

The consent infosheet

It's as simple as tea!

Do we really know what consent is? Are we fully respecting it? Many of us are aware of the meaning and importance of consent, but still, it is being violated and disrespected so often.

"Consent occurs when one person voluntarily agrees to the proposal or desire of another person."

The concept of consent is present in many of our life areas: when we decide on plans with friends, when we interact with our coworkers, when we flirt with one or more people, when we live in a settled relationship (or not).

The core idea is very simple: YES means YES and NO means NO. But there is also a more tricky area called "the grey zone," where the person doesn't give a clear answer. How can you be sure about consent then? You can't! And the best way to avoid an uncomfortable or even dramatic situation, is to consider that any answer that is not a clear YES is a potential NO.

Key point of consent is two-way communication between all parties. Everyone has to:

know what they agree on
have the space to express their limits
have the right to change their mind at every step of the process

One situation that we would particularly like to emphasize is consent when it comes to any kind of sexual interaction. Sexual consent plays an important role in defining what sexual assault is: any sexual activity without consent by all parties is considered rape.

Also, we need to be careful when it comes to who can give consent. Not everyone is able to give consent either by law (children, minors) or because of their medical/health status (Alzheimer patients).

If we take the example of "consent to drink a cup of tea" as a synonym for "sex consent", it's very simple to realize that sex, as any shared decision and moment in life, needs to have the consent of every person involved.

Take a look at this educational video which explains what consent is when it comes to sexual interactions:
<https://youtu.be/oQbei5JGiT8>

