

Official Handbook

# Love doesn't Hurt

6-16th July 2024

2023-3-BG01-KA152-YOU-000170512

# Progleed Bulgaria

# ***INTRODUCTION***

LOVE DOESN'T HURT was designed to educate and empower young people from North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Spain, and Romania. By focusing on healthy relationships, dismantling patriarchal stereotypes, and addressing gender-based violence, the project aimed to foster a more inclusive and respectful society.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. **Promote Healthy Relationships:** introduction to Tantra principles for fostering respect and well-being and challenging and overcoming patriarchal prejudices.
2. **Support Personal Development:** teaching how specific behaviors can positively influence personal growth and chakra development in relationships.
3. **Raise Awareness of Gender-Based Violence:** providing tools for offering emotional support to victims.
4. **Understand Patriarchal Stereotypes:** analyzing the needs behind stereotypes regarding sexuality and their relevance today.
5. **Community Impact:** developing practical skills to challenge stereotypes and support LGBTQ+ issues.

## **MODULES**

1. **Toxic vs. Healthy Relationships:** understanding and challenging personal attitudes and beliefs.
2. **Impact of Patriarchy and Matriarchy:** exploring historical influences on relationships.
3. **Communication and Chakras:** developing negotiation skills and understanding chakra impacts.
4. **Types of Violence and Support:** learning about victims' rights, emotional support, and legal resources.
5. **Challenging Gender Stereotypes:** promoting understanding of gender roles and LGBTQ+ issues.
6. **Practical Community Skills:** preparing participants to make a positive impact in their communities.

# ***TOXIC BEHAVIORS IN RELATIONSHIPS AND HOW TO RECOGNISE THEM***

A toxic relationship is characterized by behaviors and dynamics that are harmful, damaging, and detrimental to the well-being of individuals involved. This can include emotional abuse, manipulation, control, jealousy, disrespect, and lack of trust. Toxic relationships often bring out the worst in people and can cause long-term physical and psychological harm. It is important to recognize the signs of a toxic relationship and seek support to safely end the harmful dynamic.

**Warning signs and abusive behaviors:** 1 - Ignoring you: on days when you are in a bad mood/when things don't go their way 2 - Blackmailing you: if you refuse to do something 3 - Humiliating you: belittling you 4 - Manipulating you: to force you to do or say something 5 - Feeling jealous: of everything you do/of everyone else that you dedicate your time to 6 - Controlling: where you go and how you look 7 - Violating your privacy: looking through your phone or tracking your location 8 - Isolating you: distancing you from your family and friends 9 - Intimidating you: saying you've lost your mind and instilling fear



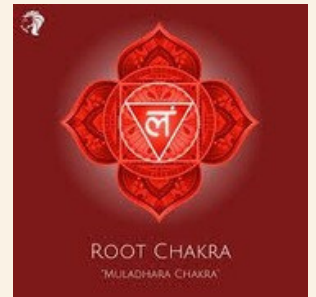


# ***Behaviours through which we can develop our chakras***

Developing and balancing the chakras involves adopting behaviors and practices that align with the energies and qualities of each chakra. Here are some behaviors and practices for each of the seven main chakras:

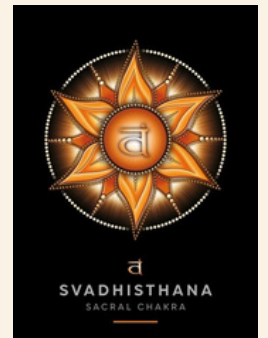
## **Root Chakra (Muladhara)**

- Grounding Exercises: spend time in nature, walk on grass.
- Physical Activity: engage in regular exercise, yoga, or dancing.
- Security and Stability: focus on financial stability.
- Mindfulness: practice mindfulness and body awareness.



## **Sacral Chakra (Svadhithana)**

- Creativity: engage in creative activities like painting or music. Emotional Expression: feel and express emotions freely.
- Healthy Relationships: positive and balanced relationships.
- Enjoyment: indulge in activities that bring joy and pleasure.



## **Solar Plexus Chakra (Manipura)**

- Self-Confidence: personal goals, positive affirmations.
- Self-Discipline: develop routines and practice self-control.
- Personal Power: take responsibility for your actions.
- Digestive Health: balanced diet and have a good gut health.



## **Heart Chakra (Anahata)**

- Compassion: practice kindness and empathy.
- Forgiveness: let go of grudges and practice forgiveness.
- Self-Love: engage in self-care and nurture self-love.
- Relationships: build loving and supportive relationships.



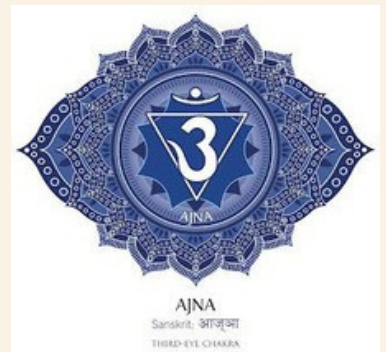
## Throat Chakra (Vishuddha)

- Communication: clear and honest communication.
- Expression: express yourself creatively.
- Listening: be a good listener and honor others' perspectives.
- Truth: speak your truth and live authentically.



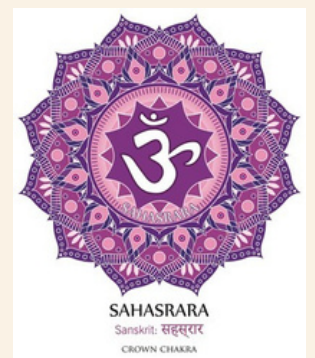
## Third Eye Chakra (Ajna)

- Intuition: trust and develop your intuition.
- Visualization: practice visualization techniques.
- Awareness: cultivate mindfulness and self-awareness.
- Learning: do activities that stimulate the mind.



## Crown Chakra (Sahasrara)

- Spiritual Practice: engage in meditation, prayer, or spiritual study.
- Connection: foster a sense of connection with the universe.
- Mindfulness: practice mindfulness and presence in everyday life.
- Service: engage in selfless service and acts of kindness.

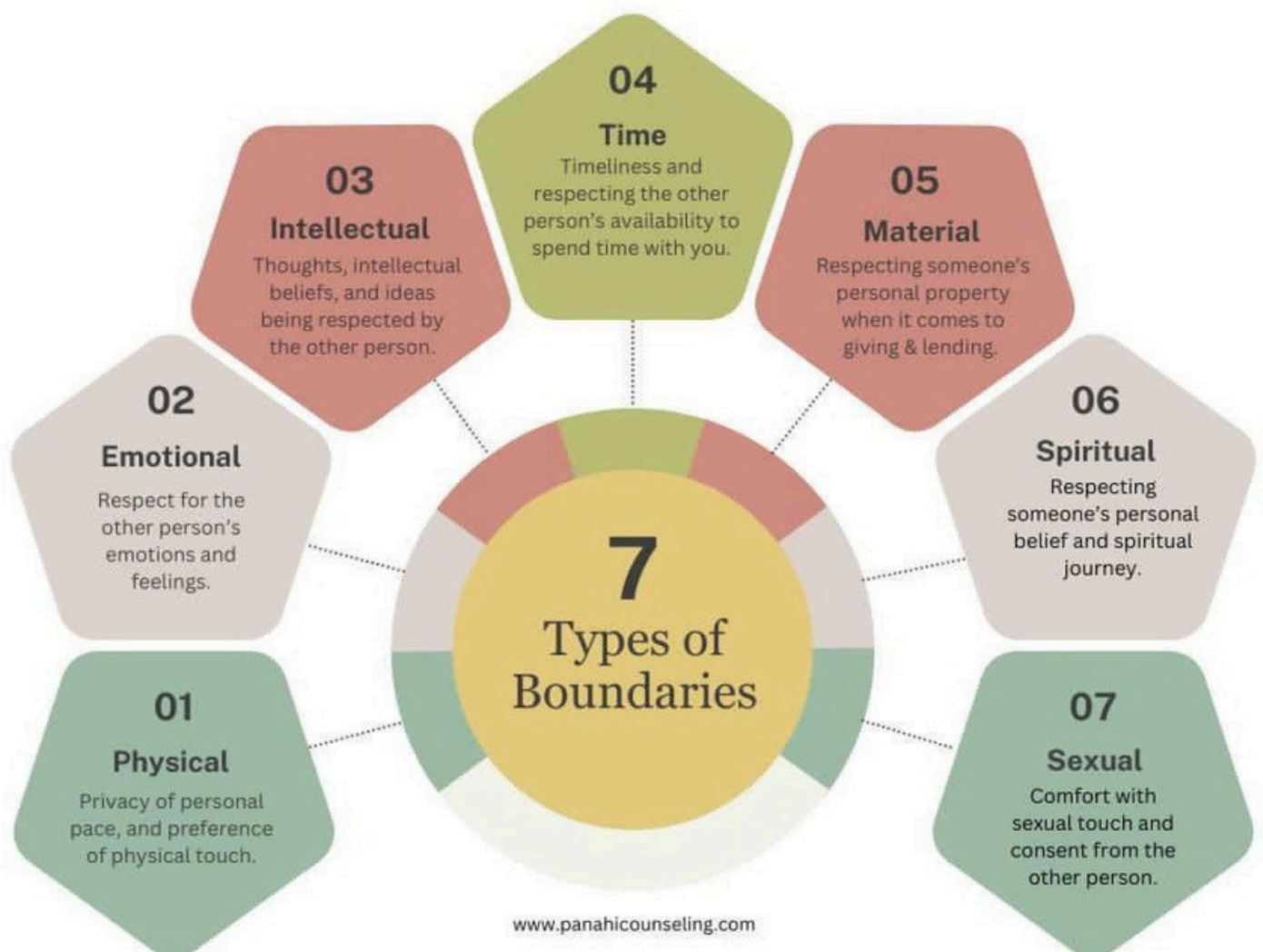


Integrating these behaviors into your daily life can help balance and develop each chakra, leading to overall well-being and harmony.

# ***Understanding and communicating healthy boundaries***

Understanding and communicating healthy boundaries is essential for having respectful and fulfilling relationships.

Boundaries are the limits we set to protect our physical, emotional, and mental well-being. They help define what we are comfortable with and how we expect others to treat us.



Boundaries can be physical, such as personal space and touch; emotional, such as how much personal information we share; and mental, such as respecting differing opinions and beliefs.

Communicating boundaries effectively involves clarity and assertiveness. It's important to express boundaries clearly and calmly, using "I" statements to convey personal feelings without blaming others. Boundaries can also range from being rigid and strict to appearing almost nonexistent. If you have more rigid boundaries, you might:

- keep others at a distance
- seem detached, even with intimate partners
- have few close relationships
- avoid close relationships

# HOW TO SET HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

## 1. LISTEN TO YOURSELF

Begin by listening to yourself. What's important to you? What are your needs? Are you feeling any resentment, anger or discomfort? These feelings are a sign of poor boundaries.

## 2. LEARN TO SAY NO

Give yourself permission to say 'no'. It's absolutely okay to say no! You don't need to overexplain, debate or defend yourself.

## 3. ALLOW ROOM FOR FLEXIBILITY

Know that boundaries can be flexible. It's a balance: too rigid, you risk isolation; too soft, you risk exploitation. It comes back to applying Step 1 and knowing the situation before you. You'll wobble - and that's okay! Perfection is not what we're seeking here, but progress towards healthy living.



# ***Understanding and supporting victims of domestic and gender-based violence***

Firstly, we visited the police station in smoljan. Where one of the policemen held a presentation about domestic violence in the town. The following day, we used the previously gained knowledge to make our own leaflets on domestic abuse, in order to continue the process of educating others on the topic and also encourage domestic abuse victims to stand up for themselves. Lastly, during the meeting with members the LGBTQ+ community and the workshop- river of my gender, people shared their experiences and told stories about times when people were acting violent towards them.





**What did we learn?** Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior in a relationship that is used to gain or maintain power over another person. This doesn't just include physical abuse, it can also be in the form of emotional, psychological, sexual or financial abuse.

If a person is experiencing domestic violence they may have unexplained injuries, frequent absences from work/school, extreme insecurity, fear of abuser or speaking about them, withdrawal from friends/family. You can always ask them how they are, listen without judgement, be there for them, believe what they say, never tell them what to do, but instead ask how you can help, empathise and put yourself in their place, accompany them to seek professional help.



## ***Conclusion***

Over the past ten days, the LOVE DOESN'T HURT project has explored toxic relationships, LGBTQ+ experiences, and gender violence through meaningful discussions and holistic learning.

The LOVE DOESN'T HURT project emphasizes the need for awareness, education, and action. By fostering understanding and compassion, we can create a safer, more inclusive world where love truly does not hurt. Our commitment to change and support continues beyond this project.

After the project, participants are equipped to foster healthy relationships, support personal and communal development, challenge harmful stereotypes, and effectively address gender-based violence.

Handbook Assessment Survey [HERE](#).  
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Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union