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Campus-Based Sexual Assault Prevention

Perspectives and Recommendations From Program Facilitators

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Abstract: *Despite years of feminist work and change toward raising awareness of the prevalence of sexual victimization, girls and women continue to disproportionately struggle for safety and justice. Sexual assault occurs at particularly high rates on college campuses. The purpose of this chapter is unique in that in addition to providing syntheses of literature and reflections regarding sexual assault prevention, we provide an "insider's view" of the step-by-step procedures for implementing and facilitating campus-based sexual assault prevention programming. More broadly, the overarching goal of this chapter is to assist educators, health professionals, and student affairs personnel in gaining an understanding of the fundamental components, as well as the personal and procedural challenges, of campus-based sexual assault prevention.*

THE EXPERIENCES DESCRIBED in this chapter reflect the experiences of facilitators and supervisors administering the *Community Program Initiative*, a large scale, dual-pronged sexual assault prevention and risk-reduction program, administered and evaluated within the residence halls at a medium-sized Midwestern university (Gidycz, 2006). Explanations of the various approaches in sexual assault prevention and risk reduction are provided, as well as a detailed description of the procedural aspects of program administration. It is our hope that the material assists campus personnel in further developing and administering comprehensive, collaborative, and evidence-based approaches to combat the endemic problem of campus-based violence against women.

Rates of sexual victimization on college campuses have shown little decline since Koss, Gidycz, and Wisniewski's (1987) landmark prevalence study. Studies conducted over the last 10 years at one Midwestern university document that 16%–32% of college women report experiencing some form of sexual victimization over a two- to three-month period (Gidycz, Coble, Latham, & Layman, 1993; Gidycz, Rich, Orchowski, King, & Miller, 2006; Orchowski, Gidycz, & Raffle, 2008). Alarmingly, college

women are three times more likely to experience sexual victimization compared with women the same age in the general population (Corbin, Bernat, Calhoun, McNair, & Seals, 2001). Notably, all educational institutes of higher learning that receive federal funding are mandated by U.S. federal law to implement some form of violence prevention program on campus (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 1994). The overarching goal of sexual assault prevention programming is to reduce rates of violence by engendering attitude and behavior change (see Bachar & Koss, 2000; Gidycz, Rich, & Marioni, 2002, for reviews). Sexual violence prevention efforts with men are often referred to as "prevention programs," whereas programming efforts with women are referred to as "risk reduction programs." Use of this terminology highlights the belief that *only potential perpetrators of violence against women can truly prevent its occurrence*.

Because of high rates of sexual violence, we agree with fellow researchers (e.g., Breitenbecher, 2000; Gidycz et al., 2002; Yeater & O'Donohue, 1999) who proposed that it is of vital importance to develop sexual assault prevention and risk reduction programs demonstrating *efficacy* not only in changing attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate sexual violence but also in reducing rates of sexual violence. Establishing methods for assessing participants' attitudes, behaviors, and experiences of sexual aggression and victimization necessitates that program administrators establish methods for surveying attitudes and behaviors prior to program participation and at multiple points following program participation. These assessments should utilize surveys, which have already been shown to be reliable and valid measures of program objectives. The program itself must also be administered consistently.

With the exception of research conducted by Lonsway and colleagues (1998), documenting a semester-long training course for sexual assault peer educators, there are very few descriptions of the *process* of facilitating, training, and supervising the administration of campus-based violence prevention programs that include an evaluation component. This chapter addresses this gap in the literature by documenting the "behind-the-scenes" perspectives and recommendations from facilitators of a nationally funded evaluation of campus-based violence prevention programming, the Community Programming Initiative, in which sexual assault prevention and risk reduction programs were concurrently administered to single-sex audiences of men and women living within the same residence halls (Gidycz, 2006). To assist future professional and peer health educators in administering large-scale, empirically evaluated, violence prevention programs, this chapter explores the following questions:

1. What are the training needs of men and women facilitators of sexual assault prevention and risk reduction programs?
2. What are the common personal and procedural challenges faced when working to facilitate sexual assault prevention and risk reduction programs with groups of men and groups of women?
3. Do the personal and procedural challenges of program facilitation differ between men and women program facilitators?
4. What recommendations do current program facilitators have for other peer educators engaging in efforts to prevent violence against women?

These research questions were chosen deliberately, with the hope that this chapter could be distributed to current undergraduate health-educators and sexual assault prevention program facilitators in order to normalize some of the personal challenges faced when working with college students in the context of violence prevention programs. With this goal in mind, personal stories from 10 male and female program facilitators are the foundation for a series of recommendations for future program facilitators. We also list strategies for coping with emotional

reactions, handling challenging group dynamics, and addressing sensitive issues and statements in violence prevention programming. These recommendations highlight not only the different *approaches* to working with male and female college students in the context of violence prevention work but also how the *process, dynamics, and impact* of violence prevention programs differed between male and female facilitators.

We have developed this chapter with supervisors of sexual assault prevention program efforts in mind as well. Because secondary victimization—including reactions of burnout, anger, and disillusionment—is common among individuals working to prevent violence against women, it is important for supervisors to be aware of the challenges faced by needs of male and female peer educators. Thus, it is our hope that material on the selection, training, and supervision of program facilitators assists supervisors in supporting the individuals working to administer prevention efforts.

APPROACHES TO SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION PROGRAMS FOR COLLEGE MEN

Various educational programs exist to bring awareness to men of the prevalence of sexual assault and rape on college campuses. Various theoretical approaches and methods are used in these programs. According to Berkowitz (1994), most programs describe facts and statistics, without attending to the theoretical and research literature on male sexual assault. Berkowitz (2004) posited that scholars in the field generally agree that the following components are integral to successful programs. First, men should be approached as partners who need to assume responsibility for their actions. Second, programs should include intimate discussions in small, peer-based groups. Third, men should have a forum to discuss their understanding of masculinity and perceptions of typical male behavior. Fourth, descriptions of ways to intervene must be included in programs, to help males feel efficacious in preventing sexual assault. Finally, programs for males should be run in conjunction with female programs to create a collaborative, nonthreatening, and healthy campus environment.

Engaging men in ending violence against women is often approached as encouraging men to—more broadly—become allies in social justice efforts. This stance emphasizes that men must be the agents of social change if they are serious about bringing an end to sexual assault (Berkowitz, 2005). To accomplish this, Berkowitz (2005) asserted that men must challenge notions of traditional masculine gender role and sexist beliefs, which are fostered via peer- and society-based socialization processes. As social justice allies, men should recognize that traditional notions of masculinity harm everyone by sustaining a culture that tolerates violence against women, as well as sustaining harmful notions of how men think, emote, and behave (e.g., "real men don't cry"). By becoming social justice allies, men encourage other men to notice, challenge, and change harmful and limiting misperceptions regarding masculine gender roles.

Further, Janis (1972) defined groupthink as a mode of thinking in cohesive groups where unanimity is valued over realistic appraisal. Perception of realism and moral judgment become subservient to pressures of the group, and groups are unable to engage in critical thinking and make informed/correct decisions (Janis & Mann, 1977). Consequences of groupthink include generation of few alternative behaviors/actions, selective information gathering, and hindered development of alternative courses of action. Conditions that contribute to the occurrence of groupthink include the use of directive leadership, similar demographics, and beliefs of group members, and group isolation from information sources outside of the group (McCauley, 1989). Given that groupthink underlies peer group interactions, it is likely that it plays a key role in maintaining ascription to hypermasculine norms.

Since many sexual assaults occur because men believe that they have consent when indeed they do not, the consent model may be one of the most important components of sexual assault prevention (Berkowitz, 1994). Consent includes four conditions: both parties are equally free to act, are fully conscious, have clearly communicated their intent (either verbally or nonverbally), and are positive and sincere in their desires. An emphasis on the consent model encourages students to define positive and respectable behavior, rather than focusing on discussions of legality (Berkowitz, 1994).

APPROACHES TO SEXUAL ASSAULT RISK REDUCTION PROGRAMS FOR COLLEGE WOMEN

Sexual assault risk reduction programs operate under the belief that although true prevention of sexual assault is achieved by working with potential perpetrators of sexual aggression, some experiences of sexual assault are unavoidable and, thus, women must be provided with strategies to fight back against potential perpetrators. According to Rozee and Koss (2001), women can be more effective in resisting the perpetrators when they are aware of characteristics of potential perpetrators, situational risk cues, and the signs that a social or dating experience is moving toward a potentially coercive or threatening situation. Rozee and Koss (2001) delineated the "AAA" strategy for reducing risk for victimization, which includes (1) assessing whether a social or dating experience is potentially dangerous, (2) acknowledging and labeling that a situation is potentially threatening when it is so, and (3) assertively and forcefully taking action via immediate verbal or physical resistance. Following detection of threat, women are encouraged to increasingly use more assertive verbal and physical resistance strategies (Rozee & Koss, 2001). This model serves as the general framework for many risk reduction efforts (e.g., Gidycz et al., 2006; Orchowski et al., 2008). Some recent risk reduction programs also include a self-defense component focused on engaging women in intensive practice of resistance tactics, such as forms of immediate verbal and physical self-defense (see Gidycz et al., 2006; Orchowski et al., 2008).

Risk reduction programs educate women on risk factors for sexual victimization so that they can notice when a dating situation may be becoming dangerous and respond assertively. The literature documents a range of characteristics relating to the perpetrator (see Abbey, Zawicki, Buck, Clinton, & McAuslan, 2004), as well as certain social and dating situations (Gross, Winslett, Roberts, & Gohm, 2006), which may increase a women's likelihood of sexual victimization. Substances used by the victim and/or the perpetrator are commonly discussed in programs as a risk factor for sexual victimization (Abbey et al., 2004; Gross et al., 2006). Videos that model and encourage discussion of risk factors for victimization may be used to enhance women's ability to identify risk factors and also brainstorm resistance strategies. When developing self-protective strategies, women are informed that there is no "right or wrong" way to respond to a potential threat. Rather, women are encouraged to identify the resistance strategy that *works best for them* (Gidycz et al., 2006; Orchowski et al., 2008).

Dating situations are rarely clear-cut. When in a social scenario, women face a number of competing demands, such as wanting to be liked, while also wanting to remain safe (Nurius, 2000). Fear of rejection, or fear of feeling embarrassed if the threat is unfounded, make it likely that women dismiss the cues to respond protectively when they feel uncomfortable in a dating situation (Norris, Nurius, & Dimeff, 1996; Nurius & Norris, 1995). Further, cultural dating norms increase the likelihood that women focus on the social cues within a dating situation, as opposed to "safety cues" that indicate a situation is unsafe (Nurius, 2000). As a result, cues that indicate to a woman that she may be in a

risky dating situation may be normalized or even ignored as a result of competing social demands (Norris et al., 1996; Norris, Nurius, & Graham, 1999; Nurius, 2000; Nurius & Norris, 1995), particularly when substance use is involved.

In addition, risk reduction programs aim to enhance women's effectiveness in responding to potential threats by helping women to identify their personal "psychological barriers to resistance" (Breitenbecher & Scarce, 2001; Norris et al., 1996, 1999; Nurius, 2000; Nurius & Norris, 1995). Orchowski and her colleagues (2008) presented risk reduction strategies as a lifestyle and note that women should make a plan for how they may respond when they feel uncomfortable. Women may also be informed that it is natural to feel hesitant to engage in self-protective behavior, and that it can be difficult to make choices in social situations that prioritize personal safety over perceived social demands (Orchowski et al., 2008).

RECRUITING, SELECTING, AND TRAINING PROGRAM FACILITATORS

Community Programming Initiative

The sexual violence prevention program discussed here is the Community Programming Initiative, a campus-based sexual assault prevention program evaluation study funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from 2006 to 2008 (Gidycz, 2006). First-year college students from a single Midwestern university were recruited from six campus residence halls each year to participate. Over 1,300 students agreed to participate in the research, which was advertised via posters in the residence halls and personal contact from resident advisors. Residence halls were randomly assigned to either a program or control group so that the research team could compare how the attitudes and behaviors of those who received the programs changed over time in comparison to those who did not receive the program. Male and female undergraduate students in both groups completed a pretest, four-month, and seven-month follow-up assessment, where they reported on dating behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of sexual aggression/victimization they experienced since the last assessment session.

The format of the sexual assault prevention and risk reduction program in the Community Programming Initiative is strategic, in that single-sex programs are tailored to meet the needs of women and men in gaining skills to prevent violence or reduce risk for experiencing violence. The program is also synergistic, in that it targets first-year women and men living together in the *same* campus residence halls, in order to encourage dialogue between students and create a community-based change in the norms that perpetuate violence against women. The program also highlights service provision by coordinating with a campus-based *Counselor-in-Residence Program*, which is available to assist program and control group participants who wish to discuss concerns regarding violence (see Orchowski, Castelino, Ng, & Cosio, 2007). The specific program protocols administered in the Community Programming Initiative are described in detail now.

Program Protocols

The Men's Workshop (Berkowitz, 2006, in press) consists of two sessions. The first session lasts approximately two hours and aims to inform men of social norms and to facilitate the expression of discomfort with the coercive and opportunistic sexual behavior of some men. The program also encourages men to take responsibility for decreasing their peers' inappropriate coercive behaviors. During the program warm-up, the purposes of the group are outlined and open, honest communication is fostered. Following the introduction, definitions and statistics regarding the prevalence of sexual assault and sexual

harassment are provided. To increase the saliency of program material, incidence rates of sexual assault from the local university are provided. Next, scenarios highlighting the definition of consent and the difficulties that are encountered in social situations when alcohol is being consumed are discussed. Following this, participants complete a small group norms activity in which they generate data to correct misperceptions about men's sexual activity on campus. Additional scenarios are presented and the session concludes with small-group practice of bystander intervention strategies. The second session is a one and a half hours booster session of program material and is held approximately four months following session one. Facilitators reviewed social norms information as well as condition for consent. Next, in both small-group and large-group formats, men discuss how they have utilized program information over the interim, as well as what they found most useful about the program.

Risk Reduction Program

The Ohio University Sexual Assault Risk Reduction Program (Gidycz et al., 2006) consists of three sessions and is designed to increase women's awareness of risky dating situations and encourage women to respond assertively when faced with a potential threat. The program also aims to increase women's awareness of common reactions to sexual victimization and encourages women to seek support if they experience a sexual assault. The first session is two and a half hours in length and begins by introducing the conceptual framework of the program as well as definitions and statistics regarding sexual assault. Statistics regarding the frequency of sexual assault at the local university are provided to increase the saliency of program material. Women next view a video titled "I Thought It Would Never Happen to Me," in which survivors of sexual assault discuss the "warning signs" that the situation was potentially risky as well as their own process of recovery (Gidycz, Dowdall, Lynn, Marioni, & Loh, 1997). Following the video, women discuss the risk factors for sexual assault, including characteristics of the perpetrators, as well as the situation involved. Next, the facilitators present information regarding the role of date rape drugs and alcohol in sexual assault as well as common postassault reactions. To encourage women to brainstorm reactions to risky dating scenarios, a video titled "Keep Your Options Open: Alternative Solutions for Stressful Social Situations" is shown (Gidycz, 2000). The benefits to responding assertively to the situation are discussed, as well as potential barriers to resistance (e.g., embarrassment), and women are provided with a handout listing strategies for responding to risky situations and campus resources. The program concludes by encouraging women to trust their intuition and to find the best way to integrate self-protective strategies into their lifestyle.

The second part of the program is a two and a half hours self-defense program, taught by Cheryl Cesta, a national expert in self-defense for women and girls. The workshop emphasizes the self-protective strategies introduced in the workshop and aims to further develop women's awareness of risky dating scenarios and potential responses to threat. Goals of the workshop include (1) increasing awareness of body language, (2) increasing awareness of risk factors, (3) enhancing women's ability to trust their intuition, (4) learning and practicing verbal and immediate resistance tactics, and (5) learning and practicing physical resistance strategies to disable an attacker and escape. The workshop reminds women that there is no single way to respond to a risky dating situation and emphasizes the importance of responding assertively when a threat is detected.

The third part of the program is a booster session review of program material, which is one and a half hours in length and occurs approximately four months following initial program participation. Facilitators review risk factors for sexual victimization, including characteristics of the perpetrator, characteristics of the situation, as well as the role of alcohol in risky

dating situations. In small-group and large-group discussion, participants share how they have utilized program information over the interim, as well as what was most useful about the program.

RECRUITING PROGRAM FACILITATORS

Prior to the onset of the Community Programming Initiative, the principal investigator and project coordinator collaborated with the Department of Residence Life and the Department of Health Education and Wellness at the university to recruit potential program facilitators. The goal was to recruit five men and five women to serve as program facilitators and assistant program facilitators. Given the excellent leadership abilities of residential advisors and students trained in health promotion, these students were targeted via e-mails and letters to apply. This process was repeated during both years of program administration. Following the first year of program administration, program facilitators who were still attending the university were invited to return to the project. Because it might be uncomfortable for a man or woman to participate in a sexual assault risk reduction or prevention program led by their own resident advisor, it was made clear to participants and the staff that no resident advisor would facilitate a program within his or her own residence hall.

Facilitators were selected on the basis of their ability to clearly communicate ideas, their enthusiasm for the project and for issues of violence prevention, level of maturity, skills in managing groups and addressing difficult questions, and level of critical thinking. In the first year of program facilitation, two undergraduate men were invited to join the research team. Given difficulties recruiting male facilitators, two male graduate students were invited to join the project team as well. Since none of the men graduated following the first year of the project, all facilitators were invited to join the research team again during the second year of program administration. One new male undergraduate joined the facilitation team during the second year of the project. In the first year of program facilitation, four women were invited to join the project. Since only one women's program facilitator remained on campus following the first year of the project, four new facilitators were recruited to facilitate the project during the second year of program administration. Over the course of the project, none of the facilitators left the research team, were asked to leave the project, or declined to continue facilitating.

Training

Individuals who facilitate scripted health-intervention programs must conduct each program in a reliable fashion and must be skilled in addressing the unique questions posed by group members in a consistent manner. Reliable and consistent program facilitation is essential to evaluating the effectiveness of a program protocol. Training for the Community Programming Initiative contained several components designed to assist facilitators in gaining a background on the theory of the programs, strategies for managing group dynamics and difficult questions, and tips for reliably and consistently administering the programs. All program facilitators received training binders that included (1) program scripts, (2) background information on the theory of sexual assault prevention and risk reduction programming on college campuses, (3) empirical articles documenting current findings on risk factors for sexual victimization, (4) empirical articles documenting prevalence and incidence of sexual assault on college campuses and the local university, (5) empirical articles documenting prior evaluation of the program protocol, and (6) pamphlets on local resources.

Over the course of an intensive weekend of training, men and women program facilitators attended a mock presentation of their respective program protocol. Next, facilitators of

the men's sexual assault prevention program attended a series of presentations by Dr. Alan Berkowitz, which included discussion on social norms, engaging men as social justice allies, the role of groupthink in program administration, and strategies for responding to difficult audience members. Facilitators of the risk reduction program attended presentations on rape myths, debunking myths surrounding sexual assault, responding to disclosure of sexual victimization, aftereffects of sexual victimization, resources for survivors, and how to respond to audience members who blame victims of sexual assault for the experience. These sessions were designed to address some of the unique issues addressed in prevention programming for men and risk reduction programming for women, as well as the differing group dynamics that often occur within groups of college men and college women.

Men's and women's program facilitators practiced the programs for small audiences, including members of the Department of Residence Life, as well as small groups of undergraduates in Introductory Psychology courses. Program facilitators observed their peers' program administration, and audience members provided written and verbal feedback. Next, the project supervisors met with program facilitators to process the experience, provide feedback, and further discuss how to respond to difficult questions and comments from audience members. In order to increase reliability and fluidity of group discussions, facilitators and supervisors worked together to generate lists of key points to cover during group discussions and phrases to use to generate group discussion.

Throughout training, facilitators practiced responding to challenging, incorrect, and/or inappropriate (e.g., victim-blaming, ascription to rape myth ideology) responses from participants by encouraging group members to generate alternative responses or differing opinions rather than directly challenging incorrect or inappropriate statements. Supervisors emphasized that the role of the program facilitators was not to take an "expert" stance, to tell participants "what to do or what not to do," but rather to help group members develop their own strategies for creating a safer community for themselves and their peers.

Supervision

Health professionals, student affairs professionals, researchers, and health advocates who supervise the administration of sexual assault prevention and risk reduction efforts have an ethical obligation to ensure that prevention programs are conducted in a sensitive manner. Above all, practitioners must "do no harm" when engaging in preventative practice. However, while program supervisors are often acutely attuned to protecting the participants in a prevention or risk reduction program, program supervisors may overlook the need to support the emotional and professional growth of the individuals who facilitate the program (see Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). Multiple supervision strategies are likely to be most effective in ensuring that programs are administered in a sensitive, reliable, and consistent manner. Opportunities for group discussion as well as personal reflection are also important strategies for encouraging self-reflection and ensuring that facilitators' reactions are normalized and processed. Supervision is also an important component to ensuring that interventions are administered reliably over time.

Facilitators met with the on-site and off-site project supervisors on a weekly and biweekly basis. At the onset of the program evaluation study, supervision sessions were held directly after program facilitation in order to share information regarding specific questions from audience members, troubleshoot any technological difficulties, and process their emotional reaction to especially challenging group dynamics (e.g., cliques, jokes, demeaning statements, disinterest, disbelief, blame). Facilitators fill out and submit process evaluation forms, program evaluation forms, and journal entries.

WOMEN'S AND MEN'S REACTIONS TO PROGRAM FACILITATION

Almost universally, the men felt unprepared to facilitate the program at the outset of training and program facilitation. They described feeling hesitant to lead a program for undergraduates, when they did not feel like experts themselves. However, the training offered support granted through cofacilitation, which helped the facilitators grow and feel skilled and proficient by the end of the study. Conversely, facilitators of the women's risk reduction program often noted professional reasons for being interested in the program—such as wanting to gain leadership skills or being personally committed to violence prevention. As Sax (2008) noted, college women generally demonstrate a strong commitment to improving the lives of others. Nonetheless, female facilitators tended to underestimate the personal impact that the program would have on their own lives. Generally, supervisors observed that male and female program facilitators started the process of program facilitation with different levels of intellectual and emotional awareness regarding violence against women, which also may have accounted for some of the differences in the process of personal growth experienced between male and female program facilitators.

Uniquely, recognizing personal contributions to the program was particularly important in men's process of overcoming feelings of "being an imposter" as a social justice advocate. For example, several male facilitators noted that learning to view their personal experiences and personalities as strengths in program facilitation was a unique growth experience. Personal assets helped male facilitators effectively disseminate knowledge and promote active learning and discussion. Men suggested that their personality also played a role in facilitation. For example, some male facilitators promoted a healthy atmosphere during the program by using humor and levity, whereas others used great interpersonal skills to relate to the participants. Differences between male and female program facilitators' initial interest in the study and personal challenges faced over time also raises the question of how the process of *self-selection* among students who apply for positions as rape education facilitators influences their experience. Many of the men reported being alerted to the option of participating in the project by a friend or supervisor who believed that they would be a good fit for the job. For female program facilitators, interest in the project stemmed from personal experiences involving unwanted sexual contact, supporting friends who experienced sexual assault, or having an interest in women's studies or feminist issues.

Feminist Identity Development

The process of raising consciousness among the current group of program facilitators was similar to the emotional growth and development documented by Klaw and colleagues (2005). They describe the feminist identity development of a group of college students participating in a semester-long course designed to train peer educators in sexual assault awareness. Feminist identity development is outlined as a series of stages, including (1) passive acceptance (e.g., denying or accepting sexism); (2) revelation of gender discrimination and altering of worldview—which is often accompanied by anger; (3) embeddedness-emanation (e.g., integrating gender oppression with sense of individuality); and (4) active commitment to a feminist identity by engaging in activism (see Nassi & Abramowitz, 1978). Of note, Amy Stalzer Sengupta and Yvette Loury Upton's chapter (chapter 14) in this book, titled "Identity Development in College Women," provides a thought-provoking description of the complex process by which gender influences the process of social and psychological development among college women. Further, an extensive examination of the process of identity development among college students is provided by Elisa Abes and David Kasch's (chapter 13) work, titled "Using Queer Theory to Explore Lesbian College

Students' Multiple Dimensions of Identity," in this book.

Indeed, the process of developing a feminist identity as a result of program participation was self-evident to some program facilitators, especially those facilitating the risk reduction program. For example, one risk reduction program facilitator noted, "I've become more of a feminist. I'm more aware of control issues in society between men and women." Women reported beginning the program already with a sense of commitment to advocating to end gender-based violence, which may account for some of the differences in emotional and professional growth experienced by male and female facilitators over the course of the project. Program training and facilitation further strengthened the women's resolve to act as a social advocate. The onset of a feminist identity and development of an interest in social justice was also commonly reported by male facilitators. Although only a minority of the men reported personal interest in violence prevention prior to commencement of the study, over time, it appeared that men's interest in social justice and advocacy began to develop, despite their initial hesitancy of engaging in such work, identifying as an advocate, and feeling like an imposter.

For both male and female facilitators, this process was gradual and often involved a significant amount of anger in response to derogatory jokes, sexist comments, or remarks that blamed victims for the experience of sexual victimization. For example, most facilitators documented intense feelings of disillusionment at their peers' often blatant expressions of victim blame during the sessions. This anger was often so marked that facilitators reported feelings of burnout. Processing the anger associated with hearing peers discuss sexist or victim-blaming attitudes within supervision sessions, with graduate student supervisors, and with cofacilitators was described as a key component of facilitators' ability to continue engagement in activism. After several weeks of program facilitation, many of the female facilitators expressed feeling a renewed sense of confidence in women's ability to support each other, noting that "women can and do empower other women."

Vicarious Traumatization

Vicarious traumatization refers to the process by which individuals who work with trauma survivors incorporate painful experiences of their patients into their own memory systems (Figley, 2002; Jenmorri, 2006; Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1995; Rager, 2005; Salson & Figley, 2003). Over time individuals who work with trauma victims often experience intrusive thoughts, images, and emotional reactions that can be related to symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (McCann & Pearlman, 1990). Individuals who have personally experienced a traumatic event have a significantly harder time coping with disclosure of trauma (Pearlman & Mac Ian, 1995; Salson & Figley, 2003). Several female facilitators reported that listening to female participants' stories of interpersonal and sexual violence triggered intense personal feelings, ranging from helplessness to the urge to control, rage to numbness, and detachment to overidentification among the facilitation team. Several of the facilitators of the risk reduction program reported feeling *personally engaged* with the participants in the session, noting that they often "took work home with them" following difficult sessions. Importantly, overidentification with survivors of sexual victimization may impede a facilitator's ability to process participants' reactions to program material (Figley, 2002), especially if they disclose victim blame or ascription with rape myth ideology. In some cases, facilitators may seek to meet their own needs by giving advice to the participants' disclosing their own experiences, or becoming instructive within the session, as opposed to generating group discussion (Figley, 2002).

Dealing With Difficult Comments and Victim Blame

Difficulties coping with some of the participant's disrespectful comments were another frequent problem for both men's and women's program facilitators. Female program facilitators commonly reported feelings of frustration when participants blamed women for sexual assault, expressed disbelief in the rates of violence, or noted, "it could never happen to them." Men's program facilitators often became frustrated when participants failed to take the material seriously, noted that "their friends would never do that" (i.e., be aggressive), or became engrossed in discussing rates of false accusations of sexual assault. We believe these are important distinctions between the group dynamics of men's and women's programming.

Men's program facilitators were generally less frustrated by the demeaning or joking comments of the participants. However, such comments became more difficult for female program facilitators to manage as they became more invested in the program and identified more strongly as an advocate for ending violence. It is possible that as the female facilitators' investment in the program increased, it became more distressing that their peers did not share the same level of concern for violence against women. It was common for supervisors to help female program facilitators to process their anger and frustration following particularly difficult sessions, and to reframe participants' disbelief and disregard of program material. Discussing the developmental level of the freshman program participants or reasons why women audience members may distance themselves from the material were particularly helpful in decreasing female facilitators' frustration.

Personal Growth

The reactions of men's and women's program facilitators mirror those documented by Lonsway et al. (1998), who suggested that undergraduate program facilitators became more willing to engage in assertive sexual communication within their own intimate relationships after participating in the training course to facilitate rape education programming. All facilitators in this project also discussed tremendous personal growth. The program challenged the facilitators' personal beliefs and made them contemplate their worldviews, behaviors, and decisions. For female facilitators, this shift mirrors Stalzer Sengupta and Upton's (chapter 14) description of Helms's Womanist identity model, whereby identity development is characterized by altering one's worldviews regarding womanhood from an externalized conceptualization to an internalized understanding of self.

Some differences were noted between male and female facilitators as well. Male program facilitators realized that some biases and stereotypes they held about sexual assault assailants (e.g., "you can pick them out of a crowd," "they are always 'big' guys") had little merit. Conversely, female program facilitators reported a sense of empowerment following program facilitation, noting that being asked to model assertive behavior within the group sessions encouraged them to take a more confident, self-protective, and assertive stance in their own social, family, and interpersonal relationships. It is important to note that the women's reactions to program facilitation suggested that although they were now more confident in asserting themselves to take protective action within dating situations, they also recognized that they were also at risk to experience unwanted sexual experiences. Such an understanding is important, in that there is a concern that peer educators may wrongly assume that as an advocate and leader in rape awareness programming, they can "handle" any risky dating situation, or that they would be able to prevent sexual assault from occurring. More broadly, this shift in the female facilitators' sense of self-concept reflects the discussion of Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's (1986) research in this book

in chapter 14, documenting the process by which women come to understand themselves as self-confident, knowledgeable, and capable of learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM FACILITATORS

Program facilitators and supervisors compiled a number of recommendations for facilitating sexual assault prevention and risk reduction programs. These recommendations are targeted for both male and female groups; however, when appropriate, distinctions are made when recommendations are specific to either all-female or all-male program groups.

Create an Open, Safe Environment for Discussion

It is important that program facilitators for both men's and women's programs create a safe environment in which participants can openly discuss their reactions to program material. Given that women face a number of psychological barriers in responding to uncomfortable dating situations, it is important that program facilitators create an environment where women can openly discuss their reservations to using self-protective strategies. It is often the case that women and men can identify the "correct" way to respond to a risky dating situation; however, when given the opportunity to discuss whether they "truly" engage in such behavior, they identify a range of reasons why they refrain from behaving assertively when actually in the social situation. For example, college men may report fears that they would experience physical injury if they take steps to intervene when they notice a male peer behaving in a coercive way. Further, many college women indicate that they refrain from responding assertively in a dating situation, for fear that they will look "mean" or "rude." Thus, it is helpful that facilitators are skilled in creating a safe, nonthreatening environment where participants can discuss the conflicting social demands often experienced when in social and dating situations. Processing the benefits and drawbacks of engaging in bystander intervention and assertive sexual communication can be a useful way to encourage participants to reflect on what might hold them back from engaging in appropriate or self-protective behavior while in a dating situation.

Take a Collaborative, as Opposed to Expert, Stance

The way in which program material is conveyed to the participant audience varies between programs. It is our belief, however, that students are more engaged in programming in which the facilitators take a collaborative, as opposed to an expert, stance. Within the Community Programming Initiative, facilitators of the men's prevention program allowed the male participants to discover how male socialization patterns can lead to internalized misconceptions through guided group discussions. This dialogue included covering the different aspects of consent, discussing how men may sometimes jump to conclusions and engage in sex play without consent, understanding the reasons behind these communication breakdowns, and talking about the role that alcohol and other drugs play in exacerbating these breakdowns. In this format, audience members were encouraged to be active participants in the program, as opposed to passive recipients of information. Program facilitators have compared this collaborative approach to the adage, "Give a man a fish and he can eat for a night; teach a man to fish and he can feed himself for a lifetime."

Group Size

Small or large groups may also require creative strategies to elicit discussion or manage side conversations within the group. One risk reduction facilitator noted that "the biggest obstacle was having a large group. They would get offtrack and it was hard to keep them focused. And some

people getting up to use the bathroom or using their phones during the videos was distracting." A prevention program facilitator agreed with the difficulty of presenting to large groups of men, noting that

> larger groups tend to require facilitators to exert more effort to get everyone involved and to keep the peace. Looking back, however, although it felt difficult to handle, I do not think that this obstacle has substantially affected the presentation in a detrimental way. We've learned to just go with the flow.

Accommodating the Research Protocol

Staying "on script" in order to adhere to the research protocol was also a challenge, especially when attempting to address difficult questions, distracting group members, or high levels of disbelief or victim blame. A facilitator described that "although we cover the necessary information on the script, it is sometimes difficult to do it in the order that is laid out for us." Encouraging facilitators to stay on the script, while also being flexible in addressing problematic group dynamics, personal disclosures, and questions, was a critical component of supervision. Often, supervisors normalized the nervousness that program facilitators felt when "going off script," reminding facilitators that variation among topics of discussion was a normal part of the program protocol.

Managing Cliques

Facilitating programs within peer groups, while likely the most effective strategy for changing group norms, is also likely to foster potentially distracting conversations within groups. For example, one men's program facilitator addressed a difficult group in the following way:

> I separated a particularly difficult group of friends during the survey portion of the program. When separated, they were fine but I made the mistake of allowing to move back. They were disruptive enough that I considered moving them again, but not enough to give me the final push. I wished I would've followed through, and suggest that you trust your gut and follow through on separating individuals if you have an indication that some cliques might get disruptive.

Strategies for addressing some of these technological concerns, as well as problematic group dynamics, are provided in Table 17.1.

Disclosure of Personal Experiences

It is vital for facilitators to be aware of appropriate response to disclosure of trauma in order to avoid retraumatizing participants who share their experiences. Directly practicing supportive responses to disclosure can decrease the likelihood that facilitators become "caught up" in processing the disclosures of participants, pushing the program participant to recount details of the trauma, past the point of healthy processing or self-directed sharing. This may cause the participant, as well as group members, to feel unduly distressed during the session and overwhelmed. Such experiences may also retraumatize the survivor and dissuade other group members from participating honestly or sharing their own experiences.

On the other hand, some facilitators may be so distressed by participants' personal disclosure of traumatic events that they unconsciously distance themselves from processing the event with the participant, change the subject, provide minimal response, or fail to provide emotional support to the group members. Such reactions may be a result of the facilitator's personal feelings of avoidance, denial, guilt, shame, or helplessness. The detachment from the participant's disclosure may also be interpreted by audience members as victim blame, or disbelief. In such situations, it is vital that facilitators practice reacting to disclosure of traumatic experiences prior to facilitating program sessions. Utilizing two program facilitators, as opposed to one, may also increase the likelihood that the pair of program facilitators

Table 17.1 Strategies for Addressing Difficult Group Dynamics

Type of Concern	*Strategies for Intervention*
Participants don't want to be there	Let the group members know that they are free to leave at any time.
Technology malfunctions	Problem solved! Get the participants involved in their own discussion (e.g., ask for names) while another facilitator works to address technology problems.
Cofacilitator is absent	If group appears to be difficult, let participants know that you are working shorthanded. At times, participants will "give you a break."
Group is unexpectedly large	Get group members involved by asking questions to all sections of the audience.
Dominant participants	State your awareness of the perspective of the dominant group member and draw out opinions from other group members (e.g., "We know what this group member thinks, do other people agree/disagree? How so?").
Jokes and laughing	If individuals are making jokes or find program material humorous, it is OK to ignore it if it is not interfering with the program. This is a normal reaction to sensitive topics. Address the issue directly once participants become obscene, loud, or detract from others' experience.
Following the script	When a facilitator is drawn off the script of the program, it is OK to address the topic at a later point. Assigning two facilitators to each intervention can help to reduce the likelihood that topics are omitted, as cofacilitators may notice and correct omissions in the protocol.
Quiet participants	Remember that as long as participants are listening, they are most likely processing the material. Some groups are less talkative than others. Since interventions are administered within a community, they may talk about the material with their peers after the program, when they feel more comfortable.
Differences among facilitators	Program facilitators bring a unique personality, background, culture, and style to the facilitation team. There is no "one" personality for a facilitator, since different participants may relate better to different facilitators. Overall, it is important to work together to communicate a cohesive message to the audience.

can work together to effectively respond. Specifically, if one program facilitator fails to provide an appropriate emotional response, the second facilitator may help to provide a response. It is important for facilitators to practice finding the right balance of validating the individual's experience, expressing appreciation for the disclosure, communicating empathy, belief, and support for the survivor—while not making the survivor feel the uncomfortable focus of attention. It is also important for facilitators to be prepared to redirect discussion if those individuals who disclose trauma histories are at risk to be further victimized by questions from other group members, which convey that she is to blame for the experience.

Confronting Disbelief and Victim Blame

Often, individuals distance themselves from thinking that they could experience a traumatic event, such as sexual assault, believing that "it could not happen to me." For example, one risk reduction program facilitator noted,

> I think a lot of the female participants came into the session and were really nervous about the topic. Many women laughed. I was not sure if they just thought some of the words were funny or if they were a little uneasy with this discussion.

Humor is one way that women may downplay the seriousness of sexual assault, or protect themselves from the frightening realization that all

women are at risk to experience violence. Women may also blame victims for their assaults by indicating that what they were wearing or their actions "caused" the assault. Such comments allow women to maintain the false "Just World Belief," wherein good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people (Janoff-Bulman, 1992)—when in actuality, it is the perpetrator of sexual aggression who is responsible for an assault, regardless of women's actions or behaviors.

Men may also distance themselves from the issue of sexual violence by joking about the experience. One men's program facilitator stressed the importance of preparing for demeaning comments and jokes, noting that

> you just don't want to hear those things, and you want to address them in a professional way, but it's quite difficult when what was said has really angered you. It helped to be prepared for it—we weren't caught off guard.

Within men's programs, victim blame may be portrayed less overtly, often in rejection or disbelief of the rate at which rapes are falsely reported. To handle these objections, facilitators would sometimes cite other sources, which showed slightly higher false accusation rates, and ask men to reflect on these statistics. An alternative strategy may be to ask men to ponder why they believe men tend to doubt a female who accuses a male of sexual assault. Facilitators also may relate to the participants the stigma attached to women who accuse men of assault as well as the heavy burden of proof required to convict the accused.

Confronting comments that place blame on victims of sexual assault is a delicate task within group settings. Facilitators working from a collaborative stance must engage with audience members, as opposed to talk to them, in order to avoid being perceived as an expert. The goal of addressing these difficult interactions is to create attitude change by allowing the group to express differing opinions, which offer alternatives to victim blame, derogatory comments, or disbelief of statistics. For specific strategies for addressing victim blame, see Table 17.2.

Groupthink

Expressions of victim blame and disbelief of the severity and prevalence of sexual violence may be linked to social norms and groupthink. Thus, helping men to recognize and focus on the discomfort they feel is a useful starting point in engaging men's feelings of responsibility during sexual assault prevention programs (Berkowitz, 2002). One place to begin is by helping leaders or facilitators of men's groups become aware of their own misconceptions or beliefs (Berkowitz, 2005). Unless this is integrated into training, the leaders' biases might contribute to group relational cohesion or directive leadership. In fact, research has provided many different strategies that can be used to facilitate groups and overcome groupthink. Originally these included educating the group about groupthink and its consequences, using nondirective leadership, allowing and fostering critical thinking, considering unpopular alternatives, and dividing the group up into smaller groups to generate various opinions (Janis & Mann, 1977). Subsequent research in this area has also shown that holding group members accountable for their decisions and reducing the pressure put on them to conform can decrease groupthink (t'Hart, 1998).

Another crucial element is enlisting the aid of members of the group who feel pressured not to voice their opinion or feel ignored. This may be particularly useful for addressing quiet participants. Often group members will experience groupthink and feel that those who do not speak are in agreement with the opinions that are being expressed. Several specific tools can be used as well, including using separate gender groups, presenting ambiguous scenarios to participants, and focusing on the commonality of all people (Berkowitz, 2005). Recommendations for facilitating groups should foster a diversity of

Table 17.2 Strategies for Victim Blame

Strategies for Intervention	*Example*
Use a metaphor	Use the mugging analogy: no one asks a woman whose purse was stolen, "Why were you carrying a purse?" It's a situation that forces study participants to think about their own misconceptions and double standards.
Discuss the harm involved	Date rape is especially hard for some to understand. The bottom line is a person who cares for you, and is a good person in general, would never do something to hurt you. Why would you want to spend time and energy on a person who doesn't care about you? This is an important lesson for students coming out of their teen years, an age group associated with social aggression.
Ask for consensus	There are some participants who have a hard time accepting that sexual assault victims are never to be blamed. In these situations, it may be best to let the group handle it. Since they all live in the same residence hall, they often have more influence over one another. If there is a dissenter, ask the group if they agree/disagree/have anything to say.
Use different wording	Rephrase the response in a way that takes the blame away from the female; rephrase the question asked, or the way the scenario was presented.
Postprogram processing	Facilitators often report feeling disheartened and frustrated when they felt unsuccessful in diffusing a group's victim-blaming attitudes. Program supervisors may consider using the participants' postprogram evaluations to help facilitators to understand the group dynamic, and recognize the positive components of the program administration as opposed to dwelling on the attitudes of victim blame expressed by some participants. As suggested by one women's program facilitator, "a couple of girls do not ruin the experience for the whole group. If the other group members seem engaged, it may be best to ignore the unresponsive members."

perspectives and encourage the unshared or silent information to be expressed.

Self-Care

Data suggest that therapists who include self-care strategies into their regular routines report lower stress levels than those who do not. These strategies include regular exercise, eating healthy, and having time to recuperate or meditate (Meadors & Lamson, 2008). Participating in group discussions, support groups, and journal writing also help reduce the negative effects of trauma therapy (Rager, 2005). Discussing personal reactions to program facilitation with others who are involved in the project may help to normalize some of the intense emotions stirred by discussing sexual assault. Maintaining involvement in activities outside the project is also essential in continuing to develop personal interests. Some program facilitators may find it useful to share the information they are learning in training with friends and family.

CONCLUSION

The current chapter provided a behind-the-scenes description of the personal challenges, transformative experiences, and process of facilitating dual-pronged sexual assault prevention and risk reduction programming on a college campus. Uniquely, programs were facilitated within residence halls, and programming was evaluated over a four-month and seven-month follow-up period. The experiences of program

facilitators provided here document some of the unique challenges for facilitating violence prevention campaigns that contain a program evaluation component. We believe that these recommendations can be utilized by other educators, researchers, health professionals, and student affairs professionals in the development and orchestration of campus-based sexual assault prevention efforts.

Given that rates of sexual assault on college campuses have yet to decline despite over 30 years of preventative efforts, it is the responsibility of individuals working in violence prevention to improve the quality, intensity, and comprehensiveness of intervention programs. Programs must be empirically and theoretically driven, and program administrators must prioritize efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of the program by implementing valid methods of surveying pre- and postprogram attitudes, behaviors, and rates of perpetrating or experiencing sexual violence. Within college campuses, and in communities, efforts are likely to be most effective when campus personnel and offices work systematically to coordinate services and collaborate in programming efforts. It is also the responsibility of those administering violence prevention efforts to ensure that those involved in trauma intervention are prepared, and more important, supported in their efforts.

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