

April 2023 Sanctuary Monthly Training
Community Meeting & Social Responsibility

Social Responsibility

- The commitment to social responsibility is the agreement that the community will take care of itself and its members.
- Members share responsibility for
 - doing good work
 - adhering to the rules of the community and
 - being accountable for their behaviors and decisions.
 - remembering the history of the organization so that members can learn from the past.
- Confrontation of injustice and abuses of power that happen within the community and to the community from external sources.
- Recognizing the impact of chronic stress and exposure to vicarious trauma for many of its members.
- Having mechanisms in place to mitigate the effects of this stress
- Creates a sense of community that protects its members from the bombardment of traumatic stress.
- In short: together we accomplish more, everyone makes a contribution to the organizational culture.

Community Meetings: are a tool to bring groups of people together and allow an opportunity to take the pulse of the group before beginning a meeting. The community Meeting is not a therapy group, but a short check-in in which you are able to connect with others and identify issues that may support or impede your work together.

- Provide a way to structure time together.
- Create a healthy and predictable routine for the community.
- Models caring for each other.
- Builds bridges from the present to the future in setting goals.
- Reinforces the power of the circle – the idea of shared responsibility for each other and the community serves as a way to establish some safety within the group by allowing each person to participate.

Let's break down the three questions:

How are you feeling? The purpose of this question is to reinforce the importance of recognizing emotions and managing them. When used with clients or with staff, the question helps members gauge the emotional functioning of those in the group. The answers to this question may lead your group to recognize that it needs to address issues or tensions that may not otherwise be addressed.

What is your goal for the day (or meeting, or morning, etc.)? The purpose of this question is to keep a focus toward the future. People who have experienced trauma often become stuck in the past and have difficulty envisioning the future. This question requires that participants build a bridge from the present to the future.

April 2023 Sanctuary Monthly Training
Community Meeting & Social Responsibility

Who will you ask for help? The purpose of this question is to build relationships among participants. Some goals may require help from someone outside of the group. Whenever possible, participants should look to other members of the community meeting to help with their goals. Many people rely on a spiritual practice or belief to meet their goals. Although this should be respected, we encourage participants to also look to another person in the room or in the community in order to meet the goal of this question.

Sticky Issues:

“I don’t want to participate”: Keep in mind that the community itself is likely to pull the individual along in participating OVER TIME; and that power struggles will likely defeat the purpose. Staff and peers may want to check in with that person later.

“I don’t feel anything/I don’t know how I feel”: It might make sense to offer an observation about the person’s body language as a hint to their feelings. Offer a feeling chart – some individuals may need help putting feelings into words.

“My goal is to get the F out of here/hurt myself/hurt someone else”: Think about referring back to the feeling expressed in the first question and ask to check in about what may have happened. Think about referring the individual to his/her safety plan. It is also okay to offer responses like, “I’m worried about you and I’m going to check in after this to figure out how to help you stay safe.”

Throughout the month of April, mix up the Community Meeting. Here are some ideas:

- What color are you feeling like today?
- What type of amusement park ride do you feel like today?
- What weather best describes how you feel today?
- What movie do you feel like today?
- What cartoon character are you feeling like today?
- What food do you feel like today?
- What animal best describes how you feel today?