MODULE 3

Woman-centered Advocacy

Readings

Cover Reading: “Me, A Feminist?”

1. PCADV Domestic Violence Services/Definitions
2. Review of the Goals and Values of the Movement
4. Feminist Philosophy and Approach, and Elements of the Feminist Approach to Helping
5. Examples of Empowerment Counseling, For Shelter and Beyond, Massachusetts Coalition Against Domestic Violence
6. Lyrics to Video by Breakthrough Productions, “MannKe Manjeere” and “Babul”
7. Woman-centered Advocacy Activity Sheet
Module 3 – Reading 1

Me? A Feminist?

■ Do you think men and women have equal talents, abilities and potentials?

Then you are a feminist.

■ Do you think men and women should have equal pay for equal work?

Then you are a feminist.

■ Do you think women who spend their lives making a home for their families deserve respect for the job they are doing?

Then you are a feminist.

■ Do you think men and women should have equal access to school scholarships, sports facilities and higher education degrees?

Then you are a feminist.

■ Do you favor equal opportunity, equal responsibility and equal treatment for both men and women?

Then you are a feminist.

Feminism is not a new phenomenon.
It is as old as the human desire to be treated fairly and to be judged equally.

BUT IT IS AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME!

Compiled by the National Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs
Module 3 – Reading 2

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence Services/Definitions

A. Eligible Service Recipients:

1. An adult who is subjected to physical abuse or the threat of physical abuse by a family or household member. This individual is referred to as the “Primary Recipient.” “Family or household member” means spouses, parents and children, other persons related by consanguinity or affinity, current or former sexual or intimate partners, or persons who share biological parenthood.

2. A child, under the age of 18, is a dependent of the Primary Recipient of service or an individual under the age of 18 experiencing intimate partner violence or violence in a dating relationship.

3. Significant Other - a family or household member or any other person, other than the person using physical force or the threat of physical force, who relates to the victim in an important way. Examples might be a parent, a sibling or a close friend, etc.

B. Required Services:

All Domestic Violence Programs shall provide the following support and advocacy services to all battered women, their children and other domestic violence victims.

- 24-hour hotline
- Crisis intervention
- Safety planning
- Emergency shelter (or access to) that includes safe homes as appropriate
- Domestic violence counseling/advocacy
- Support/education groups
- Children’s services and advocacy
- Legal systems advocacy
- Other social service advocacy
- Emergency transportation
- Information and referral

In addition, all domestic violence programs will engage in the following:

- Community education/prevention activities
- Training to or with community agencies/systems
- Systems change/systems advocacy activities initiated to effect policy or procedural change
Introduction:
Services provided within a domestic violence program to victims of domestic assault can be characterized as most often crisis and short term. These services are provided within a counseling framework described as supportive and educative.

Supportive counseling is a non-therapeutic helping method that involves listening to and understanding the victim and responding as an informed helper. Supportive counseling may be carried out in a one-on-one setting or within groups. The goal of supportive counseling is to share concern, responsibility and power between the helper and the victim, thereby acknowledging the victim’s competence. The victim is provided with support, but the victim makes each decision; supportive counseling can be described as a "self-help" model.

Educative counseling is a non-therapeutic helping method which offers the victim information, resources, advocacy and education for the purpose of restoring the victim's sense of dignity, power and control. Educative counseling builds upon the victim's strengths and assumes that victims heal most effectively when they are given the tools and information necessary to help themselves.

Specific services available from a domestic violence program within the context described above are as follows:

**Adult Counseling-Individual**

A one-to-one interaction between a trained program worker and an eligible adult client for the purpose of helping the client deal with the actual or threatened physical, mental, sexual or economic abuse. Examples include: information exchange and referral, support, guidance, education and problem solving, and discussing options. Reportable counseling hours must have a clear focus on assisting the victim in developing/working towards plans/goals and should not reflect casual conversations or meetings.

**Adult Advocacy**

Any intervention by a trained program worker with a helping professional or significant other on behalf of an eligible client. The helping professional could be someone from the civil or criminal justice system, the healthcare, mental health, or social service systems.

Intervention with a third party should have the purpose of benefiting the client with the service plan in mind. Advocacy may also include accompanying a domestic violence victim to appropriate agencies in order to carry out the goals identified in the service plan.
Children's Counseling

A one-to-one interaction between a trained program worker and a child who is:

- a dependent of the Primary Recipient of service or
- who is experiencing intimate partner violence or violence in a dating relationship.

The purpose of the contact is to help the child deal with the actual or threatened violence experienced in the home or in a dating/intimate partner relationship.

Examples of one to one interactions may include: explaining the purpose of the shelter and allowing the child to express fears, concerns, and hopes; a tour of the shelter showing the child's sleeping, eating, and play areas; providing a child with age appropriate information on family violence; support; guidance; problem solving; information exchange, etc.

Other services provided for children such as recreational and social activities, field trips, childcare, nurturance, etc. are considered to be an integral part of programming for children. The time spent providing these services, however, should not be reported as counseling/advocacy.

Child Advocacy

Interventions by a trained program worker with a third party on behalf of a child. The third party could be the non-offending parent, a significant other or a helping professional from child protective services, school, health care, mental health, or another social service system, etc.

Community Education/Prevention

Programs designed to help the public understand the need to stop violence against women and children. Community Education activities may include, but are not necessarily limited to making informational/educational presentations, tabling at a community health fair, being interviewed by a representative from a print or electronic media source, responding to requests for written information, distributing brochures, newsletters and other educational materials.

Group Services

Any services provided by a trained program worker to more than one child and/or adult client at a time, with the purpose of giving support, education, providing necessary information, offering guidance, and/or providing the impetus for change for the purpose of benefiting the client and with the service plan in mind. Group services may refer to a structured, regularly held group that has an agenda or theme (Assertiveness Training, Women's Support, Children's Activity Group) or to a less structured meeting with two or more clients (at the kitchen table with a mother and her child, etc.) where the above services are provided.
**Hotline/24-Hour Hotline**

An advertised telephone line that provides a domestic violence victim with 24-hour access to a trained program worker. The Hotline worker provides crisis intervention and supportive counseling, needs assessment, information, advocacy and resource referrals.

The goal is to provide supportive, non-judgmental information regarding what options may be available to meet the caller’s needs, and to assist each caller to sort out her/his thoughts and feelings, culminating with the development of a safety and service plan.

**Information and Referral**

Assisting a client to identify and gather information about community resources for her/him self and/or her/his children. Information and referral is documented under the service categories of Counseling, Advocacy or Group Services.

**Legal Advocacy**

Any one-to-one interaction between a trained program worker and an eligible adult client or a third party on behalf of an adult client, the purpose of which is to explain the criminal justice system, the civil court system or the legal system, the client’s rights etc. Legal Advocacy may also include accompanying the client to court, the police station, Legal Services, etc., or interviewing on the client’s behalf with representatives of the legal system, the criminal justice system, etc.

Legal Advocacy should have the purpose of benefiting the client with the service plan in mind. Examples of legal advocacy may include issues related to the PFA Act as well as other legal issues such as divorce, custody, etc.

**Shelter – Residential (On-Site)**

Has 24-hour intake capability and includes room and board for adults and children. Services are designed to provide a safe and supportive environment essential to the individual's/family's protection and maximum participation in program services.

On-site shelter provides an atmosphere conducive to the type of individual and group support uniquely provided by persons sharing similar experiences. Shelter services provided under this contract are not to exceed 30 days in a six month period.

**Shelter – Non-Residential (Off-Site)**

Emergency shelter, in a local motel/hotel or a private home, not to exceed 30 days in any six month period (under this contract) may be provided when a situation of imminent danger of abuse exists and room and board within a residential shelter program is not available.
**Systems Change/Systems Advocacy**

Systems Change/Systems Advocacy pertains to personal contacts (made in person or on the telephone) initiated to effect policy and/or procedural change in order to improve a system's (agency's or institution's) response to all abuse victims.

Contacts to effect policy and/or procedural change with the following systems would be appropriate:

- Criminal Justice System
- Social Service Agencies
- Housing Agencies
- Welfare/Food Stamp Agencies
- Health Care Agencies
- School Systems
- Governmental Systems
- Women's Services Networks

**Training**

Programs designed to develop the skills necessary to meet the needs of domestic violence victims and their children. Examples of this activity would include:

1. **Domestic Violence Counselor/Advocate Training:**
   
   Forty five-hour (45) training which includes a minimum of 40 hours of didactic and a minimum of 5 hours of supervised practicum experience working with a trained volunteer or staff person. This training must be developed in accordance with the requirements outlined in the PCADV’s Program Standards.

2. **In-Service Training:**
   
   Training within a domestic violence program for volunteers, board members, or staff, to better enable those individuals to meet the needs of domestic violence victims.

3. **Training to/with Community Agencies and Systems:**
   
   Training outside the domestic violence program, provided to/with other agencies and systems in the community, to better enable those agencies/systems to meet the needs of domestic violence victims.

**Transportation**

Transportation provided for a domestic violence victim by the program (staff or volunteers) to remove the victim from immediate danger and/or to accomplish the goals identified in the service plan.
Other Definitions:

**Differently-Abled**

Refers to any person who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, or
- Has a record of such impairment, or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

Major life activities are defined as functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working. An individual whose activities are limited due to their current abuse of alcohol or drugs is not to be included in this category.

**Service/Goal Plan**

A service/goal plan is required for every victim receiving domestic violence services. The purpose of the service/goal plan is to outline the goals the client wants to achieve, provide a description of the steps to be taken by, and on behalf of, the client and the services to be provided by the program (examples: accompaniment, advocacy, referrals, emergency shelter). The staff or volunteer should discuss and prepare this service/goal plan in conjunction with the client. The service/goal plan should be updated on a regular basis to include follow-up information and any changes as may occur. The service/goal plan must be retained in the recipient's file with a service log documenting the nature of the service(s) provided and the actual time spent providing the service.

**Trained Program Worker**

A paid or unpaid program worker who answers the hotline and/or provides services and who has a minimum of 45 hours of documented training as outlined in the PCADV Program Standards.
Module 3 – Reading 3

Review of the Goals and Values of the Movement

Goals:

Justice ________________________________________________________________

Autonomy/agency __________________________________________________________

Restoration ______________________________________________________________

Safety ________________________________________________________________

Values:

Confidentiality __________________________________________________________

Woman-defined services __________________________________________________

Advocacy-based approach _________________________________________________

Social change ___________________________________________________________

Voluntary nature _________________________________________________________

Other: _________________________________________________________________
Module 3 – Reading 4

J-A-R-S: The Goals of the Battered Women’s Movement

Justice:
Access to opportunities and resources that assure battered women/survivors receive responses from systems and communities that maximize safety and hold batterers accountable. Advocacy is individual and systemic. It involves political change and social justice change. We use reforms and our free voices in a democracy that permits protest and civil disobedience. We are a movement for social justice change.

"A feminist movement encouraged women to organize on their own behalves; it helped spawn many forms of women's movements and led to the creation of a multitude of reforms and new kinds of services. Although in 1982 many felt that a progressive women’s movement was less visible and perhaps dying, the view from the battered women's movement suggests a different assessment. As long as feminist and grassroots women’s shelters exist in hundreds of towns across the country, a progressive women’s movement with diverse politics is very much alive. Although this movement is difficult to categorize, its fierce commitments to women's self-determination, self-organization, and democratic participation declare it an important bearer of a liberating vision." (Schechter, page 314)

Autonomy/agency:
Because battered women are part of the larger class of women we recognize that we all have suffered the oppression of subordination by male society. We actively encourage the battered woman to take her own steps to safety. We may not agree with her decisions or actions but we respect her authority to act on her own behalf – it is, after all, her life. By doing this in a supportive environment, we are helping her overcome the oppression of male violence in her life and increasing her skills to live apart from her abuser.

"We were not providing social services. As staffers, we were no different from the women except that they were in crisis. We only gave people safety and information. We emphasized women have to make their own decisions. Support came sitting around the dining room table and while doing advocacy. Our advocacy model was a woman who went to welfare yesterday taking another woman today. If you caretake, you don’t give a woman what she needs. Shelters where women went back to their husbands were often shelters where they had been taken care of as opposed to being helped to develop survival skills. This doesn't prepare the woman for living on her own in an often hostile world." (Schechter, page 67).
Restoration:
Our work is not only to keep her safe and encourage her autonomy. We must help her move back into the position she would have been in had the abuse not occurred. This is done through advocacy for justice and equality. We should never take our subordination by the oppressor for granted. She and we need the material goods and services to overcome the oppression that hold her and us in our oppressed position. It includes assisting women who have never known life without violence to vision what it would look like, what it would take for her to feel safe, including material goods and resources.

"Material preconditions must exist to end violence against women. These conditions - shelter, adequate jobs, incomes, free health care, affordable housing, and child care - are essential to allow women independence from violent men and to enable all people to live decently. It is questionable whether this is possible under capitalism. In a privatized, capitalist economy, the social purposes and values of women's work disappears; women are easily degraded, subject to the whims of their husbands and isolated from the support of other women. Resources must be available in the form of goods, services, and jobs so that power relations between men and women in the family are equalized." (Schechter, page 238).

Safety:
We work to create a safe place she can go. We assist her in defining safety for her. We work to remove the barriers to her struggle to live a violence free life. We work to remove the oppression and subordination she has lived under with her batterer and with society as a whole.

"In feminist shelters, women created a new morality which was in sharp contrast to the ethos within competitive, male dominated organizations and the heartless bureaucracies around them. They developed their own organizational forms, celebratory events, music, and measures of success. As a reaction to the isolation and as an affirmation of women, activists tried to form a sustaining sisterhood, a community with new cultural norms." (Schechter, page 77).
Module 3 – Reading 5

Feminist Philosophy and Approach

The counseling and advocacy model that we are presenting in this curriculum is based on a feminist philosophy, which makes five basic assumptions about the nature of the counseling process.

1. Feminist counseling and advocacy views all personal problems in the context of a sexist society and helps women understand the real oppression and socially defined roles which reinforced their victimization and their feeling of powerlessness.

2. In a feminist model the woman coming for help is assumed to be a basically health person who needs understanding, information and support in order to make changes in her life.

3. The women involved in feminist counseling and advocacy are assumed to have a reciprocal relationship between equals.

4. In the feminist model it is assumed that women are best able to help other women overcome social barriers.

5. A feminist counselor/advocate who is aware of the role of society in shaping personal attitudes and reinforcing personal problems, will want to become conscious of her own cultural biases and stereotypes in order to effectively support all the women whom she helps.

Elements of the Feminist Approach to Helping

- Social rather than personal problem
- Perpetrator responsible for the violence
- Helper as educator
- Advocacy rather than therapy
- Helper as peer
- Women helping women
- Peer support
- Self-help
- Empowerment
- Overcoming stereotypes
- Language
- Woman controls the choice of options
Examples of Empowerment Counseling

- Helping women think about their situations, to realize they are not alone and that other women have had similar experiences.
- Helping women figure out what they want.
- Identifying feelings such as fear and powerlessness, which may be preventing women from making decisions.
- Sharing knowledge about bureaucracies.
- Helping women analyze the ways in which violence has controlled and limited their lives.
- Organizing a group of battered women as a support and advocacy network for one another. And stepping aside when they are ready to take ownership and leadership.
- Being honest; our lives are not perfect either. Offering your own experiences if relevant.
- Giving women the help and information they need to do things for themselves—even if it means saying no to their requests sometimes.
- Offering resources—who, what, when, where.
- Helping women gain a sense of self-confidence and the ability to take care of themselves.
- Challenging gently. And challenging each other about the ways in which we continue to take power away from battered women.
- Being respectful of women’s decisions. Each woman needs to be comfortable with and own her decisions.
- Realizing and building on the commonality of women’s experiences and recognizing the differences and diversity of women as well.
- Expressing interest and concern for each woman.
Role playing new situations so a woman feels more comfortable doing them herself.

Assisting a woman in re-naming her experiences in terms of survival rather the victim-blaming labels others have used to describe her response to the violence.

Modeling ethical communication and providing women the opportunities for practicing new ways of communicating with each other and their children.

Praising women for what they do well, especially in front of their children.

This is a revised, expanded version of a list found in *For Shelter and Beyond: Ending Violence Against Battered Women and Their Children* by the Massachusetts Coalition of Battered Women’s Service Groups. (Revised 1990)
Module 3 – Reading 7

Lyrics to Video by Breakthrough Productions

Part 1: “Mann Ke Manjeere”

Director: Sujit Sircar and Gary, Red Ice
Producer: Mallika Dutt, Breakthrough
Nominated for the MTV Awards for Best Indipop Music Video category

Lyrics:

My mind has begun to play its own rhythm today. My feet, once stilled, are dancing today. A drumbeat pulsates through my being. Awakening the music in my soul. Every breath I take is filled with joy. My heart is now singing I have begun to believe in myself. I can swing up to the clouds. I can see beyond the horizon. The wind beats against my skin. The fields and sands reach out to me. The rosy light of dawn washes away the darkness of the night. I open my doors to a fresh new world. I bask in my aloneness. Clouds of change envelope my mind as solitude comes to me in all her majesty. I see with my eyes the many-hued world, Its seasons beckon. I open my eyes, unlock my soul, I find my Voice, my soul mate lives within. I am no longer alone, I am My own friend. My own companion am I! Repeat Chorus

Part 2: “Babul”

Director: Prasoon Pandey
Producer: Mallika Dutt

Lyrics:

Father, my heart is afraid, But I must speak with you Father, I beg you. Don't marry me off to a goldsmith, I am not interested in jewelry Father, my heart is afraid. But I must speak to you Father, I beg you. Don't marry me off to a trader Money has never made me happy Father, my heart is afraid. But I must speak to you Father, I beg you Don't marry me off to a king I have no desire to rule Father, my heart is afraid. But I must speak to you Father, I beg you. Marry me off to an ironsmith Who will melt my chains. Marry me off to an ironsmith Who will melt my chains.
Module 3 – Reading 8

Woman-centered Advocacy Activity Sheet

Find the Words:

ADVOCACY, AGENCY, AUTONOMY, BAGGAGE, BUS, CHILDREN, COMMUNICATION, CRISIS, DEPENDS, DRIVER, EDUCATIVE, EMPOWERMENT, INTERVENTION, JUSTICE, LISTENING, NAVIGATOR, NON-DIRECTIVE, OPPRESSION, OPTIONS, PARTNER, RESTORATION, SAFETY, SELF-AWARENESS, SKILLS, STRENGTHS, SUPPORTIVE, SURVIVAL, VALUES, VOCABULARY

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