Welcome, Introductions, Group Agreements

ACTIVITY: Welcome, provide introductions, and develop group agreements for the day.

BACKGROUND: This Welcome Activity is an opportunity to create a respectful learning and sharing environment. The lead facilitator or trainer will use this time to introduce the agency and provide an opportunity to get to know the participants. This will also be a time to review the agenda, logistics for the time together, and Group Agreements.

GOALS:
1. To welcome everyone and lay out expectations for the training.
2. To introduce the service provider agency and its staff.
3. To introduce the participants to the agency and each other.
4. To create a safe and welcoming space for learning and sharing through the establishment of Group Agreements.

OBJECTIVES:
At the end of this exercise, participants should:
1. Know who is conducting the training.
2. Know a little about other participants.
3. Understand the goals of the training.

ESTIMATED TIME: 30-45 minutes

MATERIALS: Flip chart and markers with written Group Agreements (please review and adapt as needed)
A copy of the Group Agreements (see below)
Facilitator Talking Points

◊ Lead facilitator introduces themself and the agency. Ask other agency staff to introduce themselves.

◊ Lead facilitator asks participants to introduce themselves by stating:

✧ Name

✧ Congregation and/or agency. Encourage service providers to state their own congregation if they are comfortable doing so.

✧ Something they collect. A collection is 3 or more of something—books, magnets, figurines, etc. The collection can be serious (Bibles) or more light-hearted (shoes!). Encourage participation—even everyone has 3 or more of something, even if it’s dust bunnies!

✧ Optional: When training some faith communities, you could ask participants to indicate their preferred pronouns. However, in most faith communities, this would not be culturally sensitive.

Have an agency colleague start the introductions, and end with lead facilitator. Be sure everyone introduces him/herself, including those who might have come in late.

◊ Lead facilitator (or other agency designee) reviews the agenda and the logistics of the day:

✧ Breaks

✧ Information about lunch

✧ Location of restrooms

✧ Continuing Education Units (CEUs), if offering them

✧ Other

◊ Lead facilitator reviews Group Agreements.

◊ Ask if there are any additional agreements that should be added to the list. Once the list of agreements is complete, ask if everyone can agree to the list. The Group Agreements are important for setting a respectful tone and an open, learning attitude for the time together.

◊ Make sure there are no questions.
Group Agreements

- **Confidentiality and Safe Space** – Confidentiality is an important component of safety for victims, and for this reason we ask that everyone agree to declare the four walls of the room as “safe space.” No personal information will be shared outside these walls. In addition, we ask participants to respect the confidentiality of others by disguising names, dates, places, and other identifying information when addressing the group.

- **Pronouns** – Domestic and sexual violence affect both men and women in both heterosexual and same-sex relationships. Because victims and perpetrators can be either male or female, we suggest that it is best to make no assumptions about the gender of the victim or abuser. However, the majority of victims are women (in domestic violence 80 - 85%; in rape and sexual assault, 91%), so while we will use both male and female pronouns for victims and survivors and perpetrators, we will use female pronouns more frequently for victims and male pronouns more frequently for perpetrators to reflect the reality of the situation.

- **Victim/Survivor** - At the beginning of the domestic and sexual violence movements, those who had experienced sexual and domestic violence referred to themselves as “victims.” It was important to convey to the wider community that sexual and domestic violence are crimes with identifiable perpetrators and victims. However, with time the consciousness of the wider culture has evolved. Some victims prefer to be called “survivor” because this conveys that they have not been overcome. Some would even call themselves “thrivers”! Regardless, victims and survivors agree that they are much more than these labels, and that they do not like to be permanently labeled by the wider community. We will use both “victim” and “survivor” interchangeably throughout the presentation, at the same time that we recognize and honor the strength and courage of all those who are so much more than victims and survivors.

- **Mutual Respect** – We come together from many backgrounds and experiences. By treating each other with respect, we model sharing power across lines of difference. Please model respectful behavior at all times. You can start by silencing your phones. If you need to use your phone, please step out of the room so as not to distract others. Thank you in advance!

- **Specific Cases of Sexual and Domestic Violence** – We will not have time in this setting to discuss individual situations in great detail. If you would like to bring up an individual situation in order to illustrate a wider point, that would be fine (but remember to be brief and disguise identifying information). For a more detailed discussion of a specific case, however, please speak to one of the advocates in the room. Alternatively, you can access the local or national hotline.
 Pieces of a Bigger Picture Training Model

❖ Interfaith Setting – We want everyone in this room to be comfortable, whether you practice a faith or not. If you talk about your own faith, please use your own specific language (rabbi, church, temple, mosque, Bible). Please use more general language when you are talking about all people of faith (faith leader, sanctuary, scripture). Also, please recognize that not everyone is faith affiliated.

❖ Other Agreements – Please feel free to share any other agreements that would enhance our learning today. (Add suggestions to the list. When list is complete, ask participants to affirm their agreement with the list.)