

# Promote Active Engagement In Groups: The Paulo Freire Framework

Hailey Beard  
Shelter Manager



# Core Shelter Services

- Emergency 24hr Hour/7 Days Week Shelter,
- Gender neutral 30 bed facility offers
- 24 Hour Crisis Hotline.
- Sexual Assault Response (SART) and CCR intervention.
- Individual
- Systems Advocacy
- Legal Advocacy with Attorney
- Educational Support





# Why Groups?

# Education & the process of change

- Freire's Method for Education and Action
- Pedagogy of the Oppressed

## What are people talking about?

- How should that feel?
  - Ground rules
- Rent Issues, medical care, and housing conditions.

# Designing a Group Session

1. Conducting a Survey.
2. Choosing a theme and posing problem.
3. Analyzing The problem.
4. Developing a code.
5. Providing for discussion on the possible action.

# Concerns & Questions

- Does Alcoholism cause Battering?
  - Why are some people so angry?
- What is the cause of domestic Violence?
  - Why did I stay for so long?
- How do you choose a partner that won't be abusive?
  - Is emotional abuse battering?
  - Why is my partner so insecure?
- Why isn't my partner supportive of my hopes and dreams?
  - Is it legal to take my children away?
  - Why do I feel so lonely without my partner?
- Even if I get a full-time job my state benefits are more, why is it so hard to get off welfare?
  - What effects do abusive relationships have on my children?

# Choosing a Theme and Posing a Problem

- Make connections between seemingly isolated concerns.
- Intent, Cause, and Impact.
- How do policies of community institutions reinforce the questions?



# Analyzing the Problem

- The Personal
- The Institutional
- The cultural





# Developing a Code

- When the team has decided that the theme is generative – that it allows for discussion on all three levels– the next step is to develop a code. A code is a teaching tool used to focus group discussion. It can be a picture, a role-play, a story, a guided meditation, a song, a chart or an exercise. The code provided a reference point for discussion and analysis. Sometimes more than one code is necessary to analyze the different aspects of a theme, and often more than one group session is needed.



# Options for Actions

- Personal level actions that have already been taken?
- Institutional level actions are led with a brainstorm about other social movement steps that have been taken.
- Cultural Change could be upcoming community events that might have an impact of community views.



# SYSTEMS ADVOCACY

- Challenging victim blaming, social justifications for tolerating injustices, and the widespread objectification of those who are being harmed.
- Changing how individuals understand themselves in relation to the problem (e.g. much effort has gone into telling victims they are not to blame for being abused and into confronting abusers' claims that they are victims of those they batter)
- Deterring individuals from harming others; for instance pushing for the enforcement of laws.
- Changing how public institutions intervene in cases related to DV/SA; e.g. how police and prosecutors deal with DV laws.

# Critical Thinking

**Critical thinking involves standing back from our daily existence, examining our lives, and seeing clearly what is happening in them. The ability to think critically expands our choices.**

**We can each think of a time when we were faced with a decision that involved major changes in our lives. As we look back two or five, even ten years later, we see things that were influencing us then that we did not fully recognize when we were making our decision.**

**“I can’t see the forest for the trees”**

# Building a Diverse group

Liberation is the process of reclaiming our role as creators of culture. All liberation movements face the critical challenge of creating a new culture. While we are still steeped in the thinking of a culture based on dominance over others. The challenge of liberation is working in all levels.



# Getting group going





# Questions and Concerns?

