

CREATIVE RESPONSE TO CONFLICT

BIAS AWARENESS GUIDELINES

These guidelines are appropriate for setting parameters for participation in bias awareness work. After discussing each of the guidelines, get the group's agreement to them. They can be referred to, if necessary, during the workshop, i.e., "Remember our agreement about speaking from our own experience or our own perspective." Or, "Remember our agreement about confidentiality."

Young children may agree to "start our sentences with the word 'I' rather than the word 'you'. Or, they may agree to not talk about what anyone else in their small group said in order that all will feel safe in sharing their stories. CCRC has used these guidelines as early as kindergarten. Often, groups will have a background in conflict resolution work, so that an atmosphere of affirmation and safety are already in place before bias awareness workshops begin.

BIAS AWARENESS GUIDELINES FOR GROUP WORK

1. In doing bias awareness work, it is very important to try to keep open to new ideas, even if they contradict ideas that we may already have.
2. When speaking about bias, it is important to speak from our own experience rather than someone else's. It is helpful to begin comments with "I think. . .", "I believe. . .", "I feel. . .".
3. It is important in bias awareness work that we explore in an environment of safety. Confidentiality helps to create that safe environment. Please share with the entire group that you agree that what is said in our group sharing will be confidential.
4. Often in bias awareness work, many feelings come up. It is helpful to try to grow and learn from the feelings rather than trying to take a stand on an issue that may come up.