Four Necessary Components of Consent

Communicating willingness and/or desire is a necessary component of consent. Communicatory cues include both nonverbal and verbal signals that should ideally be discussed and agreed upon by the participants prior to sexual activity. In addition, communicatory cues should be expressed both before and during sexual activity as a continual process of agreement to convey consent.

A mental willingness and desire to engage in a particular activity are necessary components of consent. It is important to remember that both willingness and desire are embedded in cultural stereotypes that dictate normative scripts within sexual encounters.

Consent must take place without coercion, threat, or force or under duress.

All parties involved must be of sound mind to consent to sexual activity. Impairments to soundness of mind include intoxication (via alcohol, drugs, or other mind-altering substances), being asleep, as well as not being of mental capacity to consent which includes impairment by mental illness and not being of appropriate age to consent.