



Ko Koe, Ko Au, Ko Tāua, Ko Tātou
Ā Tātou Hunga Takāpui, Ā Tātou Hononga

*Our People
Our Relationships*

YOU, ME / US

You, Me, Us
Our People, Our Relationships

YOU, ME / US



This booklet is all about us,
having healthy relationships,
and what we can do
when things go wrong.

Queer

A reclaimed word that represents sexuality and gender diversity. We use it to encompass lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, fa'afafine, and takatāpui identities, as well as everyone in between and not sure. This word is used by many people, but it is also appreciated that it is not the preferred term for everybody.

Trans*

The word 'trans*' is used as an umbrella term for gender-diverse people, including transgender, tangata ira tane, FtM, MtF, transsexual, fa'afafine, whakawahine, transmen, transwomen, akava'ine, leiti, genderqueer and gender-neutral people, and many others.

Takatāpui

A traditional Māori term that means 'intimate partner of the same sex'. We use it to encompass all Māori who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, intersex and queer.



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Queer Relationships

From one-night stands to longer-term intimate relationships, with one or multiple partners, our relationships with friends, whānau and lovers are a big part of our lives.

This booklet is for those of us who are in (or want to be in) same-sex or queer relationships.

Knowing how to create and maintain good relationships is something we all want, but also it's important to know when and how to ask for help, and how to support people we care about around their relationships.

Having good relationships can be difficult, especially when we don't have healthy role models to learn from.

Bad relationships can lead to things we don't want or enjoy, like feeling sad or lonely, or becoming depressed - and even harmful behaviours such as control, abuse, and physical or sexual violence.



Check out the back pages of this booklet for contact details of awesome organisations you can ask about relationships, sex, violence, abuse, getting help and heaps of other things!

They have information, people waiting to talk to you, and can help when you don't know what to do next.

What Is A Healthy Relationship?

Healthy relationships help us to feel safe, celebrated, appreciated, loved, trusted and respected. Being able to create and maintain healthy relationships helps us to have a happy, fulfilling life.

Learning how to have healthy relationships is something we do our whole life. If we don't have good queer role models growing up, learning how to have a healthy relationship is something we often do together in the relationship.

There is no such thing as a perfect relationship. Compromises and negotiation are part of all relationships. It's normal to disagree in a healthy relationship, and being able to disagree can help your relationship strengthen and grow.

Being respectful of each other through arguments or disagreements is a sign of a healthy relationship.



People who are in healthy intimate relationships are able to say things like:

- I can be myself and say what I think.
- I can say no to sex, and it's ok.
- We work things out together.
- We respect and care for each other.
- We have fun, but I have space for myself too.
- My feelings and decisions are OK, even when they differ from my partners.



Elizabeth Kerekere's Top Relationship Tips

“Great relationships are woven from strands of laughter, thoughtfulness and shared experience to create a taonga of trust, respect and intimacy - not work but a labour of love”

1. Have fun! Laughing with those who share your values and sense of humour never gets old.
2. Pay attention to details; how their cultural/spiritual beliefs play out, what comfort food they need in times of stress, how their body moves when you touch them, what inspires their passion.
3. Don't expect them to read your mind; share your thoughts and feelings and ask questions to make sure you understand theirs.
4. Support their interests, commit to your own and make shared goals; you don't have to agree on everything or be together all the time to consider a shared future.
5. Be sure they are worthy of your respect and you are worthy of theirs; that will last long after the lust settles down.
6. Negotiate rather than compromise; fit in everything important to each of you – involuntary sacrifice and martyrdom only leads to resentment.
7. Be your best self in private as well as in public; relaxing shouldn't mean saving up all your stress and grumpiness for them to make you feel better.
8. Throwing tantrums and fighting is not flash: there can't be a fight if one of you doesn't join in - you'll get to the real issues and peaceful solutions only when you've calmed down.
9. Take responsibility for sorting out your own issues; your up-bringing and any childhood abuse impacts on your intimate relationships – they shouldn't have to suffer for it.
10. Remember they had a life before you; be proud of sharing your new love with the whānau, family and friends who already love them.





Elizabeth (left) with her partner Alofa Aiono - since 1992 and counting... Elizabeth has over 30 years of experience working within Māori and other community organisations. She has been active in rainbow communities for over 20 years, with a focus on the health and wellbeing of Takatāpui and young people.

Sex & Consent

No matter what you like to do in the bedroom (or elsewhere!), sex should feel good in your mind and body, and be a positive experience.

Be aware of your expectations of having sex and whether they match your sex partner(s). Are you looking for something casual or just a one-off encounter or are you looking for something more serious to you, such as, a long-term or monogamous relationship?

Talking about what you want to do sexually, with who you want to do it with, and giving and receiving consent, is the first step to having a good time!



Consent is about everyone involved giving and receiving an enthusiastic “YES!”

Giving and receiving consent can start with questions like:

- “So... what would you like to do?”
- “Are you sure this feels good?”

Consent

Lots of people have trouble saying ‘No’ outright. When asking for consent, watch out for signs they don’t want to, such as saying things like “I’m not sure...”, or body language like staying silent, moving away or putting clothes on.

Consent can also be withdrawn at any time. Watch out for words like **“Stop”, “Not there”, “Ouch”**.

People can say no or change their minds during sex, and may not be able to explain why. This is OK, respect their decision and move on.

Even if you say “Yes”, sometimes you can’t legally give consent:

- If you are 15 years old or younger.
- Are heavily under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- When forced or tricked into saying yes.

Identifying Unhealthy Relationships

There are a number of reasons you might start to think your relationship is unhealthy:

- *You are not sure what a relationship should be like.*
- *You start to feel scared of your partner.*
- *You are not being respected.*
- *You're physically or mentally hurt.*

When we are in unhealthy relationships, we say things like:

- *You always criticise me, why am I always to blame?*
- *I never get to see my friends anymore.*
- *They came home drunk last night and had sex with me. I didn't want to.*
- *How come you make all the decisions?*



A great way to check in about your relationship is to talk with other people about it. This could be a friend, whānau, work, school or study colleague. Not everyone will be comfortable discussing your relationship, keep asking until you find someone who is.

Sometimes, people may try to justify abusive behaviours by saying things like:

- *That's how my parents did it.*
- *My friends treat their partners like this too.*
- *This is how it's done in my/our home country.*
- *It's my right as an elder/partner.*

No one, including yourself or others involved in a relationship with you, has a right to excuse abusive behaviour for historical, religious, cultural, societal or peer pressure reasons.

If you think someone in your relationship may be using any of these as an excuse for abuse in your relationship, check in with your friends or whānau, or get in touch with a community organisation.



Organisations you can talk to:

- OUTLine
- Youthline

See the back of this booklet for details.

Abuse

Sometimes, a partner in the relationship chooses to control and hurt, or abuse, their partner. This is not “just a relationship issue”, it is abuse by one person on another.

Often we don’t recognise that we are being abused, because no physical abuse has taken place. Abuse can take many forms such as emotional, psychological, monetary, verbal, sexual as well as physical.

When someone is being abusive, you will experience some of these:

- Threats to be ‘outed’ to friends, whānau or employer.
- *Being called names, told that you are a bad person, or refusal to use your preferred pronoun.*
- *Making it difficult for you to see friends and whānau, such as hiding car keys.*
- *Telling you not to talk about your relationship with others.*
- *Threats to hurt pets, whānau, or to throw you out of your home.*
- *Taking money without your permission, or limiting your access to money.*
- *Hiding your hormones, anti-retroviral drugs or other medication you rely on.*
- *Sex that you did not want, including unprotected sex.*

These behaviours are not OK.



Organisations that can help:

- Women’s Refuge
- Shakti
- HELP
- Shine

See the back of this booklet for details.

Cycle of Abuse

Stage 1: Hearts & Flowers

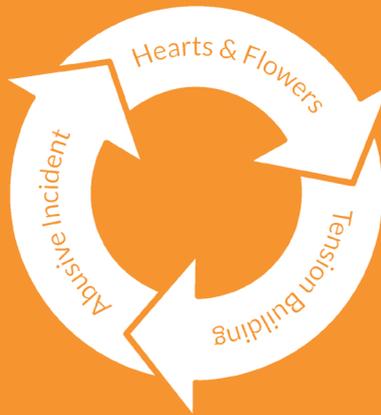
Typically, the abusive partner is not always abusive. There are times when the abuser is charming, charismatic, sincere and sexy.

Stage 2: Tension Building

The abuser starts to control you. You might feel like you are “walking on eggshells”, and try to avoid “getting into trouble”.

Stage 3: Abusive Incident

The abuser hurts or controls you (see the list on the previous page for examples). At this point, you might start to be scared, question the relationship, or think how you could leave.



The cycle of abuse: Hearts & Flowers (again)

The abuser tries to stop you from leaving, or telling anyone about the abuse that has occurred. For a while, they may act like the person you fell in love with again.

At this step of the cycle, abusers can say things like **“This will never happen again”, “I’m going to get help”**, or blame their abuse on drug or alcohol use.

You might feel relief that the abusive behaviour has stopped, and hope that it will not happen again.

Unfortunately, the cycle often repeats, and gets worse over time.

Asking For Help

Sometimes, we're just a little unsure what is or isn't acceptable behaviour in a relationship. Talking with a friend or whānau member you trust can help figure it out.

Relationships don't only happen behind closed doors, and it is OK to talk about and share details of your relationship with someone you trust.

Asking a support organisation or someone you trust for help is the first step towards building a healthier relationship. You don't need to leave a relationship that can be abusive to ask for help, or even want to leave.

There are many community organisations who provide free confidential services that you can talk to and get information from. They are



Abuse doesn't just happen in intimate relationships, it can happen between friends or whānau too. You have the same right to be happy and safe in these relationships. The organisations listed in this booklet are here to listen and help.

happy to help if you just want to chat, or if you need specific advice on how to protect yourself from abuse.

If someone you are in a relationship with doesn't want to you talk about your relationship, or stops you talking about your relationship with others, they are being abusive.

In an Emergency

If you believe you are in immediate physical danger, dial 111 and ask for the Police.

Sometimes the first person we tell about an abusive situation may not be able to help. Remember that you deserve to be supported, keep asking people you trust and organisations that can help until you receive the help and support you need.



Organisations that can help:

- OUTLine
- Women's Refuge
- Shakti
- HELP
- Shine
- Police Diversity Liaison Officers

See the back of this booklet for details.

Keeping Yourself Safe

Sometimes we don't want to leave an abusive person when times are good, or are working towards leaving at a later date. Either way, knowing what to do when times are bad can help keep you safe.

Words, seen or heard, can hurt us or make us feel unsafe.

Things you can do to help keep safe from an abuser:

- Don't answer the phone if they call you, or if you think they are calling from an unknown number. Use voicemail to screen your calls.
- Block them on social media.
- Don't view or respond to texts, social media posts, messages, emails or other communications.
- Use someone who both of you know and trust to pass messages if you need to get in touch with them.

You can take steps to help keep safe physically as well:

- If you are in the same space as them (i.e. a party), ask a friend/whānau to stick with you.
- Don't open the door to your abuser if you are home alone and don't live with them.
- Get someone to accompany you if you need to visit them, and try to meet them in a public place.
- Call for help or the police if you feel unsafe.



Your safety plan doesn't need to be written down anywhere, and is just for you to know what you will do if you need to leave in a hurry.

Safety plans are vital whether or not someone chooses to stay in an abusive relationship or to leave it.

The risk of violence can be high around the time of these decisions and support is crucial.



These organisations have awesome advice on keeping safe and can assist you with creating a safety plan:

- Women's Refuge
- Shine
- HELP
- Shakti

See the back of this booklet for details.

Safety Planning:

Having a plan for you and any dependents to leave home in a hurry can help to keep you safe, if you live with someone who is abusive, or when they show up unexpectedly.

Get prepared:

- Ask friends/whānau you trust if you are able to stay with them at short notice, and know how you are going to get there.
- Think about what you'll need to take in a hurry, and where these things are.
- If possible, take a spare key, medication, passports and leave them with a trusted friend/whānau member.
- Talk about your plan with a trusted friend/whānau member so someone else knows where you will be and won't tell the person you're getting away from.

When you are leaving:

- Gather the items you need to take with you, and attempt to leave without drawing attention to yourself. Using an excuse, such as taking out the rubbish, may help with this.
- As soon as possible, make contact with your trusted friends/whānau members, let them know the situation.
- Make your way to join your trusted friends/whānau members.
- If it is not possible to leave immediately, try to move to a safe area of the house away from potential weapons.
- In some situations, it may be safer to do what is asked of you, until the situation has calmed down and you are able to leave safely.

After you've left:

- Have your trusted friend/whānau member, or preferably a doctor, take photos and record evidence of any bruises or injuries you have sustained.
- Let your friends, whānau, neighbours and co-workers know to call the police if they see the person who abused you around your home or work.
- Go to a lawyer or Police to get advice on how the law can help protect you.
- If you are worried about the person who abused you contacting or finding you, do things to keep yourself safe.
- Stay with the trusted friend/whānau member, ask a co-worker to wait for the bus with you, have a friend accompany you when you go out.

Helping Others

If you think someone is being abused:

If you are worried about the mental wellbeing or physical safety of a friend, co-worker or member of whānau let them know you are concerned, and listen to what they have to say.

Ways you can support them:

- Offer them a safe place to stay should they need to leave their home quickly.
- Offer to help locate Queer, Trans* and Takatāpui friendly support services.

- Help to create a safety plan.
- Offer to make contact with, and go with them to a support service.

People may stay in a relationship with an abusive person for many reasons, which may not be known to you. Avoid judging them.



Signs someone may be experiencing abuse:

- Seem nervous and fearful, perhaps of someone's reaction.
- Try to isolate themselves from friends and whānau.
- Seem sad, angry or lacking confidence.
- Appear to be keeping secrets or nervous or anxious.



If you think someone is being abusive:

Letting a friend know you are concerned their behaviour may be abusive can be very difficult. Make sure they know this is your observation, not anything their partner has said, and listen to what they have to say.

Start the conversation with things like:

- “I am concerned about some of things I’ve seen you do with your partner.”
- “I feel uncomfortable when I hear/see you treating your partner in that way. It’s not OK.”

- “You are still responsible for your own behaviour. It is never OK to abuse someone.”



Signs someone may be being abusive:

- Use threatening looks and words towards their partner, children or others.
- Yell and swear at their partner or family.
- Act jealous and possessive, such as constantly checking on their partner.
- Use put downs and criticism to embarrass people close to them.
- Make all the decisions, e.g. about their partner spending money.
- Physically intimidate people.



If You Think You Are **Being Abusive**

Asking for help when you think you may be abusing someone can be a difficult, but getting help can reduce or stop your abusive behaviour.

Change can only happen if you want to change, and can accept that your behaviours in the past were abusive, and not OK.

When you stop being abusive you may be able to work towards repairing your relationship, or learn what's OK and not OK for new relationships.

Part of getting help will be to try to understand what causes abusive behaviour, and learning how to manage your feelings without becoming abusive.

Healthy relationships are about trusting, respecting, loving and celebrating each other. Control, fear and power are not part of a healthy relationship.

If you are concerned about your behaviour, talk to someone you trust, or one of the many community organisations that are waiting to help.



Organisations that can offer support:

- OUTLine
- Man Alive
- Shine
- SAFE
- Women's Refuge
- HELP

See the back of this booklet for details.



Ending Relationships That Aren't Working

Making the decision to end a relationship is hard, even when it's a healthy relationship.

Ending a relationship can look very different, depending on the type of relationship:

- Telling a casual sex partner you no longer want to have sex with them.
- Ending a long-term loving relationship.
- Leaving an abusive partner and taking out a protection order against them.

Ending an intimate relationship can be more involved when there are things like a shared home, money, pets or children to consider. Make a separation plan together if possible, and a weekly schedule for things you are all responsible for.

Talk about your expectations including how you want to communicate with each other, how often it's OK to text or call and about physical contact (e.g. hugging).

After a relationship has ended:

After ending an intimate relationship it's common to have thoughts of longing, loneliness or loss. Some ways to help deal with these feelings:

- Try to keep an emotional distance from them to allow you to heal.
- Settle agreements about property and possessions quickly so you can move on.
- Be strong. The relationship ended for a reason. Stick to your separation plan.



Duncan is the General Manager at RainbowYOUTH, and has spent the last 12 years working on having a healthy relationship with himself!

Remember: You're Awesome!

Everyone is entitled to experience happy, healthy relationships, and perhaps the most important relationship we have is with ourselves.

Having a good relationship with ourselves is the first step to being able to have healthy relationships with other people.

When we think positive things like “I’m happy with who I am”, “I look good today” or “I achieved my goal”, we’re able to negotiate better relationships with other people, and value the contribution those people make in our lives.

When negative thoughts like “I’m too fat”, “who would want me?”, or “I always screw things up” cloud our minds, we can make bad relationship choices, or let other people make poor choices for us.



Duncan’s tips about having a healthy relationship with yourself:

- Take time to think about what you’re good at.
- Learn about what you love and what makes you feel happy.
- Distract yourself if you are having negative thoughts.
- Make time for yourself and the things you enjoy doing, such as dancing, reading, exercise or meditation.
- Talk to people you trust about your emotions, thoughts, feelings and dreams. These people could be friends, whānau, or a professional such as a counsellor.
- Being able to spend time happily by yourself is a strength, not a weakness!

Organisations That Can Help

Domestic Violence & Sexual Abuse Services

Women's Refuge

If you are living in fear in your relationship or in your family, or know someone who is, you can get help right now. We offer all women in New Zealand and their children free advice, emergency accommodation and confidential advocacy services provided by women.

0800 REFUGE (733 843) (24/7)

www.womensrefuge.co.nz

Shakti

Shakti is a not-for-profit community organisation working in the area of women's development, empowerment and domestic/family violence intervention, prevention and awareness.

We provide culturally competent support services for women, children and families of Asian, African and Middle Eastern origin.

0800 SHAKTI (24/7)

www.shakti-international.org/shakti-nz/



HELP Auckland

HELP provides support for survivors of sexual violence - if you need to make a report to the police, get help to manage the fallout, or just talk about what happened.

09 623 1700 (24/7) www.helpauckland.org.nz



HELP Wellington

HELP offers crisis intervention, counseling, prevention and education services.

04 499 7532 (24/7)

www.wellingtonhelp.org.nz

Shine

(Te Kakano Tumanako)

We are a national domestic abuse charity making homes violence free.

0508 744 633

(9am to 11pm, 7 days)

www.2shine.org.nz



It is OK to ask for Help

The It's not OK campaign is a community-driven effort to reduce family violence in New Zealand.



Its goal is to change attitudes and behaviour that tolerate any kind of family violence.

0800 456 450 (9am - 11pm everyday)

www.areyouok.org.nz

Queer, Trans* and Takatāpui Specific

OUTLine

Whatever is on your mind, from coming out, to heading out, friends to lovers, mothers to brothers, sometimes you just need to talk. OUTLineNZ volunteers don't judge or tell you what to do; they provide support and appropriate information in a safe and friendly atmosphere.

0800 OUTLINE (688 5463) (9am-9pm)

www.outline.org.nz



GenderBridge

GenderBridge was formed in April 2000, by a group of 15 transgender friends wanting to help others in similar situations as themselves.

www.genderbridge.org



Tiwhanawhana Trust

Tiwhanawhana is a kapa haka, support and advocacy group for takatāpui, their whānau and friends. Tiwhanawhana is based in Wellington.

www.tiwhanawhana.com



Tiwhanawhana

Gay & Lesbian Helpline Wellington

We offer caring and confidential support, information and acceptance to callers. As well as serving the gay and lesbian community, Helpline responds to those who have an interest in gay and sexual orientation issues.

04 473 7878

(7.30pm – 9.30pm Sundays)

Voice messages will be responded to.

www.gaywellington.org



RainbowYOUTH

RainbowYOUTH is a charitable organisation providing support, information, advocacy and education for queer and trans* young people, their friends and whānau, and those who work with them.

info@ry.org.nz



Information and Support

SAFE

Treatment and advice for those who have caused harm, or are worried that they might.

www.safenetwork.org.nz



Police

Diversity liaison officers provide liaison between Police and gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex (GLBTI) communities. www.police.govt.nz/about/diversity-contacts



Man Alive

Run by men for men, we are dedicated to working in straightforward and practical ways, providing counselling and programmes to strengthen relationships with partners, children, family and friends.

0800 TANE ORA (0800 826 367)

www.manalive.org.nz



Youthline

Toll free helpline and lots of useful information for young people in Aotearoa.

0800 37 66 33 www.youthline.org.nz



Youthlaw

YouthLaw Tino

Rangatiratanga Taitamariki is a free community law centre for children and young people nationwide. We offer free legal services to anyone under 25, or those acting on their behalf.

0800 UTHLAW (884 529)

www.youthlaw.org.nz



Coalition of Community Law Centres



Free legal help throughout Aotearoa.

www.communitylaw.org.nz

Relationships Aotearoa



New Zealand's largest counseling and family therapy provider, dealing with issues like: parenting, conflict, relationships, separation, domestic violence, trauma, anxiety, grief, depression, and substance abuse.

0800 735 283 (9am – 5pm, weekdays)

www.relationships.org.nz

Citizens Advice Bureau

0800 FOR CAB

(367 222)

www.cab.org.nz



For more services available in your area, see:

Family And Community Services directory: www.familyservices.govt.nz/directory

Family Justice Services: www.justice.govt.nz/family-justice

ONLINE: ISBN 978-0-478-33599-6

It is always OK to talk about relationships with someone you trust or with one of the organisations listed in this booklet.

Abuse is never OK. Seeking help if you think you are being abused, or think that you might be abusing someone, is a strong thing to do.



By talking about healthy relationships and domestic violence with our friends and whānau, we are helping to build safe and healthy communities.

Supporting those who are experiencing abuse, or who may be unaware of their own abusive behaviours, shows that you care and that you want them to be happy.

YOU, ME / US

www.youmeus.co.nz

