

You are a flower  
and I care for you

not because you are  
beautiful, but  
because I  
appreciate  
you



## You Are a Flower by Vincy Lim

This comic was created by Vincy Lim in collaboration with the Learning Network. It explores themes of self-expression, healing, and resilience, using a unique art style inspired by zine culture. The comic invites readers to reflect on their own experiences and find strength in sharing their stories.

### Optional Access to Additional Content

Scan the QR code below with your mobile device to access the comic transcript and audio recording. The comic transcript includes the comic's text alongside each page and the audio recording features the author reading the comic aloud.

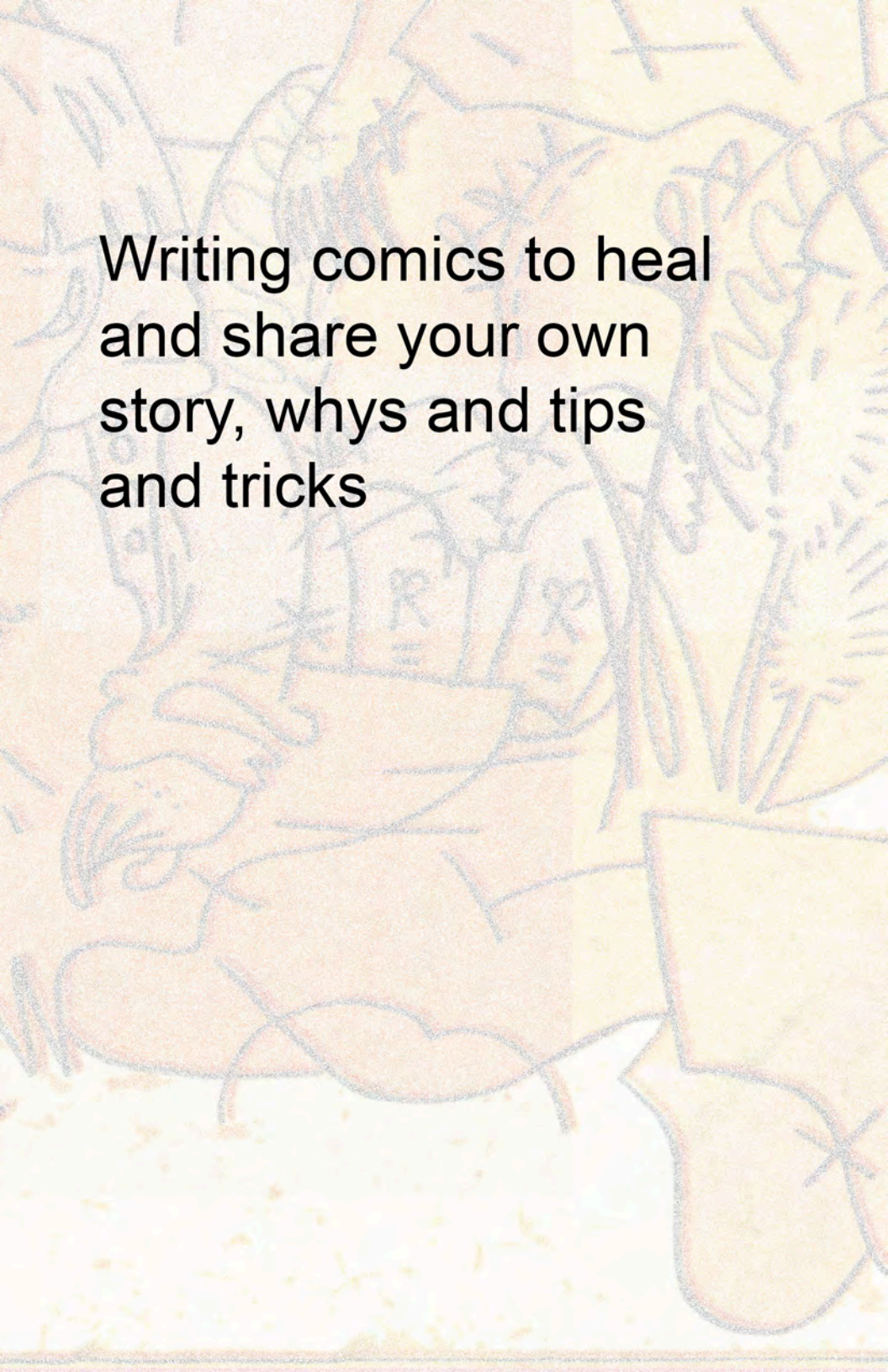


Access the transcript & audio here:

[gbvlearningnetwork.ca/our-work/comics/  
you-are-a-flower/index.html](https://gbvlearningnetwork.ca/our-work/comics/you-are-a-flower/index.html)

Scan here





Writing comics to heal  
and share your own  
story, whys and tips  
and tricks





I give  
myself  
a flower

I hold it like a  
prayer, to know  
that I am here  
and always  
have been.

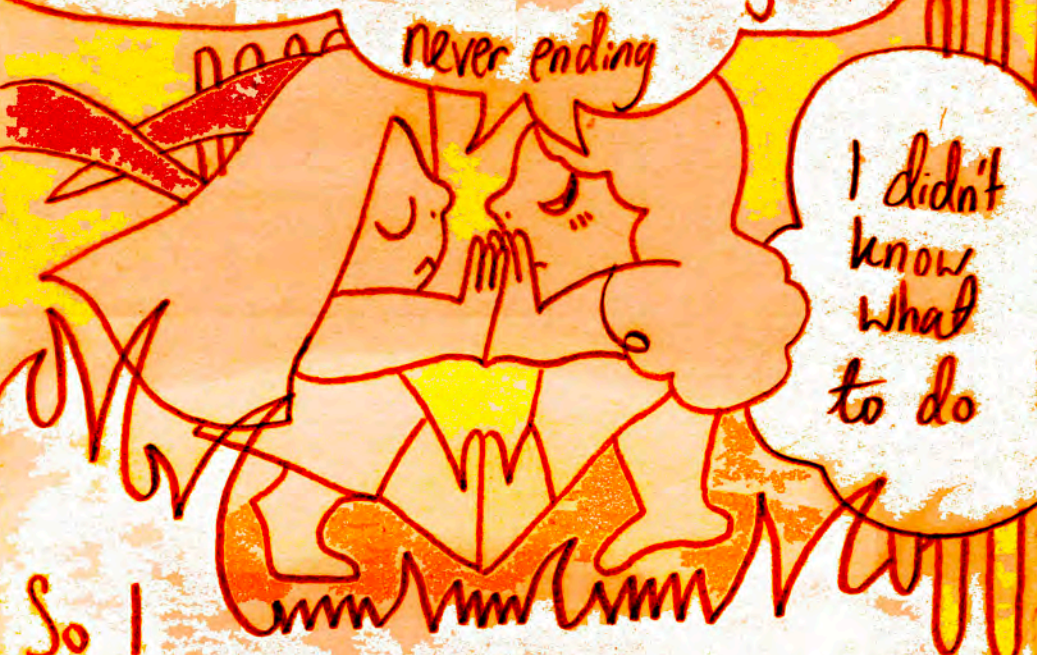
There is a  
house at the top  
of the hill, it is  
where I grow my  
flowers, this is  
my gift to you.

Because  
I care

And because I  
love you.




As a teen when the horrors felt  
never ending



I didn't  
know  
what  
to do

So I  
wrote a comic



In that comic I wrote that  
I was brave

In that comic I could  
say anything I wanted

Including the abuse





Including all  
the things my  
abusers told me  
to be quiet about

It was the one  
place they could not  
silence me



And as more  
people read that comic



My story became mine.

My story  
travelled from  
person to person.

My abusers were  
able to silence  
me (temporarily)

But—




They could not  
silence a community  
of people who cared



And in doing so, I became brave





More and more so  
other survivors  
would come up  
to me

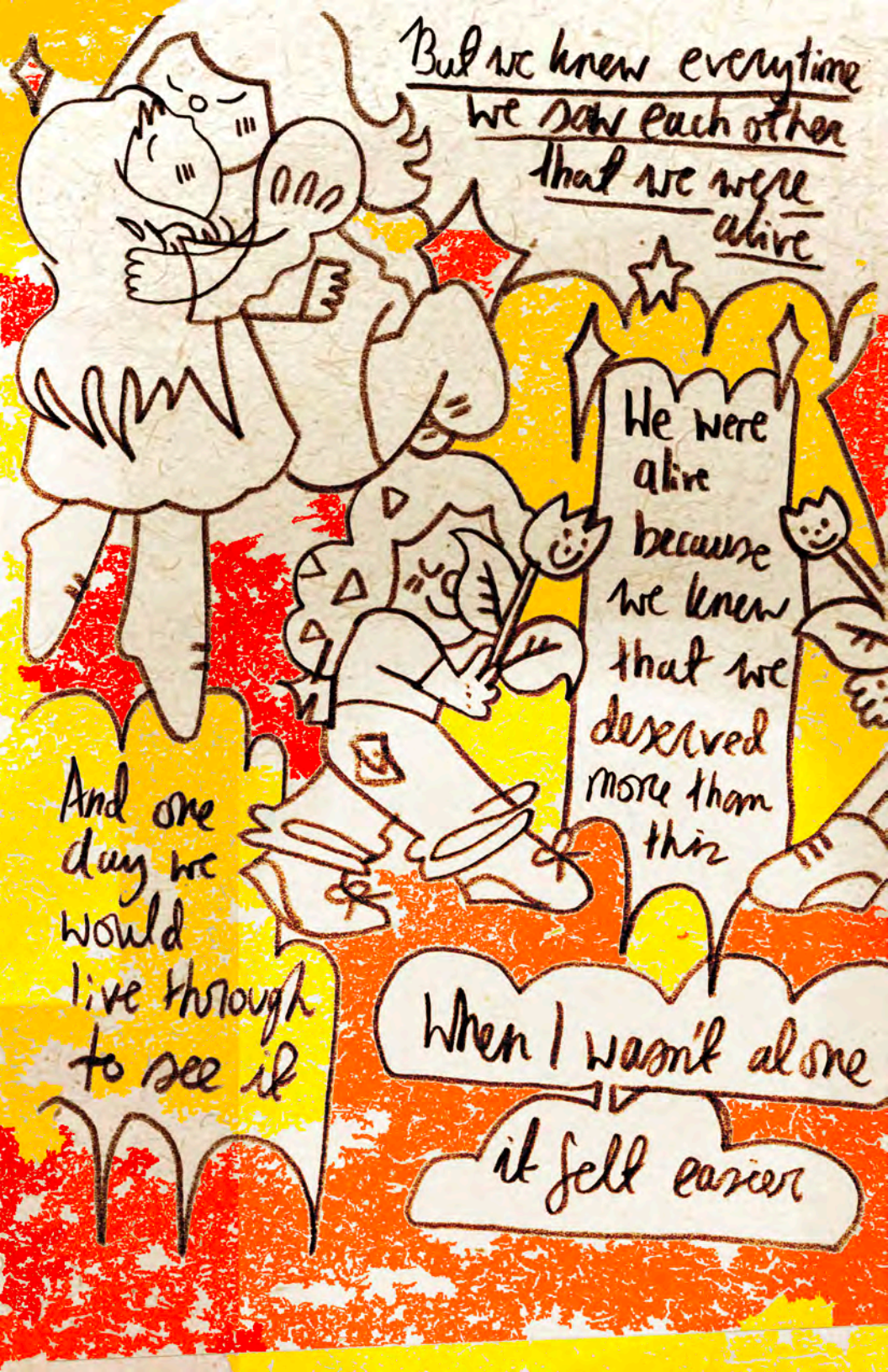
We had a shared  
sense of solidarity

A shared  
lived experience

We would nod  
on the streets

We would  
hold each  
other and cry






But we knew everytime  
we saw each other  
that we were  
alive

We were  
alive  
because  
we knew  
that we  
deserved  
more than  
this

And one  
day we  
would  
live through  
to see it

When I wasn't alone  
it felt easier





I don't think  
I was ever alone  
though

I just didn't  
know where to  
look

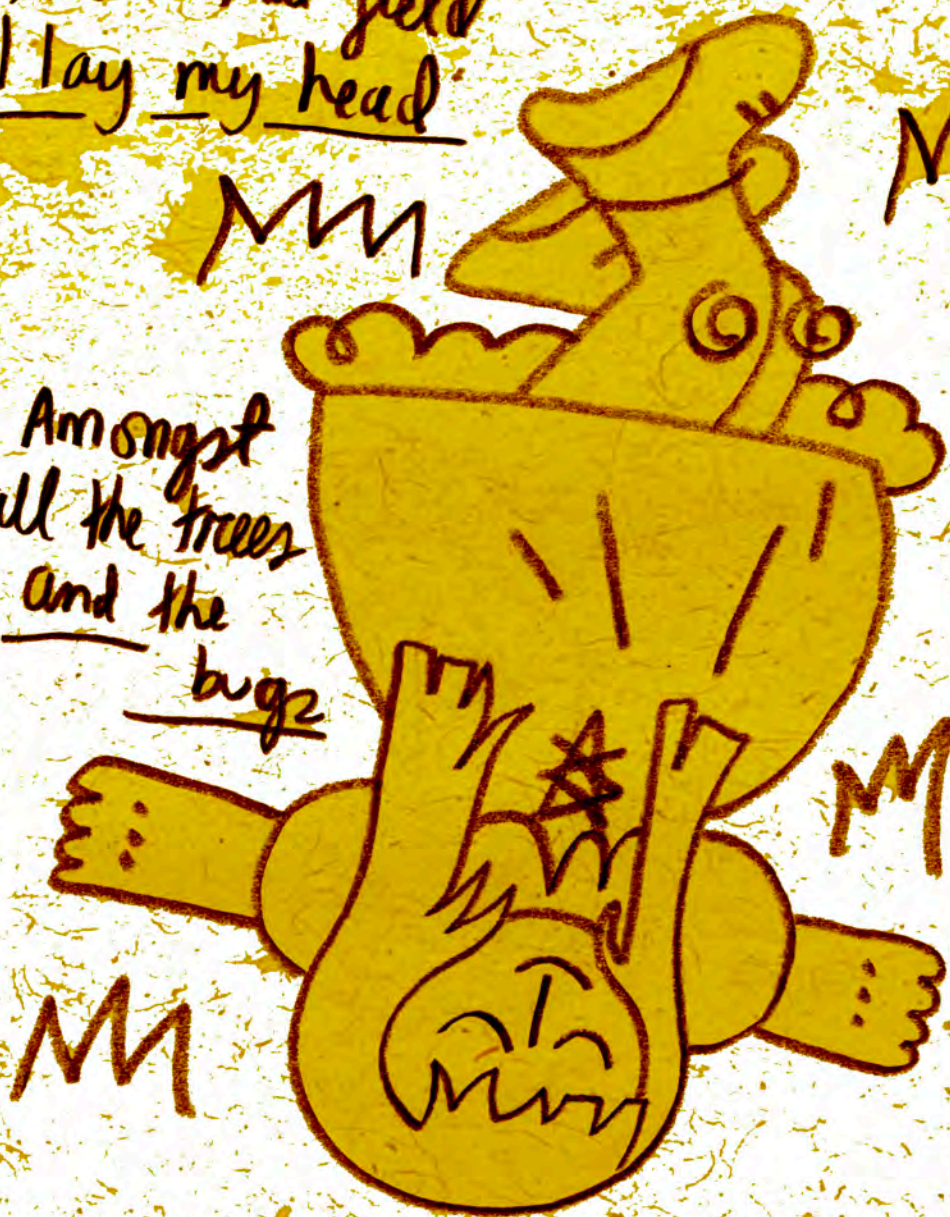
And now all  
I see is a field



And in that field  
I lay my head

Amongst  
all the trees  
and the  
bugs

And know I  
belong





I remember one survivor telling  
me that they read my zine so much it




-became old and  
worn, stained  
with tears

and loved so  
dearly




Another told  
me that they  
put my  
work on their  
Windowsill so every morning they'd  
wake up and know  
we were surviving together








And it  
became okay



It became  
okay for us all

Because  
our stories  
and existence  
meant something

It was  
bigger than  
words and  
drawings  
on a page



It was a  
community  
of people  
saying, 'I  
care about you'




And with that care  
came freedom

I left

And I  
cried  
deeply

I am happy now





Be stubborn with  
your freedom  
and know

you are deserving

You are deserving

You are deserving

You are deserving



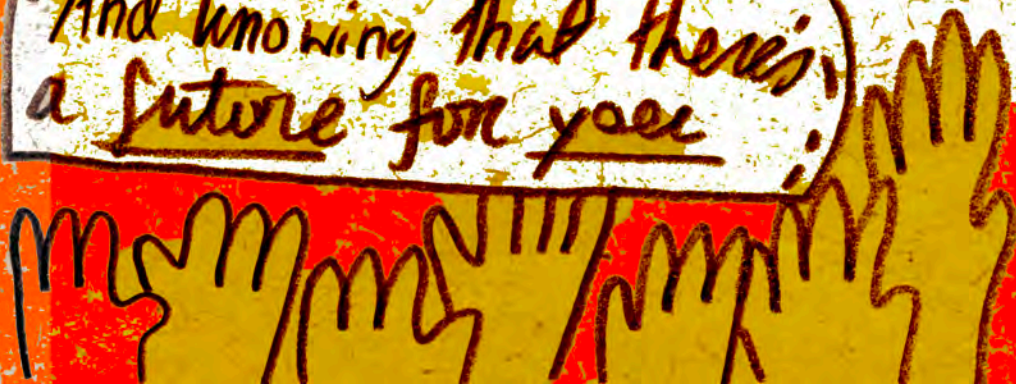
When you write,  
write freely

Write  
knowing  
you are  
deserving  
of love



Write knowing your  
past, your present

And knowing that there's  
a future for you







That things will shift  
and change

And find  
hope and peace  
in that



you do not  
always have  
to be positive.

but knowing that there  
is hope —

— I want you to write  
with hope



Know that  
when you draw  
the world is before  
you

Every mark  
you create is  
yours that

you have birthed  
into the world

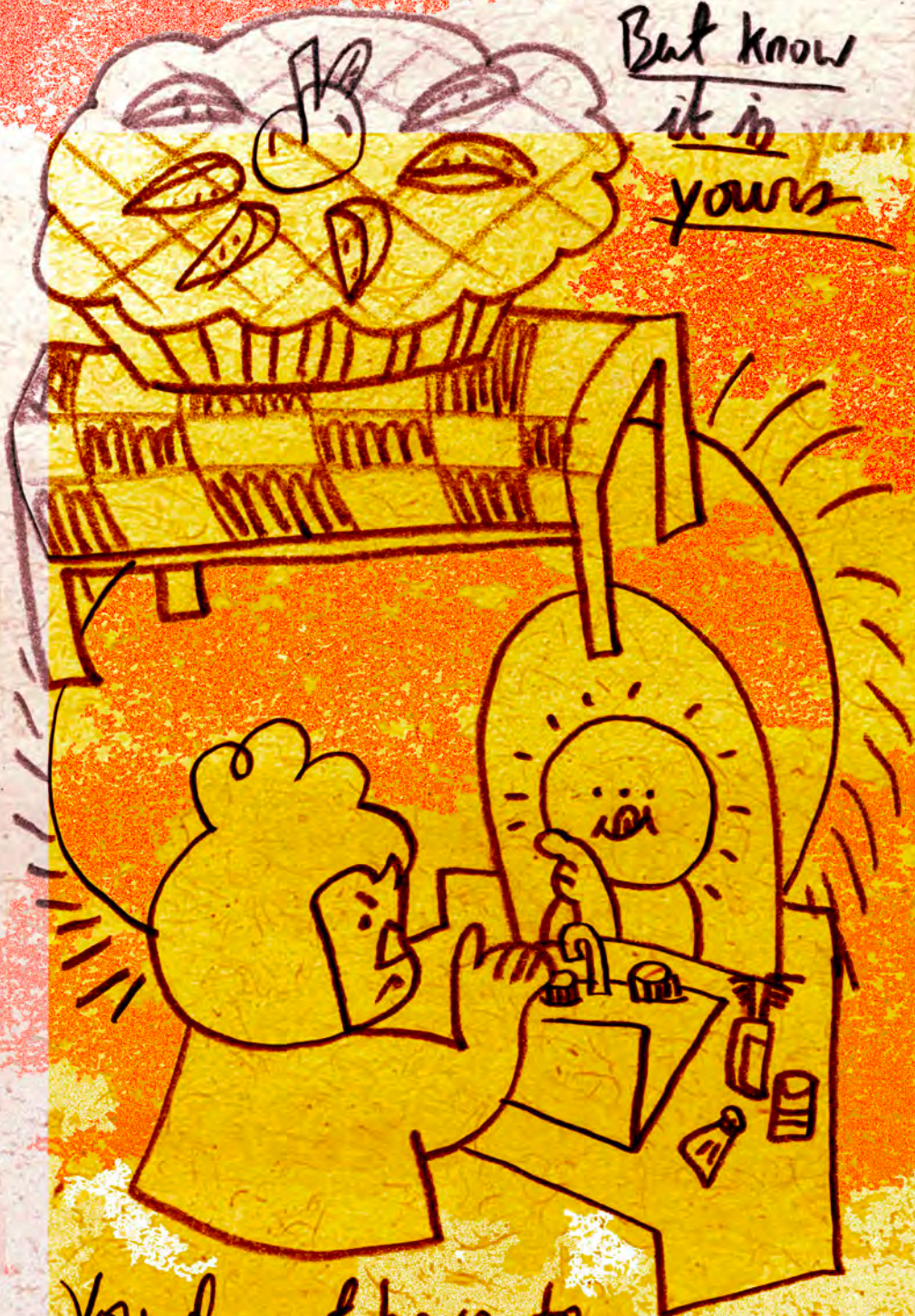
And it can be ugly

Just like your  
emotions they  
can be rough, harsh,  
and crude






But know  
it is  
yours



You do not have to  
please anybody






Pace yourself

Pace yourself  
& hold yourself dear

You do not  
need to write  
trauma unless  
you feel

comfortable with it





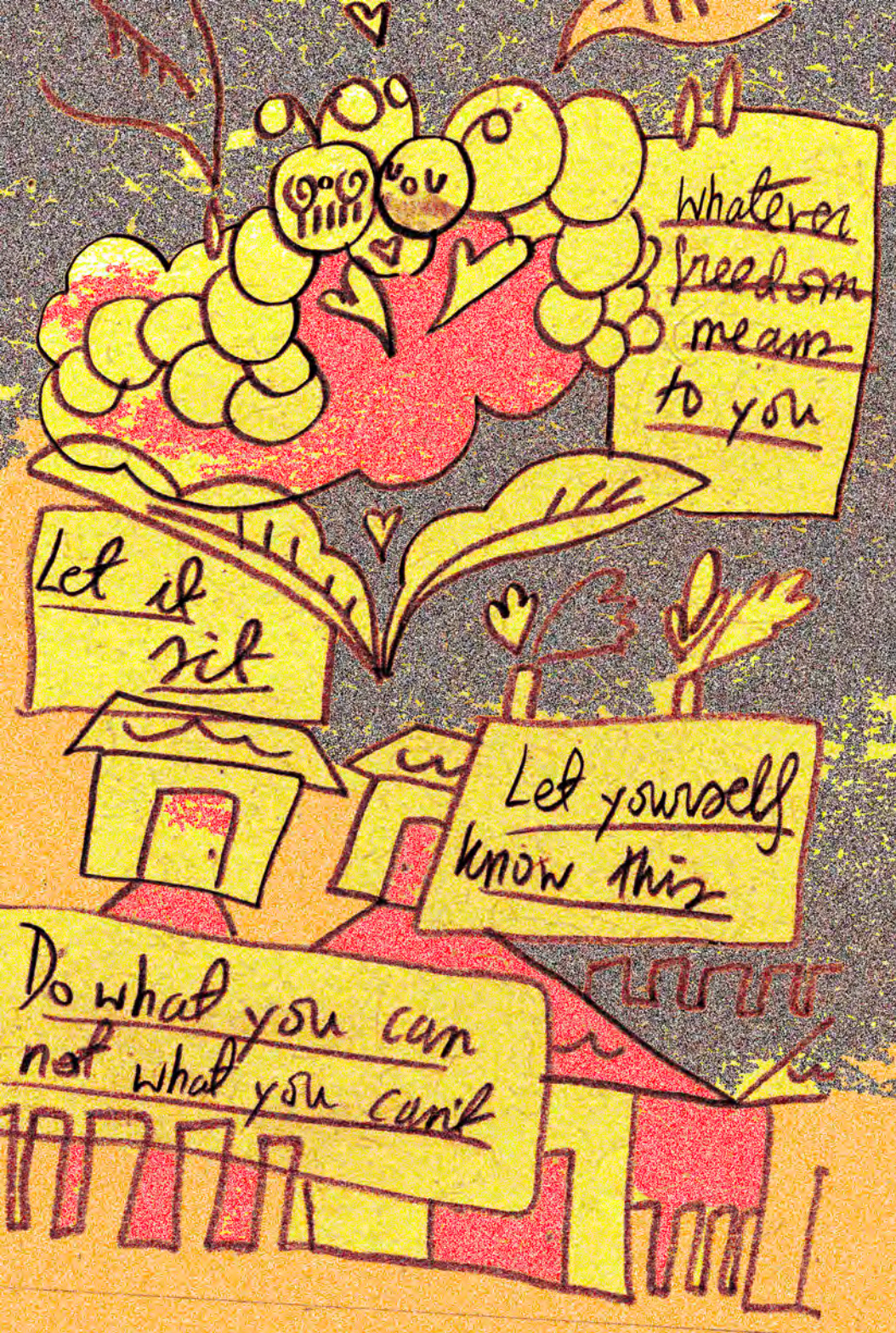
you do not need  
to tell your story  
until you are ready

you can  
write stories of  
cats fighting warlocks  
until the end

of time

you can let yourself  
be free





Whatever  
freedom  
means  
to you

Let it  
sit

Let yourself  
know this

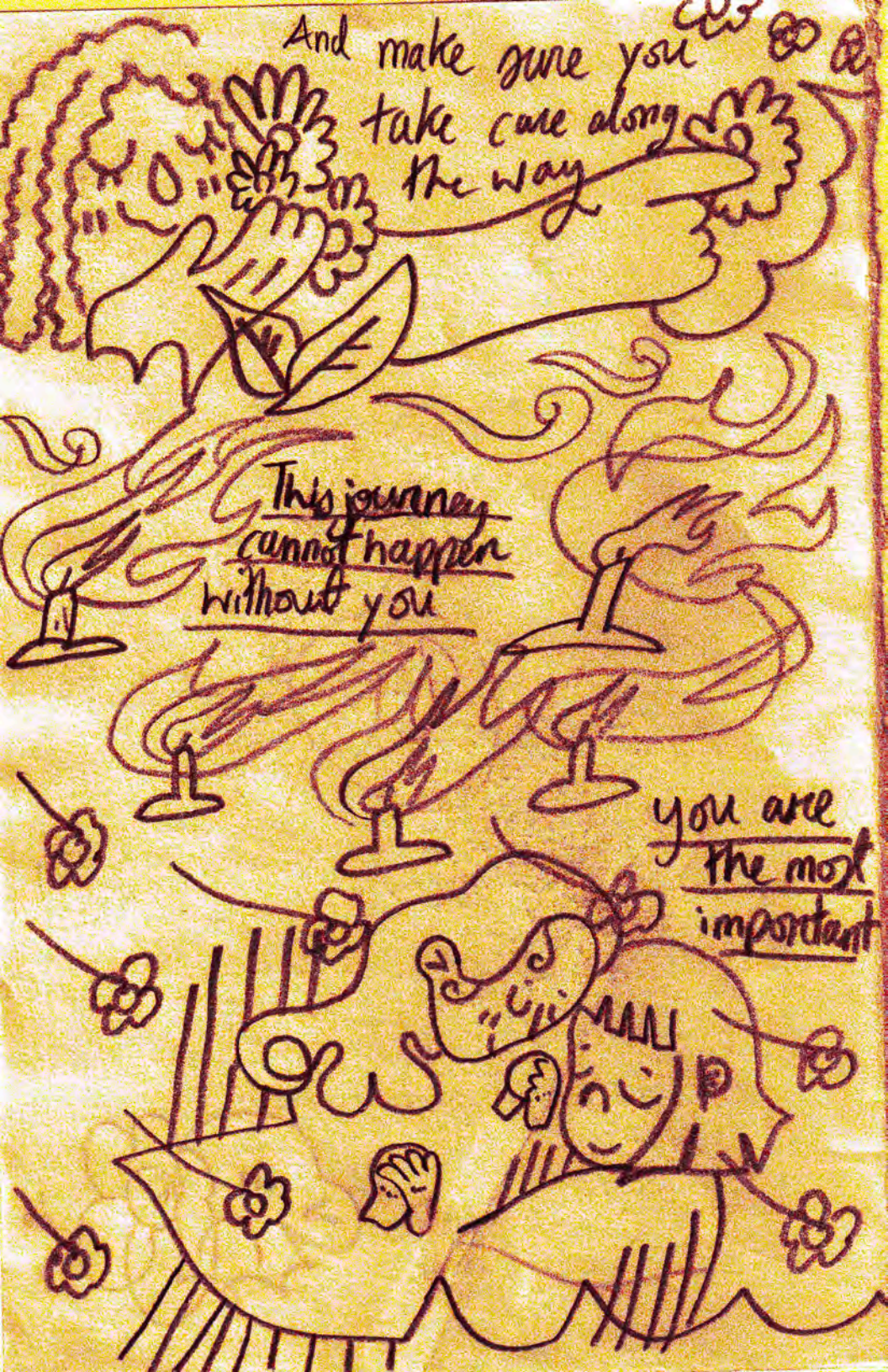
Do what you can  
not what you can't



And make sure you  
take care along  
the way

This journey  
cannot happen  
without you

you are  
the most  
important





when you  
create, you create for  
yourself

and  
sometimes,

for others

Still  
you can  
become all  
powerful in your  
creations





You can create  
for yourself  
and nobody  
else

you can  
even burn  
your creations

You have moved  
on from your past  
and trauma

And you are moving  
forward







But  
you can also  
share and see  
what happens

See if  
others  
will say

"And I see you"

Maybe just like myself  
You can make your own  
community





Create  
from  
the  
heart

When I create  
I write — my writing impacts  
my drawing

Going into it  
with no plan



Become grounded  
and contained  
into a feasible  
tangible form

So my thoughts,  
jumbled and cruel  
to me

That I can  
read and access

And realize how to  
process and change



To grow

It's all about  
growth



At the end of the day -



-we are all  
laying down

on this bed  
of flowers


In luscious fields  
unafraid of the bugs

we watch the  
clouds



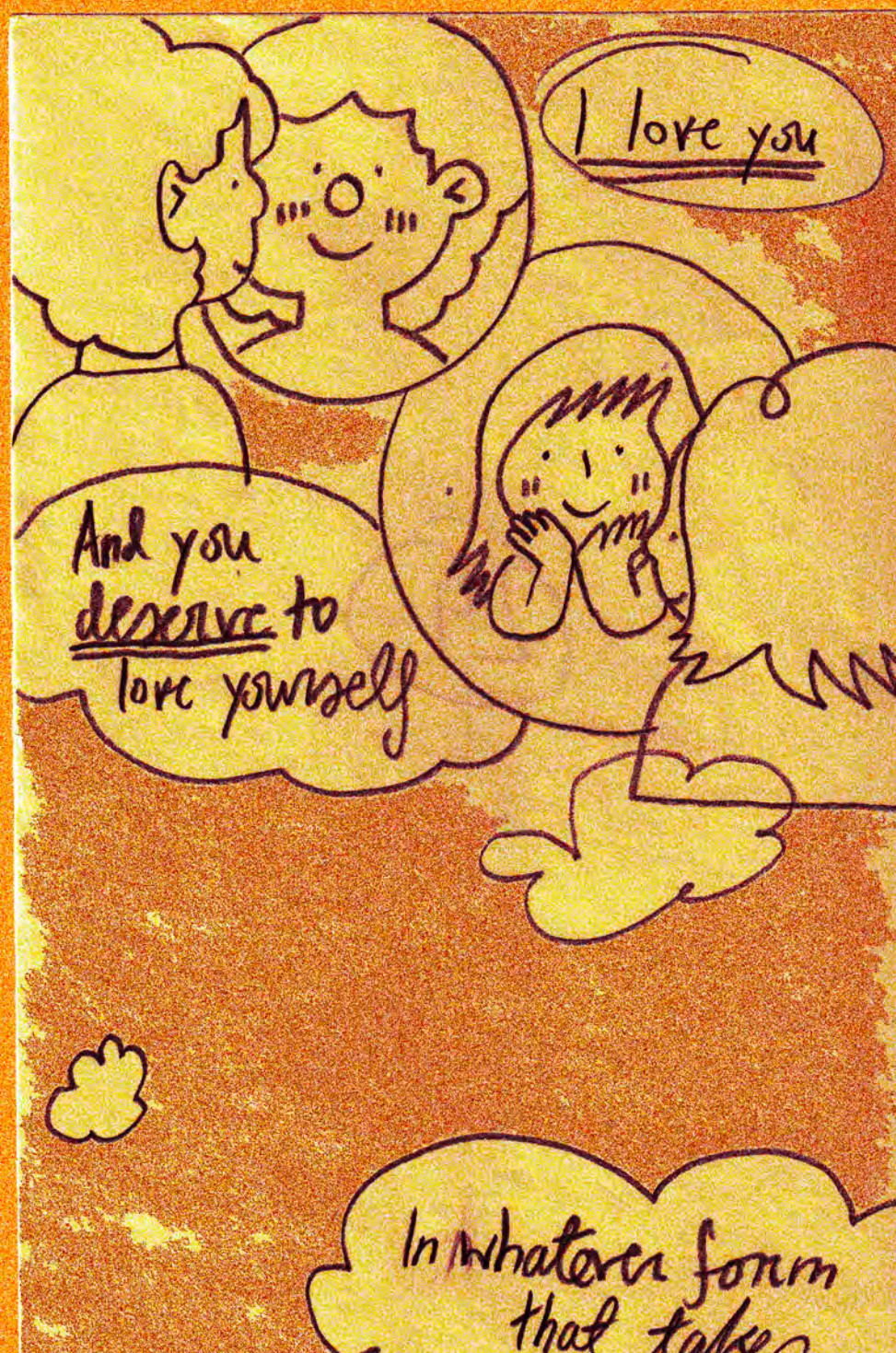
And we feel loved

And I tell you that I love you



Even if we have never met





I love you

And you  
deserve to  
love yourself

In whatever form  
that takes



0	With Warmth and care,
0	
0	Vinny



Thank you for reading "You are a flower.." first and foremost!! :) This is a comic in collaboration with Learning Network at Western University (Thank you for taking a chance on me!) <3 It's been such a fun journey creating this comic! I wanted to talk a little bit about the art style I use in this comic, as it's an interesting one for comics for sure.

As you've probably noticed, the colouring is splotty, grainy, and imperfect. It's intentionally done that way to pay homage to the origins of zine culture, something I really adore. Which is, in short, marginalized people not seeing themselves in publishing and creating self-published works that represented them. It was a way for marginalized people to share their voices, their stories, their passions and woes to the world without being hushed down. Which feels very aligned with speaking out against abuse and sharing one's story in my opinion. Zines are imperfect, and I think they're beautiful for that. I love their photocopied, messy and smudged looks. How sometimes they're a bit pixelated, but we love them all the same. Because self-published works like zines mean something to people! It means so much to us because sometimes, still to this day, we can't find works that speak to us about what we want to see in the world, and it's comforting to know that anybody and everybody can just...make a thing! And be that person to make that thing!



A lot of my imagery is pretty naive too, I really enjoy working in such a loose almost childish style of drawing, it makes the drawings feel like anybody could do this, draw and share your story through comics! It makes it less intimidating and more approachable. Something easy, simple, and clear to understand. As well, when drawing heavy content my simple drawings make it easier to feel okay. Personally, when drawing heavy subjects I don't want to ever visually depict actual violence, ever. So instead I draw my feelings and emotions surrounding these topics. There is no sense of time because of the lack of panel structures, which is something I always find interesting. It's fun to explore and experiment! I love it very much! It's also reassuring to make comics that are a bit "simple," just bucket tool dropping colours simple, and nice to know it never has to be "beautiful" because it's existence, our existence, is beautiful already.

That's about it! Thank you again for reading through this, I hope it keeps you safe and warm. I look forward to reading your comics into the future if you choose to make them! I will display them proudly in my bookshelf <3

With love,  
Vincy



Vincy (they) is a Chinese Canadian non-binary lesbian disabled award-winning cartoonist, multimedia illustrator, and workshop programmer. Blurring the line between memories, the subconscious, and day to day actions, they create dreamy worlds which we are invited into for an intimate heart to heart conversation. Striving for community care and connection for survivors by a fellow survivor, growing and learning to love and accept the love given to them wholeheartedly.

As an escapee of abuse, human trafficking, and attempted murder, Vincy wishes to highlight the ability to move onwards and feel content with one's life despite their past or current situations. They strive to create artwork and stories that speak to those who are living in fear, both in and out of abuse, and let them know that there is hope and happiness at the end of it all.

Vincy currently lives happily with their friends and their feisty loving cat Whisper and no longer thinks it is a curse to be alive, in fact, they are excited to live their life for many more years to come with the loving support of their found family and communities.

~

Vincy Lim 2025

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Made in loving collaboration with Learning Network <3



## Acknowledgements

The Learning Network would like to thank guest author and comic illustrator, Vincy Lim, for their time, expertise, and creativity in bringing this project to life.

## Guest author and comic illustrator:

Vincy Lim

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[www.gbvlearningnetwork.ca/our-work/comics/you-are-a-flower/index.html](http://www.gbvlearningnetwork.ca/our-work/comics/you-are-a-flower/index.html).

## More about the Learning Network

The Learning Network is a knowledge mobilization initiative that bridges the gap between current gender-based violence (GBV) research, practice-based knowledge, and lived experience to enhance the capacity of the GBV sector and movement (e.g., legal help, shelter support, advocacy, education, sexual assault counselling). This knowledge is essential to preventing violence across diverse communities, supporting survivors and allies, and promoting gender equity.

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