An Empowerment Model of Self-Defense: Providing a Holistic Approach to Violence Prevention

SCOPE Workshop Presentation
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Introductions

• Workshop Speakers
  – Background experience and interest

• Creating Safe Space

• Power Poses exercise
What is Self-Defense?

• How would you define self-defense?

• Anyone taken a self-defense course before?
  – What skills do you typically learn?
  – What are its similarities/differences to violence prevention?
Empowerment Model: Historical Backdrop

• Connections to early anti-violence work
  – Rape prevention efforts
• Feminist vs. non-feminist self-defense models
  – Development of women’s self-defense
• Survivor Supportive Approach
  – Connection to anti-rape movement
• Assertiveness exercise
Empowerment Model Today

• Connects to the spectrum of violence
  − Addresses rape culture
  − Addresses intersections of race, class, privilege, and sexual orientation

• Tool kit of skills
  − Increase Choices and Options
  − List of Do’s (not don’ts)
  − The Fight of no Fight

• Boundary setting skill practice
  − No! exercise
Empowerment Model Example

Five Fingers of Self-Defense

• Think
  – Awareness, intuition, assessment

• Yell
  – Energy, breath, voice, assertive communication

• Run
  – Escape, avoid

• Fight
  – Conscious choice, timing, commitment

• Tell
  – Healing, help, advocacy—for self and others
Empowerment Model in Action — It Works!

• Prevention/Intervention
  – Proven positive impact in thwarting assault
  – No Means No! Worldwide research report
  – Video Testimonials

• Self-Efficacy
  – Improved self-confidence to stop attack before becomes physical
  – University of Michigan study
Empowerment Model on College Campuses

• Connection to campus prevention education and bystander intervention programming

• Physical Defense Skills:
  - Prevention in action

• Growing acceptance by funders and legislators

• Resources:
  • NWMAF: National Women’s Martial Arts Federation – Self Defense Certification
  • Girls Fight Back!
Empowerment Model As a Healing Practice

- Embodied empowerment
- Breaking isolation
- Yes! Circle
- Research articles
Empowerment Model Research Articles


Presenter Biographies

Clara Porter, MSW has been teaching self defense for 20 years and is the Director of Prevention. Action. Change. in Portland Maine. She is a certified instructor in empowerment-based self defense with the National Women’s Martial Arts Federation and is a frequent presenter at the NWMAF annual conference on such topics as: engaging men in violence prevention, working with health professionals, and model self defense courses. She also holds certification in Advanced Trauma First Aide, a practice which informs her self defense work. She recently served as Coordinator of the Campus Safety Project at the University of Southern Maine, a comprehensive effort to prevent and respond to gender-based violence funded through a Department of Justice Campus Grant. Clara is currently an adjunct professor at the University of New England in the Masters in Social Work program. preventionactionchange@earthlink.net
Kate Webster, Ph.D. has been a violence prevention educator for over 15 years and is the Director and Head Instructor of Violence Prevention Programs at Thousand Waves Martial Arts & Self-Defense Center. She is a certified teacher of empowerment-based self-defense by the National Women’s Martial Arts Federation (NWMAF). She has been a presenter at NWMAF’s national Self-Defense Instructor’s Conference on issues of peaceful conflict resolution and violence prevention in the LGBT community, and conducted an empowerment model self-defense certification training at their conference this summer. She is an adjunct professor at DePaul University specializing in gender-based violence, gender socialization, and gender equity in schools, and is the author of: “Difficulties African Women Face in Accessing Education: The Plight of School Girls in Kenya.” kateleeweb@yahoo.com