HOW TO PROVIDE WOMEN/SURVIVOR SAFETY & BATTERER ACCOUNTABILITY

WHEN THE BATTERER USES THESE TACTICS

… *Physical / Sexual Assault*
  - Provide safe space and confidential medical care
  - Have the batterer arrested, prosecuted and sentenced to the full extent of the law
  - Provide easy access to protection and restraining orders, ensuring enforcement
  - Assess for possible threats from his family or friends
  - Acknowledge the pain and sense of betrayal that comes from victimization
  - Assist and talk with survivors from a place of compassion and validate her/his strengths

… *Male Privilege*
  - Act in a way that validates the sacredness of women
  - Express the right of women to move through the world with respect and compassion
  - Avoid collusion - confront the batterer’s belief about his right to control his partner
  - Respectfully confront him about his behavior
  - Actively support women’s expertise about themselves and their expressed needs

… *Isolation*
  - Provide respectful support and assistance to women/survivors
  - Provide outreach and easy access to services, including transportation, childcare, etc.
  - Remove any barriers to her/him regaining power and control over her/his life
  - Deal directly and immediately with ongoing threats of violence
  - Create and enforce sanctions for interfering with her moving freely and without fear

… *Intimidation*
  - Allow advocates to accompany survivor
  - Shield her/him from this tactic, being aware that it includes looks or gestures from him, his relatives or friends
  - Avoid use of position as an authority figure to reinforce intimidation tactics
  - Communicate clearly that intimidation is unacceptable by naming the behavior and enforcing consequences

… *Emotional Abuse*
  - Treat and name survivor and their children as relatives, not as “cases” or other objectifying labels
  - Do not make survivor justify their actions or requests for assistance or resources
  - Validate her/his thoughts, feelings, actions and decisions
  - Provide accurate information that lets her know the violence is never her fault, she did not cause and cannot alone stop the abuser’s violence
  - See and speak to the best in survivor
  - Support her/his healing in her/his own way
  - Speak with her/him as a friend, honestly and respectfully
...Minimizing, Lying and Blaming
- Avoid collusion with the batterer by buying into his stories or manipulation of systems to maintain control of his partner
- Believe in survivor and what she/he says
- Understand the dynamics of battering to avoid minimizing or blaming her/him for his behavior
- Focus on the truth and confront him about his dishonesty
- Find ways to hold batterer accountable and change behavior.

...Using the Children
- Act in ways that reflects the understanding that mother abuse is child abuse
- Understand that if we protect women, they can protect their children
- Do not allow the batterer to use children as weapons or means of access for violence against non-offending parent through custody or visitation
- Provide the safety and resources for the mother and children to stay together
- Know that removing children from their mother for “failure to protect” revictimizes children and mothers
- Create laws that asserts that battering is child abuse

...Economic Abuse
- Provide free, easily accessible resources and services
- Acknowledge that poverty, especially lack of housing, causes women and their children to return to the batterer or be homeless
- Create appropriate resources without barriers

...Coercion and Threats
- Create safety and comfort for women to express themselves and do things freely
- Know that batterer’s past use of violence may continue to affect survivor
- Affirm her thoughts, feelings and opinions
- Understand that using position and authority to make survivor do what you want her/him to do is disrespectful and abusive
- Create and enforce laws that validate survivor’s rights and hold the batterer accountable for his violence

...Cultural Abuse
- Provide support and accurate information
- Understand our role as relatives to all things in Creation
- Be responsible for our role as relatives by holding ourselves accountable to women who have been victimized, children and other relatives
- Respect survivors Path as being equally important as our own
- Honor survivor privacy without it being an excuse for inaction
... *Ritual Abuse*

- Validate survivors fears and concerns
- Provide accurate information
- Provide whatever she/he needs to practice her/his spiritual ways
- Practice our spirituality so our relationship with our sisters reflects humility and self-understanding

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