

Love Better: Healthy Relationships and Consent

Transcript: US Army Resilience Directorate Outreach Webinar

July 29, 2021

Presenter:

Annie Forrest, Director of Program Growth at One Love

Host: [00:00:01](#) Welcome to the Army Resilience Directorate Outreach Webinar for July, "Love Better: Healthy Relationships and Consent". At this time, all participants are in listen only mode. However, you can ask questions at any time by placing them in the chat box. There will be several opportunities for questions throughout the webinar, and we should have some time at the end as well for Q&A. Please note the views of ARD Outreach Webinar presenters are their own and are not endorsed by the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense. This month, our special guest is Ms. Annie Forrest. Annie is the Director of Program Growth at the Foundation where she is primarily focused on One Love's work with United States military branches, national community-based organizations, and corporations, as well as policy-related initiatives. Annie graduated from the University of Virginia with a B.A. in Psychology and Women, Gender, and Sexuality. She worked closely with the Charlottesville Sexual Assault Resource Agency and in the Victim's Witness Program at the Albemarle County Police Department, receiving the Act. Honor. Hope. Award from the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance for legislative advocacy efforts around survivors' rights. She was recently published in the book "Edge of Sex: Navigating a Sexually Confusing Culture from the Margins" –an anthology exploring often overlooked and excluded identities and the challenges of these lived experiences. Annie is based out of One Love's New York City headquarters, but currently resides in Central Appalachia where she grew up. Please join me in welcoming Ms. Forrest to today's ARD Outreach Webinar.

Annie Forrest: [00:01:39](#) Good morning. Can you hear me? Can you see me? Is it all working all right? Fabulous. Well, welcome everyone. I am thrilled to be here. It is such an honor and a pleasure to be with you all this morning. Like David said, my name is Annie Forrest. I use she/her pronouns and I have had the distinct honor of

working with One Love's military partners for the last five and a half years. I see some familiar names filtering through the chat. Good to see all of y'all again, and wonderful to meet everyone that I haven't had the opportunity to meet thus far. I hope that today's session gives you some really tangible tools to add to your toolkit of resources when it comes to teaching those in the Army about healthy and unhealthy relationships, talking about consent and boundary setting.

- Annie Forrest: [00:02:37](#) I know I can't see you well, I can't necessarily hear you, but I hope that you all will continue to utilize that chat box as much as possible, drop questions, drop comments. I am a pretty informal presenter and would really love to hear from you all throughout. So feel free to keep your questions coming throughout, and you don't have to save them to the end. So again, welcome to everyone and we are going to go ahead and get started. I shared my screen like every good presentation virtually starts these days. I don't know about y'all, but I feel like I live on my computer and my computer video camera these days. And I'm sure that many of us can relate. So I would just love to take a moment to check in with each other, love everything that's already flooded in the chat box. Some people have definitely introduced themselves thus far. If you haven't had the opportunity to, would love to know your name, you know, your personal pronouns, if that's accessible, where you're based, what your role is and what is one thing bringing you joy right now in the midst of all the chaos of the world?
- Annie Forrest: [00:04:03](#) And David, since I know you have a mic, what's one thing bringing you joy?
- Host: [00:04:11](#) Well, from my perspective, the fact that we're live and this is going on, and I'm excited to have you here. These webinars every month bring me joy and I always learn something.
- Annie Forrest: [00:04:23](#) I love that. The sense of community that we can foster, even though we're far away from each other. I see people, oh, the natural beauty of where you live, family dogs, definitely amazing. The Olympics, oh, the gym being open. I love that, "the mental strength of my grandmother." I love how you can feel the strength in that comment. Awesome. Relationships love to hear that. Bringing you joy, healthy relationships, the beach. Amazing. All right, well thank you everyone. Laura, congratulations on baby number three. That's really exciting. All right. Well, thanks for introducing yourselves. Again, hope to get to know everyone better throughout this session.

Annie Forrest: [00:05:27](#) And I just want to start by sharing. First of all, if I'm looking to this side of my screen, it's because I have a second monitor, not because I'm not engaged in this conversation just as a heads up. I want to share the goals for our conversation today. So the first is just to learn about One Love, who we are, what we do, why we're on this mission to change the statistics around relationship health. What we mean by relationship health is the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviors and the way that those show up in all of our lives in all types of relationships. So not just here today to talk about dating relationships are ones that have some type of romantic element to them. We're here to talk about all kinds of relationships. People have written in family friendships relationships between coworkers, between roommates, between teammates, between units within the military, all of those have relationships with healthy and unhealthy parts to them.

Annie Forrest: [00:06:29](#) It's important that we don't just focus on romantic relationships, although we know they have healthy and unhealthy elements too, but really talk about the wide spectrum of relationship types and the behaviors that are universal to all of them. Also share a little bit about our military partnership history, including with the Army. We'll talk about the 10 signs of a healthy and unhealthy relationship. And then I'll actually show a few pieces of One Love's video content and resources that are available to aid in your work. I know that many folks here work for our clinicians doing prevention. And again, just hope that these are extra tools for your toolkit. So session overview for the agenda lovers out there. We'll start with the background in program overview.

Annie Forrest: [00:07:25](#) We'll move into some of the video content and group discussion about boundary, setting and consent, then talk about how you can bring some of these tools back to the folks that you serve. Look at the military partnerships that we've established over the last six years, and then open the floor for any more questions. What is the problem that we are here to solve? I think that this is such an interesting opener. Certainly eye opening to me when I thought back to my childhood young adulthood, even adulthood, what is the point in our lives where we're explicitly taught what a healthy relationship looks like? Sounds like, feels like. And although I can't see you, I think if I asked for a show of hands, many of us would say, oh, I actually was not taught about healthy relationships growing up, not in school.

Annie Forrest: [00:08:22](#) Maybe I had examples in my family. Maybe I didn't have examples in my family. You can talk about the impact of media on what is normalized in our culture. But this first sentence, when it comes to relationships, is that experience is universal. We're all in relationships, but the education about relationships is not universal. And so that's really the problem that we are trying to solve. I also want to highlight Katie Hood, our incredible CEO, who gave a global TED Talk back in 2019. And it was one of the top five most watched of TED Talks on YouTube. And I think for so many reasons, one of them being that people would say, this is the first time I've ever been taught what healthy love looks like. And that can be such a gravitational force when you're able to put language to things that you've seen, but haven't necessarily understood in your life.

Annie Forrest: [00:09:23](#) So she says, given its central importance in our life, isn't it interesting that we're never explicitly taught how to love? We build friendships. We navigate early romantic relationships. Some people go on to get married. Others bring babies home from the hospital with the expectation that we'll just figure it out. One thing we say at One Love is that love is a skill. It's not a feeling it's actually a skill. And just like you would practice anything from your math homework, all the way up to, you know, training exercises in the military, the more you practice healthy love, the bigger your muscles will get for that. And the better healthier relationships you'll have. So who is One Love? One Love is a national nonprofit organization and really a leader in educating young people in particular. So we would say anyone from 11 to 24 is kind of our sweet spot, but we work with adults as well, because it's so important that everyone has the language to talk about healthy versus unhealthy.

Annie Forrest: [00:10:28](#) And we believe that if we give people the framework to talk about it, that's actually empowering them to identify abusive behaviors, unhealthy behaviors earlier, and avoid the escalation into abuse, while at the same time, teaching everyone to love better. And that's one of our catchphrases here. How can we all love better? We were originally founded back in 2010 after the death of Yeardeley Love. This is a photo of her. Yeardeley at the time was a senior at the University of Virginia. She was a member of the women's lacrosse team. And unfortunately just before her graduation, she was killed by her ex-boyfriend. And this really sent shock waves through the community made national headlines because Yeardeley in so many ways defies the stereotype that many of us hold about, who is in an abusive relationship.

Annie Forrest: [00:11:28](#) Her family at the time did not understand that what was going on in her relationship was actually abuse. But during the trial, a couple of years later in 2012, they started hearing from her teammates, her close friends, her coaches about all the red flags that were so very much present in her relationship and that everyone did see, they just didn't understand what they were seeing and her family thought, okay, there are amazing resources in the community. How do we bridge the gap? Helping people understand that they may need to actually reach out to those resources and speak in a language that young people can actually understand. We also want to ground in these very real statistics. We know that over one in two trans and non binary folks and over one in three women and almost one in three men in the United States will experience, have experienced some type of intimate partner violence in their lifetime.

Annie Forrest: [00:12:25](#) These are incredibly high numbers. This is also for actually the existence of abuse in a relationship. But when we think about who has experienced unhealthy behaviors that come before abuse, things like manipulation, guilt, belittling, the building blocks that can create patterns of abuse. We would say 100% of us have actually experienced those things. And 100% of us have actually done those things as well. And we'll talk about that in a moment, but I also want to lift up the disproportionate effect that domestic violence and relationship abuse has on marginalized communities. So we see here, I'm not going to read all these statistics, but we know there is a disproportionate effect on black female identifying and trans individuals, with much higher rates in comparison to the general population, unfortunately many lost lives. We also know that the population most severely impacted are Native American and Alaskan Native women who have the highest rates of domestic violence in their communities.

Annie Forrest: [00:13:35](#) We could spend a whole time to unpacking the reasons why, but I do want to lift up how important it is for us to center those stories and experiences as well. All right. So the big idea is that because 100% of us are in relationships of all types, 100% of us can actually learn how to love better, and it is imperative that we do so, so that we create healthier relationships that then have that ripple effect of creating healthier communities and ecosystems like the military. What are our strategies for doing this? The first thing that we do is focus on direct education. So we are 100% primary prevention focused. We create resources that we then partner with organizations to share for free. And we just want them to use them with the people that they're serving.

Annie Forrest: [00:14:32](#) And then we pair that education with community mobilization. So we have a lot of opportunities for young people to actually be the leaders in this for so long. We've relegated this conversation to just be an expert lead. And absolutely there is a place and a need for experts in this conversation, but at the same time, we know a young person is more likely to talk to their friend long before they ever reach out to a hotline or to an advocate. If that friend is able to respond in a way that encourages them to reach out to the advocate, how much sooner can we prevent these abusive situations from happening and all of that combined, we hope really not only improves lives of individuals, but begins to shift social norms and eventually reduces this statistics that I just shared. I just want to highlight here really quickly. We operate in all 50 states and a lot of countries around the world. And so no matter where you are, we would love to partner with you to give you some of those extra tools in your toolkit. I'll kind of share later on where you can do that.

Annie Forrest: [00:15:42](#) But when I start here, just opening up a discussion about the 10 signs of a healthy and unhealthy relationship. This is the common framework that One Love teaches because oftentimes we experienced these unhealthy behaviors in our lives. Someone says something to us that doesn't feel good. It kind of makes our gut say, oh, I don't really like that, but I don't necessarily know if it crossed a line. And so I'm maybe not going to say something or I'm going to tuck it away, or maybe I don't think it's a big enough deal to let it bother me. But as those things happen over time, you know, it does create patterns of unhealthy relationships or even abusive relationships. And we find that just by giving people a language, a kind of a label for each of these behaviors, they're able to see a little bit more clearly the things that they're experiencing.

Annie Forrest: [00:16:39](#) And then I hope that might be the experience that you all have as well as you look at this list. So you'll see on the right-hand side of the screen, the 10 signs of an unhealthy relationship and all of these really are based in control. So you'll notice control is not one of the behaviors listed, and you'll also know note that these are all related to behaviors and not feelings. It's important for us to note that however someone feels is valid, whether it's anger, whether it's sadness, whether it's frustration, we honor and acknowledge that, but the way that someone acts on those feelings can determine whether it's a healthy or unhealthy relationship. And then on the right side or the left side, excuse me, you'll see the 10 signs of a healthy relationship. All of these are really based in communication and respect. And so you'll see that again, these are really not feelings based, but they're

action and behavior based. I'm just going to flip to the next slide, which of these behaviors on the unhealthy 10 signs stand out to you?

Annie Forrest: [00:18:11](#) Alright, I'm seeing these come in. A lot of guilt, belittling, intensity, deflect responsibility. Deflecting responsibility is a big one that can lead to gaslighting, especially in combination with some form of manipulation. Thank you for all of these responses. I think that's one of the interesting things. When you actually look at a list of them, you recognize, oh, in one relationship or another, in one friendship or another, a family relationship, I have seen all of these at some point in my life. The reality is that we've probably also all done one or more of these at some time in our lives. I love spending time with my coworkers outside of work. And so sometimes after work, going to happy hour together.

Annie Forrest: [00:19:27](#) There are times I've probably unintentionally guilted someone into doing that with me. That doesn't make me a bad person, but when you stack on top of each other and someone's doing it all the time, if I was guilted that person every single day, if I was making them feel like I was the owner of their time, then it would lead to a really unhealthy relationship, especially if I deflected responsibility in that moment and didn't take responsibility for those actions. And so we like to say it doesn't make you a bad person. If you do one or two of these things, it's about recognizing when you do them faster and then pivoting toward healthy. This is a great framework to use in your work for those clinicians out there, or just anyone within a group setting to level set and say within our unit, within our community, here are the things that we're going to be on the lookout for. And then on the flip side here are the healthy behaviors, things that we really want in our community. Those could change. They might look a little bit different for you, but I think it's a good starting point. And I've seen all the, all of the messages coming in the chat.

Annie Forrest: [00:20:51](#) Are there any that you would like to give an example of in particular? An example of isolation. So one of the first red flags that we see in a relationship that might turn unhealthy or abusive might not always start off like zero to a hundred really fast. And we would call that intensity. But typically in combination with intensity is isolation. So someone is spending less time with their friends and family. You may have heard someone say that they started dating X person. And all of a sudden, they're not coming to girl's night or a guy's night. They're not doing the things they normally would do. Sometimes we write that off and say, oh, that's just what it's

like to be in a relationship. But at the same time, that could be a sign of isolation, especially if the person continues to do that, or is made to feel like they have to do that to the point where they lose some of those friendships.

Annie Forrest:

[00:22:00](#)

Then don't have a support system around them if the relationship does become unhealthy or abusive. So I'd say that's how isolation is typically seen in a relationship. Deflecting responsibility. Yeah. Could be shirking on your duties at work and then saying, if that person had done it then this wouldn't be my fault. Turn it around on someone else. Making up excuses consistently for that kind of behavior, instead of saying, yeah, I dropped the ball. We can move forward. What do I have to do better next time? We also see deflecting responsibility a lot with alcohol use. Someone saying, you know, I just wasn't me last night. I said some things and I wouldn't have said those if I was sober. Alcohol doesn't bring out something in someone they weren't already capable of doing or saying sometimes it does give that liquid courage to do it. I think it's really important for us to acknowledge that we still have to take responsibility for our actions. Just like if someone is drunk driving and pulled over, you know, the same thing happens outside of the vehicle.

Annie Forrest:

[00:23:21](#)

Great question about belittling: Can you detail the line where constructive criticism goes from healthy assistance, which we all need from time to time, to becoming unhealthy belittling? I think that's so dependent on each person and each relationship. So your relationship with your supervisor might have more constructive criticism than your relationship with your best friend, and maybe that's not true, but I think it comes to the point, where is the person giving the constructive criticism checking in and asking, "I know I've been saying these things a lot to you. How are you feeling? What is your reaction to this? Does it feel like it's constructive or is there a better way for me to be giving you feedback?" I think sometimes, especially in supervisor supervisee relationships, we feel like that's more of a one-way street before a healthy relationship.

Annie Forrest:

[00:24:21](#)

It does need to be a two-way street in a lot of ways, certainly not changing the authority of that, recognizing the power that exists for the person who is in charge in that situation. I actually do think checking in helps a lot. Belittling someone in public, saying someone's idea is dominant, turning around and taking credit for it. That definitely would cross the line. Thank you all for your responses. I love it. And then on the healthy side of things, let's chat about this, which of these behaviors stand out to you and which do you think are the most important in a

healthy relationship? What do you think we need more of right now?

Annie Forrest: [00:25:18](#) So even though we have to get our responsibilities completed, what does it look like to add a little more empathy and kindness to that independence, respect to quality. And I love that. I think a lot of times in relationships, there might be an imbalance of how equal things actually are. It may not be that one person or that the people involved split everything 50/50, but it could be that over time, there still is. This balance is kind of give and take in the relationship that does come out to equality. And then Maria, I love that you said trust and healthy conflict go hand in hand, healthy conflict is one of my favorite ones on this list.

Annie Forrest: [00:26:30](#) It's also one that I am constantly working on. How do I lean into healthy conflict and make sure that even if you have to give constructive criticism, like Laura was talking about before that, how do you ensure that you're doing that actually in a way that is healthy? You'll notice that we added conflict on the healthy side of things because it can strengthen relationships. Every relationship will have plenty of disagreements, arguments, the way that a group of people work through them determines whether it's healthy or unhealthy the existence of conflict in and of itself, doesn't determine. And that we know is just a normal part of life. And I think media we're taught that the "perfect relationship" just doesn't have any kind of conflict.

Annie Forrest: [00:27:33](#) And that's also not realistic. A complex part of being human and how people react needs to begin in a healthy manner. A comfortable pace means that the relationship is moving forward in a manner that is not too fast or too slow. So comfortable pace is all about checking in with the other person or people in the friendship or relationship and making sure that everyone is kind of on the same page. Like I mentioned before, one of the very first red flags that's typically seen in an unhealthy or potentially abusive situation is intensity or relationship that goes zero to a hundred like that. So comfortable pace is the healthy alternative to it. It means that whatever pace you're moving on feels good for everyone involved. So that might be faster than your next door neighbor who might be slower than your coworker. It doesn't really matter as long as everyone's checking in with each other and making sure that one person isn't pushing it forward faster than the other person is okay with. I hope that makes sense.

Annie Forrest: [00:28:48](#) For sake of time, I'm going to keep rocking and rolling and probably skip over a little bit of this so we can get into more of the discussion questions. So One Love, like I mentioned, creates

educational resources. Most of them are video based. We're going to watch a couple of videos in a moment. We do this because if you can watch a fictional depiction of a relationship, it's a lot easier to talk about the characters versus having to talk about your own experience. So that's one of the reasons that we really focus on a fictional film, and then we partner with organizations and with the military to share that content as far and wide as possible. And the tone that we take, and I hope that for anyone who does this type of prevention work full time, this might resonate.

Annie Forrest: [00:29:41](#) The tone that we take is that of a friend who is here to offer advice without judgment with patients, we know one of the best ways to get across to someone who might be in an unhealthy or abusive situation is using non-judgment because the second you make someone feel like this is their fault, or like they have something to be ashamed of. They'll likely shut down or maybe even get defensive, and certainly think, "Oh, well, Annie is not the person that I want to talk to when it comes to my relationship, because she's just judging me for being in this situation and not getting out of it." And that is not how we want anyone experiencing these behaviors to feel.

Annie Forrest: [00:30:24](#) So these are the learning objectives that we focus on and I'm not going to go through all of them, but I will point out that communicating boundaries and practicing consent is one of the most important ones that we can do and that we can teach and consent is not just in sexual or physical moments in relationships, but it's in the digital world. It's as simple as, how often do you want to text with each other? Are you okay with me calling you tonight or FaceTime you tonight, or do you have to study for a big test coming up or is there something else in your life going on? So often we think about consent only in a sexual context, and yes, it is very present in there that can lead to, to sexual assault or other things happening.

Annie Forrest: [00:31:17](#) But if we're able to teach that consent is really just boundary setting and boundaries are something you have to set at all points in stages of your relationships. Then it's a lot easier to really teach about consent in a sexual context. So I just want to point that out as we continue this conversation, and then we talk a lot about intersecting identities and issues, because we know that if someone is struggling with mental health, their relationships might be affected. If someone is struggling with substance abuse or being in the digital space, that boils over into all other types of relationships. I just want to point out how important it is to have that intersectional piece. So now I'm going to play, it's a short 15 second clip. These are called our

couplets. We typically use them with a younger audience, but we use them with adults all the time too, because they're funny and they're short and they juxtapose a healthy and an unhealthy behavior against each other. So I'm going to show this and then have a question in the chat.

Video: [00:32:33](#) What are you so happy about? She just started following me on Instagram. What are you so nervous about? She just started following me like everywhere.

Annie Forrest: [00:32:49](#) That's not love, I hope it wasn't too choppy for y'all. I would love to just gauge general reactions to that what you saw. We can actually bring some levity to it as well to make it more accessible for folks. Sure. You said boundaries. The tone changes everything. It really does. Something that we've heard, at least in our focus groups with young men in particular, is that a lot of times they feel like this conversation might be attacking them or just calling them out as abusers. And we want this to be an accessible conversation. We certainly want to acknowledge and validate the experiences of people, primarily women, who experience abuse.

Annie Forrest: [00:34:00](#) But we also want to say that this is something that happens to everyone and we want this to be an accessible conversation. So the question that I have is as a friend, I'm sure everyone on here is in a friend group, has friends. Some people might be parents and for even your colleague relationships, what do you think you should be aware of when looking at others relationships on social media? So the clip we just watched showed how, oh, it was so cute when she followed me on Instagram, but then all of a sudden she started following me and that really crossed the line between a comfortable pace and intensity and not relationship. So I'm going to give everyone a moment to think about this question and drop their thoughts into the chat.

Annie Forrest: [00:35:02](#) What should you be aware of when looking at other people's relationships on social media? Jennifer said there's more than meets the eye, body language, verbal comments, tell you a lot more. All of these are great. The use of location services, Michael, thanks for pointing that out. It certainly changes the game.

Annie Forrest: [00:35:57](#) I love that your boundary is I'm not friends with people on social media who are outside of my family. I love that that's something that works for you. Whereas for someone else, they might be meeting people that they'll never meet in person on the internet because that's their digital boundary and it's figuring out what it is for for everyone. So one of the things that

people have brought up that I just wanted to highlight is that relationships online are definitely not all what meets the eye, everything, what we call what's happening, quote unquote, behind the post is different than what's happening in real life. And so if you're noticing that all of a sudden someone has a new partner and is spending all their time with them maybe going on a vacation or something instead of commenting, oh, y'all are relationship goals or wow.

Annie Forrest:

[00:36:54](#)

Just the heart emoji instead of saying, it seems like you're spending time with so-and-so. How are things going, really opening up the conversation with open-ended questions. So that person doesn't feel the pressure to be in a perfect relationship online. One of the things that we hear from young people is that navigating the ending of a relationship. When you have to take down all the photos or you change your relationship status somewhere, all of a sudden leads to a barrage of questions from friends and family. And sometimes just the sheer thought of doing that keeps someone in an unhealthy or an abusive situation. So for all of us as friends or those social media users here, keeping in mind that the way we react to someone's online photos can add a level of pressure, but it can also take it away. I'm going to show one more video and I do just want to give a content warning, make sure that you take care of yourselves. I know sometimes this brings up feelings that may harken back to a friendship or relationship that we've been in or seen someone else be in. So just want to say, take care of yourselves.

Annie Forrest:

[00:38:12](#)

It's called Because I Love You. I'm going to stop my video for a moment so it plays better.

Video:

[00:38:22](#)

Because I love you. I want to be your only guy. Because I love you. Skip class with me. Let's stay in bed today because I love you I just want to be with you so freaking much, because I love you. I waited for you after chem lab. You were walking with Mark? Because I love you. You shouldn't be hanging out with that dude. You should know how dumb that makes me look. I don't care if she's your lab partner. Why do you have texts from him? Because I love you. This number, delete. Because I love you! This Jason number? Delete. And Ben? Delete. Because I love you. I should smash your phone. I'll let you give me your password instead, because I love you. I will check your texts every day. You got lucky because I love you because I love you. You think it's okay? Because I love you. You understand? Because I love you. You stop talking to your classmates, you feel completely alone. I love you.

Annie Forrest: [00:39:31](#) I would love to hear in the chat, just some immediate reactions to that. Well, that escalated quickly. Even in a minute long video, you see how imagine that happening over time and how difficult that might be to recognize if it is happening over the course of six months or a year shows manipulation control. I think for so many of us, we wish we could have seen this type of video or had this conversation at a much earlier age. It's hard to recognize manipulation when you're in it. And that's why as friends or colleagues, it actually is our responsibility to help point those things out. It doesn't involve just saying you're an abusive situation friend and I don't see how you don't see what I see. That again will cause someone to shut down, but it's about focusing on specific behaviors and say, Hey, I noticed that you seem to tense up a little bit when your partner is around or you seem to always be on your phone and have to go out of the room anytime your partner calls, how do you feel when that happens? I know that would make me feel a little weird, really focusing on specific behaviors.

Annie Forrest: [00:41:20](#) That can be a hard conversation to have. I definitely want to lift up how difficult it can be as a friend to see someone in a situation where they're not getting what they deserve in a relationship. Just for sake of time, I'm going to focus on this question. How do you think a topic like consent and boundary setting? How does that intersect with healthy relationships? And so you see in the video because I love you, that's being used as a form of manipulation to change digital boundaries.

Annie Forrest: [00:42:24](#) No, that person probably didn't want their phone to be gone through and for contacts to be deleted. But you know, that phrase because I love you I'm doing this was used as a form of gaslighting and certainly manipulation. Boundary setting is about respect and trust. Yeah. Respecting that the person has the best interest of your relationship at heart and trusting them in those moments and building trust can be really, really a hard thing to do. You're saying it's it's mutual buy-in and having good, healthy communication and healthy conflict. Oh, great question. How do you overcome the guilt in setting boundaries? Sometimes it comes off as selfish. That's really interesting. The first thing that came to mind is that I think in a really healthy relationship, the other person isn't upset when you set that boundary and you might say, I feel like, you know, this is really hard for me to do, but that person isn't making you feel guilty about it. A healthy partner is probably encouraging you to set boundaries is open to having those conversations. I think understanding that we all have boundaries and we deserve them, we deserve to set them and we deserve to have them respected, and that can be hard to tell ourselves for sure.

Annie Forrest: [00:44:16](#) Guilt is a tough thing. Selfishness is not allowing someone to set a boundary and we see that a lot in unhealthy and abusive situations. So the next thing that I want to ask about is how can you help a friend, family member or colleague that you were concerned about? How can you help someone in this kind of situation? And the reason that we talk about this is because one of the number one questions we get in our workshops is what do I do? I recognize my friend might be in this kind of situation. And I actually don't know how to respond to it. I have maybe tried to have that conversation, but it's not going anywhere. And I love what people are saying, asking questions. Yeah. Those open-ended questions, knowing what resources to provide them, it's imperative that we know exactly who to reach out to in moments where we as friends and support and the people that we're supporting obviously need support listening and being honest. Non-judgment being a mental sounding board. Absolutely.

Annie Forrest: [00:45:41](#) All right. So I'm just going to quickly share some of the things that we at One Love like to highlight in how to help a friend. And again, we view friends as the first line of defense, and I'm also going to note that for y'all in the military, you're around your coworkers. All of the time, we spend more time with our coworkers than some of our friends or some of our family members. And so if something is happening in another person's relationship, one of our colleagues' relationships, it's likely that we're the first person to see it. We might be the first people to see it. It is part of our responsibility to help that person be in a healthy relationship. It doesn't mean that we have to fly in and be the hero in that situation, but it is about guiding that person.

Annie Forrest: [00:46:34](#) When you think about readiness in the military, if someone is distracted by relationship or in unhealthy or abusive situation, obviously that will impact their ability to show up at work every day in the most productive way possible. Here are some of the tips that we focus on, starting the conversation on a positive note, even something as simple as, I really missed you, I haven't seen you doing the same things that you've normally been doing, showing up the same things, and I miss you not making it come from a place of judgment, or necessarily concern at the beginning. Like I mentioned earlier, focusing on unhealthy behaviors. So we want to stigmatize unhealthy behaviors, not people because if we stigmatize the person, they're in a relationship with, or a friendship with, then they'll likely get defensive, and not open up in the, in the future, keeping the conversation friendly and not preachy, and not placing blame on the friend.

Annie Forrest: [00:47:41](#) They might already be in a situation where they're putting that blame on themselves. The one that I really liked here is expect more conversations in the future. I think sometimes we imagine the conversation going one way and then our friend, our coworker just ends the unhealthy relationship. And that's something that takes a lot of time. Someone mentioned earlier how hard it is to be that support system. Jennifer said, you can mention that you noticed some things that are concerning and ask what the other person feels about it. They may be waiting for an open window or they may not be, it may just be about planting seeds or even thinking about who is another person in their life that they really look up to, that they would appreciate a conversation about this, and how can I get that person involved.

Annie Forrest: [00:48:36](#) We like to say it is not being a tattletale if you're actually worried about someone's health and well-being, that's part of being a good friend and a good coworker. You can allow them to reciprocate, sometimes talking about a conflict you've had in your own relationship. A couple of coworkers noticed and expressed concern when your mood and behavior changed after corresponding with a specific person, and you're so grateful that they said something. Yeah. Sometimes we're internally looking for that validation of, I don't really know if this is healthy or unhealthy, but no one else is saying anything. So maybe it is healthy, but when someone says something it's like, oh, okay. I recognize that. And I kind of needed that validation.

Annie Forrest: [00:49:47](#) Everyone's different in this situation for sure. So there's a few things to keep in mind. One of the things we talked about at One Love is that you are going to be friends with someone who is experiencing these unhealthy behaviors, but you are also going to be friends with someone who is doing these unhealthy things. And so it's really important that we're navigating those situations as well. The way that you can handle that conversation is actually very similar to the way that you would support someone experiencing abuse. So talking without judgment, the second you tell someone you're being abusive, that person might become volatile or might shut down. Opening that conversation up with non judgmental phrases. You know, I saw you get really angry back there. Tell me more about that. Let me know what's going through your mind, is that something that's happening a lot, you're giving that person an opening to really share what's going on.

Annie Forrest: [00:50:46](#) I did a workshop with the Navy a few years ago, and a person in the workshop became very volatile and he was saying, you know, there's actually nothing I can think of that will be worse

than talking about this right now. It took a lot for me to bite my tongue, but, you know, in reacting with non-judgment, it eventually came out that he had gotten in a huge fight with his wife the night before. And so that was something that was really fresh. And I think he was thinking about all the things that make relationships abusive. That's not my label to put on it. Clearly this conversation had impacted him and made him think about things in a different way. The way that someone reacts in that situation does make a huge difference.

Annie Forrest: [00:51:39](#)

Who knows, maybe that planted a seed. I hope they're having healthier conflict. Looking at some of these others using the 10 signs language, I keep them on my refrigerator. I know people who post them in their office and use them with students or with their coworkers as a way to level set around conversations. That can be a great way to point out behaviors, and understanding that someone isn't crazy for doing something. Abusive behavior stems from a number of different risk factors, and it's something that's so normalized in our culture. It may not even be related to risk factors necessarily. What's important is that we help people recognize when they're doing some of those things, getting the support they need to shift into the healthy lane.

Annie Forrest: [00:52:34](#)

I'm just going to touch on this very, very, very briefly. We know that exiting a relationship is the most dangerous time. And so it's critical that someone does have a safety plan in place. I know David's going to send out these slides. I'm not going to touch on this, but I am going to say that when we teach this material and if you choose to use some of these resources to open up the conversation, one thing we say is that you're not expected to be the expert. I know that a lot of people on here again are experts in this field. And so rock on like y'all got it. But for someone who's just a friend, making them feel like they can still make a difference, even if they don't have the language down pat, even if they're a step along the way to reaching out to an advocate or to someone who is the expert, that makes a huge difference and they don't have to be the hero in this situation.

Annie Forrest: [00:53:36](#)

Also, we just want to highlight national service providers. These are One Love partners in a lot of ways. And so making sure that these resources feel accessible to the people that you're working with is also really important to de-stigmatizing reaching out for help. Not only if you're experiencing this, but also if you're the friend of someone who might be experiencing this. So some of One Love's military partnerships that I want to highlight. We have partnered with the U.S. Army in a couple of

different ways. And with West Point for the past few years; over 5,100 cadets have been through One Love workshops since about the 2015 timeframe. We have recently really bolstered a lot of our work in the Navy Training Corps of what we call master trainers to be facilitators of this. And so that's something I hope may eventually be replicated within the Army.

Annie Forrest:

[00:54:37](#)

So One Love conducted a longitudinal study with the U.S. Navy. We started it back in 2018 and it was officially published this past year in the Prevention Science peer reviewed journal. So we partnered with Dr. Emily Rothman out of the Boston University Graduate School of Public Health, who has been doing research in the field of intimate partner, violence relationship violence. For many, many, many years. We had two ships in similar demographics size, rotational period. And we split them into an intervention and a control ship. The sample size was about 330 Sailors and we measured them at baseline four months later, and then eight months later, really interesting results here. And we had to track them over the four and eight months.

Annie Forrest:

[00:55:39](#)

So we weren't necessarily sure what kind of sample size we would get, but we were able to keep up with a significant portion of them. So we found that their attitudes about dating abuse shifted after one 90-minute workshop using one of our pieces of video content called escalation. It's a 40-minute film and a 90-minute workshop. So they were thinking about the health of their relationships more, it was easier to bring up unhealthy dating relationships, and then they were more likely to engage in prevention, oriented bystander behavior, like starting a conversation with friends. What was also interesting and was a little bit unexpected is that that moved over. They were able to see the connection to workplace situations when someone was talking down to harassing or even bullying someone else, or when someone thought that they might hurt themselves. So those were really exciting results for us.

Annie Forrest:

[00:56:37](#)

I'm not going to go through all of this, but the final conclusion is that this might be a great primary prevention resource for the military. And this is how our Navy structure works. I'm not going to get into all of this, because of time, but we really are so incredibly grateful for our military partners. I hope that you all will find some of these resources applicable to your work and then the place that you can find all of them, I will make sure to link to, but it's our education center. It is 100% free. You can go through a training on your own, you can download so many different resources around the 10 signs around the video based workshops and just add them to your toolkit. So I'm going to go

through these so fast. And I'm just going to end with questions with three minutes to go and a massive thank you from all of us at One Love, especially me. It's been such a pleasure to be with you this morning, or wherever your time zone is where you are. Please don't hesitate to reach out, One Love would love to work with y'all. Thank you. And I will stick around for questions.

Host: [00:58:02](#) Thank you so much, Annie. We've only got a few minutes left, but we will not turn into a pumpkin at the top of the hour folks. So you have questions. There were a couple of them back in the chat if you want to repost them, but we've got time for just a few questions and thank you Annie, so much. This engagement has just been great.

Annie Forrest: [00:58:22](#) Yes, definitely. Thank you all for being so engaging, even though we can't see each other, hear each other. That is the dream as someone talking to a screen. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Yes, you are welcome to email me directly

Host: [00:58:51](#) And I think a lot of a number of folks asking for your contact info. So thank you for sharing that. One of the questions I think that got caught up in the scroll was talking about a relationship where people don't feel equal, and the best way to deal with that when one partner doesn't feel equal.

Annie Forrest: [00:59:12](#) Yeah. That's a great question. I think it comes down to one. Do you feel comfortable bringing that up? You as the person on the receiving end of the unequal treatment, do you feel like you have a safe space to bring that up? Do you feel like that person is going to react in a volatile way? And if so, that could be a red flag in and of itself enough to maybe exit the relationship or think about what would need to change. When you bring that up, does a person respect and take responsibility for their actions? Again, just thinking about the labels from the 10 signs, do they gaslight you into saying, well, if you hadn't done X, I wouldn't have gotten so mad or I wouldn't have done this on equal thing. And then if they do respect and take responsibility for their actions in that moment, does their behavior change, or does this become more of a recurring problem? And I think sometimes you can just jot down, you know, tuck it away in the back of your mind. You know, I brought this up, person said that they would - they validated it, but I'm not seeing that behavior change. And so I think that's kind of how you can assess whether that's a relationship that you want to stay on long-term or not. Yeah, well, he just said, yeah, sorry, but yeah, that could be a form of gaslighting.

Host: [01:00:41](#) Folks while we're waiting to see if there's any other questions, we'll give you another minute or two, I just want to thank Annie so much for doing this. We're actually asking you to do this twice today. And so we value partnering and working with One Love and you as well. So thank you very much for this great presentation and just all of the great resources that are available and introducing us to many of those. And again, the One Love foundation website is in the web links. You can click on that to the right.

Host: [01:01:21](#) Thank you very much. While we're waiting for any final questions, I just want to mention that we ask that you take the July webinar survey, the ARD leadership looks at these surveys, and that's how we get great ideas for presenters like Annie and One Love and great topics. The leadership looks at those takes these very seriously. So please take a minute to fill out the July webinar survey that can be found to your left. As a reminder, next month, we'll have Dr. Pete Kilner from the Simon Center for the Military Professional Ethic at West Point, and he'll be discussing importance of character development and ethics that impacts units and teams and relations.

Host: [01:02:26](#) So if there are no other questions for Annie. We will be doing this again at 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time. So if you have colleagues, friends, family that this would benefit, please share the link with them. It's the same link as this morning. It's open to all, all are welcome. Please share, get the word out again. That will be at 2:00 PM Eastern, and it's not a recording. Annie is coming back. She's doing double duty for the Army today. An opportunity to ask different questions or have your friends, colleagues, and family be able to participate in asking great questions. So again, thank you Annie very much. We'll see you again in just a few hours.