

## Tri-County Batterer Intervention Provider Network Meeting Minutes - 07-19-05

Present: Chris Huffine (Allies in Change Counseling Center), William Warren (ONI Crime Prevention), Cindy Lyndin (FVCC Stalking Committee), David Houston (Lifespan Counseling), Marc Hess (Allies in Change Counseling Center), Jacquie Pancoast (ChangePoint), Michael Crowe (Choices), Paul Lee (Men's Resource Center), Brad Peterson (NW Christian Counseling Resources), Elsie Garland (Dept. of Community Justice Juvenile Services Department)

Minutes submitted by: Jacquie Pancoast, edited by Chris Huffine

### TOPIC: DENIAL

Questions: What do you do with men who flat out lie? What does it mean, what can you do with these situations?

Clients often lie to protect themselves when a violation of the No-Contact order has occurred.

Therapeutic view - it is normal to present yourself in a good light.

Counselors experience more disclosure from non-mandated men.

Realistic expectation is not to expect disclosure, especially in areas where there are likely to be sanctions such as violating the no contact order or drug or alcohol abuse. This raises the issue of whether providers should automatically disclose any probation violations. While probation officers generally want and expect such information to be shared with them, it increases the likelihood that group members will lie to the group leaders (although not necessarily other group members, in private conversations) rather than talk about what is going on. One provider reported that, over the years, as they have tightened up their reporting to probation of violations, there has been a significant increase in the amount of lying done about probation violations. It was pointed out that, in this way, non-court-mandated men tend to be more honest about their level of contact, how the contact is going, and whether there is any drug or alcohol use occurring.

One provider encourages court mandated men to be honest by pointing out that probation officers are much more receptive to human mistakes vs. lies. It's better to admit a mistake (e.g., that there has been some contact, that there was a recent relapse) than to be caught later in a lie about it (e.g., at the polygraph).

Counselor may want to look for the acknowledgment of abuse and control behaviors in a general or indirect way rather than specific actions (e.g., alluding to being "much better" now than before--how were they before?, or that they have done "almost no" abuse--then what is the little bit they have done).

How can a counselor react to lying? Move away from specific details or words, and focus on

what victim was experiencing, what was going on at the time.

Denial as: DECEIT - "I want to look good."

FEAR - of consequences, sanctions

SHAME - "I'm not a bad guy" I couldn't have done that - because if I did I would be a bad person.

Deceit - might be more criminal thinking - use facts to draw out disclosures. On the other hand, it might simply be to avoid legal consequences. In the latter, men typically "fess up" when they are no longer at risk (e.g., admitting they were having contact all along and talking about how it went).

Suggestion - use "honor card" - most men want to be honorable. Ask how specific behaviors supports desire to be honorable.

Focus on responsibility - connecting to actions and building empathy.

Deception - more actively toxic to group members. This can play out two ways. A man could be honest in group, finally open up, or he could lie, "look good" in group, but be honest to men outside of group - this is unhealthy to the group as a whole.

Ask clients how they felt when they experienced "getting busted" for a lie by someone they cared about.

Perception of stigma could impact honest disclosure.

Reading suggestion: Men Behaving Badly - focus: men basically do not have tools needed for healthy confrontation.

This discussion was cut short due to time constraints.

Next meeting: August 16, 2005 10:00AM  
Juvenile Corrections Center