

## Shannon Gates



### Why are you interested?

To put it simply, I want to help, and offer my support. I by no means think I have all the answers, but I do feel like I have the capacity to be helpful.

### Skills / Qualifications:

Professionally, I'm an RN. I worked in addiction recovery for several years and I worked with people who were survivors of trauma, as well as people who caused trauma to others, and others who were both. I now work in primary care and have worked with people over the phone in situations of consent violations. I've wanted to pursue SANE training, but unfortunately it is not an option for primary care nurses to complete training at this time (the focus is ED RN's).

Life experiences: I feel like we've all known people that we care about to have experienced consent violations in some realm. We've been "the first person [they've] told." I've also talked through consent violations with people who were the ones

to cause trauma. Full disclosure (but without divulging too much) I've had my own personal experience in managing consent violations and having really tough conversations.

### Personal interpretation of RAC purpose and priorities:

I think it's three-fold.

- 1) To help provide support for a community that is going through so much change. I think that it's really coming to light and largely being accepted that our "old" ways of thinking around consent are incorrect and can really cause harm. I think it's vital to any community to have a resource for when things don't go right, and not always in a punitive sense; it's giving tools around having these really difficult conversations.
- 2) Help provide guidance: being able to really debrief with the individuals and determine "is this person willing to participate in our culture" as well as finding a way to track patterns of bad behaviors.
- 3) Support for survivors: I think we've seen the long history to which bad-players continued to find victims, and while I don't think that we can explicitly stop consent violations, people know there is a trusted resource that they can go to for making these types of reports. Supporting people who have experienced trauma with resources and simply being present to acknowledge this is something we want to deal with and help them through is a significant step forward.

### How do you plan to handle the emotional impact of receiving information about difficult cases involving your friends and community members?

I think it's a balance and there are some situations where it would be more appropriate to recuse yourself, if it is a close friend. But in regard to coping with hard reports I think I've garnered a lot of practice in giving my brain a break from the heavy stuff with meditation and mindfulness practices, finding other ways to occupy my time, surrounding myself with really great and supportive people (friends, chosen family, and bio fam).

**Honest assessment of the monthly time commitment:**

20-30hrs per month.

**Involvement with Burner groups:**

First Aid/ Medical (woo!)

**In conclusion:**

Please reach out if you have any questions.