
KEEPING A SAFE HAVEN

ADDRESSING PREDATORY BEHAVIOR IN OUR FELLOWSHIP

Session Materials: Keeping a Safe Haven note sheets, Keeping a Safe Haven PowerPoint, Keeping a Safe Haven Table Tents, Safety Statement Handouts

Introduction:

20 minutes

(Slide 2) In our literature, we continually tell people that the newcomer is the most important person at any meeting. Most of the meetings have something like that in their scripts. On our medallions, we say, "That no addict seeking recovery need ever die." However, when people come to our meetings, do we love them and support them? Or do we take advantage of them? How many of us know someone who was preyed upon as a newcomer? How many of us have done it ourselves?

How can we tell newcomers they are important if we abuse them when they get here?

(Slide 3) According to our latest Membership Survey in 2016 we know that the average age of our members is 48. However, 12% of our members are under 30 with a substantial number under 20. 8% of our members have less than 1 year clean. 77% of our members got here from either a treatment center or a family member. 56% say what happened at their first meeting was a big influence on them.

So, with more and more treatment centers and family members trusting us with their young people, how good a job are we doing? Are we earning that trust? What can we do to deserve that trust?

(Slide 4) With this Issue Discussion Topic (IDT) we hope to learn of your experiences making our fellowship safe, and how we can make it safer for all members new and seasoned.

(Slide 5) Common Situations:

- A female surrounded by males after a meeting
- An older member pressuring a younger member
- Younger members pressuring other younger members.
- A member of the opposite gender scanning the meeting list for numbers.
- Using H&I to pick up newcomers.
- Younger members preying on older members
- Someone with substantial clean time picking up newcomers

Large Group Discussion:

20 minutes

(Slide 6) How can we make the fellowship safer?

Small Group Discussion and Feedback:

40 minutes

(Slide 7) Break into small groups and have one half of the room discuss the A questions and the other half discuss the B questions. Have each group choose a facilitator and a recorder and remind them to review the groundrules and facilitator's instructions. Let everyone know that we will be collecting the notes from their discussions so ask them to write clearly.

A. Personal Responsibilities.

1. When should members intervene in predatory behavior?
2. How do we approach these people without causing harm?

B. Group Responsibilities.

1. What should a trusted servant do when a member reports an incident?
2. How can a Home Group take an inventory of these issues on an annual or semi-annual basis?

After 20 minutes have elapsed ask each group to share the results of their discussions.

Wrap-Up Discussion:

20 minutes

Summarize what has been heard so far.

(Slide 8) Safety Statement This statement was adapted from IP #29, and Introduction to NA Meetings. Some groups in our Area have either added or are considering adding this to the Chair Person's script. It is not fellowship approved, but then again, no chair person's script is and each group is autonomous in matter such as these.

(Slide 9) Take away: What can I do to make the fellowship safer? What is my responsibility to the newcomer?

(Slide 10) Thank you: Remind everyone to please email pictures of their responses to FellowShipDevelopment@bergenarea.org Notes from future workshops can also be emailed to FellowShipDevelopment@bergenarea.org.