

Challenging Male Supremacy Study-into-Action Project - NYC 2011

Participant Evaluation

What's one thing that worked well for you in this group?

Spaces-good light,
nice vibe, cool
organizations and
great bathrooms

Schedule accommodating
by the organizers

Rape Crisis Center Intervention
Center reading was good

Food and Snacks

Group ally somatic
exercise was great (3
votes)

Building trust through
long days with one
another

Healthy food

Family-style dinner
session 9 (word doubles!)

Healthy Food and
Somatics

Theatre of the
oppressed exercise,
what male
supremacy looks
like exercise

Building individual and small
group sessions about
personal struggles

Somatics

"Caliban and the
Witch" and all of the
allyship readings

Facilitators
checking in with
participants before
each session

People checking
in outside of
the sessions

Everyone's
humbled and
sincere sharing

Small group writing
exercise in intimacy
and desire was
awesome (2 votes)

Support from
facilitators
between the
sessions

Transformative
Justice reading was
good

Check in with facilitators
between sessions

Broad discussion of
Accountability

Building of trust
in the group
was both
organic and well
done by the
facilitators.

We were kind to
one another

Good relationships
amongst facilitators

Visions of male
supremacy exercise
- challenging,
intense and edgy

Sessions that are Pedagogy
curricula-oriented personal
conversation and mixed
activities

Consistent small
groups

Working
agreements and
clarity of the goals

Theatre of the Oppressed; we
would all be fluent in Boal if we
did a little every session

Theater of the
oppressed

Boal theatre exercises

Small group convos about violence were great

Having check-ins with dedicated facilitators

Small Groups

Interconnection between theories, ideals, analysis with practice—much through somatics

Cooking for one another

Commitments worksheet

Commitment workshops

Authentic relationships and community built. Allowed for a lot of trust and support

Mixed facilitation and interactive facilitation style

Session 5 gender presentation (safety good privilege)

Caliban and the Witch=good reading

Was provided with a lot of readings and videos as resources

Readings were real good, except for the college date rape piece

Good readings in Session 2

Consent practices

What are things you learned or gained from participating in this group?

Much deeper understandings about things I knew a little about:

- Exploitation of women
- Trans struggles
- Taking care of myself
- Establishing goals
- Being an ally
- Consent

Clear framing and preparation for study into action

Utilizing practices outside the space and encouraged consistently to do so

This work is complex and very difficult to stay fully committed to (probably because we are not women). It takes a dedicated community.

We all share similar commitments and challenges

Creative ways to challenge and understand male supremacy and its symptoms

How violence pervades our society

New appreciation and feelings of support + love for survivors of trauma

Oodles of readings

Resources

Somatic practices and embodied social justice

How to develop relationships with men

Our struggles are similar - we learn a lot from each other

Understanding/familiarity with language of male supremacy

Context for different communities/institutions have shaped and encouraged practices of male supremacy

Accountability groups

The importance of building a community to support personal transformation process

Applying Somatics and body/mood checks in dealing with day to day triggers around male supremacy (specifically in relationship)

Self-awareness built through challenging readings, discussions and practices

Reminder that we are what we practice

Build community with other likeminded men (WORD!)

Somatic practices *

Somatics as a way to connect with my emotions and move out of my head. Learn how to feel in order to understand what I feel

Chance to look at my past in new light

Collective centering at the beginning of any group process changes everything

New ways of thinking about consent

Clarity and focus

Some of the humanity taken from me by white hetero-patriarchy

What I want a loving relationship to look like

Better understanding of gender

Clarity around allyship and dealing with defensiveness

Once we warm up to each other, men can be vulnerable, honest, kind... after we take off the shield of male supremacy

Self care is more important than we often give it credit or space for

What are things that you would like to see happen differently if the group were run again?

More activity (fun) between sessions for socializing, talking about our work, seeing each other's homes and hoods

Have a partner that you work through the homework and support each other in - and are accountable to each other and the group

Shorter total duration of work - like two months instead of four

Practicing in the space challenging male supremacist evasion of "feminized labor" - washing our dishes, cooking and not just buying food, cleaning space thoroughly, etc.

Buddy system check-ins with someone we don't already know - more formal check-ins between sessions

Doing the reading, showing up to partners of (CMS) events, attendance

Trust session first

We should do something collectively to have fun during [someone added check]

Racialized Masculinities - There could be a lot more about this that could be complicated by gender complexity - as people transition ftm into racialized masculinity what arises?

Accountability - Given that men evade it, generally, it'd be great to practice it more here. I know I didn't always get back to Gaurav. I saw some people not bring food often - or not cook it themselves - precisely because cooking is feminized labor, also to have a few people we work with daily or weekly be involved or be a "support partner" with CMS facilitators. Building accountability into the structure of CMS would be great.

Gender Complexity - I felt like this was just 101 - the activities, the readings, etc and I would love for it to go so much deeper w/more transmen + genderqueers in the room

Language around cisgender, masculine-identified could be clarified + practiced better by facilitators

Accountability - group accountability to each other, like when we don't come to a session, do a check-in with a facilitator

Emphasis: "Challenge each other respectfully."

Shared difficulty/challenges, especially past the point of unpleasantness (Myles Horton) engenders commitment. Let's do hard painful things.

I would want there to be small group meetings with a facilitator for the check-ins for deeper connection

There are hierarchies of violence in some people's minds and in the capacity to traumatize. Move sensitively + careful questioning around violence as opposed to declarations.

More about how male supremacy hurts men too

How men access anger and how that plays out in the manifestations of violence

Consent talk not based on made up scenario but on our own experiences

Drunk (does not equal) consent // Drunk (does not equal) rape

Talk about porn

Challenging capitalism more directly throughout sessions

If challenging ableism is a related inquiry, why isn't Challenging Neoliberalism?

More conversation/support around confronting and healing from gender-based or sexual violence

Concentration on how development of unhealthy practices impacts participants as youth and young people in general, i.e., more life map activities

Specific conversation around sex and healthy relationships/sex in intimacy/desire session

Discussion around pornography. I feel it didn't happen b/c it's such a private subject with a lot of shame. Once trust was established in later meetings we could have made specific space to discuss how it shapes our desire.

More about intimate partnerships and sexuality

Have case studies of ways male supremacy shows up in movement spaces

Wish we had a chance to share how male supremacy comes up in our justice work + how we challenge it

College date rape piece was so 101 - mix it up, complicate it

Go deeper into how to interject when violence is involved - different methods - different opinions

More involved and explicit convo on romantic/sexual intimacy

More continuity of consent/desire/coercion threads

Porn could have been 1 of (my?) issues we had as a continuing thread to deconstruct, analyze, develop accountability around, and incorporate in allyship + intimacy + desire. Basically we could have tried to discuss an issue as a continuing thread thru sessions

Praxis for confronting male supremacy in each other and other community members

Developing communal resistance practices to help us collectively confront male supremacy/patriarchy as we move forward

Supporting each other's collective SJ work and not being afraid to ask for love and other people's time

Sharing our commitments with whole group earlier in 9 weeks [sic] - at week 4 or 5 + refining them together + checking in with each other Yeah!

An opportunity to talk to CMS facilitators about CMS work in the future

Returning to gender & language used around gender a few times

INTRA-accountability among participants about their process and praxis. In their lives and work.

Have longer readings - full books? Deeper study.

Opportunity to build with/get feedback from CMS allies and partners

How to challenge from a place of principle and support NOT ego

More storytelling

Handouts from each session sent out so those who can't be present still get a chance to review

More 1-on-1 prep wk