

**A TRAUMA-INFORMED
POCKET **GUIDE**** TO SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE
HEALTH DECISION-MAKING:
SELF-AGENCY AND EMOTIONAL EMPOWERMENT

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MANOSH
Pathway to Biopsychosocial
Well-Being

Table of Contents

Part 1: Background

- Our Story: Journey of Manosh
- Youth Mental Health & SRHR
- Method and Limitation

Part 2: Sexual & Reproductive Health Knowledge

- Connection between Trauma and Reproductive Health
- Connection between Trauma and Mental Health
- Understanding Concepts and Definitions
- Reproductive Empowerment Framework
- Sexual & Reproductive Rights Awareness checklist
- Reproductive Health over Life-Course
- Reproductive Anatomy & Contraception
- Safe sex and STD Prevention
- Pregnancy Education

Part 3: Mental Health & Social Emotional Education

- Addressing Mental Health issues & MH Continuum
- Healthy Relationship & Signs of Emotional Abuse in Partnership
- Consent & Boundaries

Part 4: Helpful Decision-Making Worksheet

- Overall Self-care Ideas Checklist
- Pre-pregnancy care checklist
- Non-clinical Pregnancy to Postpartum Care Checklist
- Self-care for Survivors
- Wellness Planner
- Self-Esteem worksheet

More Online Resources
References

Part 1: Background

Our Story

Manosh is a project that seeks to improve the status of youth mental health by disseminating evidence-based knowledge. Manosh began its journey in 2018 with the vision of aiding young students with mental health struggles. In a 2019 study of university students in Bangladesh, depression prevalence increased by 22.5% (meeting provisional diagnostic criteria), and anxiety prevalence increased by 27.1% (1). It is also reported that a total of 585 students died by suicide in 2022, here in Bangladesh (2). Manosh offered insightful educational material on social media platforms based on scholarly research and real-world practice. Our awareness campaigns organically reached more than 500 youth. We are currently moving forward to meaningful youth engagement and lived-experience leadership to enable strong, safe, and trustworthy expert-led community guidance. Manosh fervently supports the biopsychosocial approach to mental health. On the premise of authenticity, inclusivity, and human rights, we view biopsychosocial well-being as an underpinned accelerator of good mental health that spheres over all the spectrums of life. As we recognize the complexity of the surge of young people suffering from mental health challenges, we prioritize following actionable methods that work and gradually creating a sustainable impact to enhance mental health-related quality of life.

Sexual and Reproductive health is bi-directionally connected with Mental Health. When young people suffer from mental health issues they miss out on many opportunities that help build essential life skills which ultimately affect reproductive health. Alternatively, poor mental health outcomes such as depression, trauma, suicidal behavior, etc. can be the consequences of Intimate Partner Violence, infertility, and other Sexual and Reproductive Health Related issues. On that account, both mental health and sexual and reproductive health must be addressed for comprehensive well-being.



Youth Mental Health &
Sexual & Reproductive
Health

About this Guide

This booklet is a collection as well as a knowledge summary of fundamental concepts and helpful resources that establish a concurrent connection with an individual's agency, SRHR, and mental health through the trauma lens. It will assist in providing foundational knowledge on how a trauma-informed approach can increase awareness and well-being guide.

We have accumulated as many useful resources on Sexual and Reproductive Health, and Mental Health as possible. Although our target was to serve anyone 18 years and older, we believe it will help youngsters from the adolescent age group as well.

We hope that this briefly demonstrated guide will help understand the importance of self-agency in decision-making for ensuring overall well-being. Brief yet designed based on comprehensive theories, it will help many young readers and increase self-awareness regarding such a significant aspect of life.

Limitation

There are several limitations of this guidebook book we honestly acknowledge. This book is only available in English, we understand it may not reach reach Bengali reader audience. Considering the sensitivity of the topic, we attempted to put general information instead of in-depth knowledge dissemination. Since generalized, all information may not fit every context in Bangladesh.

Part 2: Sexual And Reproductive Health Knowledge

How does trauma connect with Sexual and Reproductive Health and Why do we need mental Health and SRHR education to prevent this?

We suggest two important research papers to read on this!
Click the link previews or scan the QR Codes



Probing links between trauma and reproductive health harms

Early life trauma is an important and overlooked cause of adverse reproductive health outcomes in women such as...

 News / May 26



Researchers at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, suggest that early life trauma is an important and overlooked cause of adverse reproductive health outcomes in women such as endometriosis, premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD), and infertility.

The experts reviewed numerous studies examining possible links between trauma and reproductive health impacts, including how trauma-related stress leads to hormonal and nervous system changes. The researchers also noted connections between early-life trauma, menopausal issues, and cognitive decline in later life. Types of trauma that could influence reproductive health include sexual assault, physical abuse, neglect, household dysfunction, childhood maltreatment, or racial stressors. The authors suggest that a cyclical interaction between mental and reproductive health can compound the effects of trauma throughout a woman's life.



How mental health can impact reproductive health

Mental health burdens can be a big impediment for people experiencing infertility, according to Harvard Chan School'...

 News / Oct 4, 2022



Mental health can impact reproductive health. Stress and trauma can interfere with the endocrine system, affecting the production of hormones that govern the production of sperm and eggs. The emotional toll of infertility, with many individuals and couples experiencing severe anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms. It was recommended that medical providers dealing with reproductive issues focus more on their patients' mental health.

Understanding the Concepts and Definitions



Trauma

"Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being" (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], Trauma and Justice Strategic Initiative, 2012, p. 2)

Trauma- Response



Common Reactions to Trauma	
Emotional	Irritability, sadness, anxiety, depression, guilt, grief, fear, apathy/numbing, agitation, anger
Behavioral	Withdrawal, aggression, increased conflict, crying frequently, excessive worry, difficulty communicating or listening, blaming other people for everything, changes in energy levels, regressed behaviors (children), increased risk-taking (e.g., substance use), decline in school/job performance
Physical	Headaches/stomachaches, heart racing, fatigue, muscle pain, disrupted sleep/appetite, heightened startle response
Cognitive	Confusion, difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, racing thoughts, preoccupation with the event (e.g., intrusive thoughts/memories, trouble thinking clearly)

Trauma- Informed & Trauma-informed approach:



Being trauma-informed means becoming aware of trauma's many personal and societal consequences, anticipating how trauma survivors may respond to our words and actions, and doing our part to create a world that does not cause further harm. Even more, being trauma-informed means helping to create a world that can foster growth, resiliency, and healing as well.

Principles of Trauma- Informed Approach

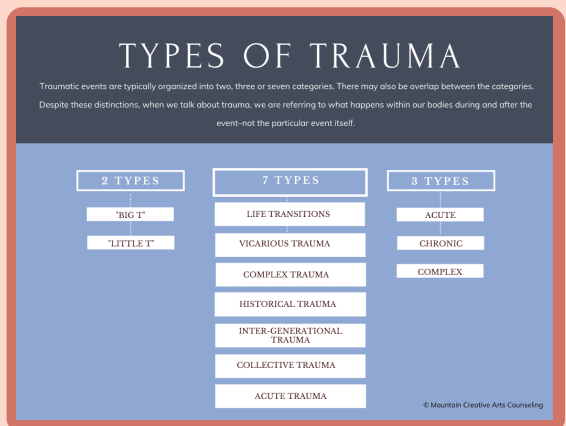


There are six guiding principles to be more trauma-informed. **safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment, voice and choice; and cultural, Historical, and Gender issues.**



Types of Trauma

Trauma can be categorized in these 2-7-3 categories such as: Acute, chronic, complex, historical, intergenerational, collective, vicarious, life transition...





Informed Decision-Making

Informed Decision-making is the process in which a decision is made based on facts or information. When facing a decision with significant complexity, risk, cost or consequences, executives need apply informed decision-making, which complements intuitive aspects of uninformed decision-making with information and logic. This provides the decision-maker with a significantly better chance of a successful outcome.

Mental Health



Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community, and socio-economic development.

Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

Mental health conditions include mental disorders and psychosocial disabilities as well as other mental states associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, or risk of self-harm. People with mental health conditions are more likely to experience lower levels of mental well-being, but this is not always or necessarily the case. Common Mental Health Conditions are as follows:

- **Major Depressive Disorders**
- **GAD and Panic Attack**
- **Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)**
- **PTSD and C-PTSD**
- **Maladaptive Daydreaming** & many more



Sexual and Reproductive Health

The term 'sexual and reproductive health' can be defined as a person's right to a healthy body and the autonomy, education, and healthcare to freely decide who to have sex with and how to avoid sexually transmitted infections or unintended pregnancy. Sexual health is an integral part of overall health and well-being, ensuring everyone can have pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination, or health risks.

Rights to Sexual and Reproductive Health

Rights to reproductive and sexual health include the right to life, liberty, and the security of the person; the right to health care and information; and the right to non-discrimination in the allocation of resources to health services and in their availability and accessibility. Of central importance are the rights to autonomy and privacy in making sexual and reproductive decisions, as well as the rights to informed consent and confidentiality concerning health services.



- **The right to equality**
- **The right to participation**
- **The right to life and to be free from harm**
- **The right to privacy**
- **The right to personal autonomy and to be recognized as an individual before the law**
- **The right to think and express oneself freely**
- **The right to health**
- **The right to know and learn**
- **The right to choose whether or not to marry or have children**
- **The right to have your rights upheld**

(Rights mentioned by **YOUTH DO IT!**)



Self-Agency

Self-agency is an empowering psychological state. It is also known as personal agency. A sense of agency refers to the feeling of control over actions and their consequences. In terms of an individual's sexual and reproductive health, it is the ability to identify, communicate, and negotiate their sexual and reproductive health needs, and to initiate behaviors that allow for the satisfaction of those needs.



Self-Care

WHO's working definition of self-care is "The ability of individuals, families, and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a health-care provider". Self-care is the practice of individuals looking after their own health using the knowledge and information available to them. It is a decision-making process that empowers individuals to look after their own health efficiently and conveniently, in collaboration with health and social care professionals as needed.



Self-Care Intervention

Self-care interventions are tools that support self-care. Self-care interventions include evidence-based, quality drugs, devices, diagnostics, and/or digital products which can be provided fully or partially outside of formal health services and can be used with or without health workers. Examples of quality, cost-effective self-care interventions include: over-the-counter availability of some contraceptive products, pregnancy tests, condoms and lubricants, HPV and STI self-sampling and HIV self-tests, and self-monitoring of blood pressure and blood glucose.



Self-esteem

Self-esteem refers to a person's overall sense of his or her value or worth. It can be considered a sort of measure of how much a person "values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself" (Adler & Stewart, 2004).



Self-awareness:

Self-awareness is one's ability to perceive and understand the things that make you who you are as an individual, including his or her personality, actions, values, beliefs, emotions, and thoughts. Essentially, it is a psychological state in which the self becomes the focus of attention.

Psychologists Shelley Duval and Robert Wicklund proposed this definition:

"Self-awareness is the ability to focus on yourself and how your actions, thoughts, or emotions do or don't align with your internal standards.



Critical Consciousness

Critical consciousness is an empowering, strengths-based, nonexpert directed approach that fosters insight and active engagement in solutions to challenge inequity (Jemal, 2017). This theory has the ability to analyze systems of inequality and the commitment to take action against these oppressive systems.



Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills are often referred to as people skills, social skills, or social intelligence. They involve reading the signals that others send and interpreting them accurately in order to form effective responses.



Emotional Empowerment

Emotional Empowerment means being aware of and feeling powerful over one's emotional state. - Dr. Anju Chawla



Reproductive Empowerment

Both a transformative process and an outcome, whereby individuals expand their capacity to make informed decisions about their reproductive lives, amplify their ability to participate meaningfully in public and private discussions related to sexuality, reproductive health and fertility, and act on their preferences to achieve desired reproductive outcomes, free from violence, retribution or fear.

-A definition by International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)

Reproductive Empowerment starts with Self-agency!

Self-agency can be built through proper knowledge and education, awareness of mental health and physical health, increased self-efficacy and critical consciousness development.



Life-Course Approach

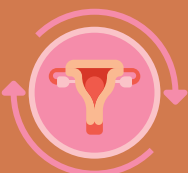
A sequence of socially defined events and roles that the individual enacts over time" (Giele and Elder 1998, p. 22).



Gender lens

Takes the existing differences between women and men into account when analyzing a situation or when developing specific approaches or programmes. - UNFPA

This publication will focus more to look into sexual and reproductive health rights from women's point of view.



Female Reproductive Cycle

The menstrual cycle is a series of natural changes in hormone production and the structures of the uterus and ovaries of the female reproductive system that make pregnancy possible. The ovarian cycle controls the production and release of eggs and the cyclic release of estrogen and progesterone. The uterine cycle governs the preparation and maintenance of the lining of the uterus (womb) to receive an embryo. These cycles are concurrent and coordinated, normally lasting between 21 and 35 days, with a median length of 28 days, and continue for about 30-45 years.

The four phases of the menstrual cycle are **menstruation, the follicular phase, ovulation and the luteal phase.**

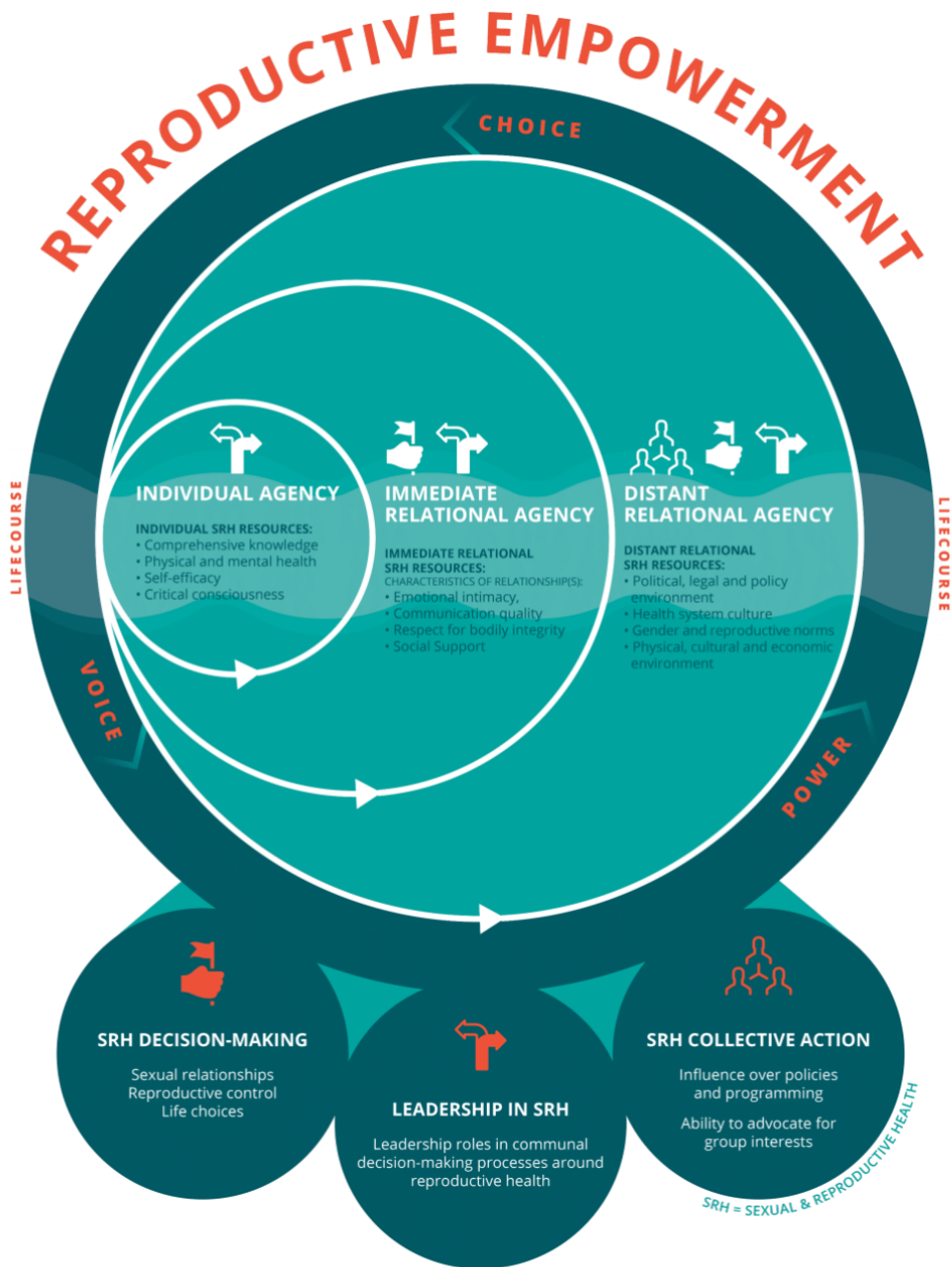


Figure: Conceptual Framework of Reproductive Empowerment by ICRW

How Well do you know about your Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights?



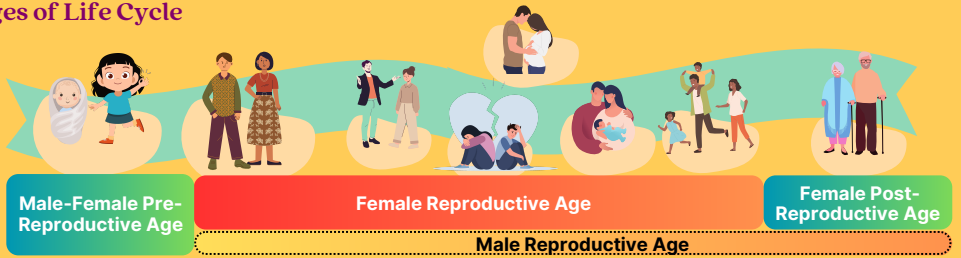
You can ask yourself these questions to assess your knowledge and Self-awareness regarding your sexual and reproductive health rights.

- Do I know what are the basic sexual and reproductive health rights?
- Do I know what sexual and reproductive health rights, policies, and legislation my country/ region has?
- Do I know where to get information about my sexual and reproductive health rights?
- Is it comfortable for me to discuss my sexual and reproductive health with my doctor or another healthcare provider?
- Do I feel like I have control over my sexual and reproductive health?
- Do I feel like I can make informed decisions about my sexual and reproductive health?
- Am I educated about gender identity & and orientation?
- Do I feel like I am protected from discrimination based on my orientation or identity?
- Am I aware of different sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and how to prevent them?
- Do I know about safe sex, safe contraceptive methods, safe pregnancy, and safe menstrual regulation?
- Do I know where to go if I need medical or legal assistance?
- Do I understand consent?
- Is my understanding of boundaries correct?
- Do I fully understand what I want and don't want in an intimate partnership?
- Do I have any mental health condition or traumatic experience to address that can affect my sexual and reproductive well-being?

Note: This checklist does not represent complete SRHR knowledge awareness, it is developed for creating a general understanding within young minds only. Although the checklist was generated from the concepts and items of the validated tools including 'SRH Knowledge Scale', the KAP questionnaire, and WHO hrp's 'Asking young people about sexual and reproductive behaviors: Illustrative Core Instruments', it cannot be used as a scale or accurate measurement tool SRH of awareness. Individuals should use their discernment. We believe this generalized checklist will help build self-awareness regarding individual's SRHR knowledge they have.

Understand Reproductive Health over the Life Course

Stages of Life Cycle



Male-Female Pre-Reproductive Age

Female Reproductive Age

Female Post-Reproductive Age

Male Reproductive Age

**Infancy
(0-9Yrs)**

**Adolescents
(10-19Yrs)**

**Young Adults- Adults -Midlife
(20-24Yrs)- (25-34Yrs)- (35-45Yrs)**

**Elders- Older Adults
(45-60Yrs)- 65+**

Probable Important Life Events During these Stages of a woman that can Affect Well-being

Infancy

- Brain & body development
- Facing discrimination based on male-female identity
- Discriminatory nutrition
- Negligent or unaffectionate parents or caregiver
- In some cultures, female genital mutilation still occur
- Study Pressure in school education
- Physical punishment etc.

Adolescents

- Hormonal Changes
- Physiological Changes
- Timely or delayed puberty
- First Period
- Sexual behavior development
- Trauma from physical Abuse, molestation and violence
- Aggression
- Early Marriage & Teen Pregnancy
- Infection (UTI/STI)
- Pornography, game, social media or drug addiction (male-female both) etc

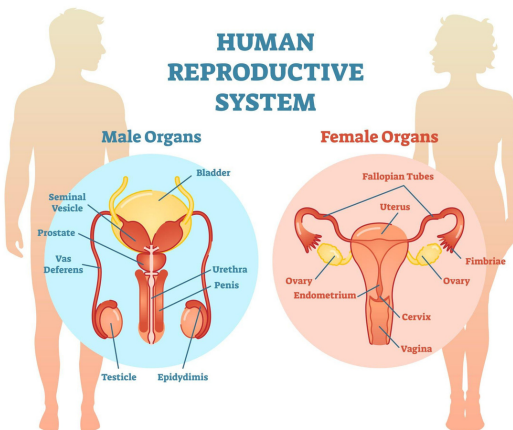
Adult Reproductive Age

- Forced marriage
- Premenstrual syndrome
- Unplanned Pregnancy & child-bearing under peer pressure
- Pregnancy & Birth complications
- Unsafe sex & Abortion
- Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
- Fertility issues
- Reproductive Health issues like PCOS, STDs, Endometriosis & other life-style related diseases
- Career and Education stress
- Transition in life, unsupportive environment
- Breakup or Divorce
- Rejection, Betrayal etc.

Post-Reproductive Age

- Menopause
- Post-menopausal syndrome
- Changes in mood & energy
- Facing stigma and discriminatory attitude from others
- Declining Health
- More risk of chronic diseases such as cancers, dementia etc.
- Loneliness

Know Basic Reproductive Anatomy!



Find More Resource on Reproductive Anatomy!



Interactive Guide to the Male Reproductive System

Explore the male reproductive system with Innerbody's interactive guide. View detailed diagrams of the testes, penis, and other male...
innerbody.com

Just Click the Link Above or Scan the QR code



**SCAN
HERE!**



Interactive Guide to Female Reproductive Anatomy

Discover the female reproductive system with Innerbody's interactive guide. View detailed diagrams of the ovaries, uterus, and other...
innerbody.com

Just Click the Link Above or Scan the QR code



**SCAN
HERE!**

Do You Know about “Safe Sex”?

Safe sex is defined as sexual activity that uses contraceptives or other means to lower the risk of contracting or spreading STDs, particularly HIV, and to avoid unwanted pregnancy.

Benefits of Safe sex:

- ✔ Protection against major Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) like chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, genital warts, genital herpes, HIV, Hepatitis A, B and C etc.
- ✔ Prevention of unplanned pregnancy.
- ✔ Aids in planned parenthood.

Guideline for safe sex

Use a condom or any barrier method during intercourse

Women should not douche after intercourse as this might increase the risk of spreading infection further into the reproductive tract

Being aware of the partner's body if there is any soreness, rash or discharge



Discuss with partners about each other's sexual history, history of STI and drug use prior to beginning a new relationship

Reducing the number of sexual partners

Having regular tests such as Pap test, pelvic examination, and periodic tests for STI

Check yourself for the same kind of symptoms

Types of Contraceptives

The following methods are commonly used contraceptive options of Bangladesh

Intrauterine device or IUD (copper T)

Injections

Oral pill

Male and female sterilization (Permanent)



Implants

Emergency contraception

Condoms

**Contraceptives are
Pretty safe to use!
These methods have success
rate around 95-99%!**

**...but if you suffer from
headache, pain, acne & other
concerning health issues after
using them, don't forget to report
to your doctor!**

AN INFORMED WAY TO HAPPY PREGNANCY!



Pregnancy and childbirth are significant life events that come with their own set of challenges and joys. This chapter aims to provide you with essential information to navigate this phase safely and make informed decisions.

Understanding the physiological changes, risks, and healthcare options can empower you to make informed decisions about your pregnancy and childbirth.

Childbirth Options

Natural Birth involves minimal medical intervention and is usually performed in a non-hospital setting.

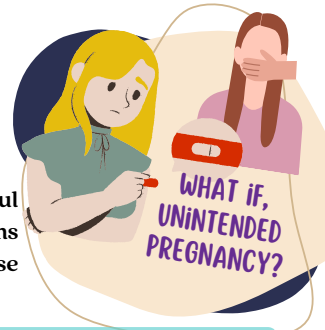
Cesarean Section is a surgical method used when natural birth is not possible or safe.

Epidural is an option for pain management during labor.

Addressing Birth-Trauma

- Psychological Support
- Counseling and support groups can help manage the emotional aspects of birth trauma.
- Physical Therapy
- Specialized exercises can help recover from physical trauma.
- Post-Partum Well-being of the mother must be ensured

Unintended pregnancies and menstrual irregularities can be stressful experiences that require informed decision-making. This chapter aims to provide you with the knowledge and resources to navigate these situations effectively.



Under Bangladesh's penal code of 1860, induced abortion is illegal except to save a woman's life.

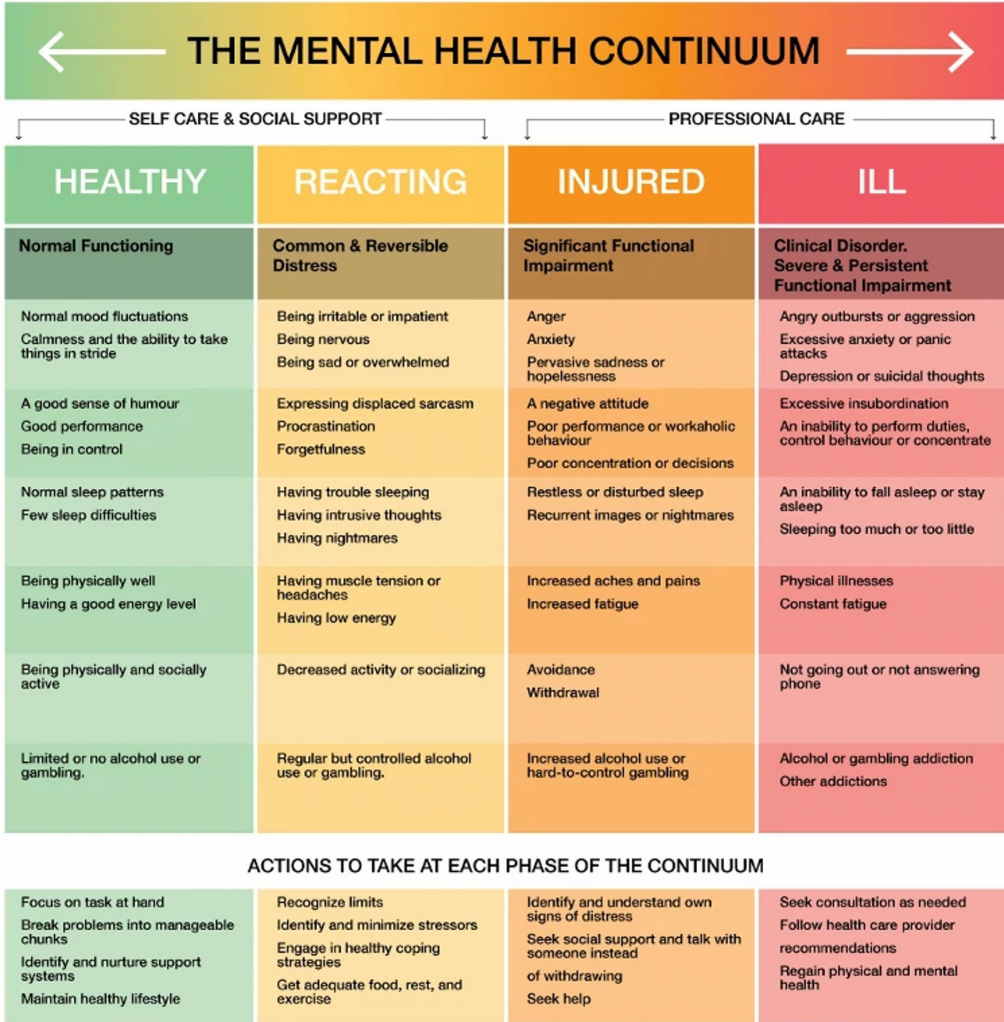
Menstrual regulation (MR), however, has been part of Bangladesh's national family planning program since 1979. MR is a procedure that uses manual vacuum aspiration or a combination of mifepristone and misoprostol to "regulate the menstrual cycle when menstruation is absent for a short duration." MR performed using medication is referred to as MRM.

Government regulations allow for MR procedures up to 10–12 weeks after a woman's last menstrual period (depending on the type of provider), and MRM is allowed up to nine weeks after a woman's last menstrual period

Part 3: Mental Health and Social Emotional Education

Addressing Mental Health Issues in Daily Life

Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, attention and focus deficit, can hamper daily functioning. In the case of severe stressful events and post-trauma, it is even harder to have a positive and better life.



mentalhealth.ae

How have you been feeling recently? If you look at the signs and know about it, you can make an informed decision on what action should you take next. Remember, good mental health is a key to increasing health-related quality of life.

HAND OF MENTAL HEALTH

How do everyday choices affect your mental health?



HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP



Healthy relationships involve honesty, trust, respect, and open communication between partners and they take effort and compromise from both people. There is no imbalance of power. Partners respect each other's independence, can make their own decisions without fear of retribution or retaliation, and share decisions. - Teen Dating Abuse Awareness and Prevention (NY State Government)

<p>Healthy</p> <p>A healthy relationship means both you and your partner are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating • Respectful • Trusting • Honest • Equal • Enjoying personal time away from each other • Making mutual choices • Economic/financial partners 	<p>Unhealthy</p> <p>You may be in an unhealthy relationship if your partner is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not communicating • Disrespectful • Not trusting • Dishonest • Trying to take control • Only spending time together • Pressured into activities • Unequal economically 	<p>Abusive</p> <p>Abuse is occurring in a relationship when one partner is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating in a hurtful or threatening way • Mistreating • Accusing the other of cheating when it's untrue • Denying their actions are abusive • Controlling • Isolating their partner from others
<p>Check for the signs of the relationship with your partner, the above image was created by Philadelphia FIGHT.</p>		

Helplines for domestic violence,/intimate partner violence/rape, and sexual assault in Bangladesh

109	Government helpline number for Violence against women/ prevention of child marriage	Multi sectoral referral and psychosocial support; This is the main helpline number to call and has been/being circulated nationwide
999	National Emergency Hotline Number	Immediate services to police and hospitals
10921	National helpline center for violence against women	Immediate service to victims and links up to relevant agencies: doctors, counselors, lawyers, DNA experts, police officers
01779554391/ 01779554392	Kaan Pete Roi	Mental Health & Psychosocial helpline
01776632344	Moner Bondhu	Mental Health & Psychosocial helpline
01724415677 (9 am-5pm)	Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)	Legal assistance, emergency shelter and mental healthcare
01714048418 (SRHR); 01771 444666 (legal)	Bandhu Social Welfare Society (In collaboration with Ministry of Social Welfare)	Psychosocial support as well as guideline for SRHR and legal aspects

Consent

Consent occurs when one person voluntarily agrees to the proposal or desires of another..

Do you know there are 4 types of consents?

Implied Consent Consent not expressly given, but implied through actions or due to circumstances. Doctors use implied consent in emergency situations where the patient cannot consent to treatment. IMPLIED CONSENT IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR SEXUAL ACTIVITY!	Expressed Consent Consent is expressly given, either verbally or in writing. This is the kind of consent you want when you're engaging in any activity with a partner!
Unanimous Consent Everybody consents! Technically this is a tactic used by politicians for less controversial topics, but when it comes to sex, it's good to know everybody involved is good to go!	The 4 Types of Consent
	Informed Consent Consenting person is aware of all the information available about what they are consenting to. Again, used heavily in the medical field, but it's great to let your sexual partner know what you are into, and vice versa!

By CAISA Counseling and Information for Sexual Abuse/Assault

Click or Scan the QR to check Resources on Consent & Boundaries



9 Ways to Practice Consent Every Day

Consent is not just for sexy-times! Practicing consent in daily low-key ways makes it less awkward.

Dawson Women's Shelter / May 22



How to Set Healthy Boundaries in Relationships

Boundaries in relationships help you determine what you are comfortable with and how you would like to be treated...

Choosing Therapy /



Boundaries

In the context of psychology, boundaries are a conceptual limit between you and the other person. Simply put, it's about knowing where you end and others begin. Knowing what's yours and what's not.

Do you know there are 6 types of boundaries?

THE 6 TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

Boundaries are expectations and needs in different areas of human experience that help a person feel safe and comfortable in their relationships. Below are six common boundary areas with examples of what they include.



Adapted From "Set Boundaries, Find Peace." By Nedra Glover Tawwab
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Part 4: Helpful Decision-Making Worksheet

Self-care for all

SELF-CARE CHECKLIST

PHYSICAL

- healthy eating
- personal hygiene
- exercise
- fun physical activity
- regular sleep
- medical check-up
- physical appearance
- rest after work
- rest when sick
- go for a walk

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- practice a hobby
- learn something new
- read
- challenge yourself
- do something creative
- no-screen hour
- alone time
- delayed gratification
- go on a day-trip
- practice patience

EMOTIONAL

- time with loved ones
- reflect
- express feelings
- feel the feelings
- laugh
- affirmations
- respect yourself
- stress management
- talk about problems

SPIRITUAL

- meditate
- pray
- find meaning
- priorities and values
- stand by your morals
- contemplate life
- think about mortality
- observe your thoughts
- participate in a cause

SOCIAL

- time with loved ones
- stay in contact
- meaningful dialogue
- have fun together
- take a trip together
- ask and offer help
- meet new people
- smile to a stranger
- be polite

PROFESSIONAL

- stay in the loop
- work on your skills
- read relevant literature
- get involved
- prevent burnout
- organize workspace
- plan the work
- work on relationships

Note: This is a generalized self-care worksheet was prepared by the cheatsheetlife.com

Preconception Counseling Checklist

The goal of preconception (or prepregnancy) care is to optimize health outcomes by providing education and addressing modifiable risk factors. Any visit with a client who has reproductive potential is an opportunity for preconception counseling. After a discussion of the client's reproductive goals, a preconception counseling conversation can be introduced with: "Since you said _____, would you like to talk about ways to be prepared for a healthy pregnancy?"¹



To help clients be prepared for a healthy pregnancy, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends that providers assess for:²

Pregnancy intention

Timing of desired pregnancy—"Would you like to have (more) children? When do you think that might be?"³

Recommend the client seek medical care before attempting to become pregnant (or soon after a positive pregnancy test) to facilitate correct dating and management of medical conditions.

Folic acid

400 mcg of folic acid daily for at least one month before and during pregnancy (4 mg daily if history of seizure disorder or infant with neural tube defects)

Recommend folic acid every day if there is a chance the client may become pregnant.

Medical conditions

Diabetes mellitus, chronic hypertension, hypothyroidism, bariatric surgery, mood disorders

Refer to primary and/or specialty care provider to make changes to treatment if needed and manage the condition before pregnancy.

Family history

Genetic disorders, birth defects, cystic fibrosis, Fragile X, hemoglobinopathies, and if of Ashkenazi descent: Tay-Sachs, Canavan, familial dysautonomia, etc.

Refer for genetic counseling as needed.

Use of teratogenic medications

ACE I, ARB, androgens, carbamazepine, lithium, methimazole, methotrexate, minoxidil, misoprostol, mycophenolate mofetil, phenytoin, trimethadione, paramethadione, retinoids, sulfa, tetracycline, thalidomide, valproic acid, vitamin A, warfarin, etc.

Caution that some nonprescription medicines, supplements, and herbal products are unsafe during pregnancy.

Refer to a primary and/or specialty care provider to adjust medications if needed.

NOTES: MMR = measles-mumps-rubella; Tdap = tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis; HPV = human papillomavirus; STI = sexually transmitted infections; CDC = Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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¹ Reproductive Health National Training Center Client-Centered Reproductive Goals & Counseling Flow Chart: <https://rhntc.org/resources/client-centered-reproductive-goals-counseling-flow-chart>

² Prepregnancy counseling. ACOG Committee Opinion No. 762. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. *Obstet Gynecol* 2019;133:e78-89.

³ Geist C, Aiken AR, Sanders JN, Everett BG, Myers K, Cason P, Simmons RG, Turok DK. (2019). Beyond intent: exploring the association of contraceptive choice with questions about Pregnancy Attitudes, Timing and How important is pregnancy prevention (PATH) questions. *Contraception*. 99(1):22-26.

Immunization status

Tdap, MMR, hepatitis B, varicella, annual influenza (flu), and HPV

Provide or refer for: flu shot; MMR and varicella vaccine if not pregnant and won't become pregnant for one month; and other immunizations per CDC schedule.

Need for infectious disease screening

STIs (chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis), tuberculosis, hepatitis C, HIV, zika, toxoplasmosis

Address each according to CDC recommendations:

- Screen based on age and risk
- HIV test (once and if at risk)

Counsel regarding travel restrictions.

Caution against changing kitty litter.

Exposure to environmental toxins

Plastics with bisphenol-A (BPA), lead paint, asbestos, pesticides (agriculture), organic solvents and heavy metals (manufacturing), solvents (dry cleaning), organics and radiation (health care)

Explore alternatives to toxic exposure or refer to occupational medicine programs if exposure is concerning.

Alcohol, nicotine, and illegal drug use

"I'd like to ask you a few questions to help give you better medical care. In the past year, how often have you..."

- Used alcohol? [≥ 5 drinks a day for men; ≥ 4 drinks a day for women is considered heavy drinking]
- Used tobacco products?
- Used prescription drugs for non-medical reasons?
- Used illegal drugs?"⁴

Counsel that no amount of alcohol is considered safe and that using tobacco products, prescription drugs for non-medical reasons, and illegal drugs during pregnancy can result in serious adverse outcomes.

If abuse or dependence, **refer** for treatment prior to pregnancy.

Intimate partner violence

"I talk to all of my patients about safe and healthy relationships because it can have such a large impact on your health. Has your partner ever..."

- Threatened you or made you feel afraid?
- Hit, choked, or physically hurt you?
- Forced you to do something sexually that you did not want to do, or refused your request to use condoms?"⁵

Respond supportively. For example:

- "No one deserves to be treated that way."
- "It's not your fault."
- "There are resources that can help. I can connect you today."

If client is in immediate danger, **get help**.

Know local referral sites for IPV services.

Understand legal obligations for mandatory reporting.

Nutrition and physical activity

- Body mass index (BMI) <18 or >25
- Diet of proteins, vegetables, fruits, and whole grains ⁶
- Level and frequency of physical activity

Advise that high or low BMI is associated with infertility and pregnancy complications.

Encourage eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, protein and whole grains. (Consider a multivitamin.)

Recommend at least 30 min of moderate physical activity per day.

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⁴NIDA. (2012, March 1). Resource Guide: Screening for Drug Use in General Medical Settings. Retrieved from <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/resource-guide-screening-drug-use-in-general-medical-settings/nida-quick-screen> on May 9, 2019.

⁵Intimate partner violence. Committee Opinion No. 518. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. *Obstet Gynecol* 2012;119:412-7.

⁶U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. December 2015.

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Note: This Checklist is prepared by RHNTC, USA for healthcare providers. If you are planning to get pregnant, this checklist may help you to decide which things need to consider! It also provides physician's perspectives which may assist you in planning accordingly.

Non-Clinical Pregnancy Care Checklist



PREGNANCY TO POSTPARTUM CHECKLIST



FIRST TRIMESTER

<input type="checkbox"/>	Get healthy: read up on pregnancy health and safety, start taking those prenatal vitamins, and start your daily kegels
<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose a healthcare provider (OB, midwife) and schedule appointments
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check out costs and develop a budget for baby
<input type="checkbox"/>	Call your health insurance company to determine coverage options and benefits
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start moisturizing the belly

SECOND TRIMESTER

<input type="checkbox"/>	Research maternity and paternity benefits (FMLA, company policies, and short / long term disability) and develop plan for recovery time / maternity / paternity leave
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare siblings and / or pets for baby
<input type="checkbox"/>	Getaway for some relaxation with a babymoon
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research and test baby gear; start building your registry
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start designing nursery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research and develop plan for newborn care and ongoing child care
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview and schedule doulas / baby nurses (if interested)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Compile contact information for shower invitations, thank you notes, and baby announcements
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get a prenatal massage

THIRD TRIMESTER

<input type="checkbox"/>	Participate in childbirth / labor / breastfeeding / newborn care classes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read up on the birthing process, newborn care, and baby's first year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take infant CPR / choking safety course
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete registry; order remaining baby supplies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set-up nursery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wash baby's clothes, sheets, swaddles, and burp cloths in free and clear detergent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview and select pediatrician
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start preparing for breastfeeding by moisturizing those nips
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start getting regular manicures (newborn photos have a lot of hand shots!)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Finalize baby name
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conduct hospital tour
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine plans for child / pet care during labor and delivery
<input type="checkbox"/>	"Rehearse" hospital trip: develop a plan for routes to get there, know where to park, and after-hours entrances
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask partner / family members / caregivers who will be in frequent contact with your newborn to get TDAP vaccination
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop "birth plan" (or at least share your intended preferences with your partner, doula, and / or healthcare providers)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Call insurance to check if breast pump is covered and place order

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PREGNANCY TO POSTPARTUM CHECKLIST



<input type="checkbox"/>	Book newborn photographer, research poses, and purchase styling props
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine how you will announce baby's arrival (gather addresses, designate a point person)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get a bikini wax
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stock up on postpartum supplies and household essentials
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-register with hospital
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pack hospital bag
<input type="checkbox"/>	Install car seat - this is a hospital requirement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make some freezer meals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get a head start sending thank you notes for baby gifts

POSTPARTUM / FOURTH TRIMESTER

<input type="checkbox"/>	Come to the hospital prepared with a list of cute newborn photo ideas and take copious amounts of photos as you only get one chance at these
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document your birth story, special mementos, save hospital hand / footprints / namecards
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attend hospital workshops on breastfeeding / newborn care - many hospitals offer free workshops led by lactation consultants and nursing staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	Schedule your postpartum care and pediatric appointments per your discharge instructions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask the hospital staff for some extra supplies to take home
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start wearing a belly band / corset / girdle for support and comfort
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get ready for a lot of trial and error, late-night googling "is xyz normal", and panicked Amazon purchases
<input type="checkbox"/>	Download a baby tracking app to help track feeding, sleeping, pooping schedules
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you are planning on professional newborn pictures, confirm your session as the optimal window is between 4 - 12 days to capture the sleepy stage
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start reading the Wonder Weeks and refresh yourself on newborn soothing, healthy sleep habits, and development
<input type="checkbox"/>	Once your milk comes in, test out your pump and start building your freezer stash
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't stop those kegels! Check out a post-natal yoga class
<input type="checkbox"/>	Send baby announcement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check out a new moms support group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Add newborn to health insurance (often there is a 30 day window, do this asap)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop / update will, update trust / beneficiaries, and determine legal guardians
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research and consider additional insurance coverage
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm baby's birth certificate with hospital administration; order additional certified copies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request Social Security Number for baby (often the hospital staff will help start the process)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply for passport for baby
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish college savings fund for baby - it's never too early to start saving!

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*Dimension definitions from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Wellness Wheel Worksheet

Developing a sense of connection and belonging, and a well-developed support system.

Coping effectively with life, including its challenges, stressors, and joys; creating satisfying relationships.

Enjoying personal satisfaction and enrichment from your choice of work.

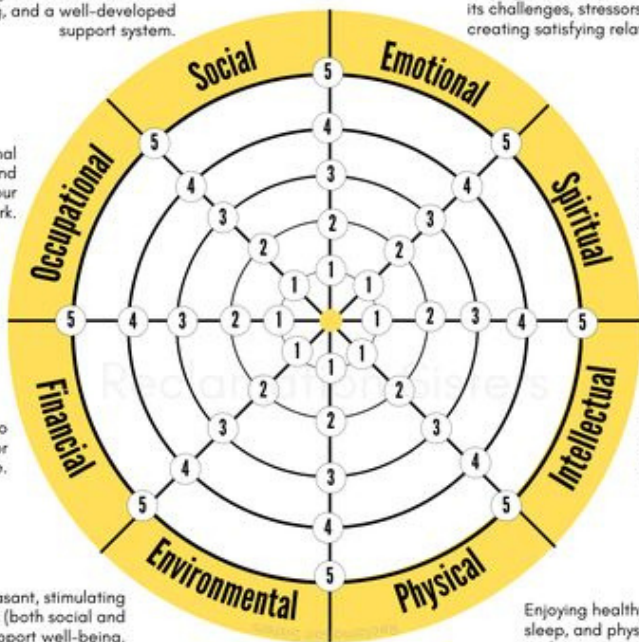
Expanding our sense of purpose and meaning centered on personal beliefs and values.

Managing expenses to create satisfaction for the present and future.

Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills.

Occupying pleasant, stimulating environments (both social and natural) that support well-being.

Enjoying healthy nutrition, adequate sleep, and physical activity; preventing and managing illness and health conditions.



DIRECTIONS

1. Print this worksheet or draw your own wheel.
2. Read our blog "Balancing Your Wellness Wheel: Self-assessment" for prompts designed to help you best score each dimension.
3. For each dimension, score your current level of success, coloring from the center of the circle out to your score.
4. Read our blog "Eight Dimensions of Wellness for Optimal Health" for more information on these important aspects of well-being and how they interact.

SCORING KEY

1. I own this weakness. I know I definitely need to work on this. Hello, flat tire!
2. OK, fine, I admit this area isn't great in my life. I know I can do better here.
3. This part of my life is pretty solid, but I'm sure there's something I can do to improve.
4. I am satisfied with this dimension. There's probably more I can do, but I'm not sure I have time/energy.
5. I am completely happy and fulfilled in this part of my life. I see no room for improvement.

*Optional: Expand scoring to 10 to assess in greater detail.

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Note: This wellness planner using the wheel of life framework was prepared by Reclamation Sisters. Following the given instructions you can organize your life goals, which is a boost to your emotional health

Self-Care After Trauma

Tips from RAINN

Self-care is about taking steps to feel healthy and comfortable. Whether it happened recently or years ago, self-care can help you cope with the short- and long-term effects of a trauma like sexual assault.

Physical self-care

After a trauma, it's important to keep your body healthy and strong. You may be healing from injuries or feeling emotionally drained. Good physical health can support you through this time. Think about a time when you felt physically healthy, and consider asking yourself the following questions:

- **How were you sleeping?**
Did you have a sleep ritual or nap pattern that made you feel more rested?
- **What types of food were you eating?**
What meals made you feel healthy and strong?
- **What types of exercise did you enjoy?**
Were there any particular activities that made you feel more energized?
- **Did you perform certain routines?** Were there activities you did to start the day off right or wind down at the end of the day?

Emotional self-care

Emotional self-care means different things to different people. The key to emotional self-care is being in tune with yourself. Think about a time when you felt balanced and grounded, and consider asking yourself the following questions:

- **What fun or leisure activities did you enjoy?**
Were there events or outings that you looked forward to?
- **Did you write down your thoughts** in a journal or personal notebook?
- **Were meditation or relaxation activities** a part of your regular schedule?
- **What inspirational words were you reading?**
Did you have a particular author or favorite website, like RAINN's Pinterest board, to go to for inspiration?
- **Who did you spend time with?**
Was there someone, or a group of people, that you felt safe and supported around?
- **Where did you spend your time?**
Was there a special place, maybe outdoors or at a friend's house, where you felt comfortable and grounded?

If you or someone you know has been affected by sexual violence, it's not your fault. You are not alone. Help is available 24/7 through the National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800-656-HOPE and online.rainn.org, y en español rainn.org/es.

RAINN

To learn more, visit rainn.org.



Note: This self-care self-help toolkit was created by RAINN. Please, do consult a mental health professional if you have experienced any violence or any other traumatic events.

Build your self-esteem. Notice your strengths.

3 things I like about my character:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3 Things I am good at:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3 things I am proud over:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3 things I am grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3 things I like about my body:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3 difficulties I have overcome:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3 people I am grateful for:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3 compliments that others have said about me:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Discover yourself at  www.atrapamente.com

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