



1. There continues to be a greater awareness of & movement against violence against women & girls.
2. Women & girls are disproportionately affected by sexual violence & abuse. The patriarchy also harms males.
3. There is rising movement against the medical model that pathologises responses to sexual trauma.
4. All forms of victim-blaming of women subjected to sexual violence & abuse remains prevalent.
5. Conviction rates continue to be low as the criminal justice system continues to fail women.
6. The need for holistic, multi-sectoral, strengths-based, trauma responsive & inclusive support remains present.

**rationale**

Women subjected to sexual violence & abuse need a warm, compassionate, safe, connected space offering immediate, specialist support that is tailored to meet their needs.

To step into shared power, in celebration of individuality, compassion & connection to support women subjected to sexual violence & abuse in living hopeful futures; while challenging beliefs, attitudes & systems that facilitate sexual violence & abuse.

# GINA theory of change: the narrative



## Introduction



GINA is a social enterprise united by lived experience to bring compassionate, tailored, immediate counselling & bespoke products/resources for women subjected to sexual violence & abuse. At the heart of GINA's philosophy, is the belief in the importance of being heard, understood & believed; while offering women subjected to sexual violence & abuse with opportunities to Grow, Inspire, Nurture & Achieve through a compassionate, tailored, curious approach to support. This Theory of Change will help us to better understand the difference we make. It has been created collaboratively through discussion & reflection with team members, partners & individuals who have accessed GINA's services.

## Rationale



The individuals who participated in the Theory of Change sessions reflected on the purpose of GINA, why we exist & our place in the landscape of support for women subjected to sexual violence and abuse. GINA has previously given considerable thought to our values & what we achieve. From discussion, it was agreed that women subjected to sexual violence & abuse need & deserve a warm, compassionate, safe, connected space offering immediate, specialist support that is tailored to meet their needs- GINA meets this need through a unique offering as a private specialist rape crisis organisation.



## Mission & Vision

**Mission:** To step into shared power, in celebration of individuality, compassion and connection to support women subjected to sexual violence and abuse in living hopeful futures; while challenging beliefs, attitudes and systems that facilitate sexual violence and abuse.  
**Vision:** A world revolving with hope & compassion to hold women subjected to sexual violence & abuse in their truth & embrace individuals in living into their power.

## Outcomes...



GINA seeks to make a difference by supporting women who access our services & by collaborating with women with lived experience (volunteers & beneficiaries) to co-produce bespoke products & resources to support women with the impacts of sexual trauma. We also wish to influence organisations we work with & wider society to challenge the underlying factors that facilitate sexual violence and abuse.

## ...Outcomes

### Enhanced wellbeing



This relates to emotional & physical wellbeing, reduced blame & shame, a sense of relief upon being believed, heard & understood. Our collective outcome for our partners is to feel hopeful that our safe supportive space can promote positive wellbeing.

#### Increased safety

Women have tools to cope with triggers & feel able to speak their truth.

#### Increased hope

Women will be able to set goals, make plans & feel they are making progress.



### Enhanced relationships

Women will feel more connected, with a sense of belonging & are able to express their needs to others. For our partners, our collective outcome is to feel connected to our organisation to our organisation through enhanced relationships, transparent operations and authentic collaboration.

#### Increased trust

There will be reduced power imbalance between women offering & accessing GINA support & enhanced transparency of organisational information, processes & procedures.

### Enhanced awareness, knowledge & understanding



For our partners, our collective outcome is partners being able to identify, acknowledge and challenge beliefs, attitudes and systems that have impacted experiences.

For individuals, team members & partner organisations, this surrounds increased awareness & understanding of trauma responses, triggers & the longer-term impacts of trauma. It also relates to awareness of individuals' rights in society & the criminal justice system surrounding how they deserve to be treated. This also includes identifying, acknowledging & challenging beliefs, attitudes & systems that impact experiences (sexual violence & abuse facilitated in society by cultural norms) & possessing increased awareness & knowledge surrounding victim-blaming.



### Enhanced empowerment

In aiming towards this outcome, women will know where to go to support themselves outside of the therapeutic space, recognise their strengths (& how strengths have supported them with the acknowledgement that they are their own expert on their needs), deploy coping strategies, understand their trauma responses, be able to set boundaries, feel heard, recognise their rights, feel in control of the situation they are in & hold their sense of self. Our collective outcome for our partners is accessing a tailored/bespoke support offering, feeling confident to raise awareness and empowered to amplify collective voices.

#### Increased confidence

Women feel able to speak up & out, with increased self-belief. They will feel able to cope and be able to use their talent, skills & experience.

#### Increased choice

Women can make decisions & have choice over what justice looks & feels like for them, with awareness that justice/healing can come in different forms. They feel able to choose not to be defined by their trauma and can make decisions. They have access to creative, holistic & embodied approaches to support.

## Activities

Activities are the things that we do to achieve outcomes with individuals, team members & partners.

### Counselling



We provide immediate, specialist, paid for, in-person/telephone/online counselling services, with counsellors who are specialists in the field of sexual violence & abuse. There is no waiting list for services - we provide support when needed.

### Paid products/resources



Paid for products/resources to support women with & provide information on the impacts of sexual trauma; many created/co-produced with volunteers with lived experience of sexual violence & abuse & women accessing GINA support.

### Free Resources



Free products/resources to support women with & provide information on the impacts of sexual trauma; many created/co-produced with volunteers with lived experience of sexual violence & abuse & individuals accessing GINA support.



### Co-production/involvement opportunities

Ongoing opportunities for individuals with lived experience of sexual violence & abuse to get involved with GINA's work & co-produce bespoke services, products & resources. This includes women accessing our support, volunteering opportunities & co-production with partner organisations.

### Online support hubs



Our support hubs are designed as accessible online platforms tailored to offer individuals bespoke support, information & resources based on a diverse range of individual needs.

### Communications



GINA communications include blogs, newsletters, social media, podcasts & appearances in media to raise awareness, provide information & increase knowledge surrounding sexual violence & abuse.

### Volunteering



Volunteering with GINA offers experience working within a non-profit organisation, the opportunity to support women subjected to sexual violence & abuse, the chance to develop new skills, access to training & development opportunities & the opportunity to gain experience to support exploration of career opportunities. Roles are diverse, flexible & can be adapted to meet the needs/wishes of volunteers.



### Campaigning

GINA offers allyship for individuals who wish to pledge their support, live into our values & advocate for our work. We also campaign through our social media, resources, media appearances, communications & aligning with/supporting national campaigns for change within the sexual violence & abuse sector.

## Enabling factors

The following factors need to be in place as a foundation to enable GINA to make the differences identified in the Theory of Change.

### Support offered by women with lived experience



GINA is committed to ensuring that women subjected to sexual violence & abuse are involved at every level of our organisation. Therefore, throughout the recruitment, application & induction process, we do all we can to facilitate, welcome & encourage applications for team member roles (ie. counsellors, volunteers) from women with lived experience of sexual trauma so we can work together to amplify women's voices throughout GINA & unite in lived experience to ensure women's needs, wishes & views remain at the centre of all we do.



### Responsive support available when women need it

Through close monitoring of capacity, availability & demand, our team consists of a sufficient number of specialist counsellors to meet demand (this ensures there are no waiting lists & women are able to access support when needed). Products/resources can be accessed at any time, while counselling support is offered flexibly with a diverse range of availability to ensure women can access counselling support on a day/at a time & at a frequency that meets their needs. We facilitate all of this through a flexible/lean business model that allows us to meet demand as it increases/decreases.

### Women feel held, heard, believed, validated, valued & supported



For all women who come into contact and access GINA to feel heard, believed, validated, valued and supported through all interactions with our organisation. Believing women subjected to sexual violence & abuse is the foundation of our support, which we believe can subsequently create space for healing.

### A welcoming space that is inclusive, colourful, friendly and non-judgemental



Counselling support is offered in a variety of locations across Birmingham to ensure accessibility for all (with locations meeting different individual needs surrounding disabled access, easy access to transport, refreshment facilities). The counselling spaces are all selected based upon their location, ease of access & comfortable/welcoming setting that is designed to ease anxieties & enhance our friendly, inclusive, non-traditional/informal approach to support. Our support is also responsive by being offered through a range of modalities (in-person, telephone, online); designed to enhance inclusivity & accessibility (especially for women who prefer enhanced anonymity through virtual counselling, feel more comfortable with digital support or who may be unable to travel to access in-person counselling). Our central virtual online space (website) is also designed to be colourful, friendly & inclusive, as echoed through our communications.

### A relational approach that rejects labels & recognises trauma responses as normal



To ensure a relational approach that rejects labels & recognises trauma responses as normal, regular training for team members surrounding trauma-informed approaches, victim-blaming & sexual violence & abuse is embedded within GINA (alongside our internal sharing/promotion of external training/learning & development opportunities). Associated resources, research, information & communications are also shared among team members.



### A space where authentic selves are honoured, celebrated & met with warmth & understanding

As embedded internally within our organisational culture & subsequently projected externally, GINA is a space where all women & their authentic selves are honoured, celebrated & met with warmth & understanding. This culture originates from the team GINA consists of, our organisational values/stances & our approach to support.



## Partnerships, collaboration & space to build relationships surrounding advocacy & allyship

Why do we want to work in partnership?

- To build connections / a community of partners with an interest in addressing sexual violence & abuse
- There are co-production opportunities for multiple organisations working together e.g. on resources such as Tackling sexual harassment in the workplace (aspirational strand of work)

Successful partnership working includes (in no particular order):

- Helping to start the conversation about where an organisation stands on sexual violence and abuse
- Reducing barriers to individuals accessing support
- Being an advocate for the cause and for individuals
- Providing partners with the skills they need to support GINA e.g. confidence to talk about sexual violence
- Aligning GINA with organisations who have similar values about sexual violence and will work with GINA to support individuals - allyship
- Raising awareness of sexual violence and abuse and associated issues
- Providing them with the knowledge they need

## Underlying principles



### Context is critical

Successful approaches to support are those that are tailored & based on rigorous analysis of the particular contextual factors affecting sexual violence & abuse, disclosure & accessing support.



### Holistic, tailored, responsive & multi-sectoral approaches are more likely to have impact:

Coordinated approaches operating at multiple levels, across sectors & over multiple timeframes are more likely to have an impact for women subjected to sexual violence & abuse.

### Social change makes a difference



Sustained reduction in sexual violence & abuse will only occur through processes of significant social change at all levels.

### Backlash is inevitable but manageable

Resistance to tackling sexual violence & abuse (in particular, violence against women & girls) is inevitable where root causes are being addressed but can & should, be managed.



### Specialist organisations create & sustain change

Supporting specialist organisations, especially those working to tackle violence against women & girls, to make change & build strong & inclusive social movements is the most effective mechanism for ensuring sustainable change in the lives of individuals subjected to sexual trauma.

### Empowering women subjected to sexual violence & abuse is both the means & the end:



Focusing on the rights of & being accountable to individuals (particularly women & girls) is the most effective way of tackling gender inequality as the root cause of violence against women & girls.