

## GROUP PROTOCOLS

### **Confidentiality!**

What happens in group MUST stay in group – do not discuss or reveal in any capacity who and what you see and hear during a session. Everyone should feel safe to openly discuss their personal experiences, without fearing that information will be shared outside of the group. To protect confidentiality online, no recordings or screen shots are allowed. If complete privacy is not possible, be sure to at least hide your device screen and use headphones so no one else can see or hear the session. As extra protection for yourself, consider changing your screen name and either adding a video filter / virtual background or turning off your video entirely.

### **We Are All Experts**

Please keep in mind that this is a *personal self-development* group, NOT group *therapy*. The facilitators bring certain expertise to the table, but they are not professional counsellors. Also keep in mind that the facilitators don't consider themselves to be the only ones in group with expertise. They value everyone's experience and believe women are the best experts on their *own* lives. The facilitators act more as consultants, giving suggestions and options that women may choose from and act on as they see fit.

### **Respect Everyone / All Viewpoints**

Different life experiences bring different perspectives. Please make your best effort to always: respect each other's opinions (even if you disagree), actively listen, avoid judgment, recognize the value of diversity, and give constructive feedback only. Respect in this case also means doing your best to abide by the rules of online etiquette. For example, try to test your technology and do any necessary troubleshooting in advance; join the call on time; use the 'raise hand' or chat functions if you have any questions or comments; mute your microphone when not speaking; and turn off your video to preserve bandwidth if you don't have a stable connection.

### **Be Aware Of Assumptions**

We *all* have biases – personal judgements based on beliefs that people will behave a certain way because they share qualities with a certain group. Biases are not always bad, but assuming that people *should* behave a particular way can lead to prejudice. Please try not to jump to (potentially discriminatory) conclusions. For example, be careful not to assume that the D/IPV experiences of your fellow participants necessarily align with yours or that they even have experience with D/IPV in the first place (since this group is open to any self-identified woman in the community, not just Liberty Lane Outreach clients).

### **Share At Your Own Comfort Level**

Disclosures of any kind are not required. Everyone has the right to speak AND the right to pass. This group values and respects personal boundaries. Although you are welcome to make disclosures as you see fit, please be mindful of how detailed you are with your disclosures because of the potential for others to be triggered.

### **Share The Air**

Due to time constraints, please make your best effort to: stay on topic, be succinct in your comments and recognize that everyone needs an opportunity to contribute to the conversation.

### **Group Topics Can Be Difficult**

You are encouraged to take a break or leave the call if you are feeling triggered. Please just give the facilitators a heads up first - you can send a private message using the chat function, so no one else has to know. The facilitators will likely check in with you at some point, but it could be a while before they have the opportunity. If you need immediate support, there are a number of crisis services available: Women In Transition House (459-2300), Gignoo Transition House (458-1236), Mobile Crisis Unit (453-2132), CHIMO (450-4357) and the Sexual Violence NB Support Line (454-0437).

### **Every Question Is Valid**

There are no stupid questions – feel free to ask anything!