

# DEAR PARTICIPANTS,

A COLLECTION OF MESSAGES FROM PEOPLE WHO HAVE ENGAGED WITH INSIGHT EXCHANGE TO PARTICIPANTS WHO SHARED THEIR LIVED EXPERIENCE INSIGHTS

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The decision to share your insights and lived experiences of gendered violence and abuse is one I am sure that you did not make lightly. Some of us find it very difficult to share our stories, even in deidentified ways, for safety or livelihood reasons, and I cannot thank you enough for giving voice and clarity to the deliberate harm and ongoing impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence. There is nothing more moving and motivating, personally and professionally, than knowing that you are not alone.

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I cannot thank those who have shared their insights from lived experience enough. These resources and narratives have been shared within our organisation and a key part of our workplace response to domestic family violence and abuse.

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To the women who bravely told their stories about personal experiences with domestic violence and sexualised violence, I thank you. Thanks for trusting me to interpret your stories visually so others can learn from our experiences.

Your lived experience narratives were embedded deep inside me as I made the artworks, during the waking hours, sometimes occupying my thoughts all day, in both conscious and subconscious thought realms.

Together we are driving the change through powerful visual tropes which enables another layer to better understanding domestic violence and sexualised violence.

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Your bravery and generosity is so greatly appreciated and valued. You have a unique and critical role in being central to the development of services through sharing your valuable knowledge and expertise. By hearing your voice, we are able to change services and systems to better support survivors.

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Thank you for sharing your lived experience narratives. Your contributions are so significant. I have read all of the narratives and have been moved by all of them.

Your experiences hold me to account and sharpen my commitment to doing what I can to end domestic, family and sexualised violence.

Your knowledge is greater and more useful than many of the university courses I have completed. Your voice and your resistance matters!

Thank you for your generosity - you are making a difference in the field of domestic, family and sexualised violence and to other victims/survivors.

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Thank you for sharing your experience. It has been invaluable in so many ways. In my own learning and understanding through your experience I was able to see and feel situations differently (both personally and professionally).

Each and every story I read touched me and influenced me in a different but valuable way. To support others we work with to feel not so alone, or unusual, or strange in their experience. To influence and change the way we deliver services and programs to better respond to victim/survivors and people who use violence. To give us a platform and an experience to share when we are trying to influence others to challenge misconceptions and to better respond to victim/survivors and people who use violence.

Having a real life story to refer someone to has meant so much more and had a greater impact than talking about theory's or philosophies. It really gets the message across when you have something tangible to reflect on that it is real, it happened and we need to take stock and learn from this for the sake of so many others

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I want to say that through your generous, heartfelt and truth-telling of your experiences, the women who encounter these resources will see themselves reflected in a way they have never before. I trialled the proof of concept of the Resistance and Dignity (RaD) program in December last year with a group of women doing our existing DV program (Out of the Dark). The staff member and facilitator of OOTD sent me this feedback a few days later.

*"...they told me that they spent the whole weekend thinking about resistance and all the times that they demonstrated that 'little fire' within them. They used to think that 'trying to get away' or 'putting up a little bit of a fight' but then not following through was a sign of weakness, but they now have recognised that this was the little fire within them that never stopped burning – wow, right?! Very much looking forward to seeing this program in action! Thanks again for taking the time to come and see the women, they enjoyed every moment"*

So my final word to all of you is that your experiences and strength are lighting little sparks and fires in even the most hard to reach, dark corners of our community.... Thank you.



## INSIGHT EXCHANGE

**Insight Exchange** centres on the expertise of people with lived experience of domestic and family violence and gives voice to these experiences.

**Insight Exchange** is designed to inform and strengthen social, service and systemic responses to domestic and family violence.

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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our work and services operate and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We extend this respect to all First Nations peoples across the country and the world. We acknowledge that the sovereignty of this land was never ceded. Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

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Launched in November 2017, Insight Exchange was designed by Domestic Violence Service Management (DVSM), in collaboration with Dr Linda Coates and Dr Allan Wade from Centre for Response-Based Practice Canada.

Insight Exchange has been established, developed and is governed by Domestic Violence Service Management (DVSM) a registered charity (ABN 26 165 400 635).

Insight Exchange has been sustained through the generous donations of individuals and a silent donor for the benefit of many.

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Insight Exchange is for all people. Insight Exchange respects the diversity of all sexualities and gender identities including but not limited to; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and A-Sexual + identities as well as Heterosexual and Cisgender identities.

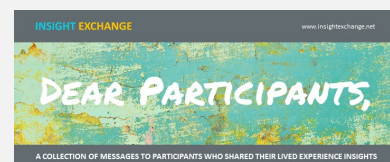
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### Acknowledgements and thanks

We would like to thank all contributors, critical friends and communities, who have engaged directly or indirectly with Insight Exchange.

We would like to thank Dr Linda Coates and Dr Allan Wade and their colleagues at the Centre for Response-Based Practice, Canada for their visionary and pioneering work on social responses, resistance, language, and the upholding of dignity.

**Most significantly, our thanks go to all people with lived experience of domestic and family violence who have generously shared their insights for the benefit of others.**



### ADD TO THE COLLECTION



Please use the Insight Exchange **Contact Us** page to add your comments to the collection of messages to participants who have shared their lived experience insights.

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[www.insightexchange.net/contact-us/](http://www.insightexchange.net/contact-us/)

