**Community Contexts that have shaped our practice**

* Lack of community (meaning lack of values, guidance, and boundaries).
* Lack of models of good communication
* Disparity between the radical and mainstream approaches
* Coercion of sexism in radical left communities
* Drinking (tool for me to more easily ignore my values)
* Queer community that values and exoticizes transmen as “safe” men because of our personal histories with misogyny, sexism, and patriarchy
* Soundboard to be open about desires and..
* Affirming manhood and personhood through being desired by someone else, particularly physically
* Learning to evade parental control\*\*
* Queer community that values polyamory and unconventional arrangement of relationships
* Reinforcing practices that I want to break or not engage in \*
* Threat of ostracism-if you fuck up discourages honesty and healing
* Sharing experiences based on identity
* Radical left supporting, dominant oppressive values in beauty, relationships and social currency
* Sharing experiences on the basis of identity
* Positive reinforcement around the act of “attain/obtain” a woman
* Romantic/sexual relationships a “private” or “personal”
* General acceptance of men sleeping around
* Sexualization of comrades. Friendship and connection starting out or growing principally when there is attraction, whether it will be acted on or not.

 **Institutional Contexts that have shaped our practices**

* Acceptance of hyper-sexualized narratives and practices
* Expectation that men sleep around
* You are not a successful man unless you get some
* Male supremacy message-sexual activity=successful masculinity
* Ambivalent relationship to MS stereotype: man as seducer
* Validation as a man comes from lots of people desiring me
* Idea that platonic relationships do not exist; all relationships are shapes by some level of physical attraction.
* White supremacist beauty norms
* Entitlement of white male supremacy
* A society in which young girls are sexualized and sexually abused at young ages
* Western school culture
* White supremacy TV broadcast; HBO
* Difficulty with boundaries🡪vulnerability or weakness
* Traditional/cultural measures of masculinity-linked to virility
* Being allowed to be angry emotionally without question
* Enabling deceit and lack of accountability
* Lying as a social norm
* Men being socialized not to talk about feelings
* Social Judgments on what it is to be a man (in relation to and with women)
* Focus on accumulation (capitalism)🡪 around sexual partners
* Complexities of other oppression dynamics
* Sexism in my environments

 **Practices that build healthier connection**

* Providing support sustainably
* Opening up to really be with people 🡪more emotional and personal connection
* Playing with power- Affirming our own and others’ powers
* Communicating clearly, courageously, consistently
* Initiating conversations about power imbalances that I dominate
* Honesty and self-awareness
* Honesty
* Healthy communicative open relationships
* Confronting major, persistent problems and conflicts in current relationships
* Only remain in relationships that are healthy and that I want to be in
* Fuck Social Currency…Struggle to engage past the surface…struggle to be open and share commitment and hope
* Being open more about past relationships
* Taking risks to be honest
* Open communication and honesty to foster connection
* Expressing desire/love/friendship
* Recognizing when you’re lying or manipulating the truth in your head to clean up your wrongdoings or shortcomings
* Expressing my needs, wants, and desires, with my partners
* Open dialogue with community and reflection
* Writing
* Talking, listening, and struggling
* Being embodied and knowing what I want in the moment-not what my community or culture wants for/ from me
* Redeeming “Love”