

Be patient with yourself in answering these questions. get support if painful memories surface. every question holds a story that needs to be told carefully. add questions or amend these to represent your issues more accurately.

### **questions on socialization**

at what point were you aware that you were not a girl but a boy?

who taught you more about your gender role? mother, father, peers or others?

before puberty, what was your awareness of the male body- both yours and others? what was your awareness of the female body?

do you remember any recurring dreams or fantasies from this time?

how did you feel about being out of doors? at school? at home with family? by yourself?

who were your best male friends? who did you look up to among your elders? whom did you avoid or fear?

whom did you have fights with? how often? who disciplined you? how? how often?

who would you go to if you were in trouble? where did you go to be safe? who cared for you when you were sick?

what did you accomplish in elementary school? did you excel in games, music, and school subjects? were you well liked? what kinds of problems did you have?

what were you told about your race/ethnicity/religion? what were you told about other races, ethnic groups or religions?

who taught you about religion? did you believe it? what were the hardest parts to believe?

did you go through a time when you didn't like girls? did you have friends who were girls? girlfriends? were you ever called a girl or a sissy? by whom? how often?

what toys did you play with? what games did you play?

what were your clothes like? what kinds of haircuts did you have?

what tv shows, movies or stories did you like?

what did you want to be when you grew up?

did you have heroes or idols?

did you have sex play? with whom? how often? were you ever caught? punished? by whom? how?

were you ever forced to have sex or seduced by someone? how did you feel about it? was there anyone you could talk with who would help you?

did you hunt, fish or garden? who taught you how?

did you have pets, hobbies, special treasures?

did you have favorite teachers or relatives? teachers or relatives you disliked or feared?

what was one of the best things that happened to you as a boy?

what was one of the worst?

what happened to you as a boy when you reached puberty?

was there anyone who you could talk to about any problem you had? who? why were you able to talk to them?

what do you miss about being a boy?

assuming you have or could have a son or foster son, how would you want his boyhood to be different from yours?

### **questions on sex**

define sex?

how many kinds of sex are there?

what are other possible definitions of sex?

define rape?

define sexual assault/ abuse?

is there a difference? if yes, what?

do you think your definitions of sex and sexual assault/abuse are learned? if yes, where did you learn them from? if no, how did you come up with these definitions?

are there ways to violate your partner that aren't included in your definitions of rape and assault/abuse? name some of these ways.

how do you feel about sex? are you comfortable talking about it with others? what is it like for you when you see sex on the tv or in movies?

who initiates most of the sex you have- you or your partner?

why?

what are some of the things you really like, when having sex? ie. oral sex, etc.

name at least 3 ways to pay attention to your partners body language during sex.

can you think of a time when you had sex but weren't sure if you or your partner wanted to or meant to?

how do you know when you want to have sex?

were you ever forced/coerced to have sex or seduced by someone? how did you feel about it? was there anyone you could talk to with who would help you?

do you know someone who has been sexually abused? how did you react when you found out? do you know any skills in how to be an ally to abuse survivors?

name 3 things you can do if someone you know was raped?

have any of your closest friends been accused of rape? how did you feel? did it change your relationship? if yes, in what ways?

what are 3 things you can do if a friend of yours is accused of rape?

how much do you and your partner communicate during sex?

how does it feel?

do you practice safer sex? why or why not?

name one person, if any, who you've been in an intimate relationship with who was physically stronger than you? was the difference noticeable? how did you feel?

if you haven't, how does the idea of being in a relationship with someone physically stronger than you feel?

### **questions on sexuality**

are you queer?

if not, how do you feel about people who are queer?

if yes, how do you feel your answers to these questions will differ than those of straight people?

does the thought of two girls having sex turn you on? why or why not? how does lesbianism or "women with women" make you feel?

### **questions on love**

define love? name 2 people that you love. how do you know you're in love?

can you "fall out of love?" how do you know you're falling out of love?

do you feel loved by other men? is this love different then the love you feel from women? if yes, how so?

### **questions on sexism**

what is sexism? who can be sexist? are you sexist? why, or why not?

is sexism the same for queer people? if yes, how? why or why not?

### **questions on emotions**

do you talk about your emotions?

do you have trouble expressing your emotions?

what ways do you express your emotions? (ie. talk, do art, etc.)

when you get angry, what physical sensations do you feel?

have you ever taken your anger out on someone else? how? when? what happened?

what are some skills you can use when you get angry to feel your emotions and not hurt others in the process?

### **questions on power & violence**

define power? what is one of your earliest memories of feeling power? who are some powerful people in your life?

define violence?

how do you feel about violence?

what are some experiences in your life where violence was present? what were they? how did you feel?

did you watch movies or tv with a lot of violence in them? which programs? how did it feel to watch them?

how does violence manifest in your present relationships?  
question on images of men

list 5 characteristics portrayed in the media as sexy in men. in women.

list 5 characteristics portrayed in the media as strong in men. in women.

list 5 characteristics that you consider sexy in men. in women.  
list 5 characteristics that you consider strong in men. in women.

which of these characteristics match up?

what are 5 things you look up to in men? in women? why?

### **questions on intimacy**

define trust? how can you tell somebody is trustworthy? is there

one type of people you generally consider trustworthy?

what are 5 of your ideal characteristics of being in a relationship?

are you able to be intimate with other men? if no, why not? if yes, how does it feel?

do you feel closer with your male or female friends? why?

do you get attracted to the same type of partner over and over again? if yes, what are the similar characteristics? why do you think this is?

what do you believe that the women in your life understand the least about you? what about the men in your life?

### **questions on manhood**

define manhood? how did you come up with this definition? are you happy with this definition? if yes, why? if no, what would you like to change about the definition of manhood?

what do you dislike most about men?

what makes you proud to be a man?

is there anything you would like to change about yourself? if yes, what?

is there anything you would like to change about how society portrays men? if yes, what?

-----

credits:

some of these questions were brainstormed between me, matthew campbell, and matthew mullinnex. most of the socialization questions came from a book edited by franklin abbott, called boyhood: growing up male. a bunch of the sex questions came from a flyer written by katie dugat. other random questions were written by sarah kennedy, michelle luellen, shayna swanson, and heather lynn in a flyer titled "some things a few women always wanted to know about men..." which i distributed at a few men's workshops in chicago during the summer of 1995. compilation of these questions was by me, basil

*Note: these questions originally appeared in "On the road to healing: A booklet for men against sexism" issue #1*