

It's for men who have sex with men (or who *really want to* have sex with men, lol). Their website has lots of safer sex info on it. The only problem is that I don't type on a computer keyboard or use a mouse, so I have to ask someone else to help me use the website. Which can be awkward.



ONE DAY MY STAFF ASKED ME IF I WAS GAY, AND I SAID YES. It was scary telling people I'm gay, but I'm glad I did. It means I can be myself and get more of the things I want in life.

DO YOU EVER HAVE TO GET HELP WITH PRIVATE STUFF, LIKE JAMES DOES?



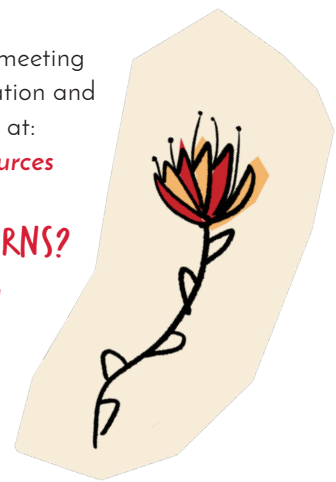
I HAVE (CEREBRAL PALSY SO I LEARN A BIT DIFFERENTLY, AND MY ARMS AND LEGS WORK A BIT DIFFERENTLY. It's cool, but there are times when it can be annoying. Like, if I want to have a sex life, I have to tell my family and staff about stuff that most people get to keep private.

MY FAVOURITE PLACE TO GET SEXUAL HEALTH INFO IS...

Discover more resources for meeting people, sexual health information and LGTBQA+ communities at: <http://real-talk.org/resources>

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Email [john@real-talk.org](mailto:john@real-talk.org)



## JAMES USES:

**HiM** HEALTH INITIATIVE FOR MEN  
<http://checkhimout.ca/>

PleasureABLE Guide  
[http://www.dhrn.ca/files/sexualhealthmanual\\_lowres\\_2010\\_0208.pdf](http://www.dhrn.ca/files/sexualhealthmanual_lowres_2010_0208.pdf)

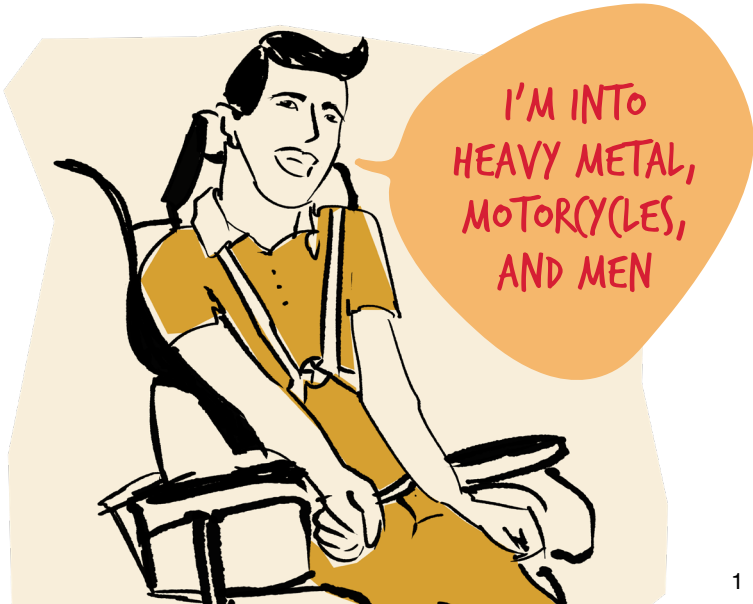
604-734-1313 (G.F. Strong Rehabilitation Clinic)

**SEX SENSE**  
 1-800-SEX-SENSE Hotline  
 1-800-739-7367 or 604-731-7803

**MANHUB**  
[www.manhub.com/](http://www.manhub.com/)  
 (Not Safe For Work)



## HI I'M JAMES



I'M INTO HEAVY METAL, MOTORCYCLES, AND MEN

## WHEN I HAVE A PRIVATE SEXUAL HEALTH QUESTION...

I phone the Sex Sense hotline and talk to an educator. My staff helps me get them on the phone, and then leaves the room so I can talk privately.

SEX SENSE LINE, CAN I HELP YOU?



1-800-SEX-SENSE Hotline  
1-800-739-7367 or 604-731-7803

WHAT ABOUT YOU?  
DO YOU EVER HAVE  
QUESTIONS ABOUT SEX?

5

## I LIKE TO MASTURBATE. I USED TO NOT BE ABLE TO.

My staff heard about the PleasureABLE guide and got me a copy. Now, I use sex toys that are adapted for people like me. An occupational therapist helped me figure out which ones would work best. SUPER awkward, but worth it, lol!

PleasureABLE Guide

[http://www.dhrn.ca/files/sexualhealthmanual\\_lowres\\_2010\\_0208.pdf](http://www.dhrn.ca/files/sexualhealthmanual_lowres_2010_0208.pdf)

604-734-1313 (G.F. Strong Rehabilitation Clinic)



RIGHT NOW I DON'T HAVE A BOYFRIEND, BUT IF I START DATING SOMEONE, WE'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO ORDER SOME MORE THINGS.

6

## NOT GONNA LIE, I LIKE TO WATCH PORN.

Since I don't type or use a mouse, I need to watch longer videos to masturbate. Usually my house staff puts on a video - either from manhub.com or my DVD collection - and then leaves my room so I can git 'er done.



Manhub  
[www.manhub.com](http://www.manhub.com)  
(NSFW)

DO YOU GET TO FEEL  
SEXUAL PLEASURE IN  
YOUR LIFE?

8



## HIM ALSO DOES FITNESS AND RECREATION NIGHTS

I go sometimes. It's nice to be around other gay guys, but nobody's asked me on a date or anything.

WHERE DO YOU MEET  
PEOPLE?

## SOMEDAY I HOPE I'LL GET TO HAVE SEX WITH A GUY.

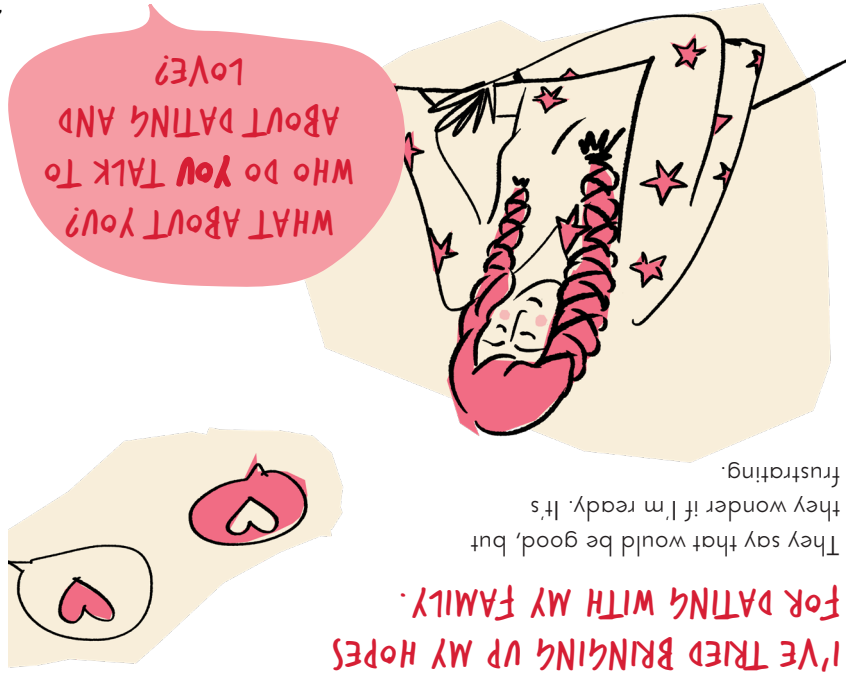
Maybe it will turn into something more. But even if it doesn't, just the sex would be great.



WHAT ARE  
YOU HOPING  
FOR?

9

10



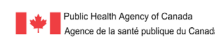
I'VE TRIED BRINGING UP MY HOPES FOR DATING WITH MY FAMILY.

They say that would be good, but they wonder if I'm ready. It's frustrating.

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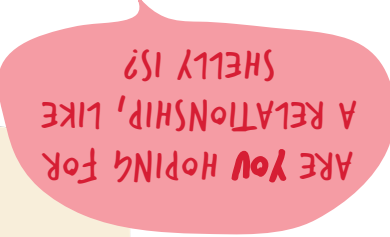


Production of this document has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.



SOMEDAY I WOULD LIKE TO GET MARRIED

Hopefully to a hot man who likes video games, but can also give me space and quiet to read.



### SHELLY USES:



[www.scarleteen.com](http://www.scarleteen.com)



[www.literotica.com](http://www.literotica.com)  
(Not Safe For Work)



[www.optionsforsexualhealth.org/sex-sense](http://www.optionsforsexualhealth.org/sex-sense)  
 1-800-739-7367 or 604-731-7803



[www.mojoemporium.com](http://www.mojoemporium.com)

Let's Get Real

[lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca](mailto:lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca)

WOMYNS'WARE

896 Commercial Drive  
Vancouver, BC

[www.womynsware.com](http://www.womynsware.com)

[www.buildingcaringcommunities.ca/lets-get-real/](http://www.buildingcaringcommunities.ca/lets-get-real/)

Printable PDFs and videos of these comics are available at:  
<http://real-talk.org/resources>



I HAD A HEAD INJURY AS A BABY SO I PROCESS INFORMATION DIFFERENTLY FROM A LOT OF FOLKS.

I can also be kind of shy.



### HI I'M SHELLY!



MY FAVOURITE PLACE TO GET SEXUAL HEALTH INFO IS...



[www.scarleteen.com](http://www.scarleteen.com)



It's a website where you can email your questions and get answers from sex educators. You can also read questions other people have asked and the answers they got.

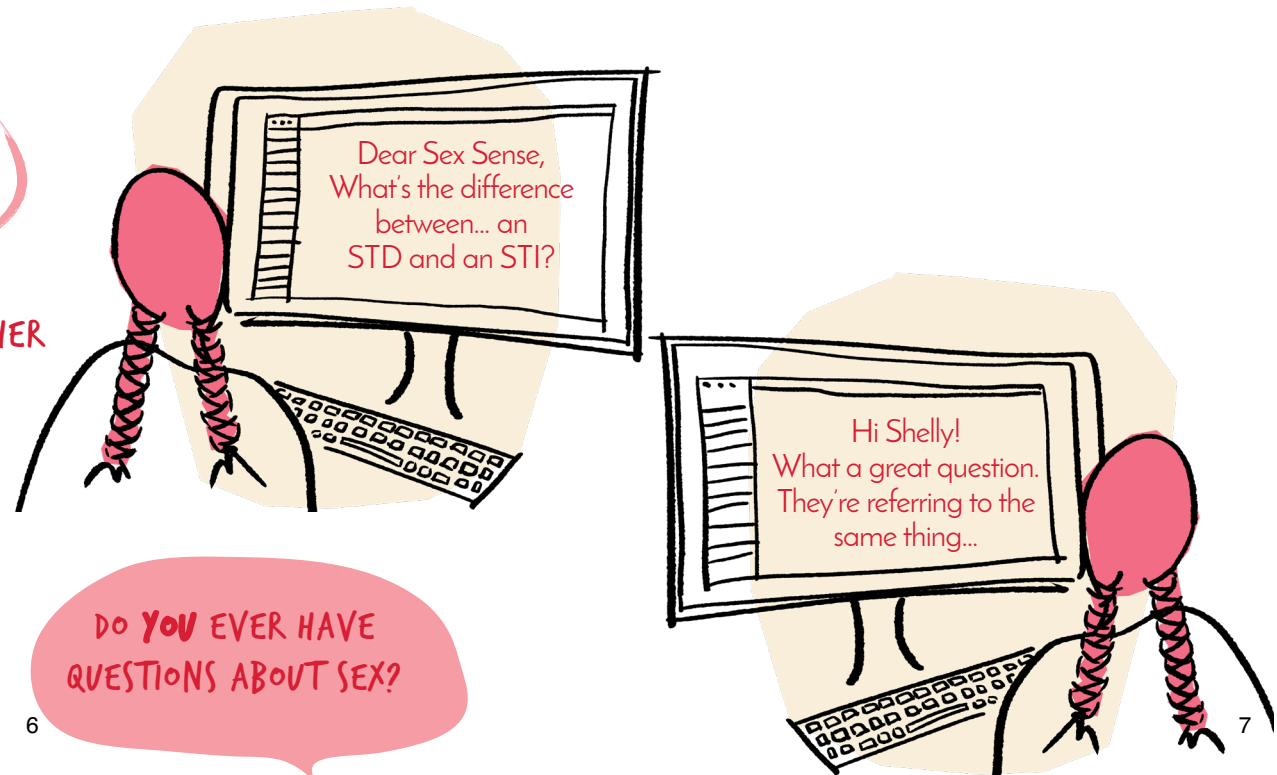


[www.optionsforsexualhealth.org/sex-sense](http://www.optionsforsexualhealth.org/sex-sense)

1-800-739-7367 or 604-731-7803

I'M SUPER SHY TALKING TO OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT THIS STUFF...

So reading or emailing is the best way for me to get answers. Options for Sexual Health also has an email question and answer service. They're in BC so they know all the local stuff.



I'D LIKE TO HAVE A RELATIONSHIP ONE DAY.



I enjoy going to the Let's Get Real group. It's a dating community for people with cognitive disabilities. They have social events where people can learn about dating, but mostly we just meet and mingle.

WHERE HAVE YOU TRIED TO MEET PEOPLE?

Let's Get Real

[lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca](mailto:lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca)

[www.buildingcaringcommunities.ca/lets-get-real/](http://www.buildingcaringcommunities.ca/lets-get-real/)

I LIKE TO MASTURBATE, BUT I'M NOT INTO PORN.

Sometimes I'll read erotic stories from Literotica (NSFW). The easiest way for me to have an orgasm is with a sex toy. I read somewhere that lots of people find it easier this way.



[www.literotica.com](http://www.literotica.com) (NSFW)

I WAS NERVOUS ABOUT BUYING ONE...



but my friend told me about some stores that aren't all sketchy and gross. She came with me when I bought my first toy. The staff were friendly and didn't make me feel rushed when I needed time to ask my questions.

DO YOU GET TO FEEL SEXUAL PLEASURE IN YOUR LIFE?

WOMYNS'WARE

896 Commercial Drive  
Vancouver, BC  
[www.womynsware.com](http://www.womynsware.com)

DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR? DO PEOPLE EVER USE WORDS TO DESCRIBE YOU THAT DON'T FEEL RIGHT?



I NEVER REALLY FELT LIKE "WOMAN" OR "GIRL" DESCRIBED ME PROPERLY. When I talked to people about it, they said it was because of my autism. Or they'd say I didn't like to wear a dress because of the fabric - not because it was a dress. Now I'm finding out more about others who also don't fit 'woman' or 'man'.



I HAVE AUTISM SO I PROCESS INFORMATION DIFFERENTLY FROM A LOT OF FOLKS. Sometimes it's about my sense of touch. There are some fabrics that I just can't stand feeling on my skin. Also I usually really hate getting hugs - especially if I don't know the person well.



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**QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?**  
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## DEE USES:



**TRANS CARE BC**  
 Provincial Health Services Authority

[www.phsa.ca/transcarebc](http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc)



**Oh Joy Sex Toy**

[www.ohjoysextoy.com](http://www.ohjoysextoy.com)  
 (Not Safe For Work)



**QMUNITY**  
 BC'S QUEER, TRANS, AND TWO-SPIRIT RESOURCE CENTRE

[www.qmunity.ca](http://www.qmunity.ca)



**Pink Label**

[www.pinklabel.tv](http://www.pinklabel.tv)  
 (Not Safe For Work)



## HI I'M DEE



I'M INTO ANIME, SCIENCE FICTION SHOWS, AND COFFEE.

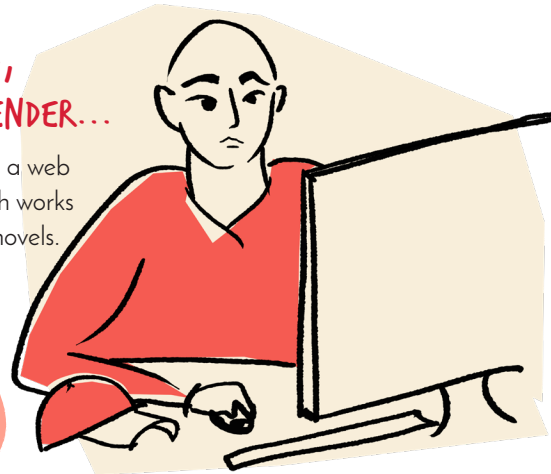
## I'VE STARTED MEETING PEOPLE LIKE ME TO TALK ABOUT THIS STUFF.

I like going to Qmunity's community center for trans discussion group but my lifeshare family doesn't like it, so they don't often drive me. I met someone at a Qmunity who lives close enough that I can get a ride with them sometimes. I also get info from the Trans Health Information Program.



## WHEN I WANT TO LEARN ABOUT DATING, RELATIONSHIPS AND GENDER...

I often visit Oh Joy Sex Toy. It's a web based sex ed comic strip, which works for me because I like graphic novels.



WHAT ABOUT YOU? DO YOU EVER HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT SEX?

## MY FAVOURITE COMIC SO FAR WAS ON BINDERS.

That's where I learned about different clothing you can wear if you aren't comfortable with how your body looks or feels.



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT?

## RIGHT NOW I'M NOT SURE WHAT KIND OF PERSON I'M INTO.

People say you have to decide if you like women or men. I don't know if I want to be with anyone. Sometimes I've gotten excited by both women and men or people like me. I've never told them though because I get too nervous and don't know what to say.



DO YOU EVER FEEL ATTRACTED TO PEOPLE? HOW DO YOU LET THEM KNOW?

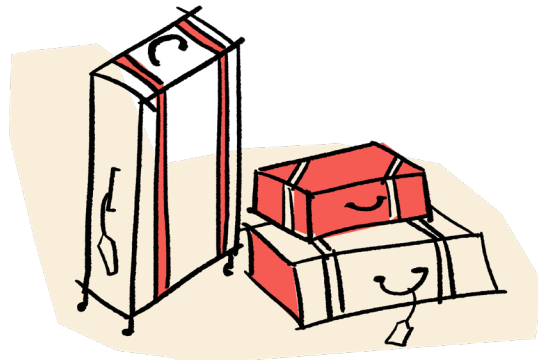
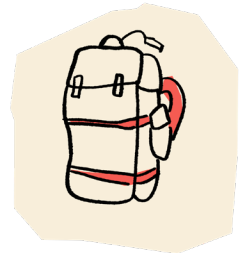


## I DON'T LIKE TO MASTURBATE VERY OFTEN.

When I do, I like to watch videos. At first I thought I hated porn but then someone at Qmunity told me about Pink Label. It's all made by queer women. There are all different kinds of people in the videos. They even have videos that are sexy but don't have any nudity.

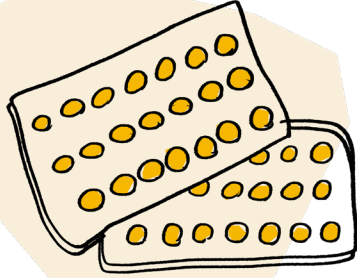
## SOMEDAY I'D LIKE TO MOVE INTO VANCOUVER SO I CAN LIVE CLOSER TO QMUNITY AND SOME OF MY NEW FRIENDS.

They say it's complicated because I've already chosen my lifeshare placement and my service provider doesn't have any families close to the West End.

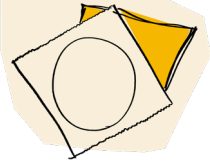


WHAT ARE YOU HOPING FOR?

HAVE YOU EVER HAD  
CONFLICTS BECAUSE  
OF DATING OR  
RELATIONSHIPS, LIKE  
LIAM HAS?



BUT THEN HER MUM FOUND THEM...  
and we weren't allowed to date any more.  
I wish we had just used condoms instead of  
condoms and pills both. Condoms are easier to  
hide. But we wanted to be as safe as possible.  
I told her family that but they were still mad.  
They thought we were just friends.



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people, sexual health information and  
LGTBOA+ communities at:

<http://real-talk.org/resources>

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Email [john@real-talk.org](mailto:john@real-talk.org)



## LIAM USES:

Sensual  
SOLUTIONS

[www.sensualsolutions.ca/](http://www.sensualsolutions.ca/)



[www.real-talk.org](http://www.real-talk.org)

Porn hub

[www.pornhub.com](http://www.pornhub.com)  
(Not Safe For Work)

fraserhealth Vancouver  
CoastalHealth

<http://vch.ca/Documents/youth-clinics-LM.pdf>

Let's Get Real

[lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca](mailto:lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca)

[www.buildingcaringcommunities.ca/lets-get-real/](http://www.buildingcaringcommunities.ca/lets-get-real/)

Printable PDFs and videos of these comics are available at:

<http://real-talk.org/resources>

FOR A WHILE I WAS  
DATING GITA.

We met in high school. When  
we decided we wanted to try  
having sex, we went to a Youth  
Clinic. They had free condoms,  
and Gita even got free birth  
control pills because she was  
under 21.

fraserhealth Vancouver  
CoastalHealth  
<http://vch.ca/Documents/youth-clinics-LM.pdf>



BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL, MY  
GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR  
TOLD ME THAT I LEARN  
DIFFERENTLY FROM A  
LOT OF FOLKS.

Nowadays, things are going great  
with my job at the garage. With  
my love life... not so much.



HI I'M LIAM

I'M INTO PRO  
WRESTLING, BEER,  
HIP HOP, AND  
WOMEN.



## MY FAVOURITE PLACE TO GET INFORMATION ABOUT SEX IS THE YOUTH CLINIC.

I hate reading, and I don't like talking on the phone. At the youth clinic I can talk to someone face to face. Either a doctor or nurse about birth control and safer sex, or to a counsellor about how I'm feeling.



 fraserhealth Vancouver Coastal Health

<http://www.vch.ca/Documents/youthclinics-LM.pdf>

5

## MEETING WOMEN INTERESTED IN DATING HAS BEEN REALLY TOUGH.

Sometimes I try to meet women at the mall, but usually they're mean to me. I've tried a dating group for people with cognitive disabilities in Vancouver called Let's Get Real. It was alright but it's too far from me. There's also pro wrestling shows at a nearby community center that I want to check out sometime. Maybe I could meet someone there.

Let's Get Real

 [lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca](mailto:lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca)

 <http://buildingcaringcommunities.ca/lets-get-real>

6

HOW ABOUT YOU? DO YOU WANT TO DATE ANYONE? HOW DO YOU MEET PEOPLE?



7

## I'VE ALSO STARTED TO TALK WITH OTHERS LIKE ME ABOUT THIS STUFF.

I started going to Real Talk Pizza Parties. They're run by a sexual health educator and I can ask them questions in the group or privately afterwards.



[www.real-talk.org](http://www.real-talk.org)



DO YOU EVER HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT SEX?

8



## YEAH I MASTURBATE. AND YEAH, I LOOK AT PORN.

Pornhub.com is free, and as long as you stay on that site, you don't wind up accidentally clicking on anything illegal.

Porn hub

 [www.pornhub.com](http://www.pornhub.com) (NSFW)

9



Sensual SOLUTIONS

[www.sensualsolutions.ca/](http://www.sensualsolutions.ca/)

DO YOU GET TO FEEL SEXUAL PLEASURE IN YOUR LIFE?

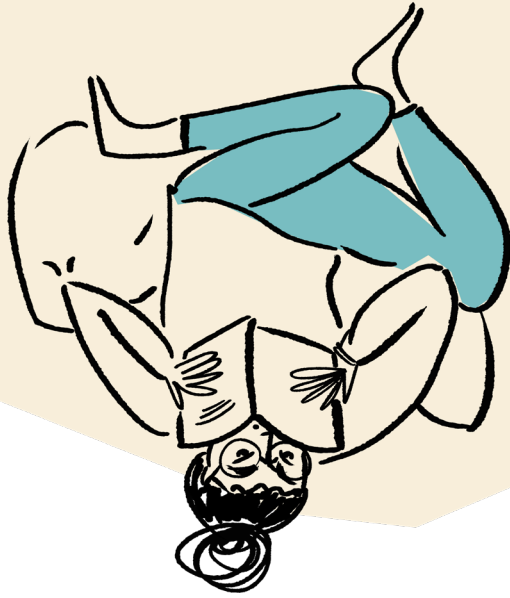
Someone told me about Sensual Solutions where you get to do sexual things with someone called an intimacy coach. It's pretty expensive though when you're only making minimum wage.

10



to talk to a youth counsellor about stuff. Like when those guys ditched me, or when I found out I had herpes, or or if Lucas pisses me off.

**SOMETIMES I GO TO THE CLINIC BY MYSELF**



**MY FAVOURITE PLACE TO GET INFORMATION ABOUT SEX IS THE YOUTH CLINIC. SOMETIMES I GO TOGETHER WITH LUCAS.**

We talk to the nurse about birth control. I told her I didn't want pills or a shot. I think Lucas should take some responsibility, not just the woman all the time. So it's condoms for us. They're not quite as safe as pills or the depo shot but it's my choice. They also help prevent STIs.



**HI I'M JESSICA**

**I'M INTO WOMEN'S SOCCER, BEYONCE, SUSHI, HORROR MOVIES, AND GUYS.**



**I HAVE WILLIAMS SYNDROME, WHICH MEANS I LEARN DIFFERENTLY FROM A LOT OF FOLKS.**

I've had a few boyfriends over the years. And there were some guys who said they wanted to be my boyfriend but they only wanted sex. Right now I'm with Lucas. We argue sometimes but at least he stuck around.

**HAVE YOU EVER BEEN MISLED ABOUT A RELATIONSHIP LIKE JESSICA HAS?**



**JESSICA USES:**



<http://vch.ca/Documents/youth-clinics-LM.pdf>



[www.real-talk.org](http://www.real-talk.org)

Carlin Ross / Betty Dodson Youtube:

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCRO3FMd3Bg-VTHgraBujKHA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRO3FMd3Bg-VTHgraBujKHA)

Printable PDFs and videos of these comics are available at:  
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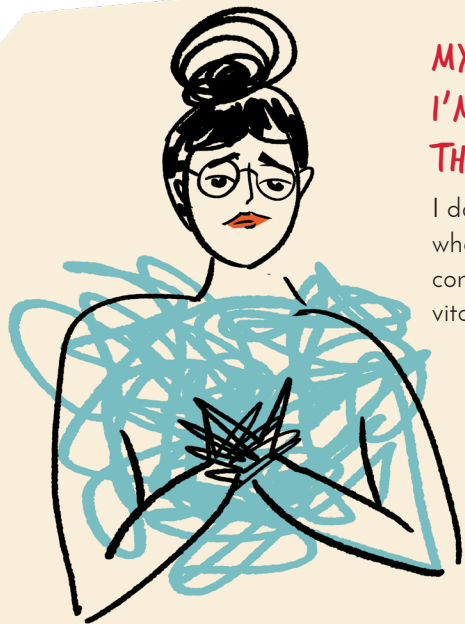
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**MY FAMILY DOESN'T KNOW I'M DATING SO I CAN'T ASK THEM THIS STUFF.**

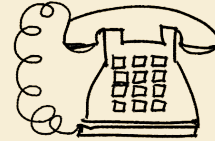
I don't want them butting in. Like when they used to give me birth control pills and told me they were vitamins. That's crap.

5



**I'VE ALSO STARTED TO TALK WITH OTHERS LIKE ME ABOUT THIS STUFF.**

I started going to Real Talk Pizza Parties. They're run by a sexual health educator and I can ask them questions in the group or privately afterwards.



**HOW ABOUT YOU? DO YOU EVER HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT SEX?**

6

**MY LIFESHARE FAMILY DOESN'T LIKE IT WHEN LUCAS COMES OVER.**

They always find some reason to come knock on my door whenever he hangs out at my place. They worry he's taking advantage of me and they won't let him stay overnight. It's not taking advantage if I want to do it too.



**HAVE YOU EVER HAD CONFLICT BECAUSE OF DATING OR RELATIONSHIPS?**

7

**I TOLD THE LIFESHARE MANAGER...**

and she said they'd look into it, but all she did was try to sign me up for a relationships course.



8

**I DIDN'T GET THE FUSS WHEN I FIRST STARTED HAVING SEX.**

It wasn't bad, it was just boring. I told my outreach worker how I felt about it and she asked me about orgasms - if I'd ever had one. Turns out I hadn't. I found out what it felt like from masturbating after watching some instructional Youtube videos by these women named Carlin Ross and Betty Dodson. Now when I have sex, I make sure I get to have pleasure too.

Carlin Ross / Betty Dodson Youtube:

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCRO3FMd3Bg-VTHgraBujKHA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRO3FMd3Bg-VTHgraBujKHA)

**DO YOU GET TO FEEL SEXUAL PLEASURE IN YOUR LIFE?**

9



**SOMEDAY I HOPE I'LL HAVE MY OWN APARTMENT.**

without anyone butting in. If I had my own place Lucas could stay over. Or maybe someone else.

**WHAT ARE YOU HOPING FOR?**

10

DO YOU EVER HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT SEX LIKE (LAIRE DOES?? WHERE DO YOU GET ANSWERS?)

OMGYES.com is a website made by professional sexologists, filled with real information about female masturbation! It's not porn, it's like a naked encyclopedia. Nobody's embarrassed. It's just a bunch of cool women talking about it. I learned so much about my own vulva. It costs \$60 but it gets you 60+ videos. I had to save up, but it was worth it.



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<http://real-talk.org/resources>

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**(LAIRE USES:**

**OMGYES**  
<http://www.omgyes.com>

**Man Up Drag**  
[www.facebook.com/manupvancouver](http://www.facebook.com/manupvancouver)

**REAL TALK**  
<http://www.real-talk.org>

**COMMERCIAL DRAG**  
[www.facebook.com/commercialdragyvvr](http://www.facebook.com/commercialdragyvvr)

Printable PDFs and videos of these comics are available at:  
<http://www.real-talk.org/resources>

**REAL TALK**

**HI I'M (LAIRE**

**I'M INTO HARRY POTTER, ARTSY MOVIES, AND ROLLER DERBY. I'M ALSO BISEXUAL.**



## MY GIRLFRIEND'S NAME IS DASHA. I MET HER AT ROLLER DERBY

We play on the same team. I love that I can feel strong when I skate, and even though the uniform is shorts and a t-shirt I don't feel self-conscious like I do in everyday life. It's a contact sport, so I'm too busy slamming into people to focus on what I look like!



WHERE DO YOU MEET OTHER PEOPLE?

5

## DASHA AND I LOVE GOING TO DRAG SHOWS

One of our favourites is **Man Up**, a drag king show where women and trans folk dress up like men and lipsync to songs on stage. Another one is **Commercial Drag**. That one's good because it's all-ages and you don't need to be 19 to get in. Some people dress in drag just to watch the show, even if they're not in it. We don't dress in drag for these shows but we do love dressing up for them!



6

## FOR A LONG TIME I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD BE INTO BOTH MEN AND WOMEN.

Even now, some people don't believe me when I say I'm bisexual. When I dated a guy, people thought I was straight. Now that I'm with Dasha they think I'm a lesbian. But who I am doesn't change just because of who I'm holding hands with! It's so stupid!

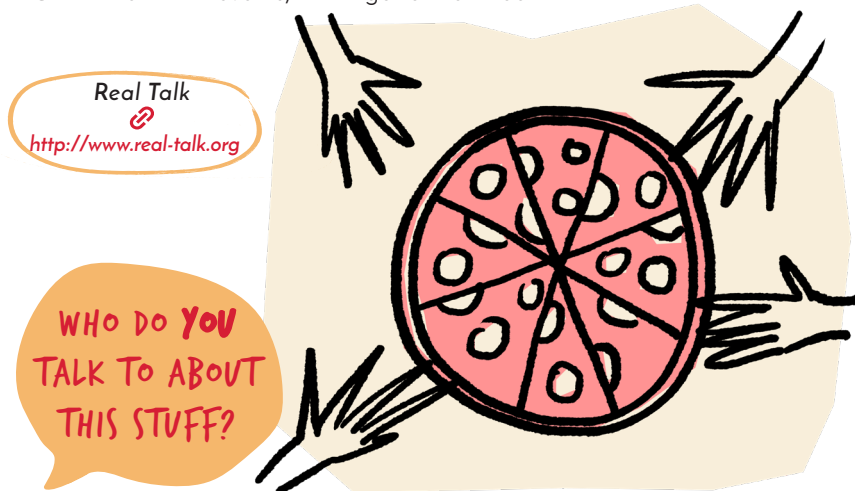


DO PEOPLE EVER MISJUDGE YOU BASED ON WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE?

7

## I'VE STARTED TALKING TO OTHERS LIKE ME ABOUT THIS STUFF...

I started going to *Real Talk Pizza Parties*. They're run by a sexual health educator and I can ask them questions in the group or privately afterwards. I especially like *Tough Cookies* - these are Real Talk events for women. (Sometimes I talk more openly with just women around.) There are also LGBTQ Real Talk events, and I go to them too.



Real Talk  
<http://www.real-talk.org>

WHO DO YOU TALK TO ABOUT THIS STUFF?

8

## WHEN I FIRST STARTED TALKING ABOUT DATING, I ASKED MY STAFF IF THEY COULD HELP ME FIND A PARTNER...

They all thought it was so 'cute' but they didn't help much. When someone finally paid attention, they didn't even ask me who I was into - they just assumed I was straight. It was so frustrating.

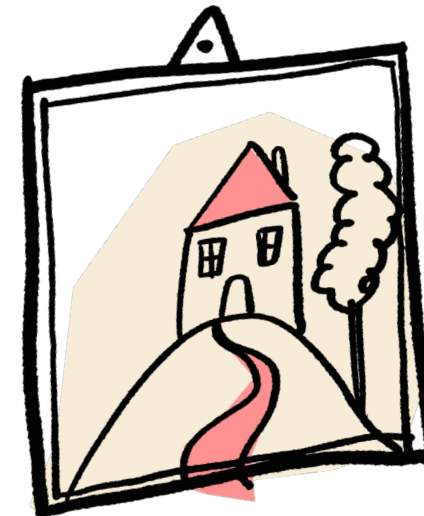


HAVE YOU EVER ASKED YOUR STAFF TO HELP YOU FIND A PARTNER? HOW DID IT GO?

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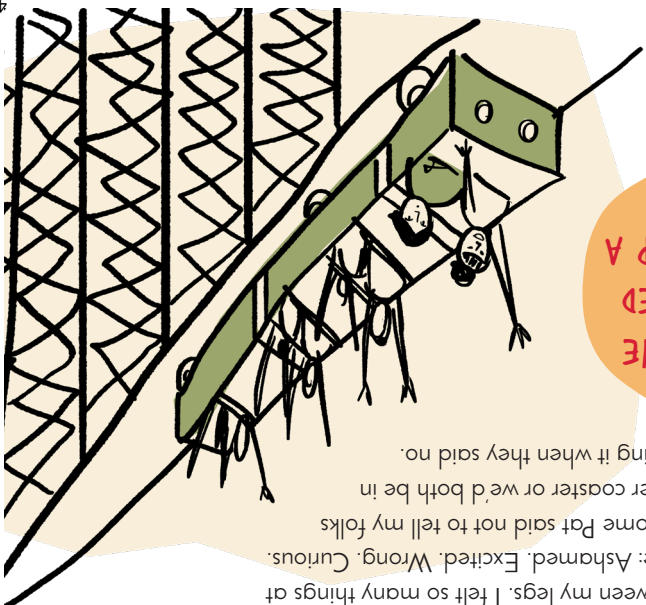
## SOMEDAY I HOPE TO GET MARRIED AND LIVE WITH MY PARTNER...

...in a private place of our own. Dasha and I aren't ready yet for that, but maybe someday!



WHAT ARE YOU HOPING FOR?

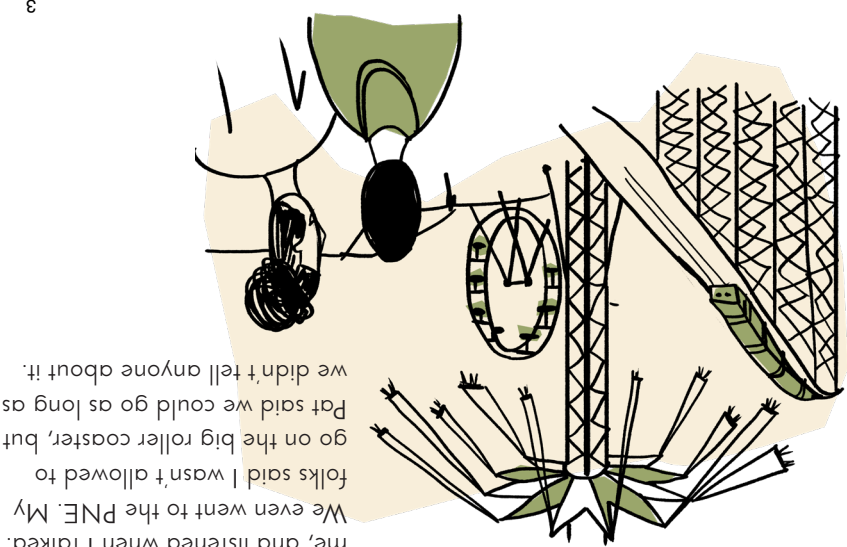
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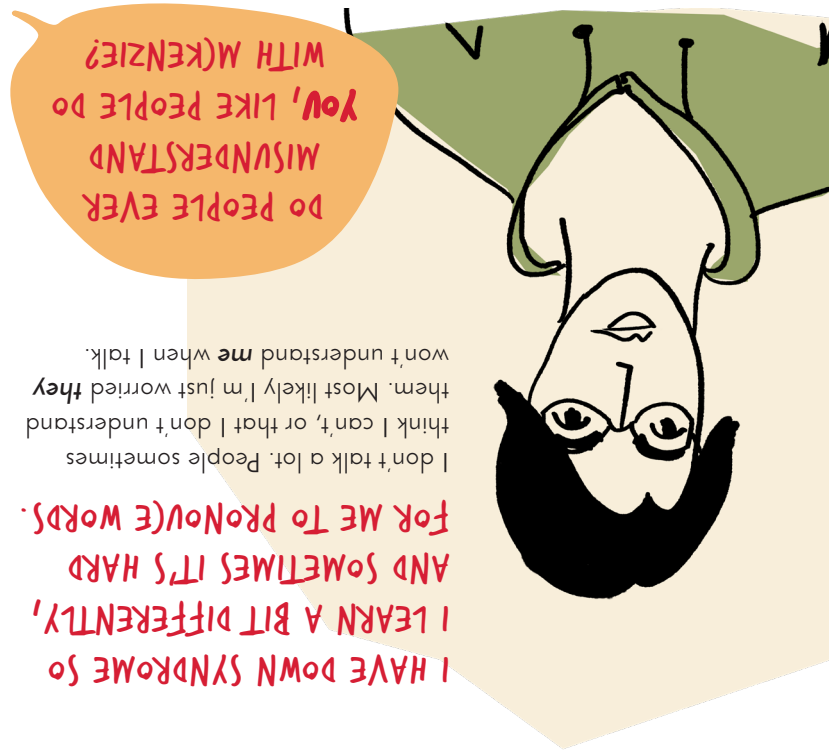
HAS ANYONE EVER ASKED YOU TO KEEP A SECRET?

...but then Pat's hand was inside my pants touching me down between my legs. I felt so many things at the same time: Ashamed. Excited. Wrong. Curious. On the way home Pat said not to tell my folks about the roller coaster or we'd both be in trouble for riding it when they said no.

AT FIRST THE RIDE WAS GREAT...



A FEW YEARS AGO I WORKED WITH PAT. WE WENT EVERYWHERE TOGETHER MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS. Pat was cool and super nice to me, and listened when I talked. We even went to the PNE. My folks said I wasn't allowed to go on the big roller coaster, but Pat said we could go as long as we didn't tell anyone about it.



DO PEOPLE EVER MISUNDERSTAND YOU, LIKE PEOPLE DO WITH MCKENZIE?

I don't talk a lot. People sometimes think I can't, or that I don't understand them. Most likely I'm just worried they won't understand me when I talk.

I HAVE DOWN SYNDROME SO I LEARN A BIT DIFFERENTLY, AND SOMETIMES IT'S HARD FOR ME TO PRONOUCE WORDS.



Discover more resources for meeting people, sexual health information and survivor support at:

<http://real-talk.org/resources>

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Email [john@real-talk.org](mailto:john@real-talk.org)



Production of this document has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

## RESOURCES:



Printable PDFs and videos of these comics are available at: <http://real-talk.org/resources>



I'M INTO ROLLER COASTERS, ZUMBA, K-POP, AND DATING

## PAT TOUCHED ME BETWEEN MY LEGS MORE TIMES AFTER THAT.

I even started saying OK. I still felt confused about it, and I was afraid because it all started on the roller coaster when I wasn't allowed. Also, Pat was one of the only people who was ever nice to me, and I didn't want us to stop hanging out.



HAVE YOU EVER FELT CONFUSED ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS?

5

## THE OTHER THING WAS, TO TALK ABOUT IT, I'D HAVE TO USE WORDS I HADN'T PRONOUNCED BEFORE...

...words my big sister Indira got in trouble for using when my parents heard her. For a while I just stopped talking to anyone. One day Indira asked me what was wrong.



HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN TROUBLE FOR USING CERTAIN WORDS?

6



## I TOLD HER ABOUT PAT.

It was hard, but she didn't interrupt. She told me she believed me and it wasn't my fault - even if I'd said ok.

She helped me find other people who could support me with all of my feelings and questions. We chose a support group and a counsellor. They were nice, and Indira came along to help them understand what I was saying.

7

## ONE DAY IN THE BATH...

...I figured out that I liked touching **myself** between my legs. But then I felt ashamed like when Pat did it. I told my support group and they said it was called masturbation. It's normal and it's healthy. It can't hurt me, and **I get to decide** how I touch myself.



DO YOU GET TO FEEL SEXUAL PLEASURE IN YOUR LIFE?

8

## IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO FEEL SAFE TO TRY DATING.

Nowadays I go **Let's Get Real**. It's a dating group in Vancouver for people with cognitive disabilities. We meet and mingle and flirt, but we also do workshops on things like consent. I've dated a few people I've met there. I'm taking things slowly, and if the other person can't accept that, I leave.



Let's Get Real  
✉ [lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca](mailto:lgr@buildingcaringcommunities.ca)  
🌐 [www.buildingcaringcommunities.ca/lets-get-real/](http://www.buildingcaringcommunities.ca/lets-get-real/)

WHERE DO YOU MEET PEOPLE?

9



WHAT ARE YOU HOPING FOR?

## INDIRA GOT ME A BOOK CALLED THE SURVIVOR'S GUIDE TO SEX.

I'm glad, because one day I hope I'll find someone special for a longer relationship, and for the kind of touching that I'm a big YES to...

10

WHO (AN YOU TALK TO ABOUT SEXUAL STUFF?)

?????

04

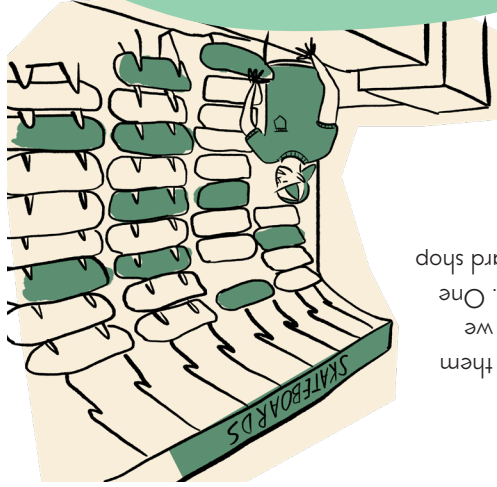
One day my brother started hassling me. He said since I'm gay I need to get a vaccine and Prep so I don't spread diseases to the family. I told him to fuck off and hung up on him. But then I wondered what those things are. I wasn't going to call him back to ask.

My family is pretty religious and they'd get mad. My homeshare lady Sheryl knows I'm gay but we don't talk about it much.

I LIKE IT, BUT I DON'T TELL PEOPLE.



ARE YOU ALLOWED TO HAVE A DATE IN YOUR HOME?



I don't think I'm allowed to have them hook up at their place or outside. One time I met a guy at the skateboarding shop and we had sex in his van.

SOMETIMES I MEET GUYS ON GRINDR.

03

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

02

A few years later I figured out I'm gay. I was lonely, but it's better now.

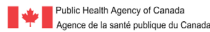
BACK IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PEOPLE SAID I HAVE A LEARNING DISABILITY.

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## SHELDON USES:



1-800-SEX-SENSE

1-800-739-7367 or 604 731 4252



## HI I'M SHELDON

I LIKE HAVING SEX WITH GUYS IN THE PARK.



## SHERYL LOOKED ONLINE

The vaccine and Prep protect against diseases: Monkeypox and HIV. Guys can get them for free if they have sex with other guys in parks or bathhouses, or if they have more than one boyfriend.



HOW DO YOU GET HEALTH INFO?

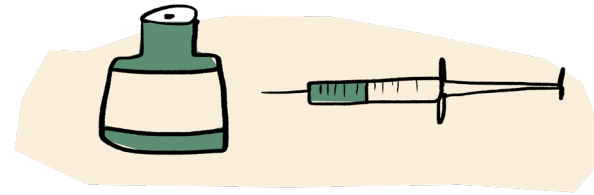
05

## I CALLED RICK. HE'S MY EX AND WE'RE FRIENDS NOW

We went to the HIM clinic on Davie St. I asked the doctor if Rick could come into the examination room with us and she said yes. I felt safe with him there so I told Dr. Wiebe about having sex in parks and stuff. She wasn't mad at all. She gave me a prescription for Prep to protect me from catching HIV and made an appointment for me to get some vaccines. She says it's up to me who I talk to about it. Doctors and nurses can't tell anyone what we talk about unless I say it's ok - not even my family or staff. That's the law.



08



But then Sheryl said I don't need Prep or a vaccine because I don't do any of that stuff. I was afraid that if I told her, she wouldn't let me go out by myself anymore.



06

## DR. WIEBE ALSO SAID MY BROTHER IS WRONG

I can't spread HIV to my family. It's passed by having sex, not by coughing or hugging or anything like that. If I have questions, I can ask at the clinic or call the Sex Sense Hotline. It's free and private and I won't get in trouble for asking anything.



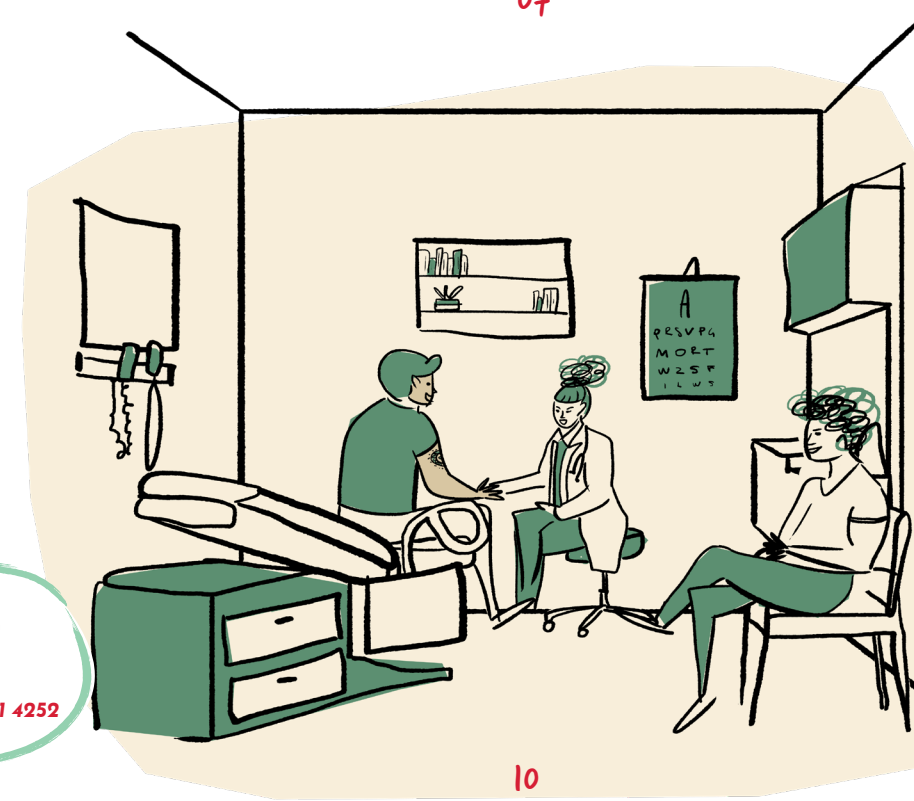
09



07

## SO I WENT TO THE VACCINE CLINIC ON MY OWN

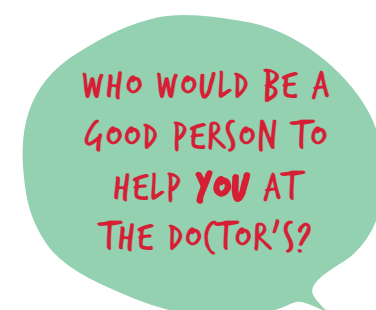
but then they asked me if I had sex in parks. I thought they'd be mad so I said no. Then they said I couldn't get the vaccine. I was confused but I didn't want to get in trouble so I left.



10

## RICK CAN'T GO TO APPOINTMENTS WITH ME EVERY TIME

but he says I don't have to keep going with Sheryl if I'd rather have someone else. There's a gay guy who works at the outreach office who might be better. I'm going to ask him.







WHO DO YOU HUG?

She was the best - funny, beautiful, and nice to me. She helped me enroll at college. And when I got that job, I gave her a huge hug.

I STARTED WITH JANIS AFTER I GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL

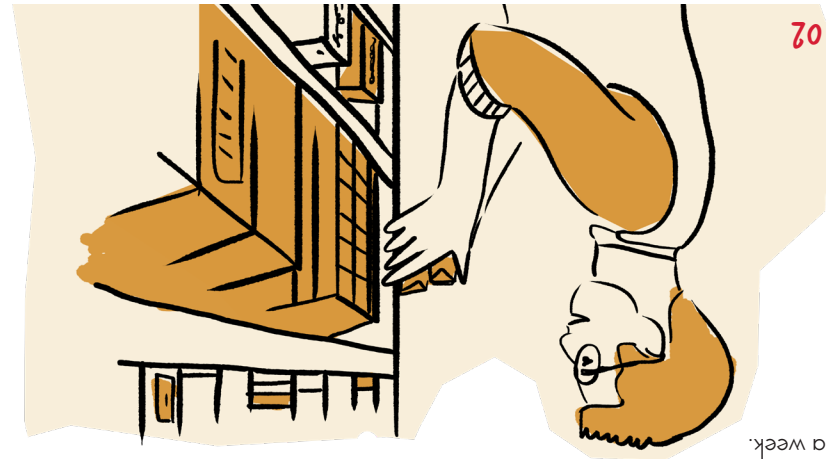
04



TUESDAY EVENINGS I GO TO THE TWENTY TO THIRTY (LUB AT THE DAY (CENTRE.

We do karaoke and watch movies and stuff like that. My first key worker Janis used to run it.

03



I LIVE WITH MY PARENTS, BUT I WANT TO MOVE OUT.

I'm taking a home budgeting course at the community college, and I work at the supermarket a couple of days a week.

02

## BRENDA IS MY KEYWORKER NOW.

She says we're not friends. Ugh - I'm not interested anyway. Brenda's a grouch, but she did help our club organize a speed dating event for next week. Some of the women might be girlfriend material. We'll see. I'm still upset about Janis. They say it gets easier. I hope so.



WHERE CAN YOU MEET PEOPLE WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN DATING YOU?

11

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12

## HI I'M LUKE

I'M INTO SCI-FI, SUPERHERO FILMS, AND WOMEN.



01

## MOST PEOPLE IGNORE ME. EITHER THAT OR THEY'RE MEAN. JANIS WAS DIFFERENT.

She smiled at me, paid attention to me, remembered things I said, and laughed at my jokes. They say if a woman does that, she probably wants to be your girlfriend. I liked Janis too, so I decided we should start dating. I dropped a few hints and she blushed and laughed, so I made a plan.



HOW CAN YOU TELL IF SOMEONE IS INTERESTED IN YOU ROMANTICALLY

05

## THEN JANIS SAID THAT IT WASN'T ABOUT BEING MY STAFF.

She just didn't want to be my girlfriend, period. She said it's part of her job to listen to me and be nice to me. She said she blushed and laughed when I hinted that I like her because she felt awkward and didn't know what to do.



HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO DATE SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T FEEL THE SAME WAY?

08

## I BROUGHT FLOWERS FROM THE GROCERY STORE TO THE DAY CENTER

I gave them to Janis and leaned in to kiss her - just like in the movies. She was really upset. She said I had to leave and that we'd discuss it later. I was surprised and sad.



HAVE YOU EVER KISSED SOMEONE? HOW DID IT GO?

06

## I FELT SO GROSS AND STUPID.

All these years she was just pretending to care about me. I told everyone at the meeting that if I can't date Janis then I want a love specialist to find me a girlfriend. They said there's no such thing. I asked why not? An employment specialist got me my job - and having a girlfriend is way more important to me.

WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

09

## THERE WAS A BIG MEETING WITH MY FAMILY AND JANIS AND MY SOCIAL WORKER.

I told Janis I was sorry. I thought she felt the same way about me. Janis said she's my staff so it's not right for us to date. I told her it was ok - I'd quit all the programs she runs so then she wouldn't be my staff anymore and we could be boyfriend and girlfriend instead.



07

## EVERYONE LAUGHED AND SAID IT WASN'T THAT SIMPLE.

I was so mad I kicked the table over and left. A week later Janis transferred to another department. I don't see her anymore. My social worker signed me up for a dating course with Laurel, and an anger management program.



10



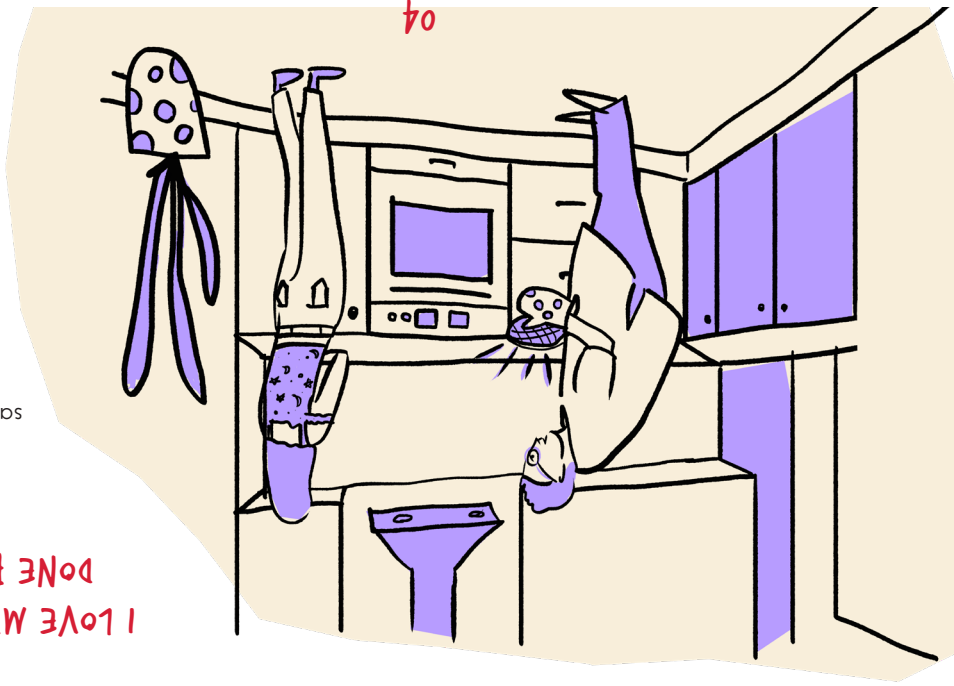
HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO DATE YOUR STAFF?



HAS SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT EVER GONE AWAY?

Whenever I mention being gay, she says I just haven't found the right guy. I don't know if I could ever bring a girlfriend home to meet her.

I LOVE MY GRANDMA AND ALL SHE'S DONE FOR ME, BUT SHE'S PRETTY OLD-FASHIONED.



She can't do much on her own, so I spend a lot of time taking care of her and keeping her company. I'm on a waitlist for a homeshare, but my case worker said it can take years!

EVEN THOUGH I'M IN MY 30S, I LIVE AT HOME WITH MY GRANDMA.

03

But I don't really care—lots of my friends are neurodivergent, too, so we understand each other pretty well.

I'M AUTISTIC, SO MY BRAIN WORKS DIFFERENTLY THAN MOST PEOPLE.



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MEL USES:

QMUNITY

BC'S QUEER, TRANS, AND TWO-SPIRIT RESOURCE CENTRE  
<https://qmunity.ca/>

CQC

<https://helloqcq.org/>

HI I'M MEL

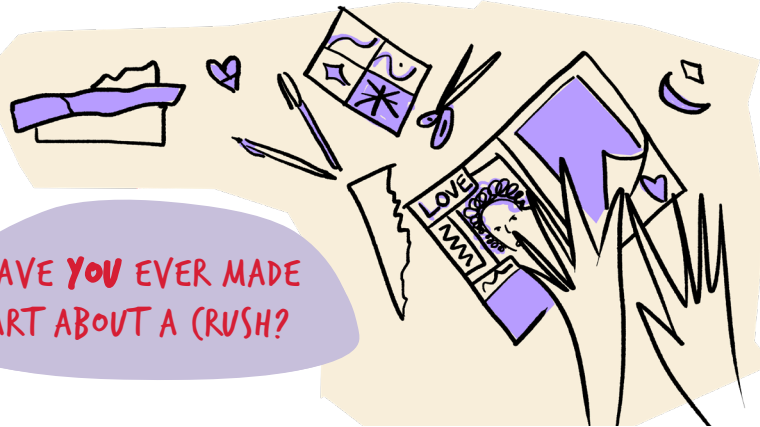
I'M INTO MAGIC THE GATHERING AND MAKING ZINES. I'M ALSO A LESBIAN.



01

## MY FRIENDS AND I LIKE TO PLAY BOARD GAMES AND MAKE ART.

I like to make zines - they're a little handmade magazine you can make with a photocopier. They can be about anything, but lately I've been making zines about video game characters and celebrities I have crushes on.



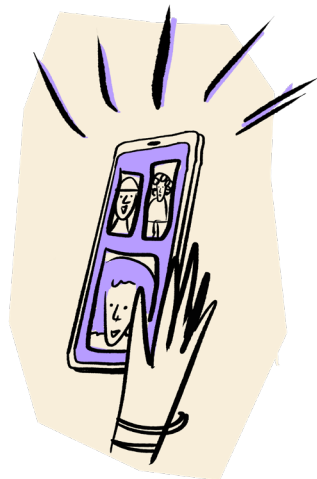
HAVE YOU EVER MADE ART ABOUT A CRUSH?

05

## I'VE STARTED GOING TO AUTISTIC QUEERS AND PEERS.

They're a peer support group at QMUNITY. We meet on Zoom and talk about whatever we want. It's nice, but it's not the same as hanging out in person.

This summer, I learned about Connecting Queer Communities (CQC). They're a social group for folks with cognitive disabilities who are 2SLGBTQIA+, curious, questioning, or who just wanna hang out in queer community.



08

## ONE TIME MY FRIEND'S BROTHER ASKED ME OUT.

I told him I was a lesbian and he said "that's hot". Then he asked me how I know I don't like guys if I've never dated one. I felt upset, so I left.

HAVE YOU EVER HAD TO EXPLAIN YOUR SEXUALITY?

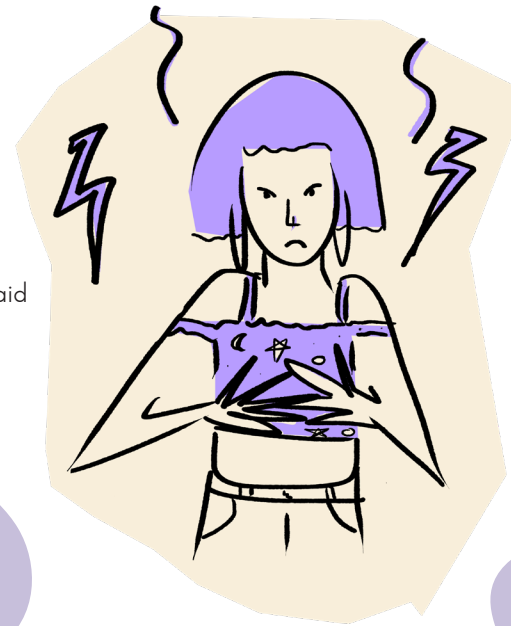
06

## I LIKE DOING COOL STUFF WITH PEOPLE WHO GET ME.

I'm on the Planning Group. We get paid to choose all the group events. We do picnics, Queer Movie Nights, and sometimes I even join them at drag shows (I bring my earplugs!) I live pretty far from a lot of queer events, and CQC even helps me with the cost of a taxi or Uber.



09



## I WANT TO FIND A GIRLFRIEND, BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW.

I don't go to clubs or bars, because I don't like loud spaces or people talking over each other. Plus, whenever I Google "where to meet queer people" in the city, it usually says I should go to Davie Village. That's mostly gay men! Where are the lesbian restaurants and cafes?

HOW DO YOU FIND PEOPLE FOR DATING AND ROMANCE?

07



10

## SOMEDAY SOON, I HOPE TO MOVE OUT AND FIND A GIRLFRIEND.

Maybe we can host board game nights at our apartment, or I can invite my grandma over for tea.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE FOR?