

Changing the Narrative

The Power of Storytelling to Push Back on Stereotypical
Masculinity

2025 Comprehensive Sexuality Education Conference



 Info@MaineBoysToMen.org

  [@MaineBoysToMen](https://www.instagram.com/MaineBoysToMen)

 MaineBoysToMen.org

About Us

Our Vision

Maine Boys to Men envisions a world where all people are equally valued, respected, safe, and celebrated.

Our mission is to end all forms of male violence and self-harm and advance gender equity by supporting the development of confident, self-aware, empathetic boys and men.



Meet The Team

Mark

He/Him



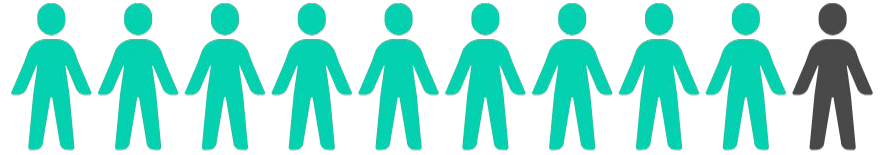
Sarah

She/Her

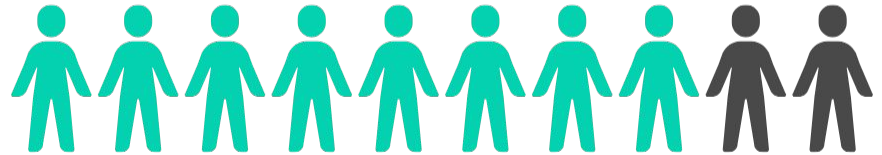


Scope of the Problem:

- 90% of all violent offenders are male



- 80% of all who die by suicide are male



Boys Are Not Broken

Our Mission

Boys and men are bombarded by narrow, confusing, and often destructive messages about what masculinity is and isn't, contributing to a culture of self-harm, disrespect, and violence against others.

Our approach is grounded in the belief that it is not the boys, but rather the culture in which they live and grow, that needs repair.



Dominant vs. Counter

The Stories We Tell

Dominant Story

- The dominant narrative is an explanation or story that is told in service of the dominant culture's interests and ideologies.

Counter Story

- A counter story is a narrative that resists the dominant story and offers a positive alternative.
- A counter story of masculinity would help to develop a healthier masculinity and promote more diverse expressions and actions in men.



What are Some of the Messages We Hear About How to “Be a Man”

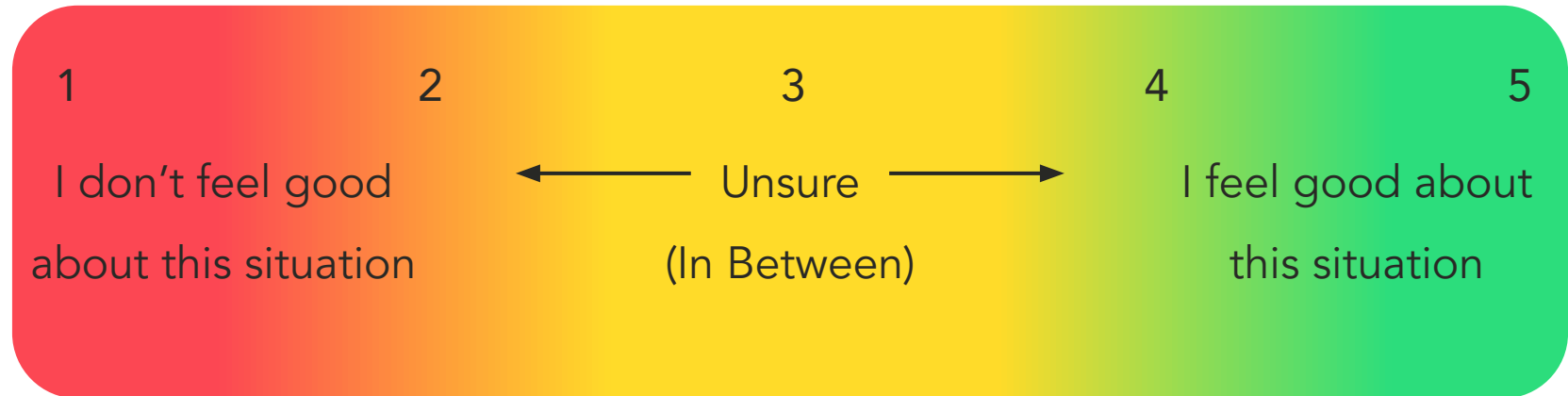
Turn & Talk

- What is the impact of this narrative?
- How does this narrative shape relationships?
- How do you see this narrative showing up in your classes or with the youth you work with?

Camping Trip

Barometer Activity

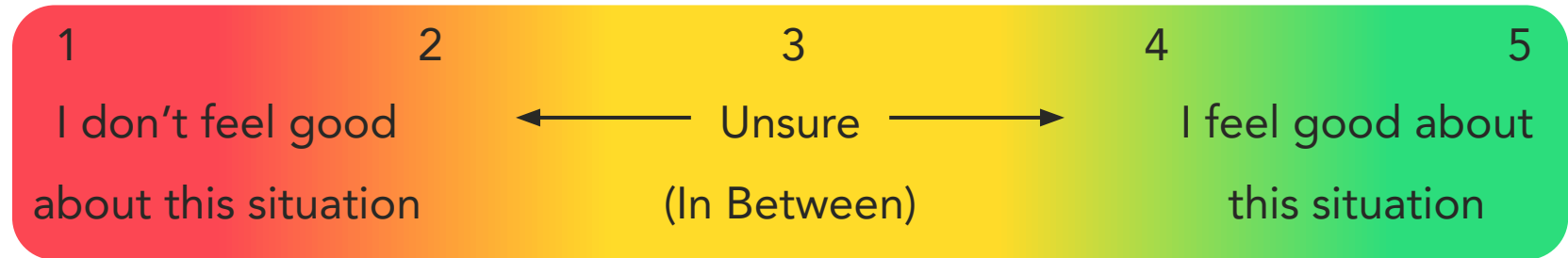
We are going to read a story and you will move across the room to show on a scale of 1-5 how comfortable you are with the situation.



Camping Trip

Barometer Activity

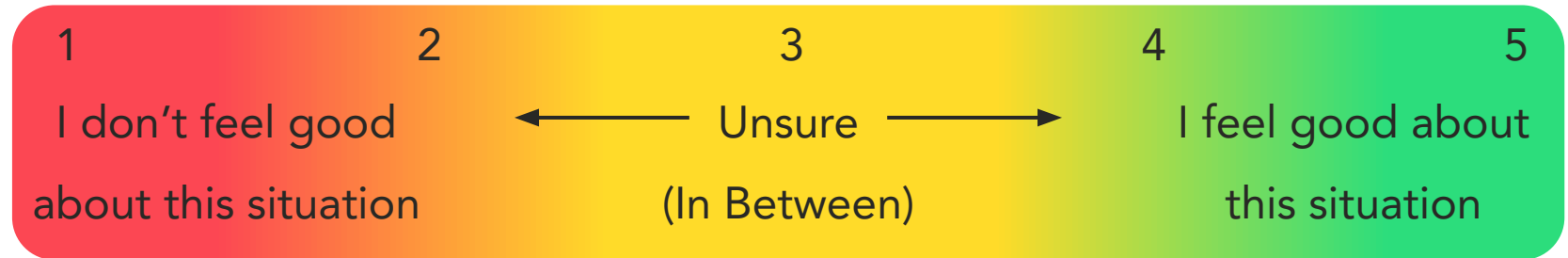
A big group of friends goes camping. When they get there two friends pull out a bag they brought that has some beers in it so it turns into a small party in the woods.



Camping Trip

Barometer Activity

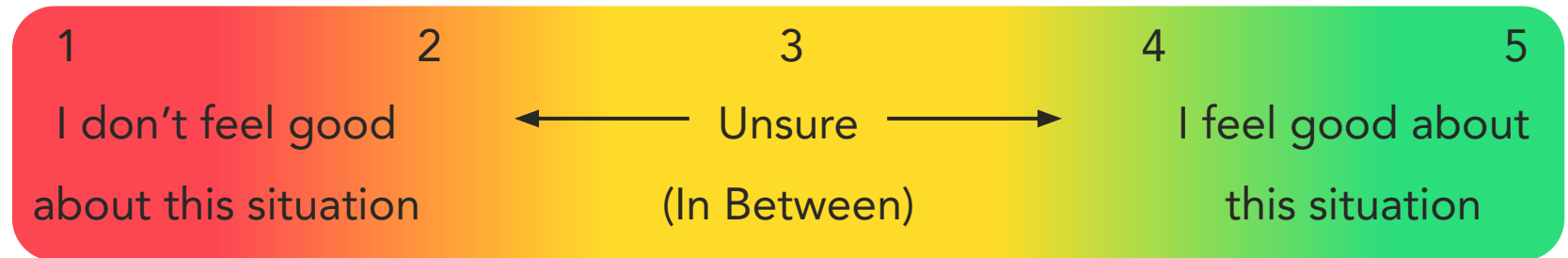
Christine and Scott are on the trip. They've always been a little flirty but in a strictly platonic way. Christine brought a tent and offers to share it with Scott. They've shared tents before on camping trips and neither of them are snorers so it always works out well.



Camping Trip

Barometer Activity

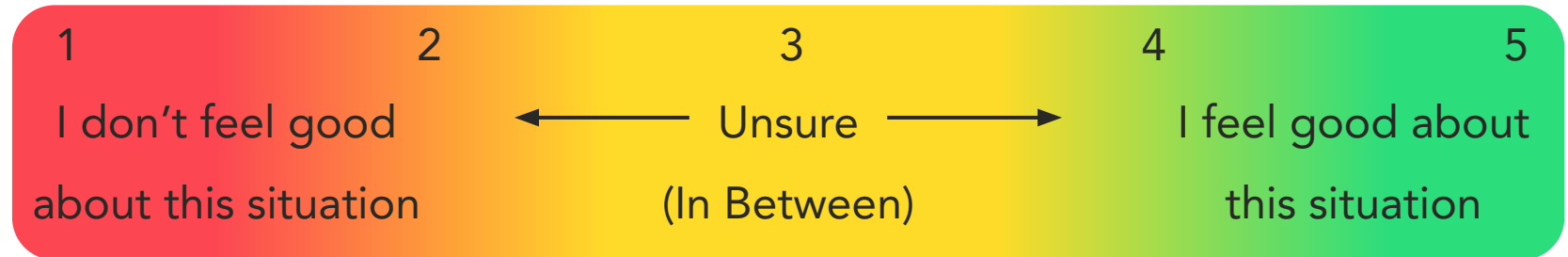
After the fire dies down and they climb into the tent they stay up whispering and laughing. Scott is really funny, Christine thinks. They slowly move closer and get quieter until Christine says, "Listen Scott. I think I've been having some feelings for you. I'd really like to kiss you right now."



Camping Trip

Barometer Activity

Scott gives a huge smile because he's been thinking he wants something more with Christine too. "I'm glad you said that because I really like you too. I also think maybe we should wait before we try anything though. I don't really want my first kiss with you to be after a night of drinking." They continue to whisper until they drift off for the night. In the morning Scott rolls over and asks if it'd be ok if he kissed her. Christine says "Of course!" and puts her arms around him.



Turn & Talk

- Do you think this is a counter story or a dominant story? Why?
- Does this story feel realistic to you? Why or why not? How could it become more of a reality? Is this our goal as educators?
- What are some of the messages of the Man Box that are getting challenged by this story?

Q & A

**What more would you
like to know about
Maine Boys to Men?**

Thank You For Joining Us!

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