

Tri-county Batterer Intervention Providers Network Meeting Minutes, 12/07/04

Present: Chris Huffine (Allies in Change Counseling Center), Terry Renzoni (East Hill Men's Anger), Greg Meier (East Hill Men's Anger), Matt Johnston (Changepoint), Danika Zundel (Clackamas Women's Services), Stacey Womack (Abuse Recovery Ministry Services), Emily Gardner (Bradley-Angle House), Michael Crowe (Choices), Tim Logan (Gresham Intimate Violence), Cindy Lyndin, William Warren (City of Portland ONI Crime Prevention), Elsie Garland (Multnomah County DCJ-Juvenile Services Div.), Songcha Bowman (Multicultural Counseling Services), Cassandra Suess

Minutes by Danika Zundel, edited by Chris Huffine

- 1 Issue: discharge, especially non-compliant men; when do you discharge and how
  - One client was discharged after six weeks. In group after going to jail, but didn't follow rules, ie- was eating, swearing and not paying attention in group, and said he "didn't know why he was there." A 32 year old male, many extenuating circumstances, decided to be a "bad boy." Provider made arrangements with PO around non-compliance, for example an evaluation period after the first interview, compared perspectives, and planned to meet together weekly with PO
  - It's okay to make adjustments to help keep people in group, depending on how that will affect the rest of the group; some programs are quick to discharge non-compliant men
  - There should be a balance between quick discharge and failure to let them go, depending on the person; if they're not engaging, recommended quick release. It also depends on the culture of the group because with low-functioning group, the goal of the batterer is to be kicked out, and a negative attitude that is followed up with discharge can influence other members.
  - If a member is not functioning well in group, intervene and do individual work until they are better-suited for group involvement; don't want to compromise the experience of the rest of the members
  - If a member wants to progress slowly, fine, in fact, this might even be better for them, but there is a minimum participation level required; for example, there is a leniency of payments but to a point!
  - Standards for non-compliant discharge: attendance, participation, doing assignments, creating unsafe or disruptive environment, threatening safety of members or facilitator, failure to comply with other requirements, failure to make payments, ongoing battering behavior. All these standards are subjective depending on program and provider. There is a dilemma because these guys need group. If a member discloses, that is generally good, but you don't want to sustain a pattern of someone unwilling to change.
  - For men that aren't good in group, there are several subgroups: men who seem to be antisocial if not psychopathic, work with individual therapist

with high levels of supervision and random Uas; significant personality disorders, very disruptive, appropriate for psychological services, ie- for depression; culturally shamed men with very low levels of disclosure; ongoing substance abuse; significant lifestyle instability, often manifests financially. But what about men who are not overtly disruptive, relatively compliant, pay fees, and participate, but aren't getting it? Or men who don't even try or want to change? Discharge and letter of concern.

- How do you assess progress? One way is through contact with victim, but in a non-obvious way, as if through batterer's disclosure. There are cracks in the mask of the "good" batterer. Typically, a batterer will fail to address areas versus lie overtly, so require men to participate, especially to comment on specific situations. Culturally, it is very hard to penetrate the private self of men who are shamed by group involvement.