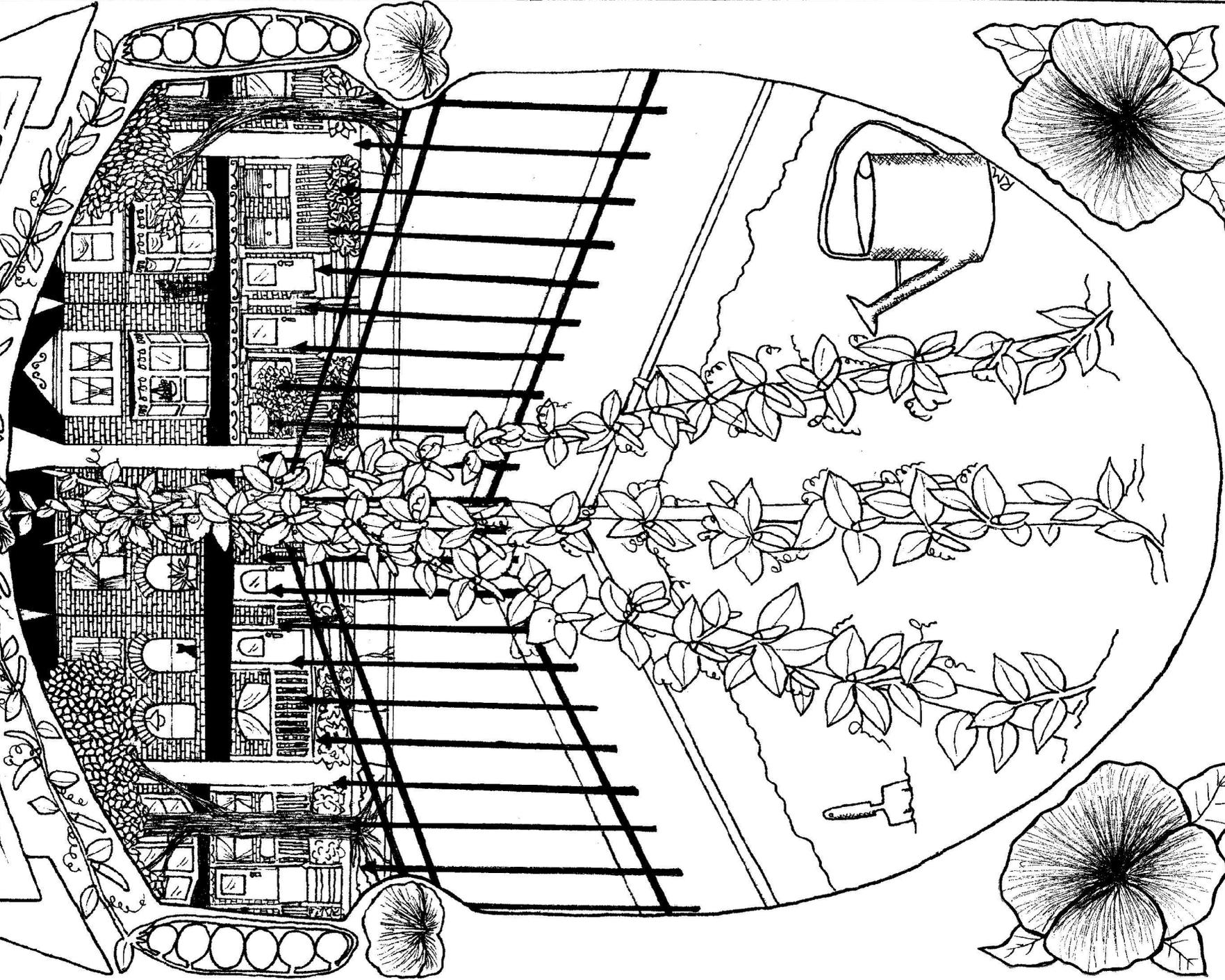


STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVORS



◁PHILLY SURVIVOR SUPPORT COLLECTIVE▷

◁PHILADELPHIA, PA▷

It can feel really helpful to take tangible steps towards healing. Here are some things we've learned from our experiences supporting survivors, communities, and each other in dealing with sexual assault. This zine is about setting goals for what you'd like to accomplish and what healing could look like in your life or in your community.

Goals can (and probably will) keep changing.

◀ FOR YOU ▶

★ You may not know what your goals are in the beginning, and that's normal! Here are some suggestions to get you started.

- ☼ Create a safety plan*
- ☼ Tell one person you trust what happened and what you are feeling about it in the moment
- ☼ Do things you know make you feel better!
- ☼ Try new things you think might help but haven't had the time to explore
- ☼ Release your emotions! - run, scream, do yoga, play drums
- ☼ Write down a memory that's stuck on a loop in your head and then tear it up
- ☼ Ask three friends to take turns walking you home at night when feeling anxious.

****safety planning** ▶ Thinking ahead to what you would do to be safe in a crisis.
tnlr.org/about-partner-abuse/safety-planning/

★ Here are some things you may want but that may take more work or time:

- ☼ Feel safe in your home/community/workplace/etc.
- ☼ Sleep through the night without nightmares
- ☼ Talk about history of surviving assault with lovers, friends, or family
- ☼ Practice using breathing to deal with flashbacks
- ☼ Cope with triggers **

cope with **triggers, flashbacks or anxiety loops ▶ move your body | focus on a specific taste or physical sensation | get up and drink a glass of water | practice breathing.

◀ FOR YOUR COMMUNITY ▶

- ◆ It can be hard to ask for support from your friends, family, and community, but for many people it's helpful to share with at least one person
- ◆ Having support from others is really helpful in healing after sexual assault
- ◆ Community can help you come out of a space of isolation and fear and can help pull survivors together to feel less alone
- ◆ Asking for small specific things from several different people can be helpful to prevent the people who are supporting you from feeling overwhelmed
- ◆ Encourage your support people to have their own support people if things are getting intense
- ◆ Think about the timeframes for the types of support you're asking for. Will you need this forever? Do you need this until you feel safe again? Or is this something you'd like to have happen for the next 3 weeks?

If reaching out to people you know for support doesn't feel right, you might find support from books, hotlines, a support group, or other resources.



★ Some things you can do:

- ☼ Be direct and tell people what is or isn't working
- ☼ Suggest resources for the people you ask for support, like helpful websites or books
- ☼ Be specific about what your support people can tell other community members
- ☼ Ask people to come over and make you dinner
- ☼ Ask for money (for therapy, child care, etc)
- ☼ Ask community to keep the PWCH out of certain spaces
- ☼ Ask your friends to help you avoid the PWCH
- ☼ Have people to call if you feel unsafe or need someone to be around
- ☼ Ask your community to organize an art show about healing from trauma
- ☼ Ask your friends to become educated about preventing sexual assault

PWCH: "The Person Who Caused Harm" sometimes referred to as the perpetrator or assaulter.

◀ THOUGHTS FOR WORKING WITH THE PERSON WHO CAUSED HARM (PWCH) ▶

- ◆ This work is very hard and can wind up taking a much longer time than you think it might. We've seen people still working on trying to get the PWCH to meet their requests years later.
- ◆ Having supportive people who are committed to seeing you through an accountability process is crucial
- ◆ Is there a way to feel your goals are achieved even if the PWCH doesn't meet all your requests? If you are basing your healing around another person's actions, you may get frustrated.
- ◆ Be specific about what you want from the PWCH (make it concrete)
- ◆ This work is hard. We can't say it enough.



◀ PHILLY SURVIVOR SUPPORT COLLECTIVE ▶

Our collective supports survivors of sexual assault in directing their own healing. We offer alternatives to the legal system for survivors seeking justice and safety. We also work to transform our communities to end sexual violence.

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By PSSC 2012/2013
 Thanks to Robin Markle for doing our illustration!
Stay tuned for an expanded version of this zine.