

**KISSA
KAHANI –
THE POWER OF
STORIES...**

**LET'S TALK
ABOUT GENDER,
STIGMA AND
DISCRIMINATION.**



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ABOUT THE CURRICULUM

As we work towards ending Child Marriage, it is more important than ever for us to acknowledge the gender disparity that exists in our society. It is important to be able to understand and distinguish between the terms Sex, Gender, and Sexuality and apply the same in our vocabulary. It is also of immense significance to work with adolescents by putting them at the centre of our programme design and for this, our approach cannot be preachy. Instead, our curriculum needs to be based on the understanding of what young people want, what are they hearing, what are they seeing, what media content are they exposed to, what is the better future that they see in eloping with their young partner without any thought of how life will go on without a job and more importantly to acknowledge that we as facilitators have our own perceptions influenced by our experiences and the same might not be true for the young people we are working with.

This curriculum explores storytelling as a means to understand underlying concepts and structures that lead to child marriage and also deconstruct the social perceptions and popular influences that impact individuals across all genders in our society. This was originally designed in August 2020 as a pilot with GNB and UNICEF State Office Rajasthan and then underwent three more iterations before reaching this final version.

This curriculum is designed by Ms. Angana Prasad, Executive Director of Project KHEL, a member of GNB's India Alliance. With a Masters in Gender Studies, Ms. Prasad has a vast range of experience in curriculum design, implementation, and Training of Trainers.



HOW TO USE THE CURRICULUM

- Each topic is content enough for a 2.5-hour-long session in a day. Feel free to break up the content based on your meeting schedule with your adolescent groups, but do follow the order of the activities to create the strongest possible impact.
- The gold textboxes enlist the debriefing questions to be asked after each activity. After each question, pause for a response and then proceed with impromptu follow-up questions if needed or ask the next question as written in the curriculum.
- The italicized texts are notes for the facilitator to either keep at the back of their minds or bring into their conversation with their adolescent groups.
- It is important to note that some of these activities might take the participants to some deeply personal moments which might bring a surge of emotions or might make shut them down to sharing or listening to others. In order to effectively deal with either of these, it is important to create a safe space in each of the sessions. The following are some tips for the creation of safe spaces:
 1. Make efforts to know everyone's names and address them with it.
 2. Acknowledge every question asked. If you can answer them, answer and if you cannot, then let the group know why.
 3. In case someone asks a question that you don't have the answer to, then you can learn the answer and respond to them in the next meeting.
 4. Your questions should be ranged from simple to complex so that participants from a range of intellectual capacities can engage with you.
 5. Appreciate everyone who answers or tries to answer your questions.
 6. In case someone gives a wrong answer, instead of calling them out or laughing or saying it is wrong, it is important that you acknowledge their effort and craftily direct them to the correct answer.
 7. Acknowledge individuals who might understand a concept but do not want to share with the group.

1: GENDER AND SOCIETY

Activity 1 - MONU AND SONU

I will now tell you a story. You have to listen to each sentence carefully. During the course of the story, I will ask you at multiple points who you think is the male and who the female character is.

Monu and Sonu are two siblings. Monu has long hair and Sonu has really short hair, like people in the army get done.

- **Raise your hands if you think Monu is a girl. Why or why not?**

They both love each other a lot and fight among themselves equally much. Both study in the same school. However, Monu rides a cycle to school, and Sonu is dropped to school by their father or mother, whoever might be free.

- **Raise your hands if you think Monu is a girl. Why or why not?**

They both love participating in extra-curricular activities, specially Monu, who is also a part of the school's dancing team. Monu is training in the art of Bharatnatyam and often has a lot of inputs to share for their team's choreography. Sonu on the other hand is much distant from singing and dancing but is a popular presence on the sports field. Sonu loves to run and is also one of the best sprinters in the school. Sonu represents the school in inter-school track events.

- **Raise your hands if you think Monu is a girl. Why or why not?**

At home, both help with daily chores. Sonu loves to cook. On most days you will see Sonu take charge of the main dish cooked for a meal. Monu on the other hand comes in handy for fixing electronic items at home. Monu has always been curious about machines and loves to open up gadgets to understand how they are built and how they function. Having their own electrician at home saves the family a lot of money!

- **Raise your hands if you think Monu is a girl. Why or why not?**



Monu and Sonu are both very social. They connect very well with family members. Sonu particularly is great at maintaining relationships with their extended families. Sonu remembers everyone's birthdays and anniversaries and is always among the first ones to wish. Even among their friends, Sonu is known to be the person whom the others fall back on when they need emotional support.

- **Raise your hands if you think Monu is the girl. Why or why not?**

Both siblings have big dreams in life. They aspire to become inspiring professionals so that they can earn a comfortable living for their families and also inspire the other children in their town. Monu wants to be a Civil Engineer and design better infrastructure for their town. Sonu on the other hand wants to become a teacher, to inspire more children to become curious, instead of the rote learning formats followed currently. Also, Sonu likes to have a predictable timetable. So, a school makes good sense as the timings will be fixed and there will be very little left to last-minute changes.

- **Raise your hands if you think Monu is the girl. Why or why not?**

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- How are you feeling about this story right now?
- Based on all the responses we received through the story, what does it tell us about the way we think about individuals?
- Tell the participants that both are girls - note their reaction.
- Now, to confuse them further, tell them that you were pulling their leg and that both Monu and Sonu are boys - note their reaction.
- (Without clarifying any of their doubts, ask this) Is there anyone who would not want to have a child like Sonu or Monu? Whatever interest one might have, if children are loving and kind and have ambitions that can make a difference, then what is the problem? Why do we constantly try to fit people into moulds as if we are ice cream?
- Let the group know that both Sonu and Monu are based on character traits of multiple female friends and relatives that the creator of this curriculum has known.

With this understanding, what is one of the first things we need to be aware of ourselves as people working in the context of Gender? Here we will talk briefly about conditioning and how it affects how we think, talk, and act. Therefore, humility needs to be the strongest trait we carry as a facilitator because we might be a step more progressive than the communities we work with, who can't see the gender stereotypes it promotes and the discrimination. People only do things as they have been taught or conditioned to do.

Activity 2: MYTHS AND FACTS

Let us play a quick game. I will share a few statements if you agree to those you need to jump up and stand and if you disagree then you continue to sit in your place. I will give you all 10 seconds to share your reaction and you have to do it without uttering a word. Make sure that whether you are sitting in disagreement or standing in agreement, you need to hold your position, so all of us can see how the entire group feels about this.

1. We feel cold during winters.
2. We get wet when water is spilled on us.
3. Drinking or gargling with cow urine will cure Coronavirus.
4. When something falls, it always comes down.
5. If we touch a utensil just brought off the stove, we will burn our hands.
6. Men have a penis and women have a vagina.
7. ONLY girls can cook.
8. Men are biologically designed to not show emotions.
9. A man should have and show a lot of anger.
10. ONLY women are capable of showing affection to people in their lives.

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- In what all points did the entire group completely agree or disagree with?
- Were there points where some people from the group had agreed while the others had disagreed? What were those statements?
- What is the difference between a myth and a fact?
- A fact is universally true, no matter which part of the globe one is standing in. Eg. only females have the natural ability to deliver a child and men cannot. This is a fact, but there is no biological order in an individual's capability to cook, express emotions or grow their hair, based on the sex they were born in.
- Sex is biological, that a child is born with, and can be identified by laypersons by seeing the genitals of a child. Gender is what society creates in terms of expectations, roles, and responsibilities of an individual based on their sex. Universally, the sex of an individual makes them naturally capable of bearing a child or not, but expectations from an individual based on their sex might differ from one community to the other. Therefore, we can see Sex and Gender as two separate concepts, where the former is governed by biology and the latter is governed by society.
- Indian society is patriarchal, which means that men are seen as the heads of the household and hold decision-making powers. In a society where men are seen as the main and women are seen as second-class citizens, it is obvious that the roles expected out of women are in service of the men, and men are deprived of the space to show their vulnerable or emotional side.

Activity3: UNDERSTANDING GENDER STEREOTYPES

1. Show your adolescent group the video created by a US company, Always, titled, 'Throw like a girl' from this link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjJQBjWYDTs>

The video is in English, so make sure that if your group is not English speaking, then translate the audio in short intervals. Also, make sure that you show this video only up to 1:14, although you can personally watch the entire video if you want to.

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What did you feel about the video?
- Is there something that caught your eye?
- Why do you think the 10-year-old girl ran and threw differently than the older girls?
- What do you feel about the phrase “like a girl” being used to humiliate someone?
- What do you feel the phrase “like a girl” should be used for?
- In the last two activities, we discussed what gender expectations are set for a female. In the light of this video, how do you think the social concept of femininity gets restrictive for a girl to develop into her full potential.

2. Now show the group this video called 'Boys don't cry' by Vogue - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Nj99epLFqg>

Show the video till 0:56 and ask the following questions:

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What all situations were shown where boys were asked not to cry?
- In the video, what kind of emotions are leading the boys to cry? (Make sure to highlight that mainly normal and non-violent situations are shown where boys felt fear or sorrow or happiness where they were discouraged from crying.)
- What does this 'boys don't cry' statement lead to? (Guide the group to talk about the aspect of stifling of emotions, difficulty to process own emotions and therefore also failing to understand that of others)

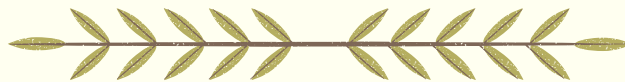
After this discussion, show the rest of the video to the group and then proceed to the following questions:

- What did you feel about the video?
- Do you think a similar scene persists in your community too?
- What do you feel about the line “boys don't cry”?
- How do you feel about being emotionally expressive as a trait allotted only to women?
- What are the other ways in which you feel men are on the receiving end of gender biases in our patriarchal society?
- Have you done anything to stop/change it? If yes, then what is the sort of response you have been met with?

3. Now show the video titled 'Ma kehti hai' by Rajanigandha Silver Pearls - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9BII9nhqTE>

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What is the theme of the video we just watched?
- This video was meant to celebrate mothers. What do you feel about it?
- Was this family a regressive or a progressive one?
- What are the progressive features you saw here?
- What clothes was the girl wearing when the mother was around?
- What clothes was the girl wearing when she took up the role of her mother? What is the subtle messaging here about expectations from a motherly figure?
- How did you feel about the morning scene once the mother had left, especially about the father burning the toast?
- How is the father shown in the video? What is the subtle messaging here regarding expectations from fathers in a family setup?
- Does the mother have any life?
- On the one hand, we are working for girl child empowerment and on the other hand, we celebrate motherhood that is about sacrificing one's own life and happiness for her family. How do we expect girls to deal with this conflicting messaging we are giving out?
- Why does a mother need to be celebrated for her sacrifices?
- How will the world look like if we celebrated mothers who also knew self-love and prioritized themselves and their dreams too?



2: TOXIC MASCULINITY AND TOXIC FEMININITY

Activity 1 - THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE

Ask a volunteer to share the story of the Hare and the Tortoise.

(Gist of the original story - This story is about a Hare making fun of the Tortoise for its speed. The Tortoise challenges the Hare for a race. They decide to run till a given point, whoever reaches first, wins. On the day of the competition, as the race started, the Hare outran the Tortoise. On reaching closer to the end line, the Hare decides to stop for a nap. The Tortoise on the other hand kept moving slowly but steadily, till it actually reached the end line. The Hare woke up after a long nap and raced again, only to see that the Tortoise was already there! The moral of the story – Slow and steady wins the race.)

Now, let us bring Gender to our story! Let us assume the Tortoise is a girl and the Hare a boy.

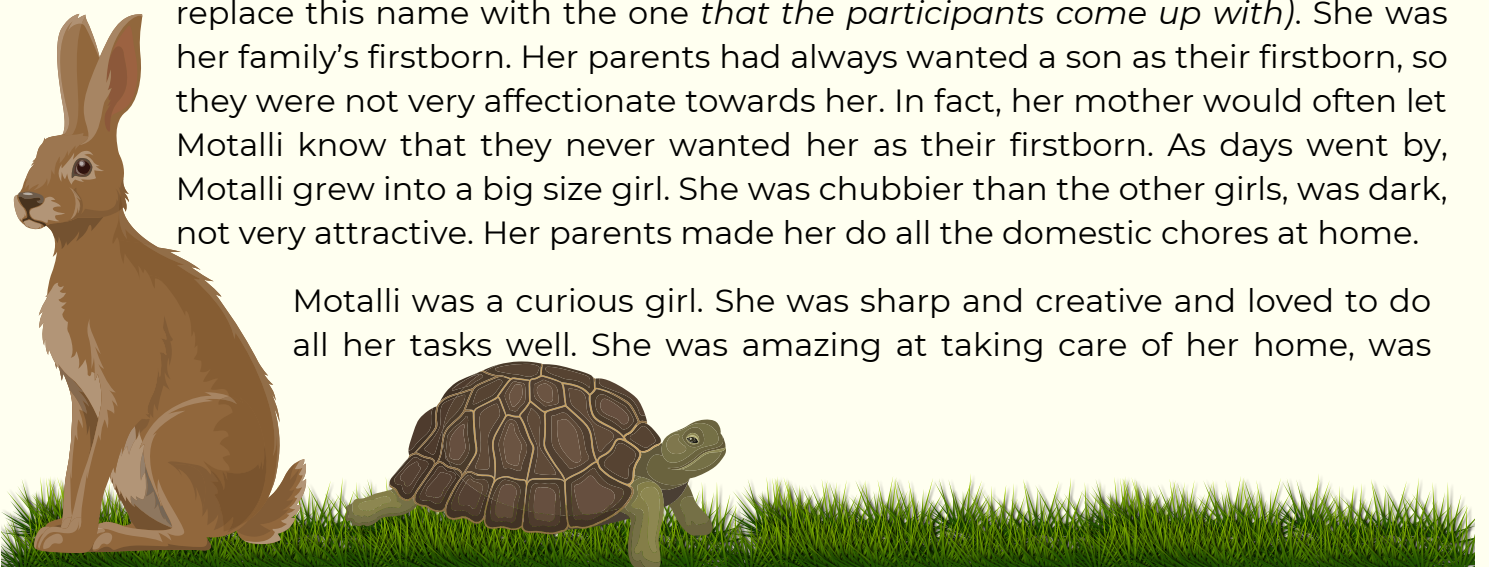
Have you seen a Tortoise? What does it look like? (Participants will be probed to add their points on the lines of – fat, ugly, big, slow) Based on this, we will also ask the participants to name the Tortoise with generic names that a girl with these looks will be called, for example – *Bhainsi, Moti*, etc.

What does the Hare look like? (Participants will be probed to add their points on the lines of – smaller and thinner than the Tortoise) Based on this, we will also ask the participants to name the Hare with generic names that a boy with these looks will be called, for example – *Khamba, Lambu, Patlu*, etc.

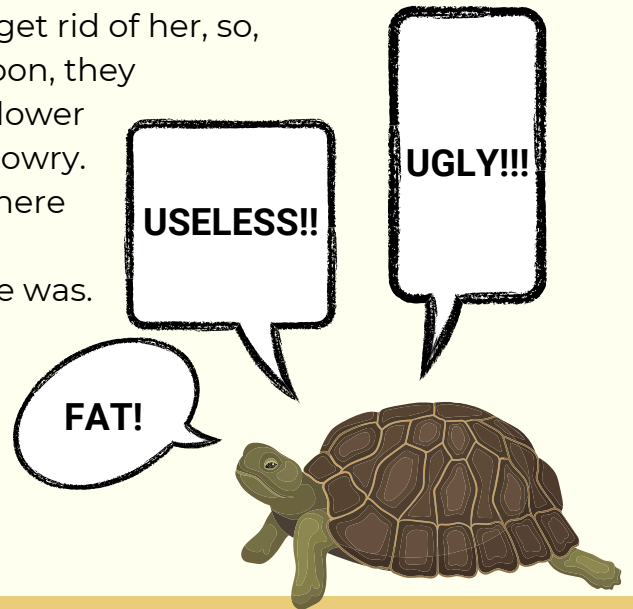
Version 1:

Once upon a time, there was a Tortoise named Motalli (while telling the story, replace this name with the one *that the participants come up with*). She was her family's firstborn. Her parents had always wanted a son as their firstborn, so they were not very affectionate towards her. In fact, her mother would often let Motalli know that they never wanted her as their firstborn. As days went by, Motalli grew into a big size girl. She was chubbier than the other girls, was dark, not very attractive. Her parents made her do all the domestic chores at home.

Motalli was a curious girl. She was sharp and creative and loved to do all her tasks well. She was amazing at taking care of her home, was



creative with the food she cooked, was loving and caring and was a fast learner. She watched how the other children would go to school and she really wanted to go too. But her family would never encourage her and instead would send the younger brother to school, although he wasn't at all keen on studying. Motalli's parents did not want to invest in her and instead wanted to get rid of her, so, they started looking for a suitable match. Very soon, they found a man three times her age, who was a widower and was happy to marry little Motalli without a dowry. The parents got happy and married her away, where she stayed in another jungle. Here too she was constantly reminded of how ugly and useless she was. Soon, Motalli lost her spark and gave in to the mundaneness of everyday life. Now that Motalli was no longer part of the jungle, she never met the Hare and there never was a chance to run a race!



DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What kind of a girl was Motalli?
- As per the story, what was the major reason that Motalli wasn't loved by her parents?
- Why was the sibling who wanted to go to school and study not sent to school and the one who was the least bit interested sent to school instead? Is this something that you have seen in your communities too?
- The women of the household, being women themselves, were they kinder to her with regard to her looks and her aspirations? (It is of extreme importance to shed light on how women can be propagators of toxic patriarchal structures too.)
- Who was Motalli married off to?
- What happened to Motalli after her wedding? Why?
- In light of your responses to the previous question, do you think that at this point, with such low levels of confidence, we could have had Motalli challenge the Hare for a race? If not, then would this beautiful story from our childhood even exist now?

Version 2:

The Hare, Patlu, (while telling the story, replace this name with the one that the participants come up with) was born in a decent middle-class family. He was an absolute gentleman, respectful, helpful, considerate, and very warm towards everyone he met. He was sharp at his studies and also liked to cook. He was very thin and his friends always made fun of him for not being manly enough. Patlu was a smart boy, but the constant jokes on his sexuality, his friends calling him 'auratana',

his family joining in to make fun of him for having 'girly' interests in cooking left an impact on him. He did not have a support system where he could share his frustrations. He would cry alone at night that he was ridiculed for being a kind and soft-hearted hare.

One day, Motalli was passing by, as Patlu was chatting with his friends at a local tea stall. His friends began catcalling her and Patlu stood up to them. His friends got offended and began teasing him back, to the point of mentally harassing him.

They kept teasing him for being attracted towards the 'fat and ugly' Motalli. He kept denying and they urged him to prove to them that he did not...

This harassment went on for a while, till Patlu had had enough...



What do you think Patlu did after that? *(Here, encourage the participants to share their interpretations of the ending. It will be very interesting to hear multiple conclusions, ranging from Patlu stopping to see that group as his friends to either raping or throwing a bottle of acid on Motalli's face to prove his manliness to his friends. As the storyteller, your intention should be to shed light on the struggle that a person like Patlu faces for not fitting in with the popular impression of a 'manly' man and the consequences that they face eventually).*

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

From Version 2:

- What kind of a person was Patlu?
- How did his family and friends treat him for being such a nice and kind and gentle young boy?
- From among the endings that all of you suggested, do the absolutely negative ones match the initial character that was built for Patlu in our story?
- How do gender roles, especially for boys may lead to them becoming violent?

From the overall story:

- What were some of the gender-related roles and molds that Motalli and Patlu did or did not fit in, that you can see in your communities too?
- What did the 2 new versions of the story make you feel?
- Do these versions sound relatable?
- Imagine a 3rd version where the family and friends of the Hare and the Turtle were supportive of who these 2 individuals were and how they looked.
- Now, which ending do you prefer? The 3rd one we imagined or the 1st two we shared?

- What is the role of our immediate social circle in shaping what our lives can look like?
- With this knowledge, would we want to make better choices for ourselves in how we try to fit in people in our lives into socially approved boxes?

Activity 2: DECONSTRUCTING TOXICITY

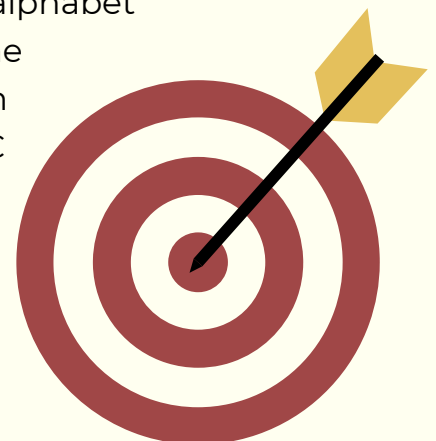
- Define Gender Roles and expectations that you know from the communities you work in.
- What happens when an individual defies the mould? What is the reaction from the people around?
- What does toxicity mean? (Help your group understand that in the context of our conversation, toxic femininity, or masculinity refers to the concept of how one person's idea of 'womanliness' or 'manliness' refers aggressively to following gender roles and norms set by society. This concept does not allow for an individual to 'be different' or exercise their voice or choice in any matter.)
- How does toxicity impact men?
- How does toxicity impact women?
- Are people of the opposite gender more toxic towards an individual or can people of the same gender exhibit toxic behaviour too?
- Enlist experiences when you felt toxic masculinity or toxic femininity impact your life.
- Have you ever exhibited gender-based toxicity towards another individual? You do not need to share your answer to this question, but it will be helpful if you can either write it down or at least reflect it in your mind.

Activity 3: BULL'S-EYE

You need to tear a small piece of paper and make it into a tiny ball. Now, take as many steps back from me, as the number in which the first alphabet of their name comes in the English alphabet. Eg. If your name starts with A, take a single step back, if your name starts with B, take two steps back, three steps if your name starts with C and so on.

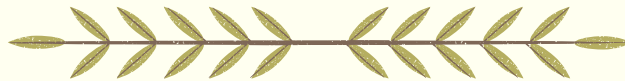
I have drawn a small circle on my palm. Now, you need to throw your paper ball at my palm.

Everyone will get only 1 chance to get the target.



DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- How many of you were able to do the task successfully?
- Why did some of you fail?
- Were all of you given the same playing field to do this task?
- Is it fair to say that the very few participants who got it right are more talented or deserving or better skilled than the others?
- How does privilege come into play in real-life experiences?
- Now imagine this same activity in a real-life situation. How many of you feel privilege comes into play in how an individual is able to access or make use of the opportunities given to them. Let us make a list of some of these privileges that impact an individual's performance when they attend the session that we conduct in their communities.



3: IDENTIFYING SEXISM THROUGH LANGUAGE

Activity 1: NURSERY RHYME

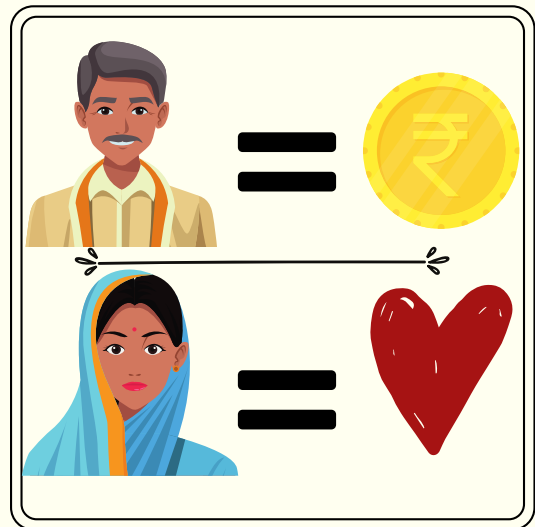
Let's start the day by singing two popular Hindi rhymes! (You can sing any nursery rhyme here in your local language which highlight that fathers earn money and mothers give love or cook food for the family):

- Papaji ka paisa gol

Upar chanda gol gol
Neeche dharti gol gol
Mummy ji ki roti gol
Papa ji ka paisa gol
Hum bhi gol tum bhi gol
Saari duniya gol matol

- Aloo Kachaloo beta kahan gaye the

Aaloo Kachaloo beta kahan gaye the
Bandar ki jhopdi mein so rahe the
Bandar ne laot mara ro rahe the
Mummy ne pyar kiya hans rahe the
Papa ne paise diye naach rahe the
Bhaiya ne laddoo diya khaa rahe the



DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- How do you like these children's songs? Do you remember singing them?
- If we wear the gender lens, what are the prominent gender roles being promoted here?
- How does such language impact a young mind going to school, imagining a bright future for themselves?
- Have you seen children's textbooks? In the drawings, where is a mother shown and what is a father shown doing?
(Fathers are almost always shown as going to the office and mothers cooking in the kitchen.)
- Is there anyone here who is against children going to school?
- If we actively insist on every child going to school, yet, gender norms are so strongly promoted through our education system, what are some of the steps that we can take to create more awareness to bring about change in the larger system?
- Let's recreate these two songs to be more inclusive.

Activity 2: DECONSTRUCTING POPULAR SEXIST PHRASES

1. Show your group this video by Samsung - 'Tum mera beti nahi beta ho' - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSjCTsQIMuI>

Pause the video at 2:16 and then ask the following questions:

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What does this line mean?
- Is this used as a compliment for girls or to put them down?
- Do you think this is an innocent line with no gender bias?
- Have you ever heard anyone tell their son 'tum mera beta nahi meri beti ho'?
- (Assuming that the answer will be No) Why do you think this is?
- What is the implied meaning of 'Tum mera beti nahi beta ho'?
- Which gender are we establishing as the better/stronger/useful/positive one here?
- How do you think such comments impact individual identities that people are trying to build for themselves?
- How many of the female participants in this group have been appreciated in the form of being equated to a son? How many of you thought this was a compliment?
- How do you feel about it now?
- Watch the rest of the video and then ask the participants how they feel about it now?

2. Let us talk about another popular phrase, '*choodiyen pehen lo*'.

- What does this line '*choodiyen pehen lo*' mean?
- What purpose is this line used for?
- What do you think the implied meaning of this line is?
- Think of the people whom you know that wear bangles in their hands. Now share what work and the amount of work they get done while wearing bangles.
 - Do you feel it is fair to people wearing bangles to associate it with being useless?
 - Now based on this understanding, in what context do you think '*choodiyen pehen lo*' should be used?
 - What are some other phrases that you have heard which refer to a particular gender, but are used for the other gender in a humiliating connotation?
 - Whom do such lines favor? Who do such lines look down upon?
 - What happens when a woman humiliates a man by asking him to wear bangles? What happens when a woman compliments another woman with '*tum is ghar ki beti nahi beta ho*'?
 - What can be some of the ways in which we can keep a check on ourselves and others who use such lines?



Activity 3: RIDDLE

Dad went to drop his son for his interview at a big firm and while they were in the car, the son got a call from the CEO of the firm, got nervous, and looked at the father. Father asked him to receive. The caller said, “don’t worry son you’ve got this”. The boy got nervous, looked at his father again. The father was still there, but he wasn’t the one calling. How did this happen?

- (after they have shared their answers) How are you feeling about the kind of answers you have heard from your group?
- Now show them this video shot in the US and establish how gender-based prejudices are so heavily ingrained in our thoughts that the struggle to establish gender equality is something that connects most countries across the globe - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kFC7669quE>

Activity 4: EXPLORING THE EVOLUTION OF IDENTITIES

We will close the session with an activity that highlights the evolution of each of our identities, based on our lived experiences. For this, everyone needs to divide their lives into blocks of 5 years, starting from age 0 -

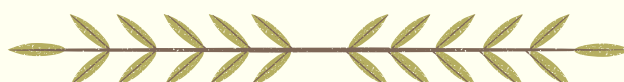
- 1.0-5 years
- 2.6-10 years
- 3.11-15 years
- 4.16-20 years

Then begin writing the strongest identities that you held at each point. It is important that we write the identity that we held for ourselves and not what we were perceived by the people around us. Eg. We could say that from the age of 6-10 years being a brown girl from a lower caste was something that I identified with, but we won’t say I was a naughty girl in school because people thought I was very naughty. Once everyone is done, we will begin sharing our identities with each other. However, if someone is not comfortable sharing, then we give them the chance not to.

As a closing process to this, you need to help the participants see how their identities have evolved over time and how intersectional experiences owing to divisive social parameters of gender, caste, class, religion, and such impact our perception of ourselves and how we want to be known and see as.

Note:

This might be a very personal experience for some participants, who might not want to share their experiences with the rest of the group. It is important that we respect their sentiment and not push them to share.



4: FEAR OF COVID AND DISCRIMINATION OF INFECTED PEOPLE

Activity 1: COMING HOME...

Once there was a jungle with a lot of trees. In that, there lived a number of different animals, especially blue bulls and wild boars. Each animal had their own family but were all very pally to each other. They worked all day at different jobs to feed their family. They would often socialize in the evenings with the other animals in the jungle. Some ambitious blue bulls and wild boars had even travelled to distant jungles to find better living opportunities for themselves.

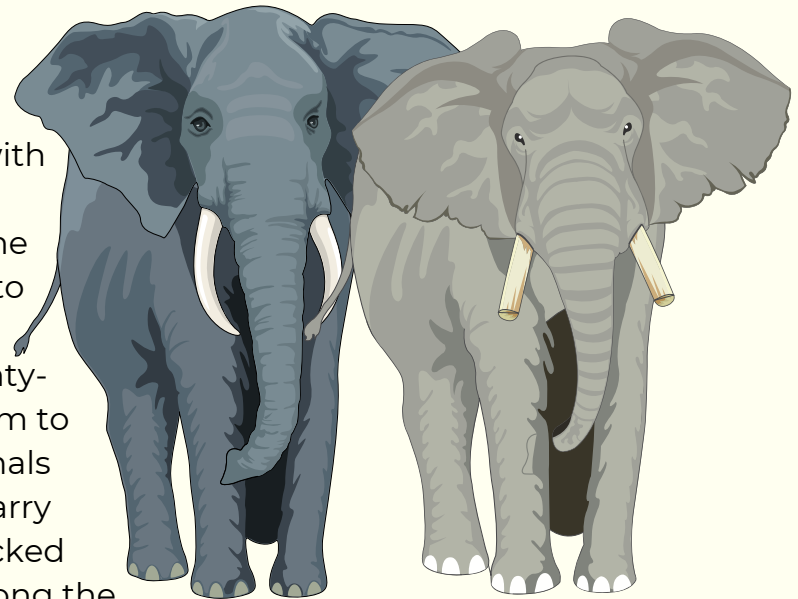
One time they all learned of a strange illness that caused animals to crack funny jokes and laugh all the time. It seemed to be spreading like wildfire. The news started spreading fast. As the animals in our jungle learned of it, they thought it wasn't really a big deal and wondered how laughing can be a bad thing. Slowly, as the illness started spreading, and the head of the jungles of the country decided to call for a complete lockdown. No animals were allowed to move outside of a one-kilometer radius of their current homes and inter-jungle travels were just not allowed. This was imposed with immediate effect. No one knew how to react to this. The ones who stayed away from home were especially perplexed.

They had travelled far from home to find a better livelihood but if no one was allowed to step out of a small radius, how could they continue living their good life? They panicked and wanted to come back home to be with their loved ones. They knew that probably they would have little to eat or do at home, but at least being in the comfort of their own homes, among their loved ones would provide just the kind of emotional support one would need! They began running helter-skelter trying to find



out ways to get back home. There were elephants who offered to carry them in their backs, but for an exorbitant amount of sugarcane in return. Most of them also had a clause that they won't carry the boars on their back because they were a smaller and dirtier breed of animal. There were crocodiles who offered to hide the boars in their mouth and swim to the jungle they wanted to reach but turned out that the first few crocodiles to offer were cheats and they actually ate up the boars within five minutes of them entering their mouth. The blue bulls and the wild boars felt helpless. They were desperate to go back home and then there were animals who tried to take advantage of this desperation!

Anyway, the blue bulls and wild boars from the jungle, we started the story with, got together to book their travel with elephants. They felt that it was a better idea to use all their resources and pay the elephants with lots of sugarcanes than to get eaten by the crocodile. Thus, five elephants were booked and about twenty-five blue bulls and wild boars sat on them to return home. Since there were five animals sitting on one elephant, they couldn't carry much of their belongings. They only packed their bare necessities and left. Now, among the



twenty-five animals, there were about four adult female ones too. The journey to their home jungle took about three weeks and one of them got their periods on the way. Since they had only carried their bare minimums, she did not have any extra piece of cloth to use. The other three women couldn't help either. Her husband was stressed about the entire ordeal, she could see that, so did not reach out to him either. Otherwise too, no woman from a decent family lets the world know that she is on her periods. She kept thinking how reaching out for help could bring a bad name for her family and therefore kept to herself.

The group would stop for toilet breaks from time to time, but those breaks were very rare and for very short intervals. To top that, since there were a greater number of men in the group, the women were always uncomfortable and could never take a peaceful break for the fear of someone else seeing them. Our menstruating lady had very little option except to just sit there, move the least bit possible. Soaking the canvas on the back of the elephant with her blood, her legs tight so no one can see her stain, and her blood-soaked skin rubbing against the canvas, causing even more blood to come out of her body.

In about three weeks when these twenty-five reached homes, they were ecstatic to have made it back alive. However, the other animals did not greet them with much

excitement. Instead, they asked this twenty-five to stay in the outskirts for a couple of weeks, till the residents were sure that none of them were carrying the deadly laughing virus with them. The twenty-five of them were dejected and while they were struggling to cope with the lack of acknowledgment and happiness that their community showed for their return, our lady who was on her periods, collapsed on the ground and a piece of skin from her abdomen fell off from her body, bleeding, smelling...

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- Why do you think the animals found it difficult to imagine the gravity of the situation in the beginning, despite the warnings from the govt.?
- How did the lockdown affect the animals?
- Was the lockdown called responsibly? If yes, explain why. If no then share how it could have been better.
- What do you think of the elephants and the crocodiles?
- What thoughts do you think the menstruating blue bull was experiencing?
- What caused the females to be uncomfortable in their bathroom breaks?
- What do you feel about the residents' reaction to the twenty-five of them reaching home?
- How do you feel about the menstruating lady dropping on the ground?
- Share instances that you can identify from the story where someone acted out of fear.
- Share instances that you can identify from the story where someone faced discrimination.
- Share instances from the story where someone acted out of the social stigma that exists for a few things.
- Is there an alternate ending that you would like to imagine?

Activity 2: SHARING LIVED EXPERIENCES FROM THE COVID LOCKDOWN

While the lockdown itself had impacted multiple aspects of everyday life, including livelihood opportunities and the downfall of the economy as a whole, we will specifically discuss the issues from a gender perspective. The following are some of the points for directing the discussion:

- Migrant labour exodus and challenges on the road (lack of public toilets, menstrual flow management products and spaces to change and discard used products, women traveling with a group of men, and so on)
- Impact of having the entire family together at all times of the day, in a shared living space and the problems related to it:
 1. Women's access to toilets, with male family members sitting on the way to the toilets
 2. Loss of personal space
 3. Disrupted routine for the women

- Increase in domestic chores
- Spaces available for women to speak to their friends or to their romantic partners on call
- What happens when one of the family members is an abuser?
- Gender-based violence and its relation with the loss in income, especially in light of the toxic patriarchy we discussed before, where men are expected to take on the role of the breadwinners for the family. With a loss in job and thereby an income, and restricted scope of moving out of the house, how are men reacting to the crisis?

Activity 3: FEAR STIGMA, DISCRIMINATION, AND GENDER

- I will be laying out a few situations and one statement after another, we will collectively be imagining how that situation plays out for an adolescent of a specific gender and how the concepts of shame, fear, and discrimination come into play.
- A girl goes to the bathroom while men of her family are sitting right outside. Will she want to go right away or wait for the men to move out? How does she walk from wherever she is in the house to the bathroom? How comfortable will she be in just using the bathroom normally? Will she be conscious of the sounds she makes inside the bathroom?
- A boy goes to the bathroom while women of his family are sitting right outside. Will he want to go right away or wait for the women to move out? How is his walk from wherever he is in the house to the bathroom? How comfortable will he be in just using the bathroom normally? Will he be conscious of the sounds he makes inside the bathroom?
- A girl using a phone at home. What is the family's reaction? What will her parents tell her? What will her family talk about her? What will be the assumptions made?
- A boy using a phone at home. What is the family's reaction? What will his parents tell him? What will his family talk about him? What will be the assumptions made?
- A girl who has boys as her friends - How do people in the colony talk about her? How do her parents feel about this? Are her parents comfortable letting her meet these friends in the colony or at her house?
- A boy who has girls as his friends - How do people in the colony talk about him? How do his parents feel about this? Are his parents comfortable letting him meet these friends in the colony or at his house?

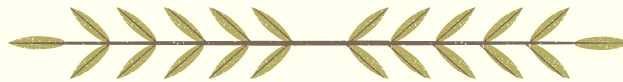


- A girl gets raped by her family member - Who will listen to her? How will people react to it? What will her family expect her to do? Will anyone believe her? Why or why not?
- A boy gets raped by his family member - Who will listen to him? How will people react to it? What will her family expect her to do? Will anyone believe him? Why or why not?

In all the cases, we see the aspects of fear, stigma, and discrimination play out. Do we see different reactions for girls against the same situation for boys? Why is that?

Activity 4: DECONSTRUCTING SHAME

- How do you define Shame?
- How does shame manifest in our everyday lives? Share some examples.
- What are some of the everyday challenges women face owing to the burden of shame they carry?
- Does being abused at home add to the concept of shame? How? Let us reflect and respond to this in terms of the victim's experience of violence and his/her ability to report or share about the same.
- What are some of the different aspects of shame?
 1. Related to dignity
 2. Related to humiliation



5: LISTENING AND WATCHING POPULAR SONGS WITH A GENDER LENS

Activity 1: ANTAKSHARI

We will start the day with an energetic round of Antakshari!

Note:

-Not many people will be comfortable with singing songs, so encourage as much participation as possible, but without pushing anyone too hard.

-Instead of singing in teams, in the context of this online workshop, it is more convenient to have individuals volunteer to sing the next song.

-Some of the participants might sing songs taught by their organization, it is OK. However, do encourage them to sing popular Hindi songs from movies or albums.



Activity 2: RE-LISTENING TO BOLLYWOOD SONGS

We will now listen to some popular songs we have either been humming since we were young or are on our list of current favourite songs-

We will carefully watch the visuals and also follow the lyrics to this beautiful song from the movie Kabir Singh - <https://youtu.be/Qdz5n1Xe5Qo> (Show till 1:20 duration of the song)

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What does 'haq' mean?
- What kind of feelings and emotions do we attach to someone or something when we say 'haq' hai?
- When someone has a 'haq' on you, what does that imply to your freedom of doing, thinking, or saying something? How does a line like this promote violence?)
- In the visuals, what is the impression you are getting of this male romantic partner?
- The video shows that the male lead wants to be the one doing everything with and for the female lead. This movie, Kabir Singh, has also been positioned as a romantic movie. How does this movie affect the romantic aspirations of young people in our country?
- In the visuals, at one point the female lead is making a presentation in a packed auditorium when the audience starts jeering and the male lead comes up on stage to make everyone quiet and keeps standing there till the presentation is on. In the context of the empowerment, we are trying to bring to girls by getting them educated, how does this visual affect our cause?

2. Here is another catchy song that has become really popular and also features a popular male actor dancing to its tune - <https://youtu.be/FjQk-2jHevs> (Show till 1:02 duration of the song)

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- Can one of you please repeat the main lyrics for all of us?
- When the girl shares the amount of jewelry that she needs for her romantic partner to take her to his house, what is the implied meaning?
- In the context of all the sexist jokes cracked on women and their vanity, women being greedy for men's money, women only wanting to marry rich men, do you think adding another song to the list helps the cause of establishing women as thinking individuals who can be independent and fend for themselves?
- What impact does it create on the mind of the audience when a popular star is seen in the visuals of sexist songs?

3. Now we will listen to a very popular song from the late 1990s - *Chal pyar karegi* - <https://youtu.be/wjmoMhMZqWs> (Show till 1:10 duration of the song)

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- Have you heard this song before?
- Have you liked singing, dancing to, or simply watching this video in the past?
- What does this song say?
- What does this line 'tu han kar ya na kar teri marzi soniye, hum tujh ko utha kar le jayenge' mean?
- What is the role of Consent in the context of our work on gender equality and gender-based violence?

4. Recently, there was a great movie focused on eradicating open defecation, Toilet. Let us listen to the most popular romantic song from that movie - <https://youtu.be/J48yYO19caE> (Show till 2:30 duration of the song)

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- How many of you have watched the movie Toilet?
- How many of you felt this movie was extremely relevant? Why?
- Now, let us talk exclusively about this video that we watched. How many of us feel this song is beautiful and romantic?
- Against such a beautiful song, how do the visuals make you feel? Respond to this question by imagining a young girl from the community you work in, instead of the female lead.
- What are some of the consequences that the girl in question might face if a boy stalks her?
- How does your answer to the previous question play out in light of the previous conversations we have had on the concept of dignity of the family and the concept of shame imposed on girls?

- What consequence do you think a boy who is stalking a girl, will have to face? Will it be at par with what the girl will have to deal with? Again, is it fair at all for the girl to face any consequence at all, for something she hasn't done wrong?
- This song has a female version too and the visuals there show the female lead stalking the male. Is it OK if a girl is stalking a boy?
- What is the impact created when a widely popular movie with a strong and socially relevant theme features a song promoting stalking?
- What are your thoughts on initiatives and interventions that start out to work for a particular cause, but in the process end up hurting another cause?
- In light of the work that we do in our organizations, what are some of the ways in which we can be mindful of not making the same mistake as mentioned in the previous question?

5. Let us listen to one other romantic song from the 1990s - https://youtu.be/n_oP9Onj0rQ (Show till 0:46 duration of the song)

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- Have you ever heard this song? If yes, then what was this song positioned to you as - romantic, sad, horror, energetic, dance number or some other genre?
- In light of some of our previous conversations, is there something that stands out to you in the lyrics?
- In light of this song being a romantic song and Shahrukh Khan becoming the face of romance since the release of this movie, what impression does this song create in young minds about love and consent?
- Are there some more movies that you can think of where lack of consent is promoted as love?

6. Let us watch an item song now - <https://youtu.be/K9XxmYsyQZE> (Show till 1:12 duration of the song)

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What is your general opinion on item songs?
- Have you heard this particular item song before? What have you thought of it?
- In light of our conversations on Consent, what is your impression of this song just based on the lyrics of the song we have heard till now?
- If you think of social acceptability, which song will young people be more comfortable singing - 'Tu hai meri Kiran' or 'Zara zara touch me'? Why do you think this is?
- In this song, the female lead is actually giving her permission to be touched and kissed. How does Bollywood portray women who know what they want for a sexual relationship?
- In light of the rise in gender-based violence, how does this portrayal impact our treatment of women in real life?

Activity 3: FOCUSING ON LYRICS

- Now we will read a piece of poem, for which I will need a volunteer - (<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/badshah/gendaphool.html>)
- (to the volunteer) How did you feel reading this poem to the group?
- Did any of you figure out which song this lyric is of?
- How has your general reaction to this Genda Phool song been?
- How do you feel about this song now? Why?
- How do we often respond to songs – via their music or their lyrics?
- What happens when as youth workers we use caller tunes or ring tones or dance to or hum songs with sexist lyrics?
- If we objectively feel that big stars should not promote sexist songs, then what is our role as local role models in the choice of songs that we endorse?

Activity 4: SHORT FILM

Watch the short film *Devi* and answer the following questions - <https://youtu.be/2KPOaDTVtFI>

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- Where do you think the movie was set up?
- What is happening here?
- Who are these women?
- What did they watch in the news?
- What are these women talking about?
- Did you observe any kind of bias or prejudice in what and how they are talking to each other?
- How do you feel about the comparison of sorrows? Is it fair to compare one's struggle with the other?
- As youth workers have we ever tried to ask a young person to get over their sorrows because someone else has a more difficult life than them? How do you think this makes that young person feel?
- What do the women see when they finally open the door?
- On what note does this film end?



6: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REEL AND REAL

Activity 1: RECAP

As a quick recap to our messaging from the previous workshop, we will watch the following video - <https://youtu.be/qum4YWhbrKM>

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What did we see the lady do in the video?
- What were the children doing?
- Can we blame the children for doing titillating dance steps or using certain words or phrases that the adults use in front of them?
- What does this video try to tell the world?
- Do you agree to the messaging?

Activity 2: SALAAM NAMASTE

In this game, we will use 2 actions of Salaam (depicted by a Salute) and Namaste (depicted by the action of namaste). Everyone has to keep watching the facilitator and do what the facilitator asks them to do. However, the job of the facilitator is to confuse, so s/he can say Salaam but do the action of Namaste, people who do Namaste instead of Salaam will be out. We can do multiple rounds of this game.

Takeaway - Despite being adults, the participants were getting confused by what they were seeing the facilitator do and not what the facilitator was asking them to do. In the same way, if we are saying the right thing to the adolescents in our group, but are singing sexist songs or laughing at sexist jokes, we are giving mixed messages, and people around us, who will most likely copy what they see us do.

Activity 3: HAPPILY EVER AFTER...

Sapna studies in class 8, she is a young, attractive-looking girl. She is smart and very impressive in how she carries herself. She also is a very good student. She also is a big movie buff.

Manoj is Sapna's senior from school. He is only a year older than her. He too is smart and intelligent, very good looking and also very good at his studies.

Both of them belonged to very typical families who were bothered about their reputation and how the others in the village perceive them. While both Sapna and Manoj had to live up to the moral codes imposed by their families, Sapna specifically had a tough time at home. Apart from studies, she had to help out with chores at home. She is a movie buff, topped by being a smart and attractive person, wanted to

dress up in a more fashionable manner. She wanted to wear skirts and tight jeans and t-shirts and crop tops, but her family being traditional, she was always forced to be in salwar kameez. She wasn't even allowed to wear sleeveless kurtas or even keep her hair open. She felt frustrated at home. Although her home was a safe place and her family was loving, she was well fed and studied in one of the better, more expensive schools, she felt suffocated about how she was not allowed to be herself.

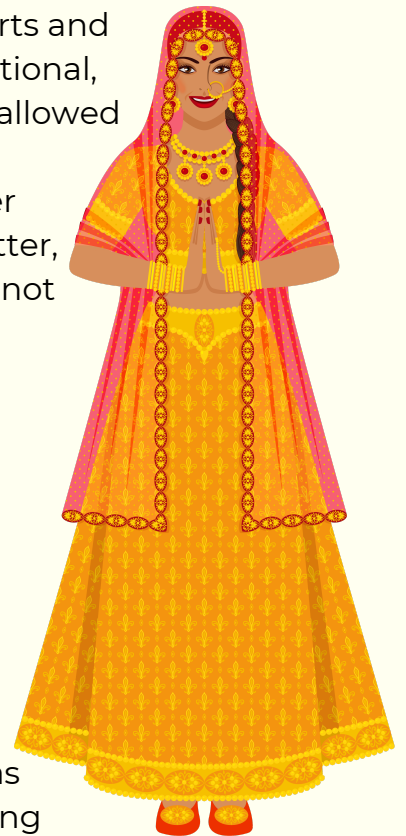
One day, there was a function in their school, where Sapna had participated in the dance sequence. She was wearing beautiful traditional clothes for the same. She looked gorgeous, like a princess from the royal family. That was the first day that Manoj saw Sapna and immediately fell in love with her.

Part 1: Stalking:

Manoj did not act on his feelings right away. He thought this was only for a day and would pass. However, he found himself noticing Sapna more and more each day and getting attracted to the little things she did—the way she walked and talked and how well she spoke in English and how much her friends loved her. Eventually, Manoj let his best friend, Vijay, know about his feelings for Sapna.

Vijay was very happy for Manoj and almost every day asked him to propose to Sapna. Sometimes when Manoj and Vijay would hang out in some corner of the school and Sapna would pass by, Vijay would immediately say things like “*arrey Bhabhi jaa rahi hai!*”. Initially, Sapna made nothing much out of this, but as more and more of Manoj's friends began knowing of this, they would make it a point to tease Sapna as their Bhabhi. Sapna started getting embarrassed with all of this. Soon she noticed that every time she went to the roof of her house or was on her way to the tuition or to buy something from a shop outside, Manoj was right there, pretending to not notice her. A couple of times, she also caught him clicking pictures of her. Being followed consistently by a young boy started to make her feel really uncomfortable and one day she confronted Manoj. Manoj expressed his love for her. Sapna did not feel that was for Manoj, so said no. Manoj quietly left her alone.

The next day when Manoj shared with his friends about the events from last evening, he was really upset. Vijay got really angry and wanted to get revenge! He hated the fact that Sapna broke his best friends' heart. (Vijay loved Manoj as a brother). The other friends immediately stopped both of them and asked them to cheer up because “*ladkiyon ke na mein unki haan hoti hai!*”. After some convincing, Manoj believed his friends and got very happy, because of course, a young girl from a



conservative family will not be expressive of her love! He continued to follow Sapna. In fact, he failed his final exams from class 9, to be in the same class as Sapna.

In the meanwhile, Sapna had shared everything with her closest friends. They got really angry with Sapna for acting so pricey! They were convinced that Sapna couldn't find a more loving partner than Manoj, who gave up an entire academic year to be with her, despite being a bright student. Sapna gave in to the pressure and finally agreed to become Manoj's girlfriend.

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What kind of a girl was Sapna?
- How was Manoj?
- What were some of the more romantic parts of this story so far? (This question is intentionally put here, to highlight how media has influenced our minds to believe that stalking is a way to express love. So, when the participants start bringing up Manoj following Sapna, clicking his pictures, etc. do not point out that all of these are ways of harassment. We will reach this point eventually)
- What were Manoj's expressions of love, making Sapna feel? After empathizing with Sapna, will we still say that Manoj was being romantic?
- Was there any line that you thought was problematic in this story?
- What do you feel about Manoj's friends?
- What is your impression of Sapna's friends?
- Take a second to imagine that Manoj and Sapna were your friends. What would you have felt about each of them at this point?
- Let's go back to songs like Hans mat pagli from the movie Toilet, how does the thought of these movies playing out in real life make us feel?

Part 2: Love Marriage:

As Manoj and Sapna started dating, Sapna learned that Manoj was a very caring and loving person. They spent a lot of time together in school. They started going to the same tuitions and now both would plan what time Sapna would step out of the house and Manoj could be waiting for her outside. They grew into an adorable couple that did cute things for each other. Sapna would observe fasts that married women would do for their husbands. All of their friends agreed that they were the ultimate couple. One of the best things that worked out for Sapna was that the suffocation she felt at home at not being herself, she got to be that with Manoj. Manoj would get her clothes that she wanted to wear, every time they went for a date to a place where both knew no one from their family would see them. Unfortunately, one day, a nosy neighbour caught them on a date, clicked a picture, and shared it in their colony WhatsApp group.

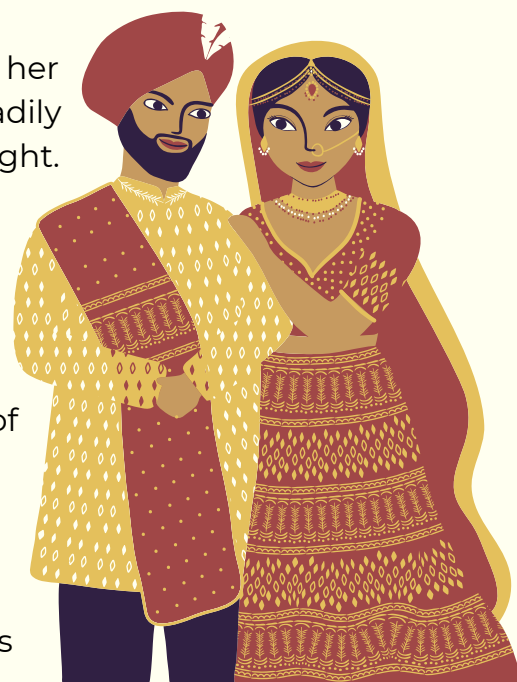
Sapna's parents were livid. The problem wasn't just that she was out on a date in the pretence of going to her tuition but that she was dating a boy from a lower cast!

Her parents immediately stopped her from going to school and kept her locked in the house at all times. They even did not allow her to use the phone. She wasn't being sent out of the house anymore. In fact, the family had now started looking for a boy to get her married off to before she tarnished their name further. Despite multiple pleadings, no one listened to Sapna, who promised she would behave herself from now on.

One day, Sapna's best friend came home to meet her. Sapna's mother refused to leave them alone as they met. The friend pretended to cough, so Sapna's mother could get her some water. For the single minute that the mother was away, the friend shared how Manoj misses her and wants to know if she would like to elope. Sapna readily agreed and a plan was made for both to run away at night.

With no money or plans for the future, both of them eloped and stayed for a couple of days at a friend's empty house. The few days that they stayed together were beautiful. They were both together all the time, they were free to do what they want. There was a lack of money and little food to eat, but they were together and that is what kept them going.

Now, this is where most movies end, making young people imagine that life after eloping is beautiful. Let us build the end of the story together:



DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- How long can the couple stay at the friend's house?
- What happens when they run out of money?
- With no money and shelter, what is the option left for both?
- When there is no food on the plate, there is no roof above one's head, there barely are enough change of clothes and also both people are still growing and evolving emotionally, what happens?
- Is it so easy to get a job?
- When you've lived a decent life and are now faced with poverty and lack a support system from your family, how far can you carry on with love alone?
- Where are Manoj and Sapna's best friends now? With the best of their intentions, do you think they can support the couple?
- With no idea of what they are up to, contraception might be the last thing in their mind. What happens if Sapna gets pregnant?
- Is it wrong to have aspirations of one's own, that are different from their family? (As a facilitator, it is important for us to highlight that having different aspirations than our families is not wrong. It definitely matters how we communicate our thoughts and how we act on our decisions. Being responsible about the generation gap, acknowledging parents' intentions and their experiences is important, but this should not lead to a person feeling guilty for wanting something different.)

- What do you feel about jumping into action without thinking of the consequence? (You can use this as a good point to reiterate the discussion from the story Pandemic and Pandemonium to drive the aspect of responsible decision-making in)

Activity 4: LOVE MARRIAGE ON TV

- How are love marriages projected on tv and in films?
- What expectations do young people begin to have about being married?
- In the legal context, is Consent accepted for underage couples?
- What are some of the state laws and provisions for underage couples?
- What is the difference between a wedding and a marriage?
- In the story, we discussed some real issues that a couple might face after getting married. How else can we facilitate similar conversations among young people so they can look at depictions of marriages more critically?
- How do poor decision-making skills impact the choices made by young people?
- What could be a suggestive list of items we can encourage young people to think about before they decide to marry someone?

Activity 5: RESPONSIBLE CHOICES

In this activity, everyone is given 4 options to choose from. Each of these options will be written on a different sheet of paper with some information about each of it. You need to announce to your group, only what is written here:

1. Sheet 1- Dress

- Free of cost
- Perfectly fits you



2. Sheet 2 - House

- A 2 storeyed beautiful house,
- You can stay with your family,
- Cheapest rate for you.



3. Sheet 3 - Pen

- A hi-tech ink flow process for smooth handwriting,
- Very expensively priced, but you can get it for Rs. 200,
- You can write with it underwater or even from space.



4. Sheet 4 - Spinach

- Increase iron in your body and helps managing diabetes,
- Gives healthy skin and hair and also helps improve digestion
- You can get it for free, but will have to walk down to the next village to get it.



After everyone has made a choice, ask people to raise their hands for the item you have chosen, as you start naming them one by one. After everyone is done voting, share the following with them:

- **Dress:** That dress was worn by someone with a communicable skin disease. Since you've worn it too, you've now been infected.
- **House:** It was a 2 storeyed building very close to a river, and your house was made of very poor-quality material. Your house has now been washed away by the waves.
- **Pen:** This pen is helping improve your handwriting, although the bit about space and writing underwater is pretty useless because you won't be doing either as of now.
- **Spinach:** You have made a very good decision. The spinach will help keep you and your family healthy.

Now ask the participants how they feel about their choices and then lead a discussion with everyone on the need for informed decision-making. It is important to help them see how things that look attractive at the surface might not always be as good, therefore, it is important that we seek complete information and weigh out the pros and cons before making any decision. You can lead the discussion with the following pointers:

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What does informed decision-making mean?
- There is always a lot of pressure on making the right decision. However, is it really possible to predict that a decision taken will bear the exact same result as we had imagined?
- Is there a guarantee that decisions taken by parents can never go wrong? Think in terms of the cause of Child Marriage. Isn't that something that parents are deciding for their children? Why are we fighting against it if we also want to promote that parents always think well for us and make the best decisions for us?
- End the discussion with an understanding that we cannot predict the consequences of a decision but we definitely can take responsibility for the same. This helps us own up to our mistakes and encourages us to reflect on how we could have done things better and be in a better position the next time.

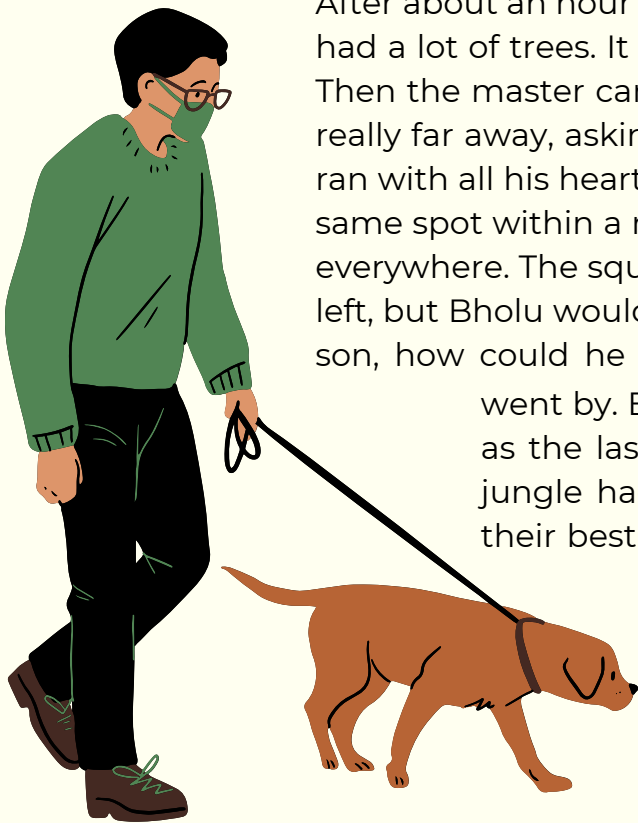


DAY 7: CONTEXTUALIZING INTERVENTIONS

Activity 1: WHAT ONE NEEDS?

As the Coronavirus started spreading in early 2020 the lack of information led to a lot of fake news, that increased panic and created misinformation. Among the other scares that people had, the world saw a spike in the number of pets being abandoned by families because they felt that pets could bring the virus home.

This story is about Bholu, a pet dog, who got abandoned by his master. One day, his master asked him to get into his car for a long drive. Bholu would love long drives, so he jumped into the car. He loved putting his head out of the window and wagging his tail and smelling new smells and also showing off to all the animals and birds how his master loved him so much that he would take him out for drives too. This time, the drive seemed longer than usual. Bholu had not been there before. He couldn't recognize this place at all. Also, he had noticed that his master had brought a big bone along. Bholu thought that this was a special drive and got very excited.

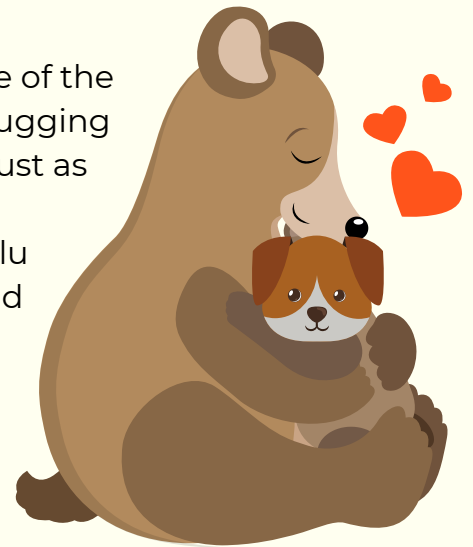


After about an hour's drive, the car stopped. It looked like this place had a lot of trees. It probably was a jungle. Bholu was very excited. Then the master came out, hugged him and then threw the bone really far away, asking Bholu to fetch it. Bholu was very happy and ran with all his heart to bring the bone back. Bholu returned to the same spot within a minute, but couldn't find his master. He looked everywhere. The squirrels on the trees told him that his master has left, but Bholu wouldn't believe it. His master would love him as his son, how could he have abandoned him then! A couple of days went by. Bholu was sad. He had kept the bone with him, as the last gift given by his master. The animals in the jungle had started to feel very bad for Bholu and tried their best to help him. They had seen a number of dogs being left behind by their masters in the last few days and knew that there was no way Bholu would be taken back to his home.

The lion offered his den for Bholu to sleep. The Deer tried to play with him. The birds would get him food to it. They did everything that they could to cheer Bholu up, but nothing worked. Although he was being taken care of, Bholu looked duller each day.

One day a bear came along. He saw Bholu and felt really bad for him. He tried talking to Bholu and cheering him up. Bholu obliged but nothing made him happy. Then the

bear got up and came to hug Bholu in his arms. It was one of the longest hugs the animals around had seen. Bholu kept hugging the bear for as long as he could and then on, he became just as cheerful and playful as he was before. The bear and Bholu met regularly and every time they met, they hugged. Bholu now had new friends who cared for him and loved him and he loved them all back!



Seeing this, the other animals got curious as to what the bear did that worked. They enquired. Turns out that as the bear and Bholu were talking, the bear learned that Bholu was a pampered boy. He was loved by his family and his master especially would begin and end his day by hugging him. So, while Bholu could have managed his food and shelter on his own, all he needed was a warm hug to feel that he belonged to this place.

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- How was Bholu's relationship with his Master?
- Why did the Master abandon Bholu although they both loved each other a lot?
- How did the other animals respond to Bholu? What can we learn from them?
- No matter how hard the animals tried, why did nothing cheer Bholu up?
- What did the bear do?
- Is there something that we can learn from the bear about the way we work? (Often, we focus on good intentions behind failed attempts. While this is definitely important, we also need to pause and reflect upon our failures, so that we can customize our approach based on the needs of a group or an individual.)

Activity 3: CHOOSING THE RIGHT CONTENT FOR YOUR GROUP

1. Watch this video created by Buzzfeed and answer the following questions - <https://youtu.be/iKWcH9HO6Ac>

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- This video is based on the exact topic that we had discussed 2 sessions back. However, if we show this video to our adolescent groups now, will this work? Why or why not?
- What kind of language was used in the video? Will your adolescent groups be able to connect to this audio?
- How were the characters dressed? Will your adolescent groups be able to connect to this visual meaningfully?
- The actors here are all famous urban comedians who enjoy mass popularity. Their delivery is also most appreciated by the young, urban crowd. Do you think it will enjoy similar responses from the communities that you interact in?
- Now, based on the questions asked above, even though the theme of the video is extremely relevant, do you still feel that this particular video will be as impactful in the specific communities that you work in?

2. Watch this video by Google and answer the following questions - <https://youtu.be/gHGDN9-oFJE>

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- The main content of this video is not something that we have discussed in our session so far. Were you still able to connect with this video? Why?
- The previous and this particular video are both made by international giants, why did one appeal more than the other?
- While selecting relevant video content for our adolescent groups, is it only enough to find a matching topic, or do we need to be mindful of the tone, the choice of words, and the picturization of it to gauge its possible impact in the groups we work with?

3. Watch this video made by Naik Foundation and answer the following question - <https://youtu.be/HkuKHwetV6Q>

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What happened in this video?
- How did this make you feel?
- This was a song in a language we did not understand. Still, it delivered to you what the makers had had in mind. Why did that happen?
- Will this work with your community? Why?

4. Now watch this silent film by Auctors production and share why this video was something that we were able to relate with - https://youtu.be/mWZ6b_l-Djg.

Note:

While selecting content available online for your session with adolescents, you need to be mindful of the following:

- Will the picturization add more entertainment value for them or will it make them think?
- Is the choice of words appropriate for the group?
- Will they be able to connect to how the characters dress or speak in the video?
- Is the story of the video simple enough for them to follow?
- Is the message easy to understand or will help be required in communicating the message to them?
- How do we ask progressive questions based on the video so that they are able to understand the concept well?

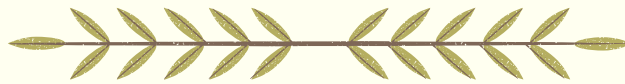
Activity 4: UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENCES TO PROMOTE EQUITY

Enlist all the subgroups that you can make from the communities you reach out to. The following are some of the parameters for you to start with and then go on to list more:

- Location - Town/Village
- Caste
- Gender
- Financial background
- Thought process - Conservative/Progressive family
- Physical or Mental abilities
- Schooling/ education qualifications, etc.

All groups that we work in are different, even though at the surface they may all seem similar. Within groups too, each individual is different. While it might not be possible to cater to individual needs, it is important to understand that we cannot fully customize our curriculum without knowing the differences that exist between every individual we work with. The above pointers are examples. We will chalk out such categories and sub-categories from the populations they reach out to. Then we will write down at least 1 contrasting reality that they experience with each group.

The intention is to help us see how different individuals have different lived realities. We will go back to the game on Gender and Power (Bull's Eye) and talk again about privilege and power dynamics. This section will be based only on discussions based on suggestions for customization, the difference in mindset for working with girls and boys, even though the content for delivery might be the same.



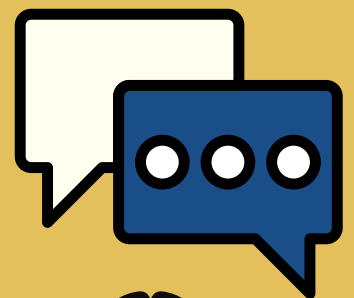
8: STORY CREATION

Activity 1: STORY CREATION ACTIVITY

- Divide all the participants into groups of 4. While doing so, ensure a complementary mix of personalities. Two vocal participants along with 2 meeker ones is a good combination. However, for the meeker one, try to gauge what kind of co-participants would make them feel comfortable enough to share a story and put them in groups accordingly.
- In the beginning, there might be some participants who have come unprepared for the session, so give everyone about 10 more minutes to brush up their stories and then put them in groups for sharing.
- Everyone has to listen to the stories shared by the participants in their group and the group should then give constructive feedback to make the story more effective.
- Every group is given about 45 minutes to discuss all the stories in their group.
- After 45 minutes, everyone gets back to the larger group and one story is randomly selected to be shared with everyone and then, all of us collectively design the debriefing questions for the same.
- If there is enough time, we could listen to a second story and design the debriefing questions for the same.

Notes for designing the debrief questions:

- Your questions should be divided into 3 parts -what, how, and why.
- The first few questions focusing on WHAT happened in the story should ideally be asked to the weaker, more under-confident participants so that they get a chance to speak too. Also, since these answers are shared in an obvious manner in the story, it should not be too difficult to answer.
- Use the 'what' questions to establish integral plot points in your story, which actually lead to the build-up for establishing the main takeaway from the story.
- The 'how' questions can either be answered in the story or left open for the participants to imagine and share with the group.
- The 'why' questions are the most important ones that actually force individuals to reflect the causes behind certain behaviors and connect the same to their real lives and eventually decide to alter their thoughts or actions to more inclusive and responsible ones.



9: JUDGMENT AND EMPATHY

Activity 1: IN SOMEONE'S SHOES

Everyone has to start their day by running around in their room in 2 laps and coming back to their seats while wearing their own shoes. Now the same is to be done while wearing the shoes or slippers of someone from the opposite gender who is also available in that space. In case there is no one else from the opposite gender, then one can simply switch their shoes between left and right foot. This is followed by a round of debriefing questions:

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- How was your experience of running in the first round?
- How was your experience in the second round?
- Did any of you have the same experience in both rounds?
- How was your first round different from the second?
- With our own experience in mind, where we struggled as we ran in someone else's shoes, how can we be less judgmental and more empathetic while thinking or talking about other people?

Activity 2: WHO IS HAPPY?

1. Munia:

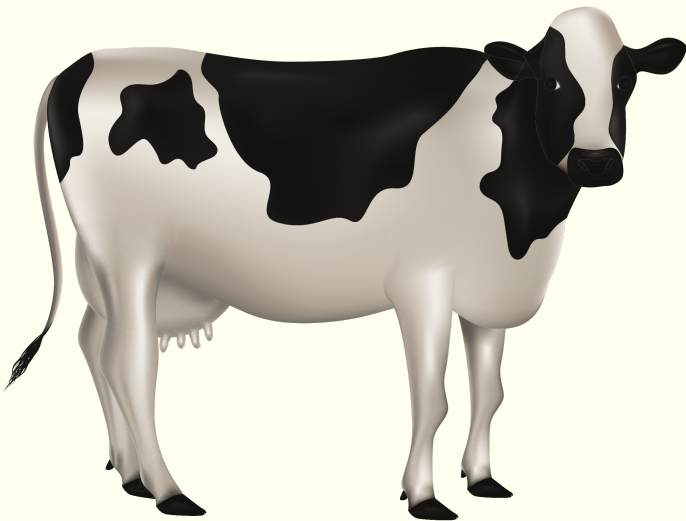
Munia is a happy little bird. She was born a little after the rainy season. Everywhere she looked from her nest, it was all green. Her parents loved her a lot. Her fondest memories were from the time when she was really small, her eyes had just opened and her mother had come to the nest with a fat, juicy worm to feed her. As she became a little stronger, her mother would take her out for flying lessons. She was still a little wobbly as she attempted to fly. Her parents had asked her to join them for flying lessons for a few more days before she left the nest to live independently. One day, Munia's parents were not home. She took the opportunity to try to fly. The minute she did, she was captured by a big man and taken to the market. She was put inside a cage along with twenty other birds. A big lady came with her child and bought Munia. They took her back in their car. On reaching home, Munia was put inside a big cage made of gold. There was a beautiful plate made of silver, with the best quality of bird food laid out for her. There was a lovely silver bathtub for her to take a dip in. A beautifully crafted silver bowl was filled with water for her to drink and a lovely cushion, covered with the finest silk was set for her to sleep. The beautiful golden cage had every item of luxury that she could need. Her owners loved her too. They would spend a good part of the day talking to her and always made sure that she had everything she needed, could she have anything to complain about?



- What kind of a family did Munia belong to?
- What was Munia trying to do the day she got caught?
- How did her new family keep her in their new home?
- With a cage of gold to live in, bathing in a silver tub, drinking water out of an exclusive silver bowl, should Munia have been happy?
- Was Munia actually happy? Why?

2. Kulwanti:

Kulwanti was a gorgeous-looking cow. Her skin was shinier than the other cows around. She was always well fed. Her stable was clean and to maintain that, there were two boys employed to clean up the space right away as soon as she took a leak or defecated.



She was given all her vaccines on time and had a vet visit her at least once in 6 months. She was of prime health. She loved being a show cow in the local village fairs. She loved how every other cow looked at her with jealousy. She loved all the attention she got from the people around her, who wanted to buy her off. Her owner used to spend time with her when she was a calf. She loved him. He was always kind to her and showered her with a lot of love. He used to feed her at least twice a day, with his own hands. As Kulwanti started winning more and more competitions, it earned her master a lot of

money. As he started getting richer, he employed people to take care of her.

Kulwanti wonders if love can be outsourced. But again, everyone saw how pampered she was and asked themselves if Kulwanti could have anything to complain about?

- What was special about Kulwanti?
- How was her relationship with her Master before she started getting famous?
- How did the other cows and buffaloes feel about her?
- Kulwanti was the most popular cow in the area. Should Kulwanti have been happy with the popularity and attention she got from everyone around?
- If you did not know what was on Kulwanti's mind, how would you think she felt about her situation?
- Was Kulwanti actually happy? Why?

3. Moti

Moti was a lazy dog! He stayed in filth. He had no family and neither many friends. He would live on small scraps that came his way. Being the lazy boy that he is, there were days he went unfed because he never tried hard enough. He had a scar mark from his childhood days when he had fallen into a dry ditch with thorny branches dumped in it while trying to save himself from dying under a car. This scar made him look ugly and scarier than he was. No matter where he went, he was always shooed away by people, because no one wanted to get bitten by a scary-looking dog. The good looking and well-behaved dogs of the neighbourhood kept their distance from Moti, the evil dogs from the neighbourhood tried to include him in their gang but soon realized that behind that scary face is actually a very good boy who did not like troubling others, so they threw Moti out of their gang. But Moti never wanted to bite anyone in the first place! All he wanted to do was to lie down on his spot under the mango tree in the orchard nearby. That was his favourite spot. From there, no one could see him, but he could see everyone. His mornings began with the chirping of the birds. Sometimes the caretaker of the orchard would come by and hit him with a stone. He would run away in an instant but knew that the caretaker would be gone soon and he would get to come back to his spot. There was very little that Moti aspired for or needed in his life, except for his perfect spot under the mango tree, which he had, so he wondered if there was anything that he had to complain about...



DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- How would people treat Moti?
- Did Moti always have food to eat when he was hungry?
- What was the one thing that Moti loved the most?
- With everyone disliking Moti and him having no friends at all, should Moti have been a happy boy?
- Was Moti actually happy? Why?

Overall Points for Discussion:

- Which of the 3 characters would you say were the happiest and had nothing to complain about?
- Which of the 3 characters do you think had a miserable life?
- Do your thoughts and feelings match what the characters might be thinking or feeling?
- Evidently, the first 2 characters had a comfortable life, but one did not have the life they actually desired. The third character had a visibly miserable life, but within that, he had everything that he needed to keep him happy. With this in mind, share honestly as to who we would judge is they complained about being unhappy?

- We know that Child Marriage is illegal and also understand the toll it has on a child's mind, body and spirit. Despite all the efforts, we might still see minors wanting to or minor couples who have already eloped. Instead of getting judgemental with them, we need to respond with empathy and try to understand what made them take the step. This way, other minors with similar thoughts will find more confidence in you and the ones already married will reach out to you for guidance.

Activity 3: GENDERED JOKES

Start this section by asking the group to share some funny husband-wife jokes that they might have read on WhatsApp. You can also share some of the jokes pasted below (*These jokes are written in English, but, if possible, share this in the local language to deliver better impact*):

1. Wife: "Stop saying Sorry all the time."
 Husband: "Why?"
 Wife: "How can I fight with you if you have already apologized!"

2. Husband: "You were at the mall for almost 3 hours! What all did you get?"
 Wife: "One pack of rubber bands and 45 selfies!"

3. Silence is like jewellery for a woman but turns out she wears it only while sleeping!



DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- In a patriarchal society, do men apologize to women so easily?
- What is the woman's problem if the husband apologizes?
- In India, domestic violence is rampant. While men have been on the receiving end too, which of the two genders are oppressed even more? Yet, which of the two genders are shown as getting beaten up by their partners in popular jokes?
- In patriarchal societies, women are encouraged to dress up and look beautiful for the men in their lives. Have you heard jokes where women's vanities are attacked? Do you find this confusing?
- In popular forwarded jokes, which gender is laughed at and which is shown as the victim? Why do you think this is?
- Have you heard jokes about men who feel free because their wives have gone to their mother's home? Think of real-life instances - do women choose not to visit their parents as often as they want to or are they held back by their in-laws or the responsibilities that they have in their in-law's homes.
- If the stories shared on jokes are so far away from reality, what makes us laugh?
- Do you think this narrative does any damage in real life? Why or why not?
- What is something that we can do the next time we receive a gender-biased forwarded message?



10: CONVERSATIONS AROUND SEXUALITY

This chapter is to be used for revising everything that we have learned in the last 9 chapters and to set the context for the second phase of the workshop series which will focus on the Gender and the Sexuality spectrum with much more depth. Use this time to introduce terms that will build curiosity for the next series.

1. **Sex:** Sex refers to the different biological and physiological characteristics of males and females, such as reproductive organs, chromosomes, hormones, etc. A layperson can identify an individual's sex by seeing their genitals.
 - **Male:** Individuals with XY chromosome, who are born with a penis between their legs.
 - **Female:** Individuals with XX chromosome, who are born with a vagina between their legs.
 - **Intersex:** Individuals who are born with physiological and biological features that fit into neither of the categories of male or female. In some cases, an individual might be born with both genitals where either one or both parts are underdeveloped, or maybe born with female genitalia but have no ovaries or male genitalia with a female reproductive system.

2. **Gender:** Gender is a socially constructed idea that tries to fit individuals into categories of roles, expectations, and physical expressions, based on their sex.

- **Man:** In our country, a man is the breadwinner of the family, who takes all decisions for the family and whose word is the final word in the house. He is the protector, who is not allowed to show any signs of vulnerability, including showing emotions. Tall height, with a rough and tough exterior, is a physical expectation of a man, and he is supposed to keep short hair and a moustache.
- **Woman:** In our country, a woman is a caregiver, who is not expected to practice her agency and put her family and its honour before herself. She is expected to be loving, caring, and emotional. Women are encouraged to be shy and not outgoing and are expected to dress up modestly by covering as much of their body as possible, and have long hair.
- **Transgender:** Transgender is an umbrella term for persons whose gender identity, gender expression, or behavior does not conform to that typically



associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth. There can be two categories under this:

- a. **Male to Female Transgender:** An individual, who is born as a male, but identifies and expresses himself as a woman.
- b. **Female to Male Transgender:** An individual, who is born as a female, but identifies and expresses herself as a man.

3. **Sexuality:** Sexuality has to do with the way you identify, how you experience sexual and romantic attraction (if you do), and your interest in and preferences around sexual and romantic relationships and behaviour. Just like Sex and Gender, Sexuality too is a spectrum, so, for the context of this workshop, we will learn a little about 3 types of sexualities - Heterosexuality, Homosexuality, and Bisexuality.



Heterosexual: Individuals who are sexually attracted to people from the opposite sex are called Heterosexuals.



Homosexual: Individuals who are sexually attracted to people of the same sex are called Homosexuals.

Females who are sexually attracted to other females are called **Lesbians** and Males who are sexually attracted to other males are called **Gay**.



Bisexual: Individuals who are sexually attracted to people from the same, as well as the opposite sex, are called Bisexuals.



POINTS TO REMEMBER AS WE MAKE STORYTELLING A TOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

- The most important element that shifts stories from a recreational activity to a tool for social change is debriefing. Every story used for this purpose should end with a reflective discussion that helps people to think, identify problems, reimagine a new reality and take steps to implement these ideas.
- It is not necessary to create a heavy-weight story. A simple story with relevant and reflective discussion points can create a strong impact.
- Instead of creating a brand-new story, we can recreate popular stories and use what is familiar to lead our audience to think more critically.
- Choosing one's words appropriately is an important preparation that needs to be done. It is important to use the local dialect as far as possible and also know the implied meaning of certain words to ensure creating a focused impact.
- Using gender-inclusive language is also of utmost importance so that the audience across all genders is able to relate to the content.
- Using imaginative characters for sensitive topics is often a good idea so that no one feels personally attacked or reacts to stories based on existing biases and notions.
- By doing small activities or asking reflective questions at different points of the story helps maintain the engagement of the audience.
- One effective way to engage the audience is the storyteller's ability to modulate their voice and channel emotions that the characters in the story might be feeling.
- We can either end the story on a positive note that leaves the audience with ideas of making positive changes in their behaviour or else stop the story at an interesting point and encourage the audience to share the ending they feel the story should get. Having a negative ending can also stir an individual's emotions for the cause and therefore can be effective.

APPENDIX

The following are stories developed for the purpose of this workshop series and can be used freely by the facilitators either in the context of a chapter from this book or independently to have more conversations around Gender.

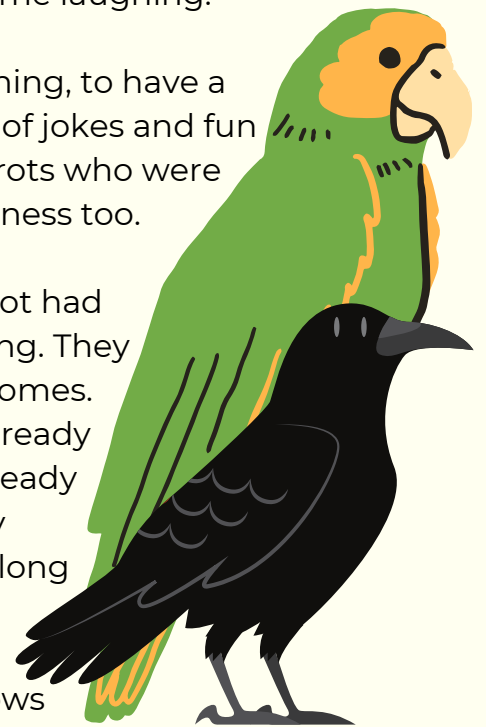
1. PANDEMIC AND PANDEMONIUM

Once there was a park with a lot of trees and in those trees, there lived a number of different birds. Each bird had their own family but were all very friendly with each other. They worked all day at different jobs to feed their family. They would often socialize in the evenings with the other birds in the tree and also the neighbouring trees.

One time they all learned of a strange illness that caused birds to crack funny jokes and laugh all the time. It seemed to be spreading like wildfire. The news started spreading fast. As the birds in our park learned of it, they thought it wasn't really a big deal and wondered how laughing can be a bad thing. Slowly, as the illness spread, they learned that more and more birds were dying of laughter. The birds found this very difficult to imagine. The local govt. had urged everyone to stay at home. The birds felt that the govt. was overreacting, so ignored all the orders and carried on with their lives, till one day, a crow returned home laughing.

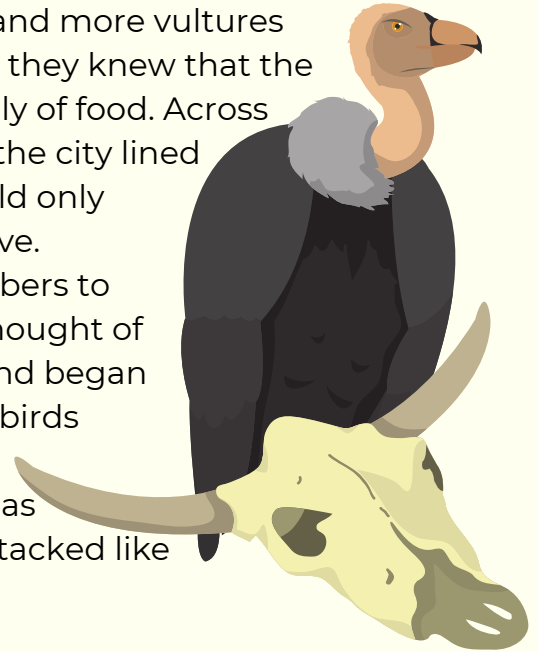
Some of the birds, invited the crow family over in the evening, to have a good time with them. They had a great evening with lots of jokes and fun and laughter. The next day, it seemed that one of the parrots who were there at the party the previous evening had caught the illness too.

Within the next few days, the family members of the parrot had started to get fed up with the constant joking and laughing. They charged the crow family for bringing the illness to their homes. The crow being ill for a longer time than the parrot had already seen a major deterioration in health and its family was already very flustered. Seeing the parrot family accuse them, they fought back saying that the two families were friends for long and the parrot family had invited the crow's home, so the crows can't be blamed. After a long argument, both families stopped talking to each other. A couple more crows in the tree fell ill and many more parrots. This had enraged the parrot community a lot. They hated the fact that a greater number of parrots had gotten ill in the tree than crows. The parrot families mobilized and started to boycott the crows. To harass the crows further, the parrots would drop hot chillies and even defecate in the crows' nests when the crows weren't around. The truth was, that there were 10 parrot families living in the tree, against 3 crow families, so, as the illness spread, it was logical why more parrots seem to be affected. They all believed that the crows had introduced the laughing illness to the Parrot community.



As days went by, a greater number of birds started falling sick. The govt. opened up health centres where they could all be kept under the same roof and under good medical care. All the birds in the park were very happy about the care the govt was providing.

As the illness started to spread, more birds were dying, despite the best efforts from the govt. and the healthcare facilities. Therefore, more and more vultures began waiting outside these medical facilities, because they knew that the death caused by the illness will get them a steady supply of food. Across the country, all medical facilities had all the vultures of the city lined up on the roof. These vultures were clear that they would only be eating the dead birds and not attacking the ones alive. However, the bird families that brought their sick members to the facilities were afraid. They felt stressed out by the thought of being attacked. Soon, all the birds gathered together and began protesting. The protests started to get violent, with the birds attacking the vultures, hitting them with any heavy object that they could lift. The vultures never retaliated as they had vowed to only eat the dead. Being violently attacked like this, the vultures decided to leave.



As soon as the vultures left, all the birds rejoiced at their victory.

Within days of this, the number of deaths around the medical facilities had shot up. Turns out that with no vultures to eat up the dead birds, the dead bodies were piling up, rotting, creating more diseases that killed the other birds!

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What was the new illness that had plagued the birds?
- Why do you think the birds found it difficult to imagine the gravity of the situation in the beginning, despite the warnings from the govt.?
- How do you think the first crow got infected?
- What do you feel about the parrot family accusing the crow family and what followed after that?
- Do you think the crows were responsible for the pandemic? If not, then how did they become responsible for it?
- What emotions drove the parrots and the other birds to do what they did?
- Is it wrong to think about oneself and their family? What could have been a better way to deal with things?
- Why do you think the vultures were being attacked?
- What happened after the vultures stopped working?
- Who actually suffered when the vultures stopped working?
- We will close the conversation by discussing the need to take responsibility for one's actions and the consequences that follow, which is a key tool for responsible decision-making.

2. SHAME SHAME!

Once upon a time, there was a peahen named Mamta, who was married into the most prestigious peacock family of the jungle. She was one of the more elegant ladies that the other peahens had ever seen. She carried herself with great dignity. The way she walked, talked, and dressed up made people feel she was a princess. Apart from being someone who promoted the local culture and respected meaningful traditions, she was also someone who had a mind of her own, she spoke up for what she felt was right or wrong, even if it did not concern herself directly. She was educated and wanted to use her education for the betterment of her society.

She fought for equal rights of the Peacocks and Peahens in her community and was a pioneer in ensuring that all the young ones in their community were enrolled in their school of basic flying and catching worms. She especially took a lot of interest in and funded the dance school that focused on young peacocks and peahens to understand when it is going to rain and to dance to their heart's content.

One day, Mamta needed to defecate. So, she went to the washroom and took off her pants to sit on the pot. Then, she began humming some of her favorite songs, when she noticed that the windows and the door of the washroom were mildly rattling. Soon the pot she was sitting on, began to shake too and she noticed a crack form on the ceiling. She immediately realized that an earthquake had hit her jungle. She knew that if she was to save herself, she needed to run out immediately, as the roof can collapse any second, but her pants were hanging on the hook behind the door...



DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What kind of person was Mamta?
- Why was Mamta confused about running out of the washroom immediately?
- Keeping in mind how our society reacts, what would have happened if Mamta would have left the washroom without her pants?
- According to you what should the reaction from society be if Mamta decided to run out of the washroom immediately?
- If, instead of Mamta, it was her husband in the washroom, would he have had the same dilemma? Why?
- Are you aware of instances where women have chosen to 'keep their dignity' at the cost of their lives?
- What is your stand on the concept of shame?
- Imagine a world where shame was only attached to actions that involved wronging others, instead of associating the same with people's bodies, based on their gender. How different would this world have been?

3. THE THIRSTY CROW

Once upon a time, there was a thirsty crow, who had been flying for hours at a stretch in search of water. Finally, she spotted a broken pot that glimmered with a little bit of water at the bottom. Now, the pot was deep, so the Crow knew that if she went inside, she might get stuck and not be able to come out. Being a smart girl, she quickly thought of a brilliant idea and got to the action! She started picking up gravel one at a time and putting it in the pot. Slowly, after hours of effort, the water level rose because of the gravel and the Crow drank till her heart's content.

Now, this is the original story that most of us have read or have heard so far. Let us bring this story closer to our real lives, as we continue to take this story forward-



As soon as the Crow finished drinking, she stretched her arms out and wide and was getting ready to take a nap before she flew further. As she looked for a space to rest, she found a little Parrot staring at her from a distance. As soon as their eyes met, the Parrot smiled, but the Crow looked away. The Crow replied arrogantly – “My parents have asked me not to speak to strangers” and tried to walk away. The Parrot politely asked her if there still was enough water for her to drink. The Crow looked at the Parrot from top to bottom and got very angry. She remembered that her parents had told her not to speak to any bird from the Parrot community because they



were lowly ranked in the Bird community and the Crows were much bigger and richer than them. Seeing a bird from the lower rank asking her for water, the Crow got furious and yelled “How dare you to ask me for water?” Saying this, she walked over to the pot and used all her might to turn the pot over, so that every drop of water got soaked in the soil. Doing this, the crow flew away. The poor Parrot was left heartbroken. She knew that the Crows and the Parrots did not get along, but had hoped for some kindness in this scorching heat. Anyway, the disappointed Parrot began flying again, looking for some water to drink. It was a very hot day and she had been flying for a very long time. Suddenly, the Parrot felt a heavyweight pull her down. She couldn't breathe, she felt weak in her wings and by the time her body fell with a thud on the ground, the Parrot's heart had already stopped beating...

If only she would have gotten some water, if only she would have rested after that, the Parrot could have lived...

10 years later

It was a hot sunny afternoon. A thirsty Crow was flying, desperately looking for water.

Finally, she spotted a broken pot that glimmered with a little bit of water at the bottom. Now, the pot was deep, so the Crow knew that if she went inside, she might get stuck and not be able to come out. Being a smart girl, she quickly thought of a brilliant idea and got to the action! She started picking up gravel one at a time and putting it in the pot. Slowly, after hours of effort, the water level rose because of the gravel and the Crow drank till her heart's content.

As soon as the Crow finished drinking, she stretched her arms out and wide and was getting ready to take a nap before she flew further. As she looked for a space to rest, she found a little Parrot staring at her from a distance. As soon as their eyes met, the Parrot smiled, but the Crow looked away. The Crow replied– “My parents have asked me not to speak to strangers” and tried to walk away. The Parrot politely asked her if there still was enough water for her to drink. The Crow looked at the Parrot from top to bottom and realized that that was a Parrot! She remembered that her parents had told her not to speak to any bird from the Parrot community because they were lowly ranked in the Bird community and the Crows were much bigger and richer than them. But she also remembered how her parents and teachers had taught her to help people in need. So the Crow immediately responded – “Yes sure, I’ve had my heart’s fill and there is still a lot of water to spare. Please come and drink some water” After drinking enough water, the Parrot shared how she was skeptical to ask the Crow for water because she was told stories about how 10 years back one of her aunts had died because a Crow refused to give her water. The Crow looked a little apologetic and shared “I know. That Crow was my grandmother and I was told that story many times while growing up, how she was a Hero for throwing the water on the ground but not letting a ‘lowly’ Parrot drink from the same pot. The same adults in my family have also taught me to help people in need. So, I wonder why this is a story of bravery and it hurts me to know that someone else who could have used that water, wasn’t allowed to because of a silly belief we have had in our community.”

Seeing the Crow look sad, the Parrot tried to cheer her up and flew to the nearby tree to bring her a little gift. As soon as the Crow took the first bite, she screamed with excitement! It was red guava, something that she had never seen before! “How on earth is there red guava!? And how have I not seen it in all these years?” As a thank-you gesture, the Crow invited the Parrot to join her for a meal of Biryani, something that the latter hadn’t ever had before. Both of them became friends and used to meet every Saturday to try out new fruits and vegetables and food items together...

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- Who remembers the original story of the ‘Thirsty Crow’?
- What happens when the Crow spots the Parrot after drinking water?
- What did the Parrot ask for?
- Why did the Crow refuse to share water?
- What emotions do you think the Crow was feeling? What action did that emotion make the Crow feel? What was the consequence of that action on the Parrot?
- Do you think the Crow would have behaved differently if she knew that the Parrot would die without water? Why or Why not?

- What happened when another Parrot and a Crow met 10 years later?
- Why do you think this Crow behaved differently, despite the stories of the previous crow shared as an act of bravery?
- How do you personally feel about the Crow denying water to the Parrot? Do you think this became the story of bravery?
- Try to think of and share a few things in your community that does not make you feel good, but people who do it, are appreciated.
- What would have been easier for the second Crow, to deny water, as was taught to her, or to share the water, which she did base on her own judgment?
- Are there times where you felt the need to act differently than what was taught to you? How did you deal with that situation?
- Is it OK to stand up or speak up against traditions or values or practices that do not make sense in the current times? How should one do it?
- Lastly, what happened when the Crow and the Parrot became friends? Did good things come out of it or bad? Share some examples of co-existence in your community.

4. A SKIRT STORY

Once upon a time, there was a little girl Asha, who had two best friends - Skirt and Saree, who lived right next door. The families of all 3 girls also had become very good friends. While Asha loved them both dearly, she preferred spending more time with Skirt, because she was fun-loving and confident, and more importantly because Skirt always allowed Asha to be herself in her presence. Asha loved being with Saree too, but Saree was way more serious as a person and always conscious of staying within socially accepted norms.



Asha was a beautiful human being. She was warm and caring for people and animals around her, was a responsible person and was always willing to help anyone who might need it. She was always good at her studies and aspired high for her career

and the life she wanted for herself. Having both Skirt and Saree in her life gave her added support to do better and be a better person.

Growing up, both Skirt and Saree felt equally loved by Asha's family. They loved going out of the house and felt well taken care of and especially appreciated how Asha would take them along for every possible opportunity. All three loved eating ice-creams and watching movies. They always celebrated their birthdays and all festivals together. All three were just like family. However, as Asha started growing up, she realized that people in her family did not like Skirt as much. In fact, they encouraged her to spend more time with Saree.

One day when Asha and Skirt were getting ready for the fair, excited about the giant Ferris wheel and the huge Columbus swings but Asha wasn't allowed to leave the house! Grandmother said that Asha could only go to the fair with Saree, otherwise not. Grandmother had started feeling that Skirt was growing up to be a strong-headed and independent lady and was worried that Asha spending too much time with her would ruin Asha too. Asha was heartbroken. She knew that Skirt would have enjoyed the fair more, but no one listened to her. Saree enjoyed the fair but wasn't as excited as sitting on the fun rides, afraid, that she would get caught in the whirring machines. Ultimately, no one went to the fair.

Once upon a time, there was a little girl Asha, who had two best friends - Skirt and Saree, who lived right next door. The families of all 3 girls also had become very good friends. While Asha loved them both dearly, she preferred spending more time with Skirt, because she was fun-loving and confident, and more importantly because Skirt always allowed Asha to be herself in her presence. Asha loved being with Saree too, but Saree was way more serious as a person and always conscious of staying within socially accepted norms.

One time at a family function, Asha had come with Skirt but was sent back home by her angry grandmother, who just couldn't believe how incorrigible this girl had become! On their way back home from this function, which was happening right in the colony, Asha and Skirt got teased by a group of rowdy boys. Both girls were traumatized by this experience. When they shared with their families, Skirt's parents assured that it was not their fault, but Asha's parents were convinced that it all happened because of Skirt, who is a free-spirited girl, who laughs a little too loudly in public. As Asha realized how Skirt was getting her to trouble, for no fault of her own, she thought it was a better idea to not go out in public with Skirt at all, so spent all her time with Skirt only at Saree's house or in school. However, one day, when she asked her parents to attend Skirt's birthday, her father, who had just returned home from work in a foul mood beat her up for always wanting to be with Skirt. He had shouted at Asha's mother too for not being able 'to control' their daughter. The mother got upset and banned Asha from ever meeting Skirt again. Mother called Asha shameless and skirt a bad influence and no boy from a good family would ever want to marry Asha if she was seen with Skirt!

Saree on the other hand was everyone's favorite! She was just what everyone believed should be Asha's best friend. They loved how she was fair and slim and had the softest skin and shining hair. Everyone who met Saree wanted a friend just like her! She was perfect – beautiful, contained, easy to manage, stayed in her place, and most importantly, ensured that Asha always acted based on socially accepted norms. However, Saree constantly felt overwhelmed with the expectations that people had for her. Everyone thought that she was perfect and nothing bad could ever happen to her. So, one time when Asha and Saree got eve-teased, neither of them shared with their families, afraid that they would stop both girls from meeting too, just like they did with Saree. Saree found it difficult to keep this secret. She had seen the support Skirt had got from her family and longed for the same. Saree wanted to get over her paranoia of getting stuck between being a good girl and what she really wanted to do. Sometimes Saree would seek help from her own grandmother and mother, but they all rubbished her questions, claiming she was just being humble and every good girl like Saree knows to handle herself and nothing bad could ever happen because they are 'good girls'.

Saree loved Skirt like her sibling and often felt it was unfair how she was treated, but,

while Skirt felt the constant pressure to prove herself as a 'good girl' in front of Asha's family, Saree could never share how she actually felt so overwhelmed with the high expectations on her...

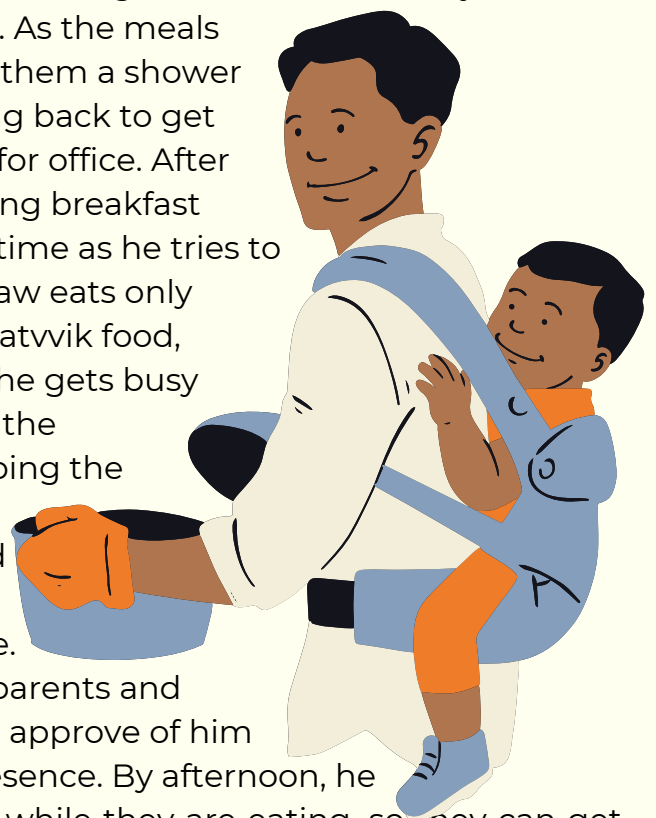
DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What were Asha's feelings towards Saree and Skirt?
- What were Asha's family's feelings towards Saree and Skirt, when they were still young? How did it change as they started growing up?
- Why do you think this behavior change happened?
- What was the family's main problem with Skirt?
- How did the family's attitude make Skirt feel?
- Asha finally gave in to her family's pressures and stopped taking Skirt out of the house. What do you think would have happened if Asha would have stood up for her dress-friend?
- Why did everyone love Saree?
- How did Saree feel about herself?
- Who is a 'Good Girl' as per society?
- How do you think should actually be called a 'Good Girl'?
- Why was Skirt blamed when they got teased?
- Do you think it was Skirt's fault? Why or why not?
- Asha was the same person, irrespective of being with Saree and Skirt. Why did she get judged only when she was with Skirt?
- Why do you think we chose 'Skirt' and 'Saree' as the names of the two best friends?
- Can you think of times when we have judged others based on what they were seen wearing?
- How do you feel about a social order that is OK with men being topless in public spaces but women being judged for wearing skirts a little above the ankle?
- Do you think this needs to change? Why or why not?
- What could be a few things that we can do to check ourselves before judging women based on their clothes?

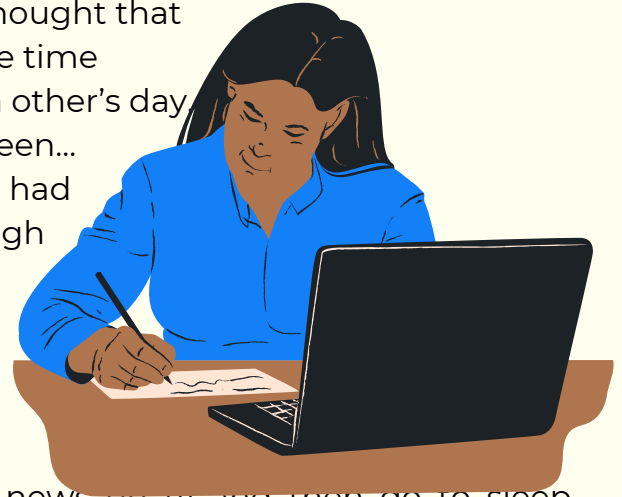
5. LET'S FLIP IT

There was once a big old city, where everyone lived a monotonous life. The boys stayed at home and played with dolls the girls went out to play cricket every evening. Fathers stay at home, they cook for their family, do the dishes, mop the floor, take care of the children. Women are the sole bread earners for the family.

A normal day for a Man looks like this – wake up early in the morning, before the rest of the family gets up, freshen up, take a shower, then perform pooja at home. Then clean up the courtyard, while making tea so that he can wake his wife up with bed tea. While the wife is sipping tea, give cups of tea to the other family members and drink tea by himself in the kitchen, while cooking breakfast for everyone and preparing lunch boxes for his wife and children. As the meals are cooking, rush to wake up the children, give them a shower and dress them up for school. While also rushing back to get his wife's clothes out and ready for her to wear for office. After the children leave for school, he gets busy getting breakfast out for the family. Cooking takes up a lot of his time as he tries to cater to the needs of his family. His mother-in-law eats only Satvik food, but his father-in-law doesn't like Satvik food, his wife is allergic to tomatoes. After breakfast, he gets busy with preparing lunch, washing the dishes from the morning, washing clothes, sweeping and mopping the house. He tries to take out time to listen to the news because his wife finds him too foolish and unaware of what is happening in the world. He tries to keep up, but there never is enough time. During the day, in his free time, he calls up his parents and siblings to catch up with them. His wife doesn't approve of him speaking to his family in the evening, in her presence. By afternoon, he serves his in-laws' lunch, cooking hot chapatis while they are eating, so they can get them hot off the stove. Then he clears up and has lunch by himself in the kitchen. Then, he starts doing the dishes after everyone. The children return home by then, who have to be cleaned up, fed, made to sleep, and then woken up in an hour to be sent for tuitions. It is common for men to not be sent to school. Being illiterate, he cannot really help his children study. By the time he finishes, it is time for evening tea for his in-laws. While they sip tea, he has to press their feet, now tired and painful with their old age. Then, he sets out to buy fresh vegetables for dinner and then cooks a hearty meal for everyone. When his wife returns, he makes tea for her again and then gets back to cooking. The children return from their tuition and then sit down to finish their homework. By the time he is done cooking, he comes back to spend time with his wife, but his wife is already busy watching the news and doesn't like being disturbed then. After dinner time, he cleans up after everyone. When he reaches his room, his wife is already asleep.



This is what a day for an average man looked like in that city. Most of these men get married at the age of 9 and 10-year olds, with women, double their age. Their families worry about their honor if something bad happens to a young boy, who will then lose all takers in the marriage market. One common thought that most men had was if they could spend some more time together with their wives, share a little about each other's day, how much easier even this busy life would have been... They wondered why their wives got pregnant and had children at all when they could barely spend enough time or say a few nice words to them...



The average day of a woman in that city was – to wake up, have tea in bed while reading the newspaper, get ready for office, work in the office, come back home to have tea, then watch the news on tv and then go to sleep. Sometimes, mostly on weekends, women meet up with their friends, play carrom board, and have drinks at the local liquor store. Their life was difficult in their own way. They had to strive hard to provide for their family, deal with office politics, maintain a good relationship with people who matter, and can influence their climb up the social/work ladder.

Somehow, with all their thoughts and struggles, they knew this is how things were and this is how they would remain. So, tomorrow would be just another day that looks exactly like the day before and the one before that.

DEBRIEFING POINTS:

- What did an average man's day look like?
- What did an average woman's day look like?
- What feelings and thoughts did you have listening to an average man's day? Why?
- What did you feel about the women in this city?
- Are you happy with this system? Do you think this is fair? Why?
- How do you see gender roles play out in our lives?
- Seeing women in our houses have no life of their own and spend the entire day in chores, do we find that unfair too? Why did we find it unfair in this story then?
- What is the one emotion that we can develop in young people to help them change the current social order and make it more equitable? (Focus on Empathy for this answer)
- What kind of relationship would you like to have with your partner after your marriage? What are some of the smaller steps you will take for the same?



About *Girls Not Brides* -

Girls Not Brides is a global partnership of more than 800 civil society organizations from over 95 countries committed to ending child marriage and enabling girls to fulfill their potential.

Members are based throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and the Americas. We share the conviction that every girl has the right to lead the life that she chooses and that, by ending child marriage, we can achieve a safer, healthier, and more prosperous future for all.

Stronger together, *Girls Not Brides* members bring child marriage to global attention, build an understanding of what it will take to end child marriage and call for the laws, policies and programmes that will make a difference in the lives of millions of girls.

About Project KHEL -

Project KHEL is a unique non-profit initiative based out of Lucknow, India that works towards empowering children, paving the way to a more equal and inclusive society. We impart 21st-century life skills to transform children into informed and gender-sensitive citizens, leaders in their communities, prompt societal change and widen the scope of their opportunities in the future.

Harnessing the 'power of play,' we create safe play spaces and implement holistic, interactive, and experiential learning methods through sports, story-telling, crafts, action songs, and games.

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