it then?



- Did things change?
- What happened in the end?
- Is there anything you would do differently now if you had concerns about your partner's behaviour?
- Do any cards describe behaviour that you think is definitely family violence?
- Do any cards describe behaviour that you are unsure is family violence?

Using the **NONE** cards (pink)

These cards help people clearly identify and articulate what their bottom lines are. These are behaviours they can name as family violence and that shouldn't be tolerated within their intimate partner relationships.

- Pick 3 cards that represent '*bottom lines*' for you in a relationship.
- What action would you take if these behaviours were happening in a relationship of yours?
- Is there anyone you would tell?

- What support do you think you would appreciate most?
- Do any of these cards describe behaviours you, or someone you know, has experienced in a relationship?
- Pick cards for behaviours that are emotional abuse.
- Pick cards for behaviours that are verbal abuse.
- Pick cards for behaviours that are mental abuse.
- Pick 3-5 cards. How do you think these behaviours might affect someone experiencing this abuse?
- If a friend or family member told you they were experiencing one or more behaviours described in the cards, what would you do?
- Which cards do you think relate to a person's immediate safety?
- Are any of these things happening in your relationship?
- What are some steps you can take today to help you stay safe?
- Who can help you?



- If you could eliminate an aspect of family violence immediately, which card would you pick?
- What would the world be like if this aspect of family violence no longer existed?
- What would have to happen—what would need to change—for this to be eliminated?

Choosing cards according to DOMAIN

Another easy way to select just a few cards is to choose them according to 'domain'. There are 10 domains, each naming a key area within a relationship where power-over or power-with behaviours can be seen such as 'decisions', 'turning points', 'safety', 'freedom', 'communication'. There are 3 cards in each domain—corresponding to what I want **MORE** of, what **CONCERNS** me and what I want **NONE** of.

The facilitator, practitioner or participant(s) may choose to focus on specific domains because they are particularly relevant to the situation, for example, the three 'sexuality' cards or the three 'safety' cards.

Using the three cards in each DOMAIN

The facilitator or practitioner may wish to preselect domains prior to the session, or may decide spontaneously during the session to focus on a particular domain because that topic is relevant to what the person is saying. Alternatively, they may wish to invite the person or group to select domains most relevant to them.

Here are some ideas:

- Spread the cards out randomly on the table with text side up. Point out the domain name on the cards (large word in blue on the top left-hand side). Let people know that these domains name 10 important aspects of an intimate relationship, where you might see respectful or abusive behaviour.
- Invite the person or group to arrange the cards in their domains (there are 10 different domains, with 3 cards in each). Ask them to stack the 3 cards like a traffic light—green at the top, then orange, then pink. The facilitator or practitioner and the person can do the arranging together, if that feels supportive.



Some possible discussion questions include:

- How do you think each of these domains relates to family violence?
 - Do any of the domains surprise you as indicators of family violence?
 - Is there a domain that names an area of a present relationship you think is going well?
 - Thinking about a past or present intimate relationship, does one domain stand out as being particularly significant for you?
 - Use the **MORE**, **CONCERN** and **NONE** cards in the chosen domain to reflect on and discuss this area of your relationship further.
 - What other things does your partner do relating to that domain (but not described in the 3 cards)?
 - Is there a domain that names an area of a present relationship you are particularly worried about?
 - Looking at the **CONCERN** and **NONE** cards in this domain, are any of these behaviours, or similar ones happening in your relationship now?
- Can you describe what happens in more detail?
 - What does your partner do?
 - What do you do? How do you feel?
 - Is anyone else present? Are children there at the time? How are they affected?
 - Do you feel unsafe?
 - How often does this behaviour happen?
 - Does it happen or get worse at particular times? (The 'turning points' domain is useful for talking about times of escalating family violence such as pregnancy, job loss, legal stress)
 - What are some immediate steps you can take to make sure you and your children are safe?
 - How can I support you?
 - Who else can support you?
 - What will you do if ...?



SOME ADDITIONAL IDEAS FOR SPECIFIC SETTINGS

The previous section suggests many ideas for using the cards. No doubt you have thought of a few ideas yourself. These may be ideas for how the cards can foster conversations in family work, schools, sports clubs or community groups.

In this section, we have included some additional suggestions about how the cards might be used in some specific settings. Once again, feel free to adapt any of these suggestions to your setting or workplace.

Practice development in teams, supervision and social work education

The simplest and perhaps the most valuable purpose of this card set is to dispel a common misunderstanding of family violence as being purely physical. The domains themselves can encourage a team, a student or a new worker to ponder the effects on an intimate partner relationship of the denial of freedom, the control over finances, the lack of safety, the manipulation of communication, and the mistrust that arises when honesty becomes just a concept.

Some useful questions here could be:

- What formed my understanding of the nature of family violence?
- How are my views of what constitutes family violence determined by the media, entertainment, my family or my culture?
- How can I be on the lookout for the less obvious determinants of family violence?
- Were any of the domains in the cards surprising or unexpected?

Taken further, **No Room For Family Violence** can be seen as an enquiry into the dynamics of power. While family violence can be seen as the use, abuse and manipulation of power and control within intimate relationships, as described clearly in the **NONE** and **CONCERN** suits, the **MORE** cards provide an equally clear picture of how the sharing of power can determine respectful relationships. This dynamic is well understood by strengths-based practitioners as pertaining to the concepts of power-over and power-with (*McCashen 2017*).

Some useful questions here could be:

- How are the dynamics of power-over within family violence contexts similar or different to other disempowering experiences such as unemployment, homelessness, the behaviour of institutions and the colonisation of cultures?
- Are our services geared towards reactive or preventative measures when working in family violence contexts?

Social work educators can also use the cards to examine the principles of solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT). Using these cards, SFBT practitioners, whilst always validating the experience of 'What is happening' for someone experiencing family violence through the use of the **NONE** and **CONCERN** suits, will also be able to reflect upon 'What would be happening if things were different' (i.e. exceptions), through the use of the **MORE** suit.

Some useful questions here could be:

- What are the benefits of exploring the exceptions to an abusive relationship (i.e. times when the problem was absent or less prominent)?
- What might be the features of a solution-focused method of working in family violence contexts?
- How might these differ from other ways of working?

Social work and intersectionality

The current (and overdue) discourse on the prevalence and broader social consequences of family violence has resulted in service providers (not just human services) becoming more aware of the drivers and impacts of family violence. We are also becoming increasingly aware of the 'intersectional' factors that contribute to human experience. Practitioners in human services fields need to understand the complex and multifaceted ways in which gender, sexuality, race, socio-economic status, disability and culture intersect with, and impact on, a person's experience of family violence.



Social work educators, students and practitioners are all well-placed to provide education and opportunities for reflection in this space and indeed have a responsibility to ensure this thinking takes place. This *'intersectional lens'* can be overlaid onto the **No Room For Family Violence** cards, providing a means by which we may see intimate partner violence beyond the realm of the perpetrator alone, without diminishing personal responsibility for the violence itself.

Some useful questions here could be:

- How is family violence impacted by attitudes to gender or sexual diversity?
- Are attitudes and understandings of family violence the same for everyone, regardless of race or culture?
- Is the depiction of respectful relationships in the **MORE** suit the same for all cultures?

Similarly, the cards enable family violence to be seen as a social problem existing within historical, cultural and structural contexts. Factors

including social policy, the law, institutions, community-held values and beliefs, economic systems and so on, all impact on a person's experience of family violence. Far from being purely theoretical, this way of thinking allows an understanding of family violence as an experience of oppression constructed by a range of factors. This opens the door for supports and advocacy, without diminishing personal responsibility.

Some useful questions here could be:

- How do social structures contribute to family violence (i.e. why it happens)?
- How do social structures influence social policy regarding family violence (i.e. how society or communities respond)?
- How do social structures shape the journey of someone experiencing family violence?

Practitioners with lived experience of family violence

Given the prevalence of family violence, it is common for a practitioner in human services to have had some connection with family violence in their



own lives. Additionally, the peer workforce, considered by many as the fastest growing workforce in human services, intentionally employs those who have lived experience. This can help practitioners to empathise and build rapport with people accessing services as they have some shared understanding of the challenges.

It is worth noting here that while any experience may have broad features shared by others, the uniqueness of experiences should always be respected. The value of peer work lies not so much in *'do as I have done'* as in *'I understand some of what you are going through and acknowledge we are all experts in our own situations'* thus powerfully validating the experience and proffering some hope. The **No Room for Family Violence** cards can be used to explore how a practitioner with lived experience might best support someone accessing services.

Some useful questions could be:

- How is my experience of family violence different to that of people who access services?

- How do the cards represent the unique experiences of family violence?
- Is my understanding of what constitutes a respectful relationship (in the **MORE** suit) different to other people's understanding?
- What if I was the *'client'* and someone was using the cards to support me? What would my reactions to the cards be? How could I use them to take *'ownership'* of the goals, actions or next steps that could arise from using them?

Schools, sports clubs and other prevention conversations

Education is key in the prevention of family violence. If young people haven't had many examples of positive relationships in their lives, they may not know what a healthy relationship looks like. They also may not understand what constitutes abuse. By being able to identify the markers of respectful and disrespectful relationships, they are in a much better position to know whether a relationship is healthy or not. These cards provide valuable opportunities for young people to reflect on their own behaviour, as well as the behaviour of others, and become clearer about



what is acceptable and what is not. They are also great for supporting young people to develop a clear picture of what they want in an intimate partner relationship.

Cultural attitudes and beliefs about gender and violence have been shown to contribute to family violence. Young people and children are bombarded with images and ideas about gender and violence every day in the media.

Some of these ideas are positive, informative and valuable. Many are not.

No Room for Family Violence can be used to guide discussions about things like gender stereotypes, the impact and prevalence of violence in the media and how the media portrays relationships.

The cards could be used in secondary classes that are specifically focussed on respectful relationships. As family violence is largely constructed in cultural and historical contexts, the cards could equally be used in other subjects like sociology, psychology, history, health or human development.

Equally, they can be used to create safe and respectful cultures in sporting clubs.

Questions you might ask include:

- Pick a card that you immediately recognise as family violence.
- Pick a card that surprises you as family violence.
- Pick a card you think many people don't recognise as family violence.
- What do you value in your relationships? (**MORE** cards)?
- Which **MORE** card represents the most important thing to you in a relationship?
- Pick a card that relates to a gender stereotype you have seen in the media or noticed in your school or club.
- Pick a card that represents a form of violence someone you know may be experiencing.
- What action could you take?
- Pick cards from the MORE suit that you think could help your school, club or community in building a strong culture of respect?



It is crucial that conversations about abusive and respectful behaviour are on the agenda in a wide variety of circumstances where young people or adults gather, including sporting clubs—this is a powerful way to raise awareness about intimate partner violence and help bring about change.

Self-care for practitioners

We know that constant exposure to the often harrowing stories of people accessing services can be stressful. This is certainly true for practitioners working alongside people experiencing family violence. While practitioners will often have strategies in place to cope with this, the prevalence of high stress levels and vicarious trauma indicate that self-care isn't always prioritised.

Practitioners can use the **No Room For Family Violence** cards to reflect on their own responses to the stories of the people they support, and to reflect on any lived experience of family violence they may have. They can also be used to explore how the presence of respectful relationships in their own lives can support them in the work they do.

Some useful questions here could be:

- Which cards in the **MORE** suit represent my personal experience of respectful relationships?
- How do my intimate partner relationships support me in my work?
- Are there any personal 'trigger' cards in the set that I need to be aware of when I use the cards with others?
- How will I negotiate self-disclosure when I am using them?
- What boundaries can I set that will help me?
- What self-care strategies can I put in place?

Working with people who have used family violence

Sometimes, whether it is expected or not, a conversation may take place that includes a person who uses (or has used) family violence—often described as a 'perpetrator'. While working with people who have used family violence requires a high level of skill and care, conversations like these are important. They acknowledge the impact of family violence



and support those who are affected. These conversations can address violent behaviours at both individual and community levels.

An essential requirement when working to support people who use family violence is *'unconditional respect'*. Safety is always paramount, as we do not want to work in ways that can result in further family violence, or increase the risk to other family members.

While working with people who use family violence is never about diminishing personal responsibility for the acts of violence, it can be a way of acknowledging intergenerational cycles of violence—those who use violence may themselves have experienced it at the hands of others. We can hold unconditional respect by also acknowledging that people who use family violence can be part of a cycle that stops them from having what they sometimes want the most—respect and equality.

Using **No Room For Family Violence** with people who use family violence may be a way for them to consider how their behaviour may be interpreted by their partner:

- Which cards do you think your partner might choose to describe your relationship?
- Which **CONCERN** cards would you expect your partner to choose?
- Looking at the **MORE** cards, which ones represent what you have heard your partner asking for more of?

The cards can be used to ponder 'what could be':

- If you could choose one card to represent what you could focus on changing, which one would it be?
- Which **MORE** card represents what you want most out of the relationship?

The cards can be used to think about how people who use family violence are influenced by their own experiences:

- Which cards describe your past experiences of intimate partner relationships?
- What did you learn about respectful relationships?



- How do your experiences of past intimate partner relationships, either as a child or as an adult, influence you today?

The cards can be used to encourage thinking about how behaviours are experienced by children and others:

- Which cards do you think your children would choose to describe your relationship with your partner?
- Which cards would you like your children to choose, even though they may not choose them now?
- What needs to happen to enable your children to choose from the **MORE** suit?
- Which cards represent how you would like your children to parent their children when the time comes?

The cards can be used to 'externalise' behaviours, with the intention of creating greater likelihood of clear observation:

- If you were a fly on the wall watching a normal day's interactions between you and your partner, what would you see happening?

- Which cards represent this?

In addition, the cards can be used to think about community expectations:

- Which cards represent common views of intimate partner relationships that differ from yours?
- Why do you think there is a difference?

Sometimes, it isn't necessary to use questions at all. Sometimes, just spreading the cards out in a shared space can be enough. Or you may wish to leave them in the box, perhaps with the lid open, and place it on a shelf or table where someone's curiosity may lead them to pick up the box and browse through the cards.

Finally, as mentioned many times throughout this booklet, any questions or techniques you use with the cards deserve careful consideration. Attention must always be paid to the safety of all concerned, present or not.



USING THIS CARD SET WITH OTHER RESOURCES

No Room for Family Violence can be used alongside other card sets to add rich layers of meaning and visual imagery.

Body Signals

Our body signals (such as a tight tummy, perspiring or trembling) are sometimes called our ‘*early warning signs*’; they let us know immediately when we’re feeling unsafe or stressed. By matching cards from **No Room for Family Violence** with **Body Signals**, people can identify how their body reacts to what’s happening in their relationships.

The Bears

The Bears is the classic resource for talking about emotions. Featuring 48 Bears characters (and no words), people can use these cards, stickers or app with **No Room for Family Violence** to express the confusing array of feelings that arise within intimate partner relationships—regardless of literacy levels or language background.

Self-Care Cards

Especially at times of stress, fear or trauma, ways to take care of oneself and be safe are critical. These cards name areas of self-care such as support, balance, safety, food, sleep, choices, relaxation. Use these cards to develop self-care strategies and plans.

Next Steps

When times are tough, it can help to have a simple step we can take today, tomorrow or next week—perhaps make an appointment, pack a bag, phone someone or take a shower. People can place these down-to-earth, original photographs alongside **No Room for Family Violence** cards to identify their next steps.



Growing Well

Growing Well (cards, pads and interactive app) features five 'domains' or indicators of mental health ('being connected', 'being healthy', 'being active', 'being satisfied' and 'being organised'). Using a scale of a seedling growing into a tree, this tool can assist people to monitor their wellbeing, and create ways forward.

Talking Up Our Strengths

Talking Up Our Strengths celebrates the strengths of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander communities. It provides opportunities to discuss how aspects of culture and community such as celebrations, food, heroes, humour and elders can help us navigate challenges, including intimate partner violence.

Choosing Strengths

Even though the effects of family violence can be disempowering, reflecting on ways forward through personal choice can be profoundly empowering. **Choosing Strengths** is a range of beautifully-designed cards,

each featuring the sentence starter 'I can choose to be ...' followed by qualities or strengths the person may want to focus on such as 'resilient', 'decisive', 'calm', 'strong'.

Anxiety Solutions

Intimate partner violence is extremely stressful and anxiety-inducing. As part of a recovery plan, it can be very useful to have a few simple strategies for managing worry and anxiety. **Anxiety Solutions** offers 50 tried and true, simple, 'doable' ways to help calm the mind, soothe the body and support mental health.

Positive Parenting

Intimate partner violence affects children in the family. The **No Room for Family Violence** cards describe situations that may be taking place in families with children. **Positive Parenting** is a set of 40 cards to prompt conversations about parenting, and parents' best hopes for their children and for themselves as parents.



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St Luke's Innovative Resources is part of Anglicare Victoria, a community services organisation providing child, youth and family services in Victoria and New South Wales, Australia. We publish card sets, stickers, books, and digital and tactile materials to enrich conversations about feelings, strengths, relationships, values and goals. Our resources are for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, culture, ability or age. They are used by counsellors, educators, social workers, mentors, managers and parents. We also offer '*strengths approach*' training and '*tools*' workshops, both online and in-person. For more information about our training please email: training@innovativeresources.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author and development team would like to acknowledge Denise Smith, Ken Hollis, Dave Annison, Gabby Glass, Enos Mahachi, Damian Perrin, Alysia Slattery, Celeste Hamilton, Kathleen Wilkes, and all the many others who offered feedback and suggestions during the development of these cards.



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EMERGENCY CONTACTS (in Australia)

If anyone is in immediate danger, call the police. In Australia, the emergency number is 000.

If you are unsure who the local service is to support people experiencing family violence, ring your local community centre, police station or information centre.

There is useful advice for friends, family and neighbours about how to go about supporting a person they suspect may be experiencing family violence on the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria website:

<http://www.dvrcv.org.au>.

The White Ribbon Domestic Violence Hotlines website lists contact information for key emergency services in Australia.

<https://www.whiteribbon.org.au/find-help/domestic-violence-hotlines/>

1800 RESPECT

1800 737 732

Women's Crisis Line

1800 811 811

Aboriginal Contact Line

1800 019 123

Lifeline

13 11 14

Queerspace

1800 LGBTIQ

Relationships Australia

1300 354 277

Kids Help Line

1800 551 800

Men's Referral Service

1300 766 491

Friends with Dignity Australia

1300 512 393

What are **ABUSIVE & RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOURS** in an intimate partner relationship?

'Power-with' and 'power-over' are revealed in the ways we talk, touch and make decisions together; in our attitudes to gender, sexuality, finances, friends, family, freedom and roles.

These **30 cards** provide prompts for considering **what I want MORE of, what I want NONE of, and what CONCERNS me** in intimate partner relationships. They can be used in many settings including:

- Family, community and mental health services
- Specialist family violence services
- Parenting education and support
- Counselling, therapy, coaching and mentoring
- Education and prevention in sporting, service and youth clubs
- Education and prevention in schools and tertiary organisations
- Social work education and professional development
- Services for people who have used family violence

