



55+ Women's Group

Part 2

Elder Abuse vs. Violence Against Women Aged 55 and Older

- Elder abuse
 - Healthcare sector
 - Associates the abuse with a lack of support and services, advocates intervention and a neutral analysis
- What happens to women who are victims of violence against women?

Flashback to Part 1

- 2007: Part 1
- Groups actively offered for 10 years
- AOcVF offers continued support to member organizations
- More than 250 older Francophone women have been reached

Flashback: Part 1

A great success

- By Francophone women for Francophone women
- Adapted to the needs of older women
- Can be adapted province-wide (urban or rural areas)
- The group breaks down the isolation of senior Francophone

women

- Age
- Belonging to a linguistic minority
- Living in a rural area
- Canadian winters

Objectives of the Group

- GOAL OF THE PROGRAM:
 - Guide a group of Francophone women aged 55 and older to increase their personal confidence.
- OBJECTIVES
 - Make sure that participants in the group can:
 - Escape their isolation
 - Improve their self-awareness and self-esteem
 - Learn to recognize abusive situations
 - Use available resources, such as:
 - Their individual and personal resources
 - Community resources, both formal and informal

Part 1: Themes and Objectives

- Explore their identity as a group of women aged 55 and older;
- Recognize their personal journey and the people they have become today;
- Explore how to cope with grief (loss of a loved one, their home, retirement, or with respect to their health). Identify their social network and break down feelings of isolation;

Part 1: Themes and Objectives

- Learn how to identify abusive situations, including abuse from an intimate partner, family members or a professional;
- Put a personal safety plan in place and be aware of the community resources that are available;
- Develop an positive attitude, assert their needs while asserting themselves;
- Give women a place to freely discuss their sexuality, as well as myths and beliefs that influence their perceptions.

Part 2: Themes and Objectives

- Identify the role of the woman before and today. Recognize the role of socialization and how this phenomenon influences behaviours and beliefs. Emphasize the role of women aged 55 and older;
- Recognize their affiliations with various identity groups. Recognize the privileges and oppression that accompany affiliations with various groups. Create open-mindedness, promote solidarity among women and how to become an ally;
- Recognize and implement problem-solving and decision-making steps;

Part 2-Themes and Objectives

- Guide the participants to recognize and name the emotions they experience and to communicate them in an positive way. Recognize how our thoughts and beliefs influence our emotions;
- Be able to recognize the difference between basic needs and needs for personal fulfillment. The importance of “self care”, of putting their own needs first, and discovering tips for taking better care of themselves;
- Recognize each participant’s personal journey and celebrate the woman.

Best Practices for Program Implementation

1- Accessibility

2- Nature of the Group

3- Francophone Character

4- Respect

5- Participants

6- Facilitation

7- Material

8- Proceedings

9- Challenges

10- Assessment

Best Practices for Program Implementation

1- Accessibility:

- Be aware of the participants' accessibility requirements before the group starts
- No stairs or escalators, access for wheelchairs and walkers, fully accessible washrooms
- Comfortable chairs and tables in front of the participants
- Take into account the fact that written text can pose a challenge for some
- Before the group starts, ask about any transportation needs and offer the available options (taxi, car, carpooling)
- Follow the best practices established for material accessibility

Best Practices for Program Implementation

2-Nature of the group

- A group for personal growth combining therapeutic support with an opportunity for socialization and education
- Between 6 and 10 participants
- Safe and confidential location
- Pre-meeting not necessary

Best Practices for Program Implementation

3- Francophone Character

- The Francophone character of the group is very important, the “by and for”, references to resources in French, material in French...

Best Practices for Program Implementation

4- Respect

- Give a warm welcome
- Discuss formality at the first meeting: most are not offended by informality, but it is best to discuss and agree upon the subject from the start

Best Practices for Program Implementation

5- Participants

- Not limited to women who are victims of violence
- Recruitment: social media, word of mouth. Best not to recruit a group whose members all come from an existing group (e.g. retirement residence)
- Women aged 55 and older can participate
- Participants will have preferably taken part in Part 1, but newcomers can also join the existing group

Best Practices for Program Implementation

6- Facilitation

- The age of facilitators or co-facilitators does not matter. However, they must have experience facilitating groups.
- Clear leadership within the group and facilitators should be well-prepared
- The participants may have the opportunity to present something to the group

Best Practices for Program Implementation

7- The Material

- Have a folder to store their documents
- A place to store material if participants do not want to bring it home
- Practical assistance: gift cards are appreciated. Offer the choice of various stores, not just a grocery store
- Promotional items: agendas, notebooks with pens, lip balm, reusable grocery bags, folders or briefcases to hold the material provided

Best Practices for Program Implementation

8- Proceedings

- Part 1: fall (Oct-Nov), and end of winter (Feb-March)
- Schedule: during the week, Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday; no condensed weekends
- From 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (with break and snack), or from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (including a meal)
- Activities in three parts: 30-30-30 + 15 minutes for the assessment, and time for a break or one hour for lunch
- Flexibility to add role-playing situations

Best Practices for Program Implementation

9- Challenges

- Have guests on themes of interest for the group
- Receive information, learn about existing resources, references, tools...
- Announce the theme of the following week

Best Practices for Program Implementation

10-Assessment

- Add “my commitment for the week” or “my personal goal” (regarding what was just discussed)