

Alternatives to Calling the Police Workshop facilitation guide

What is the Alternatives to Calling the Police Workshop?

This workshop originated in the understanding that police often make people unsafe, but there is still a need for people to respond to and support each other in unsafe situations.

This isn't a training - it is a facilitated conversation that relies on participants offering and working through scenarios from their experiences.

It's kind of like a group brainstorm which is structured by some of the thinking and reading we've done about alternatives to punitive responses to harm. While part of the idea of the workshop is to come up with tools that can act as direct alternatives to calling the police, another outcome of the workshop has been re-thinking safety in terms of something we build by structuring our work and relationships in ways that help to prevent problems from becoming crisis or emergency situations.

Another outcome has been to generate ideas about what kinds of supports and interventions at other scales don't yet exist and need to be organized or demanded.

Basically - we aren't professionals, what we do is draw from our own experiences and the experiences of people in the room to facilitate a conversation about different types of scenarios. We bring with us some knowledge about the types of resources that are available, and some ideas about what needs to be in place in order for situations that become crises to be prevented in the first place. However, a significant purpose of the workshop is a consciousness-raising exercise about the types of resources that should exist that don't, and that we have to work collectively to bring into being.

Many requests for this workshop have come from organizations that are expecting a "training," so we have found it important to communicate about the nature and structure of the workshop at the time of scheduling it. The work of the workshop is to brainstorm alternatives that do exist, identify alternatives that need to be built, and also to build a sense of responsibility for creating alternatives collectively.

Different groups of participants will lead to very different workshops.

Be prepared to have very different workshops based on different groups of participants. Different groups of people will have different understandings of how police function in society depending on their experience through the mediation of race, class etc. People's "common sense" about the police will vary widely. Some people will believe that when it comes to conflict, the police will be the least harmful solution to a situation, and you may find the tone of the workshop is more

like a Police 101. Some people will be intimately aware of the way police dangerously escalate situations. More often than not, there are a mix of perspectives and experiences within one workshop.

This workshop is generally for people who: have called the police in the past, have seen the negative outcomes and wonder if there is another way and/or have experienced first hand the destructive force of the police on themselves and their communities and need tools to respond to crisis situations which don't involve the police. We have given this workshop to non-profits, grassroots groups, peer support groups and rooms full of community members who came out because they saw a posting for this workshop in their neighbourhoods.

One of the challenges of this workshop, and potentially one of its outcomes, is deconstructing the idea that there could be a one-to-one "alternative" to the police. The police have a very limited range of tools but are called to respond to a wide variety of situations. Developing alternatives to the police requires dis-aggregating the political category of "crime" and thinking instead about harm more broadly (including harm caused by the police) and the different structures that need to be in place in order to attend to the particular needs associated with particular forms of harm.

Planning in advance of the workshop

Planning checklist:

- research resources specific to the audience or group
- workshop outline and timeline
- breakdown of facilitator roles
- printed materials for participants (resources, workshop outlines, other visual aids)
- childcare
- food and drink
- other supplies
 - Paper + writing utensils for everyone
 - Laptop for note-taking
 - Name tags

Workshop Length

We've included some sample workshop outlines with timelines in the appendices.

Typically, where the participants are capped at 10, the scenarios to be discussed are generated by participants. If you are giving the workshop to a workplace or organization that can coordinate ahead of time then they can also brainstorm what

scenarios they'd like to discuss ahead of time and send the facilitators three or four distinct types of scenarios that they'd like to work through in advance. This will also give you some more research/prep time.

You will always wish you had more time! For example, twenty minutes for one scenario feels like scratching the surface and if you only get to a few scenarios some people will be disappointed there wasn't time to get theirs. We have decided that for us a minimum three hour workshop with four scenarios is the most we can squeeze into the least time. But also, it is important to emphasize that the discussion doesn't end with this workshop. Ideally people will take this information and approach into their lives and communities. It can be helpful to emphasize that this workshop is about building skills and tools to have these conversations in an ongoing way - the conversation won't ever be complete.

Food and childcare for in-person workshops is essential. We have found that it is very important to plan multiple scheduled breaks (in addition to welcoming people getting up and moving around, stepping out as they need to at any time), and there are some activities that naturally lead in to break times.

We have found that it is helpful to provide everyone with the workshop outline and timeline at the start of the workshop. For example, some people have identified that it is difficult for them to remember the question prompts just by hearing them and therefore they benefit by having a printed reference.

Have one of the facilitators set a timer for each section to make sure you don't go over. It will likely feel like you are cutting off the conversation, but letting the conversation go on for as long as feels natural will mean not getting to other scenarios, going over breaks, etc., so be aware of that. When the conversation needs to be cut short, it is a good time for a reminder that this workshop should be treated as the starting point for ongoing conversations rather than a prescriptive plan for every scenario discussed.

Facilitation

Good facilitation and learning about a variety of de-escalation techniques and other community safety building methods before presenting this workshop is essential. Because this is discussion based and intensive it is helpful to have two facilitators per group. We prefer to cap the group size at 10, but we have done the workshop with 25. We have found that this workshop requires at least two facilitators. If you are able to include a third facilitator, a great role for them is to take notes on flip charts or on a projected screen throughout the workshop, to reflect the conversation back to participants. We use real-time note-taking as a visual aid

during the conversation, and as a record of the conversation that we can send back to participants after the fact.

We have typically spent a lot of time talking about our facilitation plans because facilitation is such a central part of making the workshop work. Our preferred method is to have facilitators switch off taking the lead facilitating discussion and whoever isn't the primary facilitator can take notes for that section. It is a good idea to think ahead of time about who will take on what facilitation role and/or section of the workshop, and to think about how you want to relate as facilitators to the ground rules and to facilitating difficult conversations. The people participating in this workshop are the ones who really create the solutions through the facilitated sharing of their experiences and knowledge, but it is helpful if the facilitators have some degree of direct experience with de-escalating crisis situations even if they aren't professionally trained.

Making Space for Pain

For many people this workshop is intensely personal and it can bring up a lot of feelings. They may recall a situation that was traumatic. You may discuss scenarios involving the police that run close to life-and-death situations someone has experienced in their life. At the beginning of the workshop, we ask participants to keep the scenarios as general as possible and not to recall violent situations to the group in graphic detail. But there may be emotional moments in the workshop and they should be met with respect. Vulnerability should be honoured. It is useful for facilitators to discuss ahead of time with each other how this may look for them, given their own experiences, and to develop some strategies for responding that work for them.

Resources

Here is a list of resources we have drawn on in constructing this workshop. You may wish to provide a list like this for participants for background and/or future reading. We usually print out copies of at least some of the free resources as materials to use in the workshop (see supplies lists). We try to get free or donated printing whenever we can. If someone with access to an office asks "how can I support this workshop?" you might ask them if they could print a bunch of workshop materials! Also, this resource list is something we can and should build over time, so feel free to add to it.

Whose Security is it Anyway? A toolkit to address institutional violence in nonprofit organizations

By Lara Brooks and Mariame Kaba

Consent and Community Healing – workshop resource guide
by Berkeley Free Clinic Peer Counseling Collective

Helping your friends who sometimes wanna die maybe not die
By Carly Boyce

Beyond Survival – Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement
Edited by Ejeris Dixon and Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha

Free to print:

If you see something, Do something!
By May Day Collective and Washtenaw Solidarity and Defense

Pods and Pod Mapping Worksheet
By Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective
(<https://batjc.wordpress.com/pods-and-pod-mapping-worksheet/>)

Podcast interview with mia mingus about pod mapping/TJ:
<https://www.iheart.com/podcast/966-we-rise-30097236/episode/an-intro-to-transformative-justice-with-30113191/>

13 Moons Resource List
By 13 Moons collective : *needs amending*

MHRN poster - Stop, Before you call the cops!
<https://mhrn.ca/community-projects>

Nonviolent Community Safety and Peace building handbook
By Pt'chang nonviolent community safety group inc.

To Access our living document of ways you can respond to situations without calling the police click [here](#). All of the ideas listed in the document were brainstormed in workshops.

Workshop Outline with Notes

Introduction to the workshop and facilitators

Go Around

We start every workshop with a go-around of names, pronouns, and if people wish, what brought them to the workshop/what they hope to get out of it. Name tags can be helpful for facilitators.

Ground rules

Don't graphically recall a violent situation (we don't have the space or capacity to take care) - keep it general / reserve judgement (we are learning together) / be generous listeners (assume the best, not the worst, of co-participants).

Discomfort vs Danger vs. Safety, defining terms and parameters for this workshop

Opening Exercise - A group Brainstorm on what is danger vs. what is discomfort. You can use big paper or a white/chalk board with two columns.

Aim: to illustrate the difference between discomfort and danger

-this is important in order to clarify the nature of the scenarios that will be the focus of the discussion *before* participants spend time brainstorming them.

Explain criteria: discomfort occurs when something happens which can make us feel uncomfortable.

-For example, property damage, people sleeping outside, or people using drugs may cause discomfort but are not dangerous

Sometimes discomfort can mimic the feeling of danger, because of :

-triggers/a behavior that makes us recall a dangerous situation that nevertheless had additional elements which made it dangerous

- racism etc., which can cause us to incorrectly judge a situation/someone's intentions as dangerous based on prejudicial assumptions

-people who are often perceived as threatening may actually be in danger (or put in danger by policing), and someone else's crisis shouldn't be re-cast as a threat to your safety

What is safety?

Be clear that in this workshop we are broadly defining safety as life sustaining characteristics and conditions necessary for people to thrive, and danger as conditions or situations which put people at risk of bodily harm. For example, safety is something that needs to be built collectively, not a condition that can be achieved for one individual or group by removing another person from a space with the help of the police.

Generating Scenarios

In this part of the workshop, we generate scenarios that will help us begin to think through a range of possible responses that don't involve the police.

Participants will brainstorm concrete situations where they or someone they know either called the police / thought about calling the police / or didn't know what to do

Participants write their situations down on sticky notes and stick them to a wall.

(suggested break time)

While participants are on break, facilitators read all the scenarios and group them into categories that reflect central/repeated themes (often by literally moving the sticky notes into columns) - often, many situations are similar to each other and if we generalize them we end up with three or four distinct categories, for example: domestic violence, someone we meet on the street seems to be in crisis, someone has overdosed, a friend is suicidal/experiencing a mental health crisis. We will discuss each of these generalized categories as a single scenario when going through possible responses.

If there are more than three or four categories that naturally emerge, sometimes we ask people to "vote" on the scenarios/themes they would like to discuss. This can be done as people are coming off of their break - they can mark a few scenarios each with a pen, or you can provide small dot or star stickers that they can use to indicate the scenarios they'd like to prioritize.

There are always way more scenarios than we have time to discuss, but again this is a good time to emphasize that we are offering a framework for exploring and thinking through scenarios rather than providing a comprehensive plan for all situations.

Scenario Discussion

This is the section where we take our 3 or 4 scenarios and discuss them one at a time to brainstorm possible responses as a group. We like to use a few guiding questions to apply to each situation which can help us evaluate what response is required.

Guiding Questions for each Scenario

- What would a “resolution” to this situation look like?
 - Idea here is to help tease out the difference between what an outsider might consider a resolution (ie. getting rid of a disturbance) vs. inquiring about what the person who is in actual danger wants/needs/has identified as a resolution
 - Also reveals how little the police are actually able to do to “resolve” anything
- Does anyone have ideas or experience with successful strategies for responding without police?
 - To ask of each potential response: Does this response harm anyone?
 - Attempting to highlight how some responses may put people in further danger - for example: calling an ambulance or taking someone to the hospital might actually result in police attention
- What would we need to carry out this response? From who?
 - acknowledging that in order to resolve some situations, other systems have to be activated
 - maybe the resolution is food that you can offer, but maybe it’s shelter that you can’t offer, or drugs you don’t have access to, or forms of compassionate psychiatric care that don’t actually exist
 - acknowledging that many situations require a response that goes far beyond what can be given by any one or two people in a moment, let alone accomplished through force by police officers
 - toward beginning to generate a list of spaces we need to create, capacities we need to build, resources we need to demand, in order to bring actual resolutions into being
- What do we need from: neighbours, institutions, loved ones, etc
 - identifying some of the relationships that could be activated in advance of another crisis situation – ex. Communicating with neighbours about what they’d like done in another future situation, making response plans with the relevant parties, getting the numbers of trusted friends or family of people you anticipate might be in crisis again at a future moment, identifying which other neighbours and/or spaces and organizations are safe to go to in the sense that they won’t call the police either
 - This question is about time and scale - often what is possible immediately in the moment is something that can be provided by people in close proximity: you, a neighbour, a safe neighbourhood space; but sometimes what is needed in order to plan for *future* crises

is something that requires calling on/or creating options that bring trusted people or organizational responses into the picture who weren't there the first time

Generally, we can think about responses in the moment vs. proactive planning for the future and, what resources already exist vs. which do we have to locate/bring into being/advocate for at other levels?

Often people are coming to the workshop with experiences of having called the police themselves or on their loved ones. One of the assumptions of this workshop is that there sometimes aren't adequate alternatives, so we are careful not to shame people for calling the police. If someone has called the police and it has gone badly, this workshop can be a good place to reflect on that.

(Suggested Break Time)

After generating responses we usually do the pod mapping exercise:

Pod Mapping

In terms of the situations police are actually called to respond to, around 2/3 are categorized by the police as "domestic disturbances". This reflects the fact that people are most likely to face harm in the private or domestic sphere from someone they know. Part of creating alternatives to calling the police requires us to plan for how to respond to domestic harms that don't necessarily read as "emergencies" or "crises" in the same way as the scenarios discussed above, and/or may not be visible from the outside at all.

The Pod Mapping exercise, developed by the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective (BATJC), is a component of the workshop that we developed in order to address these types of safety needs, and gesture toward the building of broader visions of community safety. This portion of the workshop asks us to move from concrete situations, to identifying and describing the networks of people who could be cultivated and activated to respond to less visible forms of violence and harm.

We start this section of the workshop by reading the introduction to Pod Mapping written by the BATJC

We present the idea of Pod Mapping, and provide and describe the worksheet, and give people time to begin to work on it on their own. It is not an exercise that needs to be done or can be completed in the context of the workshop - it is something

people think about often in private, over time. It is a visionary and reparative ongoing exercise rather than a tool.

Some components of the introduction that can serve as useful discussion points either before or after people have spent a few minutes thinking about their own pods are:

- what is the difference between your “community” and your pod?
- what is the difference between people you would call on for support if you were harmed, versus if you needed to be held accountable for harm you caused?
- There are many people who don’t have any pod people” (BATJC) - what are some of the conditions that make it difficult for people to cultivate and maintain trusting and supportive relationships? How can we change these conditions?

Outline for doing the pod mapping exercise:

1. Link pod-mapping to scenario discussion:

We thought of things we can do, and things we need that don’t yet exist.

Pod-mapping (a step toward pod-building) is a different scale on which to understand how we can build networks and institutions for accountability and transformative justice.

2. Introduce pod-mapping context and origins

BATJC

3. Introduce idea of pods

Your pod is made up of the people that you would call on if violence, harm or abuse happened to you; or the people that you would call on if you wanted support in taking accountability for violence, harm or abuse that you’ve done; or if you witnessed violence or if someone you care about was being violent or being abused.

People can have multiple pods. The people you call to support you when you are being harmed may not be the same people you call on to support you when you have done harm, and vice versa. In general, pod people are often those you have a relationship and trust with, though everyone has different criteria for their pods.

4. Discussion/Reflection

Follow-up questions and/or questions that may be asked in the context of discussion:

What is the criteria for members of your pod?

How is shared analysis, or membership in a community, different from a trusting relationship?

What would you need in a trusting relationship to take accountability for harm you've done?

What are the barriers to building these types of relationships?

What is working? / What can we do more of?

What work do we need to do to build pods?

5. Findings from BATJ

Bring up the findings from BATJ either in the context of discussion, or as a debrief at the end (for those points that didn't come up during discussion)

- Most people have few, solid dependable relationships in their lives.
- There are many people who do not have any pod people.
- Building analysis was much easier than building the relationship and trust
- Asking people to organize their pod was much more concrete than asking people to organize their "community."
- Relationship and trust, not always political analysis, continue to be two of the most important factors in successful TJ interventions,
- Many people have less people they could call on to take accountability for harm they've done than harm that happened to them.
- "Pod people" don't fall neatly along traditional lines,

6. Engage with pod-mapping on your own

Check out and pass out feedback forms

At the end of the workshop we do a checkout, where each participant has the opportunity to share how they're feeling, reflections on the workshop, etc.

Then we hand out feedback forms so participants can give us share their impressions of the workshop and any suggestions or criticisms of the workshop.

***add link to feedback form**

APPENDICES

APPENDIX - Visual aids

· Workshop timeline

· Flip Chart #1 - (icebreaker)

What is safety? What is danger?

· Flip Chart #2 - (generating scenarios)

Brainstorm concrete situations where you or someone you know either called the police / thought about calling the police / or didn't know what to do

· Flip Chart #3 - (generating responses)

Does anyone have any ideas or success stories of dealing with a scenario like this without the police?

Does this response harm anyone?

What would a "resolution" to this situation look like?

What would you need? From who?

What would other people need?

What do you need from your neighbours?

What do you need from institutions?

APPENDIX - Feedback Forms

APPENDIX - workplace scenarios/considerations

guiding thoughts -

If there are structures in your workplace that are barriers to you responding as a person (as above), what are they? Are they changeable?

- What is your conflict resolution procedure like now?
What has worked, not worked?
- What is motivating your response?

What are your individual fears?

What are your fears around liability as an org?

Are there potentially conflicting allegiances (guardians vs participants etc.)

- Do you have enough staff/resources to support solutions?
- How much say do front-line staff have in responding in ways that make sense to them / the responses that become organizational policy?
- How much say do participants/clients have in dictating organizational responses?

responses that are empowering vs. taking away ppl's power

basic needs as first response

In the case of non-profits or other institutional settings, sometimes the conversation turns to how we can push back against structures like liability and licensing that prevent people from pursuing alternatives to the police by requiring them to call the police in certain situations. This becomes a discussion about the conditions we need to change in order to make alternatives possible.

While this workshop isn't designed as a method for helping organizations make safety plans or policies, this is certainly a need that organizations have identified and an element of the workshop that could be further developed. For example, it could be useful to offer examples of organizational or institutional policies about not calling the cops on participants.

We have suggested in the past that in order to build community safety for people who don't want involvement with the police, it is important for institutions to be clear and transparent with people who use their spaces about what their policies are in relation to the police. This is something that can be encouraged in the context of the workshop: ie. what can you confidently tell your participants about when you will/will not call the police? Or will you at least let them know if the police are on their way and give them a chance to leave? Or are there particular commitments you can make to supporting them/being present while police are present? Police responses are very unpredictable, and so building some predictability into organizational/institutional responses to danger and to the police themselves can go a long way toward helping people feel safe accessing services from that organization/institution.

APPENDIX - If police are already there/if police come anyway

If police are already there (once police are called, the task of managing the police requires different skills)

- once cops are there, they have all the authority - that's what we are trying to avoid
- adding some tips - "what to do if the police are called?"
- perhaps tips on calling emerg services if that is what needs to happen

Police are at the front door of my building responding to a call - do i let them in?

APPENDIX - Brainstormed Alternatives

This document (link to another document). Ideas that have been generated in past workshops

APPENDIX - Sample workshop outlines/timelines

WORKSHOP OUTLINE SAMPLE #1

Context:

-3 Hours over one afternoon

-Delivered at a non-profit community organization to people who didn't necessarily know each other, who had signed up online

To print:

Newsletters

Sign-up sheet for events + driving

3 copies of this outline

13 Moons Resource list – edit or re-write

Pod mapping worksheets

Alt to calling the police zines

Feedback form

Materials and technologies

-post entire workshop outline with time frames on chart paper

-post-it notes

-envelope

-chart paper

-markers

-tabling box

-extra paper and pens

Visual aids

- Workshop timeline
- Flip Chart #1 - (icebreaker)

What is safety? What is danger?

- Flip Chart #2 - (generating scenarios)

Brainstorm concrete situations where you or someone you know either called the police / thought about calling the police / or didn't know what to do

- Flip Chart #3 - (generating responses)

Does anyone have any ideas or success stories of dealing with a scenario like this without the police?

Does this response harm anyone?

What would a "resolution" to this situation look like?

What would you need? From who?

What would other people need?

What do you need from your neighbours?

What do you need from institutions?

- Blank flip chart paper for each scenario grouping we will be discussing

INTRODUCTION (30 mins) 1:10pm-1:40pm

(10 mins) Introduction to us/the workshop

Facilitators introduce themselves

Introduction to Alternatives to Calling the Police workshops - Facilitator #1

Originated in understanding + experience that police often make people unsafe, but there is still a need for people to respond to and support each other in unsafe situations

Not prescriptive – based on generating scenarios and working through them as a group

Introduce Zine + 13 moons resource list – references, not complete 'guides'

Present the plan for the workshop - Facilitator #1

Our ground rules:

don't graphically recall a violent situation (we don't have the space or capacity to take care) - keep it general / reserve judgement (we are learning together) / be generous listeners

(10 mins) What brought you here? (go around) - facilitator #2

(10 mins) Icebreaker/framing discussion (popcorn) - facilitator #2

Flip Chart - What does safety mean? What does danger mean?

Key point: discomfort is not the same as danger

Building safety might require making some people uncomfortable

Sometimes prioritizing comfort puts other people in dangerous situations

We are working toward responses to unsafe situations that don't put people in further danger

GENERATING SCENARIOS (10 mins) 1:40-1:50 - facilitator #1

Identify some concrete situations where you or someone you know either called the police or thought about calling the police / or you didn't know what to do

-post your post-it on the wall - if your scenario is similar to someone else's, post it nearby

Supplies: chart paper, markers, post-its, an envelope

BREAK (5 mins) 1:50-1:55

Facilitators Identify which scenarios we will discuss

-Goal - 3-4 distinctly different scenarios

GENERATING RESPONSES (80 mins) 1:55-3:15 - Facilitator #1

Goal - at least three distinctly different scenarios at 20 mins each

Notetaker - Facilitator #2

Notetaker: records challenges and successes, stops for clarification, assists facilitator #1 in guiding Generating Responses section.

Scenario 1 – 1:55-2:15

Scenario 2 – 2:15-2:35

Scenario 3 – 2:35-2:55

Scenario 4 – 2:55-3:15

Flip Chart #3 – Generating responses

Does anyone have any ideas or success stories of dealing with these things without the police? (popcorn style)

Follow-up questions (ask systematically, but judge whether they are relevant to the scenario or not?):

What would it look like to have a resolution to this situation? / what would it mean to “resolve” this situation?

Does this response harm anyone?

What would you need? From who?

What would other people need?

What do you need from your neighbours?

What do you need from institutions?

BREAK (10 mins) 3:15-3:25

PART II – Pod Mapping (30 mins) 3:25-3:55 – Facilitator #2

(10 mins) Introduction to pod-mapping

-Link pod-mapping to scenario discussion:

We thought of things we can do, and things we need that don't yet exist.

Pod-mapping (a step toward pod-building) is a different scale on which to understand how we can build networks and institutions for accountability and transformative justice.

-Introduce pod-mapping context and origins

BATJC

-Introduce idea of pods

Your pod is made up of the people that you would call on if violence, harm or abuse happened to you; or the people that you would call on if you wanted support in taking accountability for violence, harm or abuse that you've done; or if you witnessed violence or if someone you care about was being violent or being abused.

People can have multiple pods. The people you call to support you when you are being harmed may not be the same people you call on to support you when you have done harm, and vice versa. In general, pod people are often those you have relationship and trust with, though everyone has different criteria for their pods.

(10-15 mins) DISCUSSION - Facilitator #2

What is the criteria for members of your pod?

Follow-up questions and/or questions that may be asked in the context of discussion:

How is shared analysis, or membership in a community, different from a trusting relationship?

What would you need in a trusting relationship to take accountability for harm you've done?

What are the barriers to building these types of relationships?

What is working? / What can we do more of?

What work do we need to do to build pods?

(5 mins) Bring up the findings from BATJ either in the context of discussion, or as a debrief at the end (for those that didn't come up)

- Most people have few, solid dependable relationships in their lives.
- There are many people who do not have any pod people.
- Building analysis was much easier than building the relationship and trust

- Asking people to organize their pod was much more concrete than asking people to organize their “community.”
- Relationship and trust, not always political analysis, continue to be two of the most important factors in successful TJ interventions,
- Many people have less people they could call on to take accountability for harm they’ve done than harm that happened to them.
- “Pod people” don’t fall neatly along traditional lines,

(5 mins) Engage with pod-mapping on your own

CHECKOUT (5 mins) 3:55-4:00pm - Facilitator #1

Introduce feedback form

WORKSHOP OUTLINE SAMPLE #2

Context:

-This was a workshop plan for the peer working group of the Manitoba Harm Reduction Network. Their ultimate goal was to produce a poster with ideas specifically geared toward advising the public about alternatives to calling the police on someone who is high

-The workshop took place over two, two-hour time slots a week apart

-The group participating already knew each other and had worked on projects together before

Workshop outline

Day 1 - 12:30pm-2:30pm

Day 2 - 12:30pm-2:30pm

Visual aids

- Workshop timeline
- Flip Chart #1 - (icebreaker)

What is safety? What is danger?

- Flip Chart #2 - (generating scenarios)

Brainstorm concrete situations where you or someone you know either called the police / thought about calling the police / or didn't know what to do

- Flip Chart #3 - (generating responses)

Does anyone have any ideas or success stories of dealing with a scenario like this without the police?

Does this response harm anyone?

What would a "resolution" to this situation look like?

What would you need? From who?

What would other people need?

What do you need from your neighbours?

What do you need from institutions?

- Blank flip chart paper for each scenario grouping we will be discussing

Materials:

Alternatives to Calling the Police Zines

13 moons resource list

Peacekeeping manual

Pod-mapping handouts

Paper + writing utensils for everyone

Laptop for notetaking (Bronwyn)

Workshop outlines

2 Facilitators

Day 1

INTRODUCTION (40 mins) 12:30pm-1:10pm

15 mins

Facilitator introduce themselves

Introduction to Alternatives to Calling the Police workshops

Originated in understanding + experience that police often make people unsafe, but there is still a need for people to respond to and support each other in unsafe situations

Not prescriptive – based on generating scenarios and working through them as a group

Introduce Zine + 13 moons resource list – references, not complete ‘guides’

Present the plan for Day 1 and Day 2

-confirm goals:

-to generate material for a poster to distribute to raise awareness about what people should do instead of calling the police on someone who is high

-in the process, to brainstorm and talk through some of those scenarios which are not always straightforward, and which we can use each other to think about

15 mins - *Go-around*

Introduce yourself / check in (how’s it going today?)

*I know the peer working group has ground rules for discussions already – I wonder whether we could ask them to introduce us to the ground rules by everyone stating one of them in the go-around?

Our ground rules:

don’t graphically recall a violent situation (we don’t have the space or capacity to take care) - keep it general / reserve judgement (we are learning together) / be generous listeners

10 mins - *Icebreaker/framing discussion* (popcorn style)

Flip Chart #1 - What does safety mean? What does danger mean?

Key point: discomfort is not the same as danger

Building safety might require making some people uncomfortable

Sometimes prioritizing comfort puts other people in dangerous situations

We are working toward responses to unsafe situations that don’t put people in further danger

GENERATING SCENARIOS (15 minutes) 1:10pm-1:35pm

In this part of the workshop, we generate scenarios that will help us begin to think through a range of possible responses

First five mins: write on a piece of paper and pencil

Ten mins: go around sharing our scenarios

While you're on break, we will group them together

When you get back from break, we will go through the "responses" exercise with one of them

5 mins

Flip Chart #2 - Brainstorm concrete situations where you or someone you know either called the police / thought about calling the police / or didn't know what to do

Paper + writing utensils

10 mins

Report back on the scenarios you came up with (go around)

Discuss (people can add to each others?)

1:35pm-1:45pm - BREAK

Facilitators group the scenarios that came up

GENERATING RESPONSES (30 mins) (1:50pm-2:20pm)

Check-in with the group about how we have grouped the scenarios people came up with – do these four scenarios cover the range of types of incidents people want to talk through?

Which scenario should we discuss today?

Flip Chart #3 - (generating responses)

Does anyone have any ideas or success stories of dealing with a scenario like this without the police?

Follow-up questions (ask systematically, but judge whether they are relevant to the scenario or not):

Does this response harm anyone?

What would a “resolution” to this situation look like?

What would you need? From who?

What would other people need?

What do you need from your neighbours?

What do you need from institutions?

*take systematic notes about ideas raised: things you can do / things we can build / things we need to demand

*take notes of other questions that come up

CHECK-OUT (2:20pm-2:30pm)

Go-around/check out

Goals and plan for next time

Facilitators post-workshop:

Solidify plan for day 2, including time frames

Day 2 - January 27

CHECK IN (15 mins) 12:30-12:45pm

Go-around: What stuck out for you from last time? What are your hopes for today?

GENERATING RESPONSES contd. (60 mins + 10 min break) 12:45pm-1:55pm

Review the scenarios we came up with last time

Review some of the responses we came up with

Scenario #2 (20 mins)

Scenario #3 (20 mins)

BREAK 1:25-1:35pm

1:35-1:45pm

Scenario #4 (20 mins)

POD MAPPING (20 mins) 1:45pm-2:05pm

(10 mins) Explanation of the activity and its origins.

(10 mins) People spend time engaging with it on their own

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES (10 mins) 2:05pm-2:15pm

For the poster:

Things you can do

Things we need to build

Things we need to demand/fight for

CHECK OUT (15 mins) 2:15pm-2:30pm