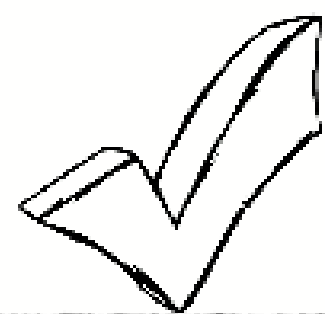


Supporting Survivors of Dating OR Domestic Violence



survivor
supporter



We want to create a community of support for survivors of all gender identities who are experiencing dating or domestic violence. This comic briefly illustrates what that might look like and ways we can support survivors.

When someone shares their survivor experience, we can use CHECK IT Support. CHECK IT support is supporting a survivor by listening, believing, supporting their choices, being there for them, and connecting them to resources. It can also be checking in with them after a potential moment of harm has happened and offering support.

If you are supporting a loved one who is experiencing dating or domestic violence, you deserve support as well. Feel free to reach out to our Campus Advocate Team at (707) 445.2881 for guidance and support.

The content in this comic is adapted from Raiin.org and their article entitled, "8 Steps for Supporting Survivors of Domestic Violence."

Believe Them



The most important thing we can do when a survivor shares with us their experience is to listen to and believe them. Sharing stories of survivorship requires trust. If someone shares with you, they trust you to hold their stories close. Don't question their experiences, believe them.

Remind Them

You're not alone



It is important for you to have a form of support, too.

We have the Campus Advocate Team if you need support.

You are here to support them. Share that you care about their safety and well-being.

You're not alone



"I care about you. Thank you for sharing and trusting me."

Survivor Safety

"Do you feel safe at home right now?"

While it is understandable to want to know every detail about their experiences, it's more helpful to ask questions that pertain to the survivor's safety.

"What do you need to feel safe?"

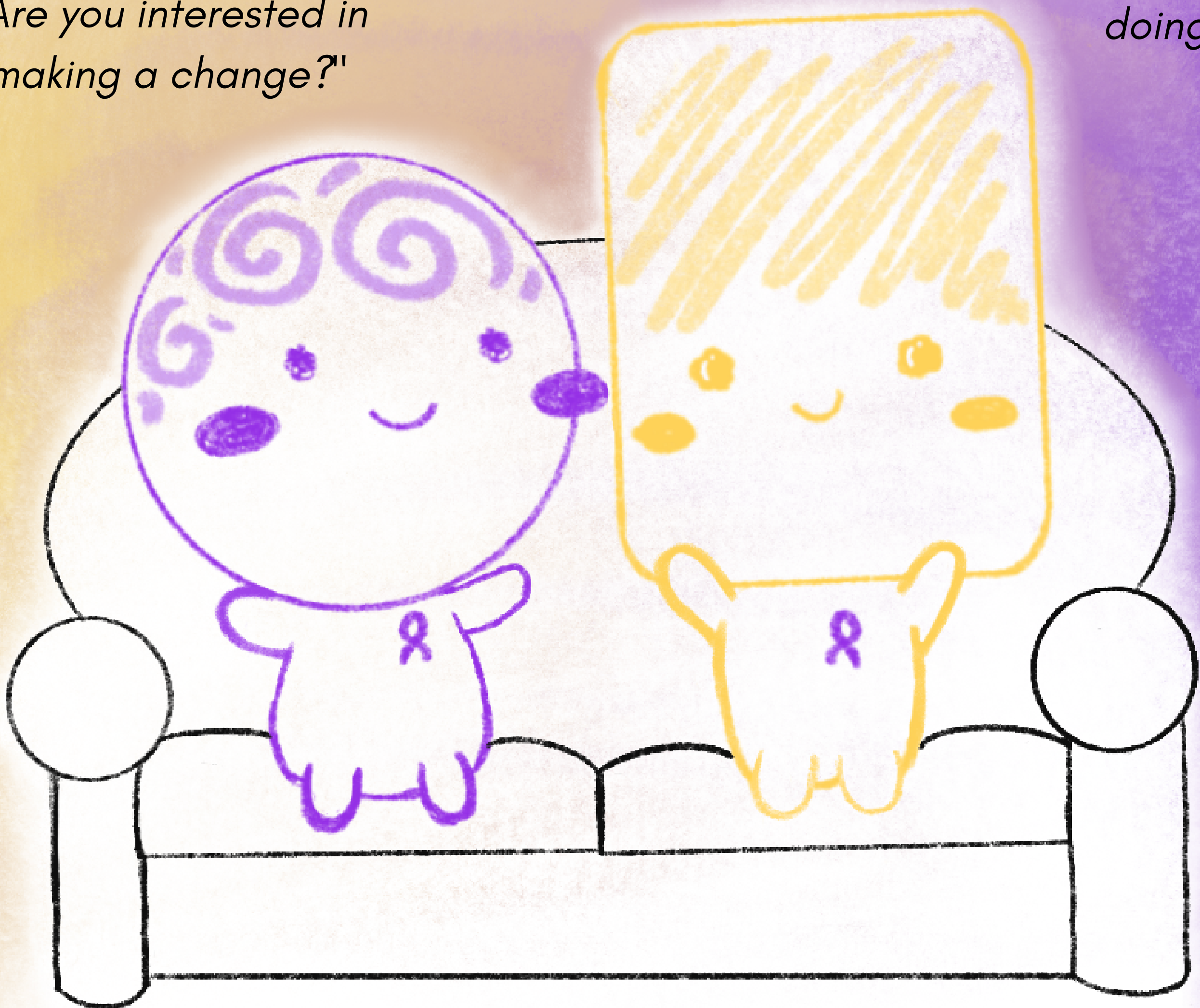


Plans:

"Do you want to stay with this person?"

"Are you interested in making a change?"

"What have you thought about doing?"



Remember, the survivor is the expert when it comes to their relationship. They will know when it is safe to leave and what actions are possible. Many people in an abusive or unhealthy relationship do not want to leave their partner – they just want the violence to stop. Meet the survivor where they are by asking about their goals and plans. Follow their lead and support their goals as much as you can.

Respect Their Decision



Don't forget to respect their boundaries and embody consent.



There are many reasons why a survivor of dating/domestic violence may struggle to leave an abusive partner or wish to stay with them. They may love their partner, want their family to stay together, may fear for their lives, or lack the resources and support networks to leave. Your goal is to recognize the many challenges your loved one may be experiencing and to help them feel as supported as possible. Listen to what they want to do - not what you want them to do.

Safety Planning

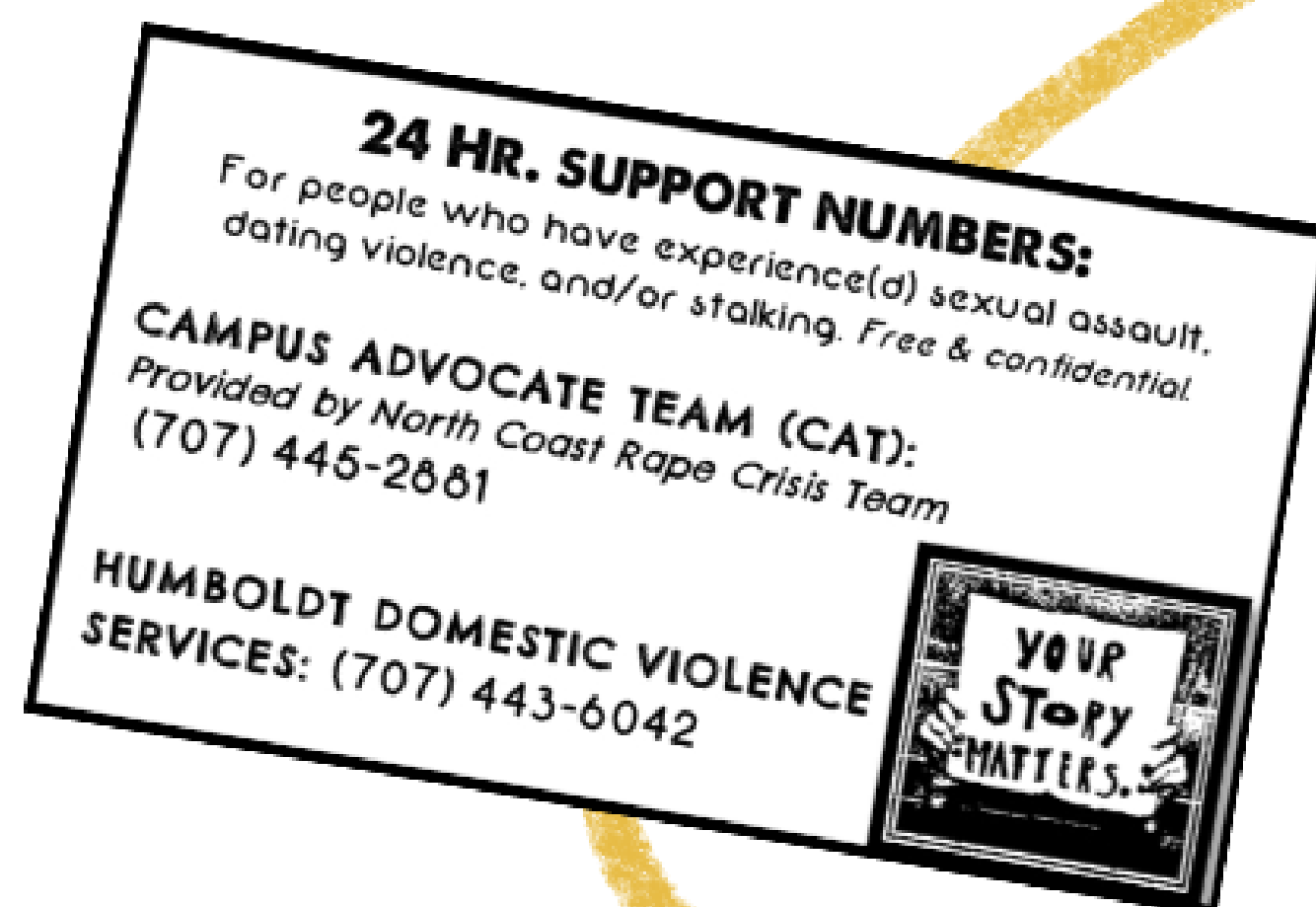
You can access a safety plan at checkit.humboldt.edu under 'Resources and Activity'



Learn more about safety planning for different situations from the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

Safety planning is aimed at increasing safety, reducing risks, and identifying support systems for a survivor. Having a safety plan can be especially helpful if a survivor is thinking about leaving an abuser.

Offer Resources



Your loved one deserves as much support as possible. Sharing support resources with them is key. You can refer survivors to the National Domestic Violence Hotline or local resources. Some local resources include HSU's Campus Advocate Team, also known as the North Coast Rape Crisis Team, and Humboldt Domestic Violence Services (HDVS). Everyone deserves support, and that includes you. These situations can not only be challenging for the survivor, but it can be for you, too. Your feelings are valid. Consider talking about what you are experiencing with the Campus Advocate Team.

Check In



Maintain communication with the survivor and regularly check back in with them. Abusers often work to isolate survivors so try to keep the connection to your loved one strong. Remind them that you care and they are important to you. Remember, the simple act of checking in is impactful.