

4.G. Working Together. How Do We Work Together as a Team?

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G.1. What Is *Working Together*?

Key Questions

- Who can work together?
- Does everyone know and agree with the goals?
- What are their roles?
- How will you communicate and coordinate?
- How will you make decisions?

What Is it?

Working Together involves the ways in which two or more people can work positively and cooperatively towards a common goal. In this Toolkit, the goal is to address, reduce, end or prevent interpersonal violence.

Working together rests on the belief that interpersonal violence is not just an individual problem, but is a community problem requiring a community level solution. For some of us, the community we can bring together is small, perhaps just a couple of people. For others, a community may be much larger.

This Toolkit offers some ways to think about working together as a group or a team and gives some tools to help us do it better. Working together consists of finding a good group or team, agreeing on goals, making group decisions, communicating well and keeping regular check-ins to make sure that everyone is taking action that is in cooperation with others.

This section attempts to correct tendencies to do nothing or to just do one's own thing without regard for how this affects the bigger picture. It calls on us to be compassionate and patient with ourselves and others while doing the difficult work required to address, end, reduce and prevent violence.

Why Is It Important?

Working together – rather than alone or separately – can offer:

- Support for those most affected by the violence.
- Support for those involved in the intervention.
- Support for each other – counteracting the way that violence divides and hurts everyone in the community.
- More people with a larger set of skills and resources.

- More wisdom and knowledge about the situation of violence and opportunities for change.
- More people with various relationships of care and concern to the survivor or victim, person or people doing harm and others.
- A collective approach reduces isolation.
- More leverage for supporting positive change.
- Fewer gaps in the community for people to slip out of responsibility and accountability.
- Build a collective or community with new experience, skills and practices that may prevent violence in the future.

Using the Tools in this Section

These tools are to be used along with Section 4.C. *Mapping Allies and Barriers*, which may be helpful with starting a process of thinking about who allies may be.

Although you and your allies may never reach the size of a "team" and may be as few as just a couple of people, this section may help you think of the types of roles you may find yourself playing and help clarify other areas of working together such as communication and decision-making.

For an introduction to teams and a quick list of questions you might ask about how your team (big or small) functions, see Tool G1: *Working Together. Snapshot: Short Question Guide*.

Tool G2: *Team Roles. Checklist* names some typical team roles such as instigator, facilitator, nurturer, cheerleader and so on and what types of personalities might suit those roles well. It includes a checklist to help you sort out who might play these roles with the understanding that people will often play multiple roles.

Tool G3: *Agreements for Sustaining over Time* offers some basic agreements that can help move your group forward and can help when things get stuck.

Good communication is important for people to work well together. Tool G4: *Communication Worksheet* has a list of guiding questions to help you think through your communication guidelines to make sure that everybody gets the information they need.

Tool G5: *Decision-Making Types and Models* clarifies different ways a group can make decisions, so that you can choose what makes sense for your group, or you can clarify how your group is already making decisions. It gives a few suggestions about models of decision-making such as voting and consensus that may be unfamiliar to your group but may be helpful especially if your group is large.

E.2. Working Together Across the 4 Phases

In Section 3.6, *Interventions Over Time: 4 Phases*, the Toolkit introduced the idea of 4 possible phases of interventions: 1) Getting Started, 2) Planning/Preparation, 3) Taking Action, and 4) Following Up.

Figuring out how to work together may look different at different phases or levels of crisis.

Phase 1: Getting Started

An intervention to violence might start with just one person, or a couple of people who identify a situation of interpersonal violence and feel that something should be done. It could start with the survivor or victim of violence. It could start with someone related to a situation of violence – the survivor or victim, a friend, family member, co-worker or neighbor or what we call “community ally.” It may be that the person or people doing harm begin to see that they want to change and need some support to make that happen.

Phase 2: Planning/Preparation

This Toolkit encourages the people who may first start thinking about taking action to look around and see if there are other people who can take a role in the intervention to violence. The team may get larger. People may take on particular roles that suit them. They may think of others that can join. As the group or team begins to plan and prepare to move forward, the team may need to begin to work more closely together – going through the other steps in this Toolkit, identifying allies, creating common goals, and coming up with action plans. Groups or teams may meet frequently or for longer periods of time as they create a stronger working relationship, struggle through differences that they might have and work towards a more common understanding.

Phase 3: Taking Action

Taking Action builds upon the plans and preparations that the group or team worked on together. As goals turn into actions, different members of the group or team may take more active roles. Some may take more supportive or advisory roles. Team meetings may turn from *getting clear* towards *taking next steps*. As the group or team takes action, it may become clear that others need to join or that you need to go back and look through this section or other sections to work better.

It may be that people who were resistant at first, including those who caused harm will get on board as the intervention moves forward. The actions of the larger group or team may begin to bring them in to work together in a more cooperative way. As once-resistant people, such as the person or people doing

harm, begin to understand the benefits of working together, they may begin to move into more active and cooperative roles.

Phase 4: Following-Up

With success, there will be a time when the intervention moves towards closure or following up. The group or team or some smaller set may decide to keep meeting on a regular basis to follow up and make sure that change stays on a long-term basis. The team may stay together. Or they might decide that their active role is over and they can disband or change the nature of their group.

Related Tools:

A group or team may start with the tools in Section 4.A. *Getting Clear* just to figure out what is going on and to make sure that they are on the same page.

A group or team may have started using the section Section 4.C. *Mapping Allies and Barriers* and build more allies using this same section.

Section 4.B. *Staying Safe* is always important, but a growing number of people involved in an intervention may raise other safety concerns. In this case, making sure that people cooperate and have a common understanding regarding things like confidentiality and safety planning may be necessary.

A key to *Working Together* well is having the group or team work through the process of Section 4.D. *Goal Setting*. Differences of opinion within a group can be identified and worked out so that everyone can agree on common goals and cooperative ways to reach those goals.

F.3. Working Together Tips

1. Read *Some Basics Everyone Should Know*.

Interpersonal violence is complicated. Although we may hear more about domestic violence or sexual assault these days, many misunderstandings still exist and many misconceptions about what it is and how to approach it. Read Section 2. *Some Basics Everyone Should Know*. Pay special attention to Section 2.2. *Interpersonal Violence: Some Basics Everyone Should Know* in order to have a clearer picture of what is going on. The Section 2.3. *Violence Intervention: Some Important Lessons* also shares important basics about interventions based upon the experiences of Creative Interventions.

Share this information with others who may be involved in a situation of violence and may need some resources to help them know what to do.

This dialogue can offer a chance for you to see how the group works together, offering an entry point to thinking, listening and learning together.

2. Take the time to meet in person.

Building a team takes in-person time. Most people are not taught how to respond to violence. There are few common understandings about how to do this well. It is useful to find out what people's unique priorities might be, what they are concerned about, or what are their bottom-lines. Sometimes, these differences can only emerge when everyone is in the room, hearing what others are saying, and sharing their own opinions.

This is also useful for building group trust and relationships. This can be especially important when things go wrong and when it becomes easy to blame others or leave the group in frustration or anger. Things will likely go wrong. Trusting and understanding other people's unique perspectives can go a long way in helping a group withstand the challenges of interventions.

We understand that you may have team members or people working together who may live far away but who play a very important role. Make sure that you communicate well with them. See Tool G4. *Communication Worksheet* for guiding questions that may help you decide what information will be particularly helpful to share with people who may not be able to meet in person. Creative solutions such as using Chat, or Skype or social networking programs can be one way to include people in meetings and processes. Think through confidentiality when using social networking tools.

3. Take the time to meet all together – especially when important information is shared and important decisions need to be made.

All steps including *Getting Clear*, *Goal Setting*, and *Staying Safe* work best when there is a high degree of common knowledge and a high degree of consensus. This is best done if everyone is meeting together and able to get all the information that leads to what are often difficult decisions. Leaving out someone's unique pieces of information or unique opinions about what should be done can cause a big gap in the plan and can make for miscommunication in the future.

For example, people may hear a piece of information which may seem insignificant to one person but may be highly important to others. Someone may find out something that everyone already knew and therefore didn't think they needed to pass on. Someone may hear special concerns and worries that they never considered but which are very important in planning future steps.

4. Expect differences, take them seriously and do the hard work to find common ground.

Addressing, reducing, ending and preventing violence is an important and challenging task. The dynamics of violence are complex and often hidden. Reactions to violence are often emotional. And people's responses to violence can be very different.

Even if everyone has the same opinion about what happened and who is responsible, they often differ on what is to be done and how to get there. If these differences are not recognized, taken seriously and worked through to a common decision that everyone can agree with, they can cause mistakes and misunderstandings that can be not only be frustrating but also dangerous.

5. Working together sometimes requires major compromises.

Finding common ground can mean deciding what is most important to move towards the group goal. It may require people to let go of points of disagreement for the common good. It is rare for everyone to feel 100% good about an intervention. People working together may need to find a common ground and decide whether they can live with the compromises. This section offers different models of decision-making that can help the group figure out how to make these difficult decisions.

6. People can be involved at different levels – some people can play a small and specific role.

This Toolkit encourages in-person meetings that at times of information-sharing and decision-making need the participation of everyone actively involved. There are situations, however, when people can be brought in for a brief, specific role that just needs them to know enough to play that role well. For example, they may provide transportation, provide a meeting space or share specific information and just need to know enough to keep safety and whatever confidentiality is necessary.

7. Not everyone makes a good team member.

Make use of the section *Mapping Allies and Barriers* to see who makes a good team member. You may find surprising allies where you would least expect it and may sometimes need to keep closer friends and family in smaller roles or out of the team entirely. People may also find that they cannot agree enough with your goals to stay on your team. They may need to step away.

8. Be ready to hold multiple roles.

This section highlights different roles that make a team run well. Most teams will not have the luxury of having the perfect person to play each of these roles. It is likely that people hold multiple roles, switch roles and jump in to play a role as it is needed.

9. If an organization is involved, think about who needs to know about the intervention or the details of the intervention and who needs to be part of a team.

This Toolkit encourages creative thinking about who might be on a team. However, when violence occurs within an organization, the organizational rules and culture might affect how a team gets put together. For example, it may be expected that the team is the board of directors or management or the human resources division or maybe the whole organization. It may be a group of church elders. If this happens within a collective, there may be another type of group that makes sense to work on an intervention. Often, however, an organization has not thought about how it will deal with violence or abuse. It may struggle to figure out what its role is.

We encourage organizations to take a look at this Toolkit and see how it can be useful in figuring out what members within the organization can best form a team. Organizations might also think about how to include other people from outside of the organization – such as friends and family of the survivor or victim or of the person doing harm.

It is also possible that people outside of an organization are coordinating their own intervention. It may be useful to coordinate to make sure that both are working towards the same goals, or at least are not in conflict with each other.

10. Build care, fun and sustainability into the process of working together.

Interventions to violence involve hard work and difficult emotions.

In order to move towards the positive transformations we wish to make, it is important to build care, fun and sustainability into this work. These can be little things such as:

- **Checking in at the beginnings and ends of meetings.**
- **Making room for spiritual practices that are meaningful to the group.**
- **Greeting people as they enter and leave discussions, making sure that new people are greeted and made welcome.**
- **Making sure there's food and drink available to "break bread," fill empty stomachs and bring another element of enjoyment to the meeting.**
- **Guarding against the overwhelming feelings of bitterness and disappointment. Laugh at oneself, recall larger goals and values, bring compassion and humor to the mistakes that everyone will make along the way.**
- **Noticing when people are burning out or have personal issues or crises to which they must attend. Acknowledging this and giving permission for people to take care of themselves when needed.**
- **Celebrating achievements, large and small.**

G.4. Working Together Special Considerations

Throughout history, people have been involved in violence intervention. However, this involvement is too often based on misinformation on the dynamics of violence. People often take actions as individuals, without taking into account the opinions and actions of other people involved. Many people mean well, but lack of coordination and cooperation can lead to mixed messages, confusion and, at times, further harm.

Working Together tries to coordinate well-intentioned efforts into a system of more effective teamwork. This involves roles that suit the person, a good process for communicating and decision-making and matching these roles with well-thought out actions.

Survivor or Victim

The survivor or victim is often the first or one of the first people to begin an intervention to violence. They often seek help – and in doing so, create the first steps towards working together and forming a group or team. This help-seeking may not look as obvious as some of the steps in this Toolkit. But it is these small first steps that, with some help, can lead to a process of *Getting Clear, Mapping Allies and Barriers, Goal Setting* and so on.

Unlike many other domestic violence or sexual assault program approaches, this Toolkit does not assume that the survivor or victim will be directly involved in the intervention. There may be other reasons that a community ally begins an intervention – sometimes without the knowledge or consent of the survivor or victim. If we think about the abuse of children, this may be the case. Children experiencing violence need help and support, but adults might need to take all of the responsibility in finding a solution to the violence children experience.

Survivors or victims may also begin an intervention but may choose to take a different, less active role once the intervention develops. They may already feel like they've carried the burden of violence and want others to take a more active role in making change. They may have left the situation and be unavailable for involvement. Or, in some cases, victims may be left unable to take an active role because of injury or even death.

Survivors or victims may choose to take active roles during some part of the intervention and not others. They may want to be active in some part of information sharing or decision making and not others. This Toolkit offers some guidance in making these decisions and working together with these special considerations in mind.

This Toolkit does not assume a survivor-centered or survivor-determined model, although this is one possible approach or path. It does, however, prioritize the consideration of the experience, knowledge and decision-making of the survivor

and understands that the survivor or victim is often the person most impacted by violence. It also acknowledges that the impact of violence and the responsibility to address violence extends to other members of the community. This means that the process of *Working Together* may sometimes involve differences and even conflicts among the different people involved that need to be worked out towards common goals. Unlike the kind of survivor-centered model that is usually promoted within sexual assault or domestic violence programs, it does mean that while the survivor or victim's needs and desires need to be taken very seriously and may even be at the center, they may also be taken into a larger set of considerations.

If you are the survivor or victim, you may have conflicting feelings about your involvement in the intervention and the decisions made among the group or team working together. Because this is a group model, you may sometimes be asked to share information that can be uncomfortable and repetitive. You can be creative about how you feel most comfortable sharing this knowledge. You may hear questions and responses from your allies that can be hurtful. You may not always get full agreement on what you think should or should not be done. This Toolkit offers different tools to make this process thoughtful and respectful of your experience, needs and desires.

If you are someone who wants to be in full control of the intervention process, you may find that other people's considerations make you feel ignored or left out of the process.

If you are someone who wants others to take full responsibility, you may find that people are still making requests of you to tell them what happened, what you want or what they should do next.

Although you may be able to find a good match between what makes you feel comfortable and what others working together are doing, it is also likely that you will at least at times feel at odds with the process.

It may be difficult, at times, to tell the difference between a process that has gone wrong and a process that considers the needs of the community and even of the person or people doing harm. You may find it helpful to ask yourself whether the process seems to be moving towards a goal of greater change, over all.

Use the tools in this Toolkit, get support from trusted allies and see if you can express your needs and work through what may at times feel uncomfortable and even painful. Also know that you can choose to contact more mainstream or traditional domestic violence or sexual assault programs for resources that are available for survivors. You can call or visit them and ask them questions about their services if you think that you prefer this over the community-based intervention approach supported by this Toolkit. They might also be another source of support as you go through a more community-based intervention.

Community Ally

Unlike most other models or approaches to interpersonal violence, the community ally has an active role in *Working Together*. Whereas other domestic violence or sexual assault programs will usually only work directly with the survivor or victim of violence, this community-based approach assumes that the most effective intervention brings together at least some friends, family, neighbors, co-workers or other community members to work together with the survivor or victim and possibly the person or people doing harm.

This may mean bringing your knowledge, skills or actions towards helping this process. It may include regular in-person meetings to make sure that you are playing a role based on solid information and actions that are in cooperation with the rest of the group or team.

If you are a community ally, you may offer to help with or have been asked to be part of a community-based intervention process. You may even be the first person or among the first to take action to address a situation of violence and be using this Toolkit to bring others together to help out.

Use these tools including those in *Mapping Allies and Barriers* and in this section to determine some possible best roles and to work cooperatively with others.

Person or People Doing Harm

It is possible that the person or people doing harm are the first to work actively to make positive change. They may have found this Toolkit or been given this Toolkit as a way to begin a process to take responsibility to address and end their violence and prevent further violence. *Working Together* may provide guidance towards creating a team to support a healthy process towards change.

It is also possible that the person or people doing harm are currently in no position to work as part of the team. They may be actively harmful and entirely resistant to change. A large part of this intervention may be in taking action to address and end their violence with or without their voluntary cooperation.

The aim of this Toolkit is to work together as a community in order to gain the cooperation of the person or people doing harm and to support a process of accountability and long-term change. The person or people doing harm may be resistant to working with the team at first or even for quite awhile. It is possible that they never cooperate or that their level of cooperation shifts back and forth. In Section 2.3. *Violence Intervention: Some Important Lessons* and In Section 4.F. *Taking Accountability* we state that most of us struggle with accountability. We urge you to create responses which take this struggle into account. We also know even with the good work of a team, accountability of those doing harm may not always be possible.

With this Toolkit, we approach the person or people doing harm with the intention of gaining their support and cooperation, but with the knowledge that this is very difficult and, in some cases, not possible. In Section 4.F. *Taking Accountability*, we describe an accountability process that creates a pathway to working together towards the common goal of ending, preventing and repairing violence. At the same time, we understand that we may not reach this goal. Reducing harm may be the best we are able to achieve.

If you are the person doing harm or are the person accused of doing harm, we urge you to consider how you can work together with this process. Even if you are the person starting this process or joined this process early on, you may find yourself in a position of being told what to do. You may have received a list of demands or feel forced into a position that does not feel like one where you are working together. You may not agree with what you are being asked to do or how it is communicated to you.

Working together may take a high degree of humility, something that may feel shameful or scary or may make you feel vulnerable, angry, and perhaps even victimized.

Your attitudes and/or acts of violence may have brought a great deal of distrust. You may need to work hard and for a long time in order to get people to accept your change. The ways in which you harmed others may have been unintentional. The lists of harms may not totally fit what you think you have done. However, accountability may require you to consider another point of view or accept difficult compromises.

Working together is largely about working toward a common good and accepting compromises. Your compromises may be the highest in this process – in part because this process addresses harms that you imposed upon others – even if you did not mean to or did not realize their impact. Being responsible, taking accountability and making change may require big shifts of power in which your sense of individual power is greatly reduced. This may be completely uncomfortable, even devastating, and require a long period of reflection and acceptance. It may also bring relief and allow you to find compassion for yourself as well as those who were harmed. We ask you to work together to make that change.

See Section 4.F. *Taking Accountability* for tools to help you take accountability.

G.5. Working Together Facilitator's Notes

If you are the facilitator, you have a central role in guiding the group or team to work together well.

1. Encourage and support people to learn fundamental information first if they have not already.

This Toolkit is long and can be overwhelming. Some important parts of this Toolkit are Section 2. *Some Basics Everyone Should Know*. An especially important section can be Section 2.2. *Interpersonal Violence: Some Basics Everyone Should Know* that discusses much more about the dynamics of violence and common misunderstandings that people have.

It can be useful for you to be familiar with the different sections of this Toolkit and to read more carefully through these sections. Also encourage people to read these sections. If reading is not the best option or they cannot read English or the language that this Toolkit is in, you can help by reading this and other sections to them in a language they understand or use other formats to pass on this information.

2. Figure out or get help figuring out the extent of your facilitator role.

This Toolkit understands that the fundamental role of the facilitator is to help guide the process to support people to use the tools in this Toolkit, and to make sure that everyone is getting the right information, is checking in with each other, and is working together in a coordinated way.

There are several other roles that might belong to you. You may also find yourself initiating the intervention (initiator), leading it (leader), writing everything down (note taker), being a primary supporter to someone else. There may only be a couple of you working on this intervention, meaning that you find yourself playing multiple roles.

If you have other people working together who can play these various roles, then you will more likely be a kind of bottom-line person, returning people to the tools in this Toolkit as needed, noticing what is not getting done and making sure that people work together to fill in these gaps.

If there are not enough people and you find yourself playing multiple roles that seem overwhelming, you may be able to pause the process and figure out what other allies can be recruited to play these roles.

3. Make sure that people are open to express themselves.

As the facilitator, you may be able to ensure that everyone is able to express their opinions. Some may not feel they have the power to speak up or may be quieter or more reserved. Others may express conflicting or unpopular opinions that are not heard or are dismissed by the group. Work to make an environment where people can express their opinions, even if conflicting, and use the tools in this section to move towards agreement.

4. Support people to work through the Tools in *Working Together*.

The facilitator will likely play a major role in figuring out the key roles that others can play, the decision-making process that makes the most sense for this group, and the communication process.

You may have people who have not worked in a coordinated way before. They may have a hard time understanding some of these group processes.

Note who is having a hard time and help support them to learn these processes and get more familiar with them. If someone simply is not and cannot become a team person even with support, then you and the team may have to find a way to ask this person to play a different role that does not require them to work within a team or to step off of the team if that is not possible.

G.6. Working Together Real Life Stories and Examples

Story G. A Small Story (*He Korero Iti*)

We live in a town, but many of my husband's *extended family* (whanau) live in the valley where he grew up about 40 kilometres away. My husband and his brother are renowned for a number of things – one being how they extend the life of their cars and vans using highly technical items like string and wire – another how they share these vehicles for a variety of tasks such as moving furniture or transporting relatives, building materials, tractor parts, *traditional herbal medicines* (rongoa), eels, vegetables, dogs, and pigs (dead or alive). They are renowned for being people of the people, the ones to call on in times of trouble and death, the ones who will solve the problem and make the plan. They travel to and from town, to the coast to dive for sea food, to endless meetings, to visit *extended family* (whanau) - along the many kilometres of dirt roads in and around the valley, through flood or dust depending on the season in those patched up, beat up, prized cars.

There are a number of things to know about the valley - one is that the last 33 children in the world of their *small sub-tribe* (hapu ririki) to grow up and be educated on their own lands go to school here, despite government efforts to close the school. Another is that the valley is known to outsiders and insiders as 'patu wahine' – literally meaning to 'beat women' and this is not said as a joke. The mountain for this valley is named as the doorway spirits pass through on their way to their final departure from this life. This valley is also the valley where my husband and his siblings were beaten at school for speaking their first language. It is the valley their mother sent them to so they would be safe from their father – back to her people. It is where they milked cows, pulled a plough, fed pigs but often went hungry, and were stock whipped, beaten and worse.

My brother-in-law still lives in the valley, in a group of houses next to the school. So it's no surprise that one of our cars would be parked by these houses – right by where the children play. Perhaps also not a surprise that while playing that time old international game of rock throwing our eight year old nephew shattered the back window of the car. If I'd been listening I probably would have heard the 'oh' and 'ah' of the other children that accompanied the sound of glass breaking from town, and if I'd been really tuned in I would have heard the rapid, frightened heart beat of 'that boy' as well.

His mother is my husband's cousin – and she was on the phone to us right away. She was anxious to assure us 'that boy' would get it when his father came home. His father is a big man with a pig hunter's hands who hoists his pigs onto a meat hook unaided. He is man of movement and action, not a man for talking. Those hands would carry all the force of proving that he was a man who knew how to keep his children in their place. Beating 'that boy' would be his way of telling us that he had also learned his own childhood lessons well.

So before he got home we burned up the phone lines – sister to sister, cousin to cousin, brother-in-law to sister-in-law, wife to husband, brother to brother. This was because my husband and his brother know that there are some lessons you are taught as a child that should not be passed on. The sound of calloused hand on tender flesh, the whimpers of watching sisters, the smell of your own fear, the taste of your own blood and sweat as you lie in the dust – useless, useless, better not born. This is a curriculum like no other. A set of lessons destined to repeat unless you are granted the grace of insight and choose to embrace new learning.

So when the father of ‘that boy’ came home and heard the story of the window ‘that boy’ was protected by our combined *love* (aroha) and good humor, by the presence of a senior uncle, by invitations to decide how to get the window fixed in the shortest time for the least money. Once again phone calls were exchanged with an agreement being made on appropriate restitution. How a barrel of diesel turns into a car window is a story for another time.

Next time my husband drove into the valley it was to pick up the car, and ‘that boy’ was an anxious witness to his arrival. My husband also has very big hands, hands that belong to a man who has spent most of his life outdoors. These were the hands that reached out to ‘that boy’ to hug not hurt.

A lot of bad things still happen in the valley, but more and more they are being named and resisted. Many adults who learned their early lessons there will never return. For *people of the land* (tangata whenua) this is profound loss – our first identifiers on meeting are not our own names but those of our mountains, rivers, *subtribe* (hapu) and *tribe* (iwi). To be totally separate from these is a dislocation of spirit for the already wounded. This is only a small story that took place in an unknown valley, not marked on many maps. When these small stories are told and repeated so our lives join and connect, when we choose to embrace new learning and use our ‘bigness’ to heal not hurt then we are growing grace and wisdom on the earth.

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Whangarei, Aotearoa-New Zealand

Glossary:

Whanau – extended family group

Rongoa – traditional herbal medicines

Hapu ririki – small sub-tribe

Patu – hit, strike, ill treat, subdue

Wahine – woman/women

Aroha – love, concern for

Tangata whenua – people of the land

Hapu – subtribe

Iwi – tribe

4.G. Tools. Cover

[Working Together Tool G1. Working Together as a Team Basics. Quick Guiding Questions.](#)

This Toolkit uses the language of building a team, but you may think of other ways of describing the creation of a group of people to work cooperatively towards common goals.

Some basic questions are: How will the team remain a team? How often will it meet? How do they meet? Where? Do they have to meet in one group or can meetings happen in pairs, over the phone, over email?

Teams can be different sizes:

- Just me and the Toolkit for now – looking for more allies/team members
- A couple of us helping each other out
- Some helpful members of our family
- A group of friends
- Some people from our apartment building, neighborhood
- Our organization, church, workplace
- A group of us connected across cities
- A bunch of people connecting in different ways

Teams can take different shapes or forms or structures:

- We meet regularly and work together on everything.
- One person coordinates the team to make sure we are part of the same plan – the rest of the team does their part but usually independently from the rest.
- We have a lot of people working on this, but a small core group of us meets together regularly to coordinate.
- We have a team working together – but we also have other people who we trust to play special roles.

Why and when is it helpful to have a big group meeting?

The steps of *Getting Clear*, *Staying Safe* and *Goal Setting* may take the biggest group of people who are affected by and who will take part in the intervention.

These steps often work better when there is a high degree of common knowledge such as *Getting Clear* and a high degree of consensus such as *Goal Setting*.

Times it may be critical to have a big group in-person meeting:

1. Getting Clear (Section 4.A.)
2. Staying Safe (Section 4.B.)
3. Goal Setting (Section 4.D.)
4. Regular or semi-regular big meetings to update, review goals and actions, and offer support and feedback to one another – either by time period, for example, monthly, or after an important milestone or event.
5. Special meetings necessitated by any big changes, emergencies or opportunities.
6. Closure meeting either set by time period or after a significant portion or all of the action steps and results have been met.

Maintaining the group between big group meetings:

It may be that carrying out an action plan can be best carried out with smaller core committee meetings or by smaller one-on-ones. People carrying out the action or people who are most affected by the intervention should always have regular support people to meet with and check in with even if the larger group does not meet for awhile.

Working Together Tool G1. Working Together. Snapshot: Quick Question Guide

This list is to help you figure out what kind of team you are, who's in your team, and how often you expect people to meet

- 1. Who's on your team (or other word you may want to use instead)?**
- 2. How often do you expect to meet?**
- 3. Who needs to be part of that regular meeting?**
- 4. Is there a smaller core group that meets more frequently? Who? How often? Where? What is their role?**
- 5. Are there other key supporters – people who you can count on but who may not meet regularly?**
- 6. Where do you meet?**
- 7. What do you need at the meeting – can be supplies, food, beverages, spiritual supplies?**
- 8. How is an agenda made for the meeting? By whom?**
- 9. What are types of discussions or decisions that require everyone to meet together?**

Working Together Tool G2: Team Roles. Checklist

When thinking about teams, we are matching team roles with people who have the skills, knowledge and resources to play that role well.

Working Together well requires:

- Ideas about what are good roles to fill.
- Thought and reflection about the qualities you and your community allies have.
- Identifying gaps of what else is needed and who could fill that role.
- Invitation of other possible people and organizations.
- Coordination of all team members either in group meetings or coordinating separate conversations.

Some Basic Team Roles:

The following are some roles into which people naturally fall. Think about whether someone is already playing this role, if they are right for the role, and if someone needs to be recruited to play this role.

Instigator – The One Who Gets Things Started

If you are reading this now, you may be the Instigator or someone may have already gotten things started. The Instigator may be the primary survivor or victim or may have been the first person motivated to start a process.

The Instigator may only have this role at the beginning – they may only kick things off but may take on a different role as things move forward.

Good people for Instigator:

- If you kicked this process off, then you are likely a natural Instigator

Facilitator – The One Who Holds the Process

The facilitator is a key role in this Toolkit. Some may prefer to call this role the “holder” because the facilitator keeps things going by “holding” the process and making sure that the people working on the intervention can be supported by and guided by the tools in this Toolkit.

Good people for Facilitator:

- Trusted person

- Not too involved in the situation of violence – but knowledgeable
- Level-headed person
- Able to see the big picture and keep details moving along
- Has a somewhat good memory or a good way of recording things

Coordinator – The Glue

There may be a coordinator in this process, not necessarily making all of the decisions but making sure that everyone on the team is on board, working well together, getting the right information and playing their role effectively. This may also be a role taken on by the Facilitator.

Good person for Coordinator:

- Trusted person
- Able to see big picture and keep things moving along
- Sensitive to others
- Good at being inclusive and not leaving people out
- Good at working with different types of people and personalities

Logistics Person – Dealing with the details of time and place

There may be one person who makes sure there's a place to meet, there's food and drink at the meeting, there's paper, kleenex, and other supplies as needed.

Good person for Logistics Person:

- Responsible
- Detail oriented
- Organized

Notetaker – Keeping the details

As an intervention moves along, it will be useful to have some notes or other ways to keep track of important points such as:

- Basic information about what happened (see *Getting Clear*)
- Goals

- Safety Plan
- Important communication sent to or received from survivor, person doing harm or others involved in the intervention
- Key steps along the way

Good person for Notetaker:

- Detail oriented
- Good memory
- Able to keep notes in an organized way and in a safe place

Nurturer – Keeps people feeling good

Violence intervention is difficult and exhausting work. The Nurturer keeps people in a caring, compassionate environment and encourages people to make sure that they are considering not only tasks to be done but the compassionate spirit underlying the task

Good person for Nurturer:

- Trusted person
- Compassionate and caring

Reality Checker – Makes sure we are doing things that are realistic

It is easy to set up ambitious goals and ambitious timelines. The Reality Checker thinks about what is likely to happen and tries to prevent unrealistic expectations that could lead to frustration and burn-out.

Good person for Reality Checker:

- Has good understanding of the people and the situation
- Can bring people back to reality without losing the higher aims
- Gets real without wallowing in negativity

Communicator – Make sure we are listening to each other, checking in and following up

The Communicator is similar to the Coordinator or the Facilitator but the focus is on communication – verbal, written, email, etc. The Communicator makes sure

that people share the right information, within a reasonable amount of time, and have good follow-up.

Good person for Communicator:

- Trusted person
- Understands that different people give and receive information differently
- Has good follow-up

Vision-Keeper – Helps us keep to the loftier parts of our goals

The Vision-Keeper keeps an eye to loftier goals and reminds people when morale sinks or when people begin to driven by hate, revenge or other negative motivations.

Good person for Vision-Keeper:

- Visionary
- High ideals

Cheerleader – Keeps people energized and positive

The Cheerleader can keep people energized and positive. The Cheerleader keeps a positive team spirit.

Good person for Cheerleader:

- Enthusiastic
- Inspirational
- Fun

Supporter – Supports, stands by and advocates for the key people within the group

A healthy team has people who are able to act as supporters for the survivor or victim, other vulnerable people such as children, an organization that may be suffering under the weight of violence and the process of intervention, the person or people doing harm, and other people on the team who may have a particularly stressful or difficult role.

The Supporter will be looking out for that person or organization, take special notice of their needs, and help to advocate for them when others are not paying enough attention. They can make sure that information is being adequately

communicated, that they are participating in decision-making and that their emotional needs are being addressed.

Good person for supporter:

- Trusted person
- Compassionate
- Able to balance needs of one person within the needs of the whole group
- Supports certain individuals without adding to divisions within the group
– works towards a healthy whole

Roles Checklist:

Do you have someone to play these roles? (Someone may play more than one role). If not, can you work together well without it? Do you need to find someone to fill in the gaps?

- Facilitator _____
- Coordinator _____
- Logistics Person _____
- Notetaker _____
- Nurturer _____
- Reality Checker _____
- Communicator _____
- Vision Keeper _____
- Cheerleader _____
- Supporter for survivor or victim _____
- Supporter for children _____
- Supporter for person doing harm _____
- Supporter for other _____

Add your own:

- _____

- _____
- _____

Working Together Tool G3. Agreements for Sustaining Over Time

Keeping teams together is difficult work. These are some basic agreements that others have used that may be helpful.

1. Check in to see what everyone is thinking and feeling about the situation you are working on – make room for confusion, doubts, and questioning
2. When in doubt, ask a question
3. Take notes – you won't remember and things get more confusing over time (You may want to assign a Notetaker)
4. Review and clarify decisions – make sure you all agree on what you decided
5. Praise efforts and celebrate achievements – celebrating even the small things can take you a long way
6. When absent, follow up with someone
7. Forgive each other, cut each other slack – and – at the same time, find a way to get necessary steps done
8. Make sure steps and goals match the team's capacity or what's possible
9. Make criticisms specific and constructive
10. Move towards resolution. Move away from gossip.

Add your own:

Working Together Tool G4. Communication Worksheet

One of the most important things about teams is to keep up communication. Communication helps the process of an intervention to go more smoothly. People can be reminded of goals and action plans. They can be informed to take a different course of action or to meet again as a team especially if things do not go as planned.

Communication can be particularly challenging when dealing with violence because the details of intervention are often confidential and teamwork is informal. Facebook may not be appropriate for communication because of privacy concerns. In-person meetings might be difficult because everyone is busy or lives in different places.

Emergencies can come up, or so can new opportunities. There may be key pieces of information that others need to make sure that they take action that fits the situation.

These are some guiding questions to create sound systems of communication:

1. Is there a key person to direct communications or to check in to make sure that people know what is going on?

- You may think about the facilitator, a communications person, a notetaker
- You may want to think about someone who has good communication skills
 - Direct and diplomatic
 - Careful and thorough
 - Has good judgment
 - Has enough time and access to resources like phone, email, etc. to keep up a good flow of communication
 - Has a good memory for details or can take notes
 - Has a solid understanding of the values, goals, bottom-lines and action plan well enough
 - Will inform but not gossip

2. Who gets to know what types of knowledge?

- Think about key people or roles to consider. What can they know? What should they know? Are there things they should not know?
 - Faciliator
 - Survivor(s) or victim(s)
 - Person or people doing harm
 - Parents or guardians particularly if this involves a child
 - Everyone involved on this intervention

- Regular team members but not necessarily other allies who are also helping
 - Sub-group, core group or steering committee
 - Everyone in the community

3. What are the key things to communicate?

- Goals, bottom lines and updates
- Action plan and updates
- Action steps taken and results of those actions
- New, unexpected changes arising such as:
 - Risk and safety concerns
 - New opportunities to take action or to add people as team members or allies
 - Major changes in people's feelings about the intervention or steps planned – time to reflect and change course of action
 - Major changes in people's ability to carry out the intervention or steps planned – time to speed up, delay or change course of action
- Requests for support – emotional, financial, other

4. What are the safety considerations and how does this affect communication? (See Section 4.B. *Staying Safe*)

- Can there be risks or dangers to anybody if certain people find out?
 - See risks and danger chart in Section 4.B. *Staying Safe*
- Can there be risks or dangers to the intervention – will it be jeopardized or ruined if certain people find out?
- Are there risks and dangers if the “system” finds out? Police, schools, mandated reporters, child protective services, ICE (immigration authorities)?

5. What are the best methods for communication among those who need to know?

- Think about convenience, accuracy of information and need for forms of communication that promote trust and team-building. There can be different methods for different people and situations.
 - In-person one-on-one?
 - In-person meetings?
 - Phone calls? Conference calls?
 - Written notes? If these need to be private, how can you insure that they do not get into the hands of people who might pose a risk or danger?
 - Emails? List serves? Do these need to be private and protected?
 - Blogs? Do these need to be private and protected?

- **Is there a communication system to pass along information that will work with your group? Here are some alternatives:**
 - Everyone communicates to everyone (easier if there are very few people)
 - One person communicates to everyone and oversees that everyone gets the information they need?
 - People on the team divide up who they communicate to – it may be based on how often they see certain people, how close they are to them, and so on

- **Special considerations. Unless the survivor or victim and/or person doing harm have a key or leading role in the intervention, it can be easy to drop them out of the communication loop. They can start to feel isolated or anxious as they have to fill in the blank of non-communication with their imagination. You may want to make sure that someone they are comfortable with plays a special role in making sure that they get the information they need and want.**
 - **Survivor or victim: Do you have agreements on what information gets communicated to the survivor or victim, who communicates, how often and through what format?**
 - **Person doing harm: Do you have agreements on what information gets communicated to the person doing harm? Who communicates, how often and through what format?**

Working Together Tool G5. Decision-Making Types and Models

Who gets to make decisions? How are they made? Are there key decisions made collectively while others can be made by certain individuals? Are there decisions made along the way that need to be brought back to others in the group?

Decision-making is closely linked to communication. Groups with good communication should also communicate about what kind of decision-making that it will follow. Even if it is decided that someone in the group has more authority to make certain decisions.

Decision

Types of Decision-Making

- 1) Collective consensus
- 2) Executive Committee or Steering Committee
- 3) Authority-led (with collective input)
 - a. Survivor-led or survivor-centered
 - b. Group leader agreed upon by everyone because they are trusted, can be more neutral, or have leadership skills
 - c. Group leader due to agreed-upon leadership role in that group or institution
 - i. For example, in a family, it may be a parent, a grandparent, or an elder
 - ii. In a faith-based institution, it may be the clergy or a church elder

Different decision-making styles:

Note: The different ways of getting collective involvement listed at the end of this section: 1) Five fingers; 2) Voting; and 3) Round Robin can all be used with any kind of decision-making method.

Consensus

Consensus decision-making means that everyone at least in the primary team is participating in a shared and equal manner to make decisions. This type of decision-making requires a trusting relationship among everyone or the need to work closely together to build a trusting relationship. Collective consensus can be helped by using the guides in this Toolkit which clarifies some of the considerations that should be made and some processes through which the whole group can work together towards collective decisions.

Sometimes this is also called modified consensus because there may be times that the group will let go of everyone feeling 100% good about a decision. See the Five

Finger consensus tool below to see how groups can come to consensus without always reaching full agreement.

Executive Committee or Steering Committee

Sometimes a large group can come together and make certain key decisions such as goals, allies and barriers, action plans. It may be more efficient for a smaller team to make decisions along the way, including the decision to bring a particular issue back to the larger group. The large group can determine which decisions must be brought back to the big group and which can be handled by the smaller committee.

Group Leader

Oftentimes groups have an official or unofficial leader, someone who weighs in more strongly on decision-making. Although groups can also have a leader who simply makes all of the decisions without much consideration of the group, this type of leadership does not work well with the community-based model. If this is a collective process, then even if one authority has more leadership and weighs in more strongly on decision-making, there must still be significant input and feedback from the collective group.

Some groups may choose a leader or a leader may naturally emerge. The leader should not simply be the loudest voice, the most outraged person, or the most aggressive or assertive person. The leader also does not have to be the traditional authority in the group. For example, even though many families traditionally have fathers or male elders as leaders, the leader may be someone who is well-respected but not necessarily the traditional head of a household. Or, even though churches often have the clergy as a leader, an intervention taking place within a church or being helped by church members, the intervention leader may be a trusted person who is not traditionally a church leader.

Some considerations for leaders

Good leadership skills and characteristics. A leader should be trusted, have good judgment, and consider well the opinions and concerns of everyone who is affected by the violence and by the intervention. The leader should be attuned to all of the opinions held within the team.

The leader should either have a good understanding of interpersonal violence or take time to learn more about violence by talking to the survivor who usually has expertise on the violence they have faced. The leader can also look on the internet for information or talk to someone at a local resource center. We strongly suggest that the leader and all key people participating in the intervention read the entire Section 2. *The Basics*.

Some groups may consider a “survivor-centered” or “survivor-led” process in which the group has decided that they feel most comfortable with the survivor driving the decision-making. This is often a political decision made for various reasons: 1) Since it is usually the case that violence has most impacted the survivor, it may be politically important for the survivor or victim to take primary leadership in the intervention. 2) The nature of interpersonal violence is often to leave the survivor or victim in a powerless position. Taking leadership and power in the intervention can be considered a key turn towards reversing this relationship of power. 3) The group may consider the survivor’s or victim’s leadership and self-determination as a primary goal of the intervention.

Five-Finger Approach to Consensus.

A useful tool for collective consensus is the five-finger approach. Following discussion of some aspect of the intervention, if a decision needs to be made, the facilitator can ask for consensus.

Using five fingers, everyone in the group can see how people weigh in on a decision, even if they’ve been silent. This helps decision-making to be clear and transparent rather than relying on someone’s impression of what others think. It helps to prevent people with strong opinions from dominating the decision even if they have dominated the discussion. It helps quiet people express their opinions even if they did not speak up.

Five fingers also helps get a group move more quickly through decisions. It reduces the need for everyone to repeat how they feel. While sometimes this is helpful and necessary, it may take up valuable time if this has to happen every step along the way.

Five fingers is preferable to voting since “majority rules” can mask huge disagreements – disagreements which may show up later on through dissatisfaction with action steps taken, splits within the group, breaking confidentiality and so on.

How to use Five Fingers:

Make sure everyone understands the five finger consensus. It may feel awkward, but after getting used to it, it can really make decision-making quicker while still making it fair. After discussion of the situation that needs to be decided on, the facilitator or someone can ask for a consensus vote – you can use your own words for this procedure. For example, ask “are we ready to make a decision? Can we see if we have a consensus?”

Everyone has to hold up their hand and show their opinion. If the facilitator is not just a neutral outsider but is a part of the decision-making team, then they also need to show their opinion.

7. One finger (index finger) – I strongly agree
8. Two fingers (index and middle finger) – I agree
9. Three fingers (index, middle, and fourth finger) – I have some reservations, but I can go with it
10. Four fingers (Index, middle, fourth finger, and pinkie) – I don't like it, but I'll go along with it – I won't stop the process by blocking
11. Five fingers (whole hand open) – I feel strongly enough about this to block this decision
12. Six fingers (whole hand plus index finger of other hand) – Wait, I have questions or need clarification

If everyone has one to four fingers up, then consensus is reached. If you feel comfortable with a stronger level of consensus (ones and twos), you could ask the threes and fours why they hesitated. This could lead to more discussion until a stronger consensus is reached or the request for some alternatives which could lead to a stronger consensus.

If someone has a five, consensus is blocked. This is a pretty strong stand to take, and it should be understood that fives are saying that they feel so strongly that they are willing to block decision-making. More discussion needs to follow until the person or people blocking can shift. If blocking happens often, the facilitator can help the group figure out if there is another dynamic going on. Is the team just moving forward without considering some important conflicting opinions? Are there certain people who simply cannot work within this team structure?

If someone has a six, consensus is halted until that person's questions are answered. If your group often gets sixes, then it is likely that not enough discussion is taking place and decisions are being rushed.

Voting

For voting, people are asked to raise their hands if they agree. Votes are counted, and generally a "majority rules" (more than half raise their hands) moves that decision forward.

This collective intervention does not favor voting because voting can overlook significant conflicts within the group. If certain people do not agree with a decision, this can lead to factions breaking off, which may take a different or conflicting set of actions. It can lead to people breaking confidentiality to tell others what this group has decided because they are unhappy with the decisions. It can cause people to leave the group or drop off because they have serious disagreements.

Sometimes, a well-functioning collective simply cannot come to consensus on a certain decision and will agree that a vote is the only way to move forward. If the

group has tried consensus and at least can come to consensus that they feel okay about resorting to a vote, then voting can make sense in these limited situations.

Round-Robin

There may be certain times in discussion and decision-making where it is useful to get everyone's opinion on a certain situation. Round-Robin is a way to ask everyone to share their unique opinion, concerns or questions. This can be a way to get a big picture of where everyone is at, to see where there are key commonalities and differences, and to uncover certain important points which others may not have even considered.

Round-Robin may be useful as the group is getting to know each other or may just be getting familiar with the situation of violence they are addressing. This is especially true during the goal-setting phase where it is important to make sure that everyone is in touch with their own ideas about what should be done and that they also understand other people's perspectives.