

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT

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Men Stopping Rape Exercises

by Dave Kosson

The following is a list of some of the exercises developed by the members of Men Stopping Rape in Madison, WI, for use in anti-rape workshops. I compiled this list for use in Syracuse at a Man-to-Man training program entitled "Practical Strategies for Ending Abuse: A Skill Training for Educators."

1) Sentence Completion Exercise: Going around in a circle, each man completes each sentence. This sort of exercise can be particularly useful for getting an audience to begin to speak and to own their own opinions. The sentence stems can vary too. Feel free to add your own. What I like about being a man (or men) is... What I don't like about being a man (or men) is... What I like about women is... What I don't like about women is...

2) Men on Rape Cards (adapted from Men on Rape book by Tim Beneke): Index cards are prepared with the [various statements about sex](#) found in Beneke's book. These are examples of things men have said. Each person reads one or more and then you discuss whether we have heard them, whether we have used them, and use this as a springboard for discussion of what they mean, how they affect how we think and feel about women and about sexuality, and how what we think affects how we act. This is one of the easiest ways to get a group of men talking on the topic. Nobody has to own what they say. Then, if they raise their hand that they've used some of these expressions, they have owned some of what's been said, and in a fairly safe way.

3) Secrets Exercise: Each person writes a secret (or a thought or feeling) about rape (or about sexuality, or about violence, etc.) on an identical piece of paper and with the same color pen (or pencil...). Then, the facilitator collects them and passes them out. If anyone receives their own, exchanges are made until each person has someone else's secret. Then each person reads another person's secret as if it was their own. As a variant, each person tries to elaborate briefly on the secret, again as if it's their own. For co-ed workshops, the women read the men's secrets and vice versa.

4) Appropriate Game: (For use with younger audiences) Workshop facilitators prepare a series of cards, each containing various behaviors that might arise for the group doing the workshop. A person picks a card, reads it, and gives his opinion about the conditions under which the action is and/or is not appropriate. Then, each person chimes in with agreements and disagreements about particular conditions. Examples: calling a girl and asking her out; whistling at a girl on the street; taking off a girl's shirt, slapping a woman's face; telling a woman you want to have sexual intercourse with her, etc. This exercise is particularly useful for showing people that different people think different things are appropriate. It can also be used to encourage people to consider the consequences of their actions, and to consider what girls/women would think appropriate.

5) Fishbowl: (For co-ed workshops, especially) Men and women segregate into two concentric circles, usually with men on the inside first. Each gender gets about 10 minutes to discuss rape (or some more specific related issues), the other gender gets 5 minutes to comment on what they've heard, and the starting gender get 5 minutes to process the other gender's response. This format promotes really listening to each other, given that we cannot respond immediately. This may also be useful with two groups of men, with each portraying a

particular perspective, but we are not sure if this has ever been tried. If women go first, men are often too defensive to say anything real.

6) Role Plays: For those who do them, they can be extremely effective at encouraging someone to consider the consequences of particular actions or for building empathy. They are also higher-risk than some other exercises and may not work with audiences that are not already comfortable with each other. A list of possible role play scenarios follows. Feel free to make up your own.

a) A shy friend of yours is going on his first date and asks you how to get a woman into bed. b) You've just returned from a wonderful date and a friend interviews you about how far you've gotten. c) Your friend's girlfriend (or partner) has been raped and he comes to you very angry. d) You try to confront another man about his practice of staring at women who pass by. e) A male friend of yours tells you he has been raped. f) One man bullies or teases another man. g) One man tells another about an unsuccessful sexual encounter.

(See related article entitled [Doing Anti-Rape Work: One Man's Perspective](#) by Dave Kosson in this same issue)

Ed. Note: This resource was originally published in the ENDING MEN'S VIOLENCE NEWSLETTER in the Fall of 1989. The EMV Newsletter was edited by Bill Warters. Author Dave Kosson was a member of Man-to-Man, a pro-feminist men's organization that educates on issues of preventing violence and abuse in Syracuse, NY at the time this was written. Dave is also an emeritus member of Men Stopping Rape, in Madison, WI.