Framing Sexual Wellness as a Part of Prevention



Joan Tabachnick

FL ATSA

March 7, 2025

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My plan for this session

Overview of Prevention

What Gives me Hope

Connection of Sexual Wellness to Prevention



For Every Complex Problem, there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong

HL Mencken



Fay Honey Knopp
Founder
Safer Society Foundation
1918-1995



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Prevention Works



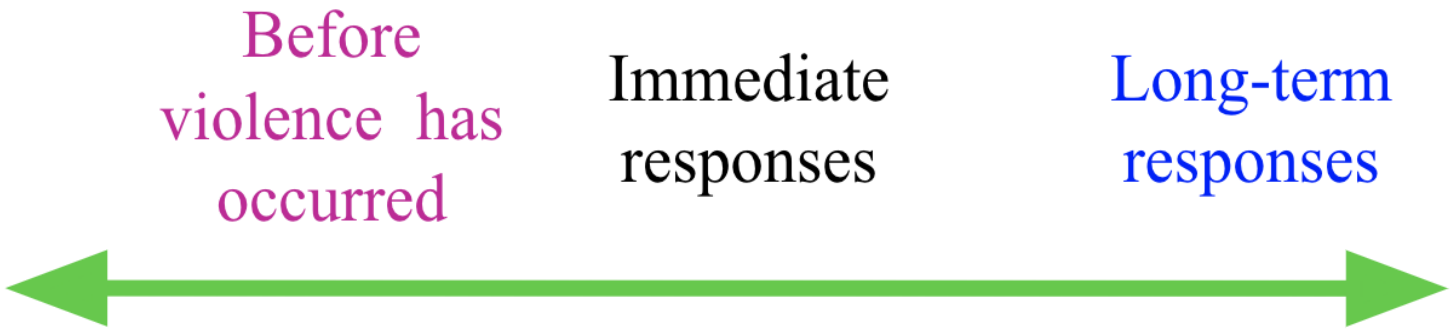








Public Health Approach



David Lee, Lydia Guy, Brad Perry, Chad Sniffen and Stacy Alamo Mixson, ***Sexual Violence Prevention***, **The Prevention Researcher**, Volume 14(2), April 2007
http://www.preventconnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/lee-2007-Sexual-Violence-Prevention.pdf

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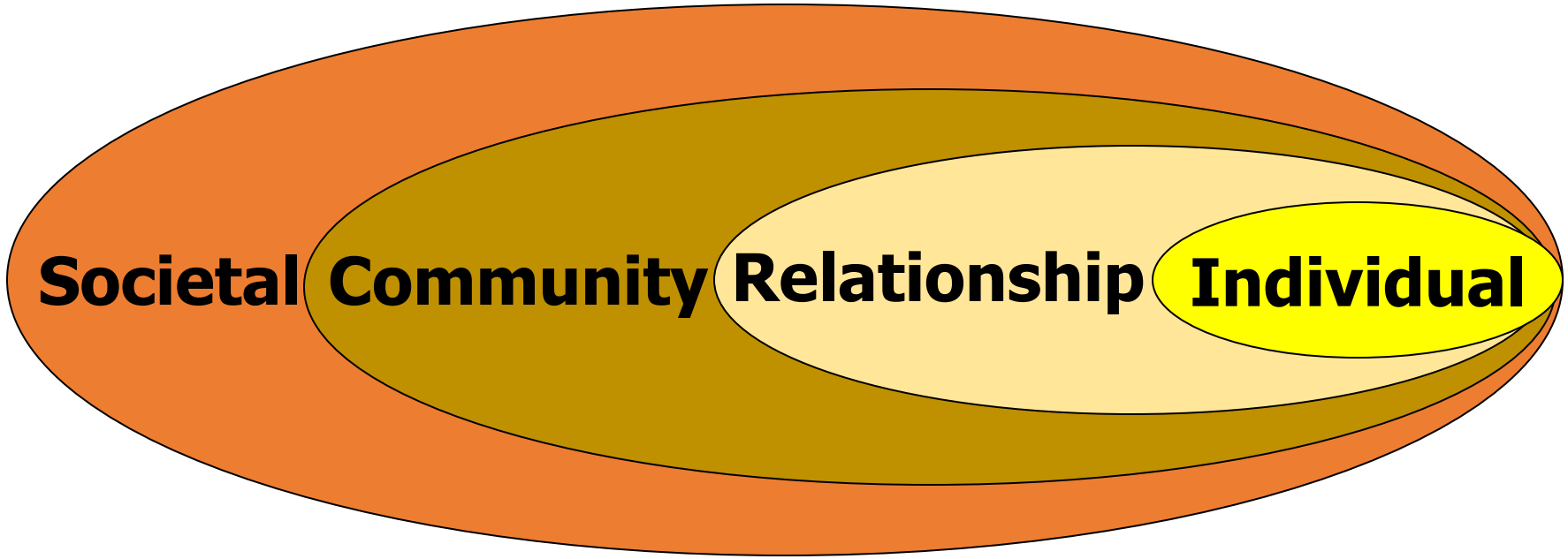
Social Ecological Model



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Why Are the Cows Dying?



Adapted from Frameworks

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Now?



Adapted from Frameworks



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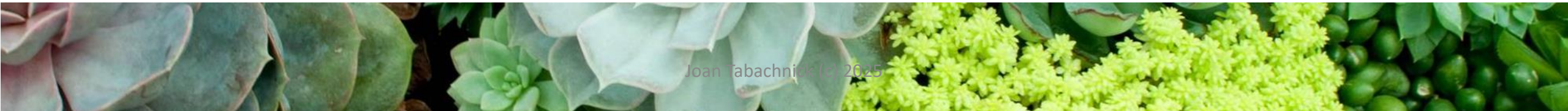
Perpetration Prevention Matrix

	INDIVIDUAL/RELATIONSHIP	COMMUNITY/SOCIETY
BEFORE	Programs focusing on preventing first time perpetration Bystander intervention programs	New protocols and standards for colleges and youth serving organizations Sex Education programs in Schools
AFTER	Treatment and management of sex offender	Policies directed towards sex offenders



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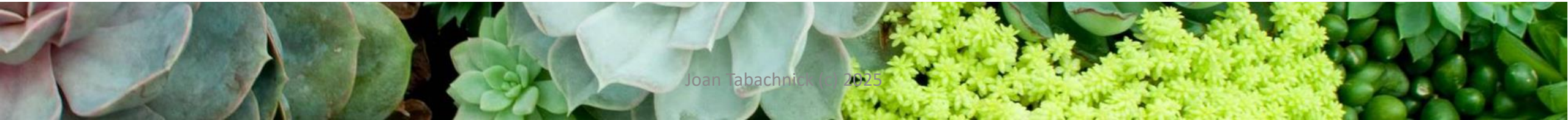
What Gives Me Hope

1. Focus on Perpetration Prevention
2. Changing Norms
3. Telling OUR Stories





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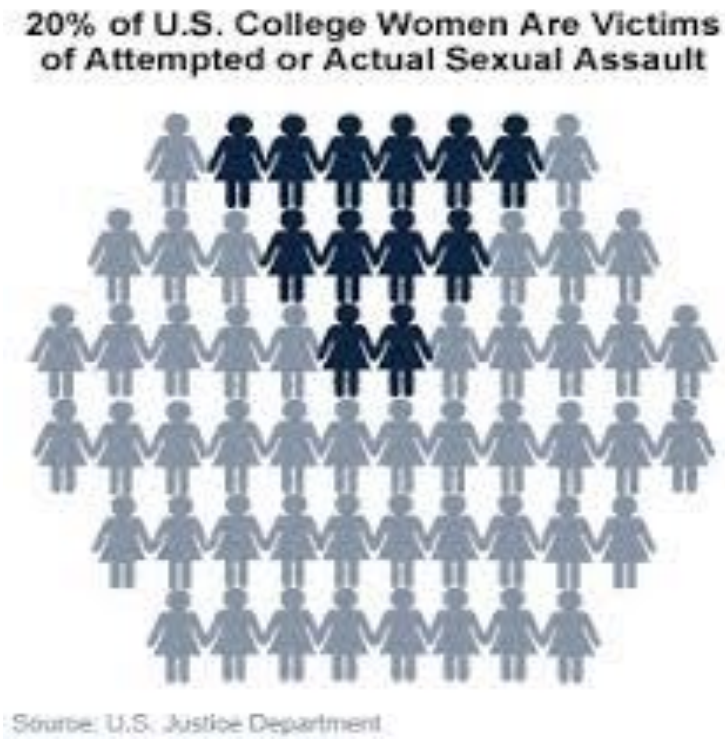
Preventing Perpetration

Prevalence of Victimization



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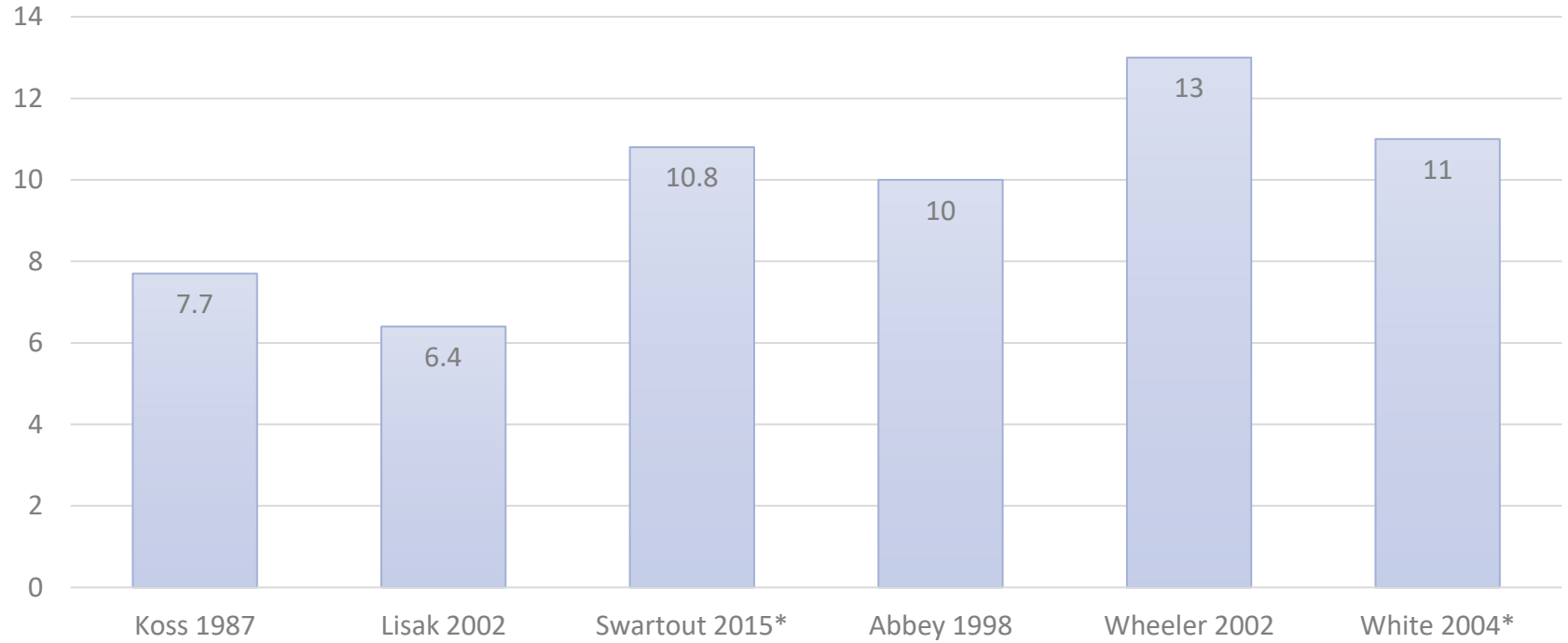
College Samples: Rape/Attempted Rape, Males

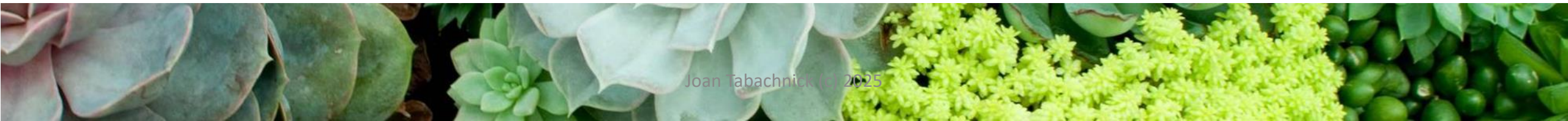


DeGue, S., Brown, P, Jones, K., & Leone, R. (2017). Perpetration data: How it can inform your sexual violence prevention efforts. Presentation at the National Sexual Assault Conference, Dallas, TX.





Stop It Now!®



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Growing Body of Research















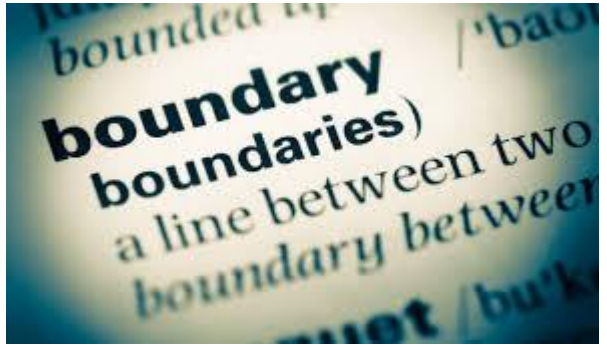


Growing Number of Programs















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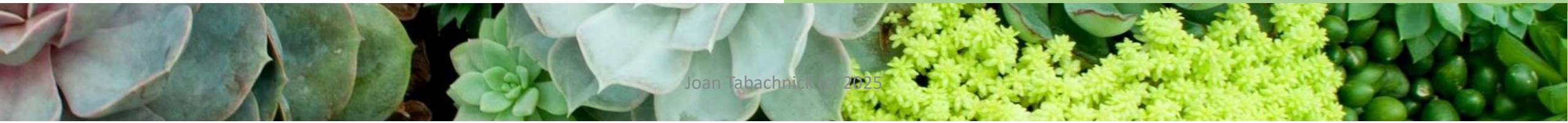
Changing Norms

It would have been easier to say my 12 year old son was a murderer… than to tell someone that he had sexually abused a younger child.

Stop It Now!®

Impact of Shaming



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Who Are They?

Common (Mis)Perceptions and Emotional Reactions

Male

Creep

Rapist

High-Risk



Deviant

Unforgivable

Untreatable

Anger-Fear-Disgust-Outrage

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We can't move to a culture that eliminates sexual violence if we're not dealing with how harm-doers become harm-doers and how they undo that. Leaving them in a heap on the side of the road is not the answer; allowing them to sneak back in through the back door [...] and acting like nothing happened [is not] the answer. There should be an expectation that there's real rehabilitation and that [offenders] have seen the light and want to make dramatic shifts in their behavior.



Tarana Burke

klancy street llc
toward common ground

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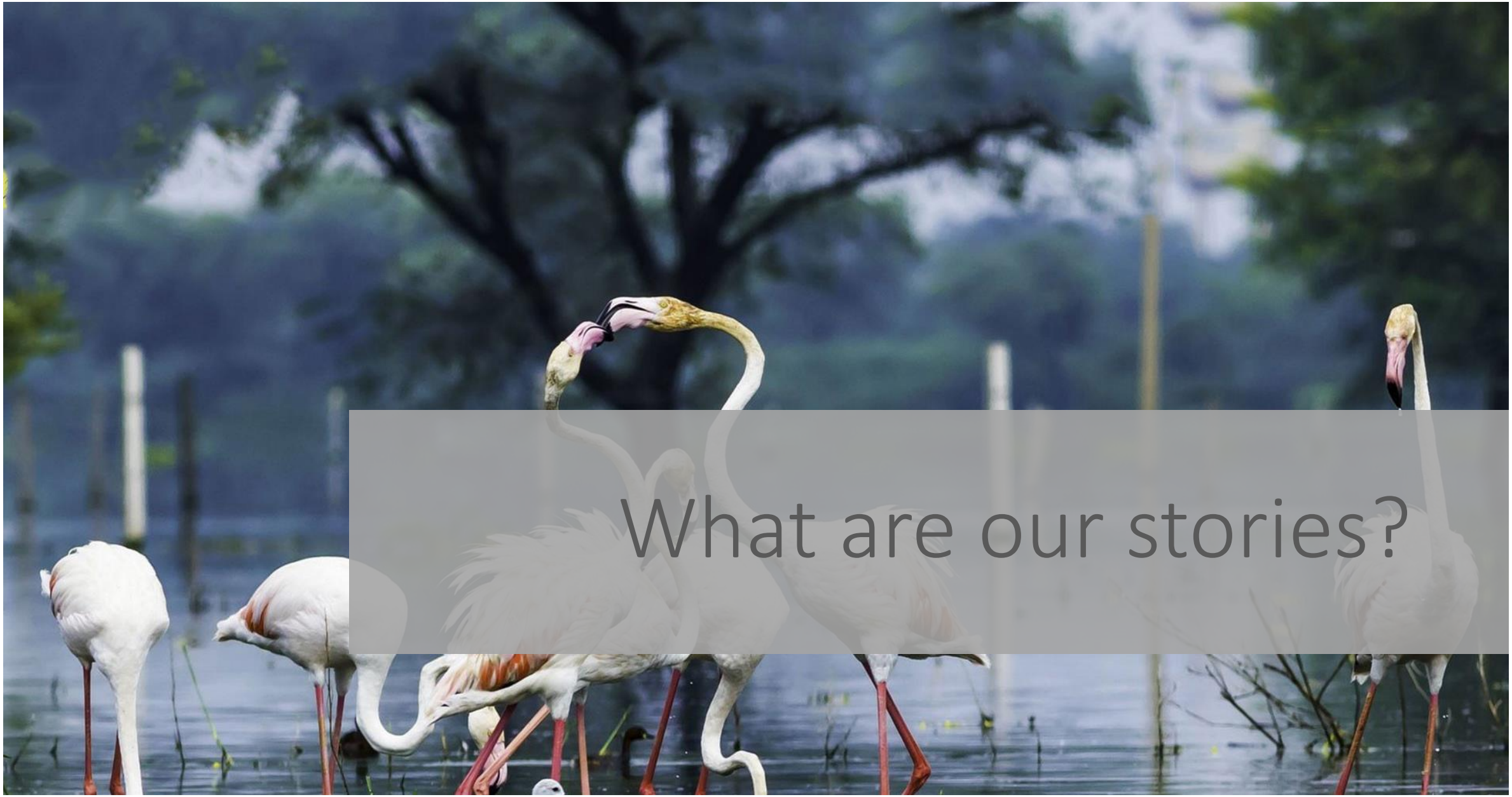
What are our stories?















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Sex Offender



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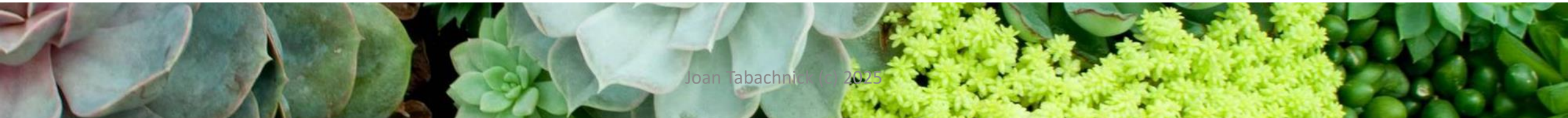
The way we communicate about sexual violence affects how audiences understand the problem and what to do about it



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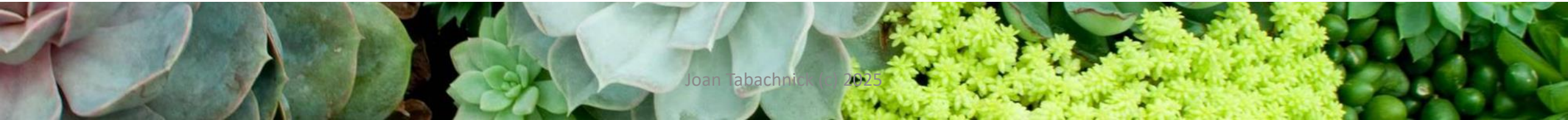

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What do you do for work?

Changing the Frame?



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What do you do?

Frameless Answer:

- *I provide mental health treatment to convicted sex offenders who are released into the community.*



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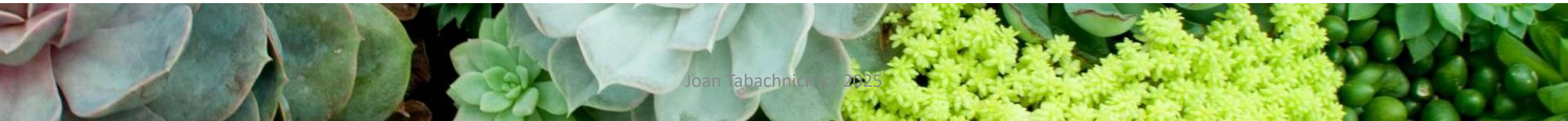
What do you do?

Framed Answer:

- *I work every day to prevent sexual abuse. I care deeply about community safety and keeping children and other vulnerable people safe.*



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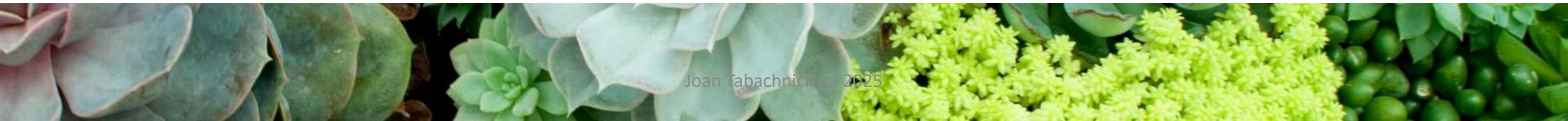
What do you do?

Framed Answer:

- *I work with teens and children who caused or at risk to sexual abuse. I work with families to help to hold them accountable for their behaviors and give them the skills to make different choices.*



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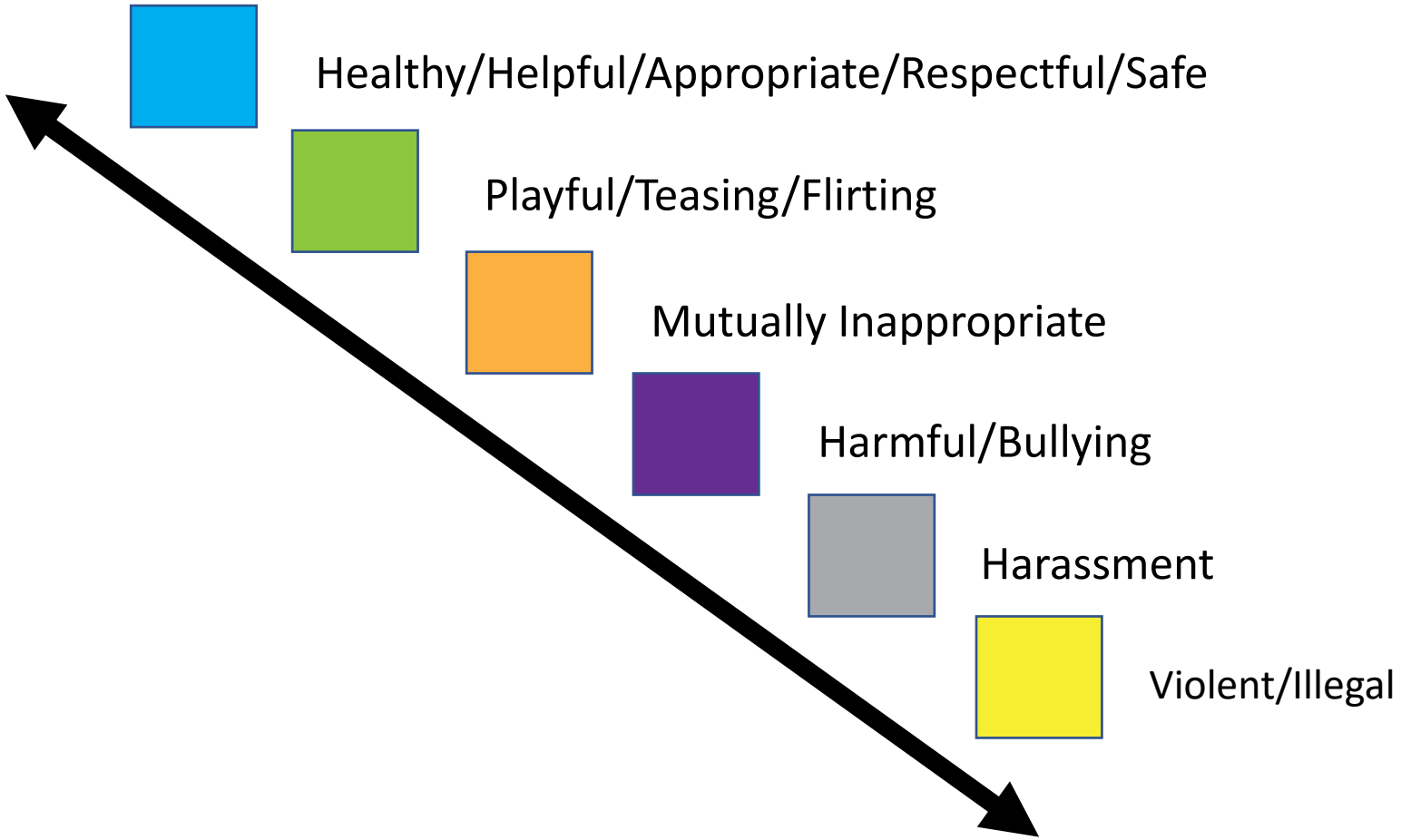
What do you do for work?



Connection to Sexual Wellness

Continuum of Sexual Behavior



Cordelia Anderson, 2001

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Not all children/teens/adults are the same…

Cultural norms

Risk Factors

Motivations

Behaviors

Tactics

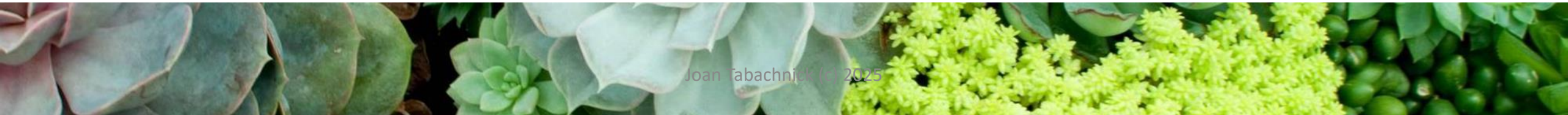
Cognitive Understanding

Gender identities

Protective Factors

Sexuality

Intentions



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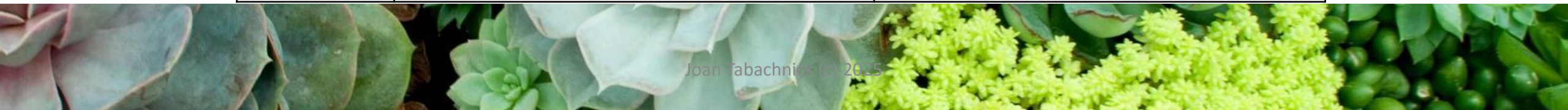

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Simple example…

Be an ASKABLE adult



Remember

Focus on hope rather than fear.





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For more information and conversation

Joan Tabachnick

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Promising Programs

- What's OK?
  - A website built by Stop It Now! where young people can chat with counselors about any questions they have about sexuality
  - www.Whatsok.org
- Stop It Now!
  - A website and helpline for adults concerned about their own thoughts and behaviors if someone is concerned about someone they know
  - https://www.stopitnow.org
- STARRSA
  - A campus-based program that uses cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and active psychoeducation (AP) to prevent the perpetration of campus sexual violence

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Promising Programs

- Shifting Boundaries
  - A hot zone mapping initiative that demonstrated the importance of the environment surrounding teens
  - https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1054139X14002845
- Help Wanted
  - An online course to help individuals who are attracted to younger children, with the goal of helping them live a safe and non-offending life
  - https://www.helpwantedprevention.org/
- Coaching Boys into Men
  - An initiative targeting teenage boys, involved in sports and teaming them with Men trained in this intervention
  - https://futureswithoutviolence.org/

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