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A Seat at the Table: Navigating Relationships While Pushing for System Change

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>> Good morning. Welcome to our webinar today. A seat at the table, navigating relationships while pushing for the system change. My name is Parker. I am joined today by my colleagues, Denise Eng, the program manager -- manager. I will introduce the presenter in a moment but first, Liz, will you tell us about how the webinar will work today?

>> Certainly. Thank you. I am a delighted you joined. I think all of you who are here to participate in the webinar. There we go. That is the slide we what. I will briefly touch upon the logistics that will hopefully will provide for a good webinar experience today. You will notice that there are captions rolling at the bottom of your screen and there is the possibility of an error. We ask you to not be overly distressed it and things that you notice. The phone lines will be muted for this presentation today. We encourage you to share your thinking, your questions or comments with our presenters at any point during the presentation in the Q&A box that you see in the middle column of your screen. Your comments will be routed to the presenters and will be responded within the audio component of the presentation. We also recommend that you utilize the control features within this Adobe connect platform that will allow you to adjust the setting of each of the boxes on your screen.

>> Within those boxes on the far right, you will see a icon. If you click on it, you will notice there are a range of options that you can adjust the settings. Certainly, do that to your preferences. At the end of our presentation, you will see that the webinar PowerPoint is available for a download that is the last 15 minutes or so of

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the presentation. If you would like to share this webinar with your colleagues, it is recorded and we will post it to the blueprint for safety website page. You can look for the recording there. With that, I will ask you to go ahead and get us started.

>> Great. Thank you. Today, I'm happy to introduce who is the coordinator and program director at the domestic abuse intervention project, which may be returned for two as spiff. She has worked with battered women for over 19 years. As the legal advocate, she has been instrumental in partnership with the legal system in St. Paul and to ensure victims receive services they need and deserve. Through her advocacy experience and knowledge of the legal system, she participated in the development of the blueprint safety and the creation of the companion piece that is a vital role. She facilitates focus groups of women to ensure that victims' experiences remain at the forefront of any response designed to serve them and to incorporate when training locally and nationally. We are excited to have you joining us today and sharing your expertise. Thank you for being with us today.

>> Thank you. Before we jump into the learning objectives, we want to take a moment to kind of acknowledge that at the current climate in the country right now, it is very challenging and difficult in many ways, particularly with the events of this Pat weekend in Charlottesville and today's webinar, I am talking about the

>> About and looking at the important role of advocacy and we want to take a minute to recognize that there is a lot of work to do. We are doing this work together. We want to take a moment to recognize that the work of advocacy is so important, particularly at this time. Thank you all for spending this time with us to talk about that role that advocates can play. Today, the objective that we hope to cover with you our talking about the different ways that advocacy can play out from direct advocacy, direct service provision through system-level advocacy. We

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will talk about the blueprint for safety with a brief review for those who may not know much about the blueprint and talking about how the role of advocacy works within the context of blueprint for safety. Also, looking at what are the main features of what makes for effective advocacy? There are four Golden rules and Bree will share -- share examples from her work. As the title of the presentation suggests, we are also going to talk about how you can feel comfortable working for that change while maintaining and navigating the relationship that you are creating with those within the system. With that, I am going to turn the conversation towards my colleague, Denise and Blueprint for Safety yet -- Bree .

>> Thank you. I want to talk a little bit about how this work of advocacy came to be and have a conversation that includes that. As I reflect on your comments about the events in Charlottesville, I am having present in my mind, the reality that advocates are trying to change the world. We are idealists. We are romantic spirit we are never satisfied with what is happening in our communities. We always want everyone to do better. We are dedicating herself not just to helping individual women but trying to change the world. We are trying to make it a better place. I believe this in my heart. I thought that those of you who are on the call, particularly you can't you really see as I do that calling yourself an advocate is among the highest and most honored calling that a person can have. We are happy to be here today to talk about this work with you today. I want to talk a little bit about what advocacy is. I am borrowing this from a colleague in New Orleans. She says she pointed out that the word advocate comes from a Latin word 'advocare' . It means to summon or to call 218. I think it captures pretty well what we are trying to do. Dictionary definitions includes the act of pleading or arguing in favor of something such as a cause or idea or policy and priding just providing support and that can happen on the individual and social level. The other is the act of speaking in support of another person, place, or thing. I heard this as standing in the place of another in advancing your cause. Advocacy is a

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political process by which an individual or group is influencing decisions within systems. Advocates you are really doing their job well are doing all of these things. Bree, can you talk about what this means in your daily work? I know this came from you and your program. I know you apply this thinking in your program. What does this mean to you as an advocate?

>> Thank you. I agree with you that to be an effective advocate, you need to have all three. I want to start by talking about that direct services peace. When providing direct services, when I am doing at, I am supporting the woman, the victim individually. Sometimes literally speaking on their behalf. That is helping one victim at a time. Advocacy also involves representing the voices of many victims. And also many women collectively in support of their rights and their safety. I look at that as creating change for all victims. You are right. That is very much a part of our jobs, changing the world. It is changing the world by helping one victim at a time but changing the world for all victims. I see that as an advocate, and a blueprint coordinator, I happen to be both but I see that each of them in those different roles are really positioning in the engaged system and doing system advocacy. And my role as a blueprint coordinator, I coordinate the legal system with domestic violence, I'm positioned to do the system advocacy. The blueprint process involves drawing the system attention to unintended consequences that negatively impact victims and the offenders to reduce any existing disparities produced by that system response. That is also advocacy. As far as the blue point peace, and even outside of the blueprint, it is the advocate with the support of the blueprint coordinator, it is both of their roles to do that creating change for all victims together. That is social change work. It is a part of an advocate role inclusive to providing direct services.

>> Thank you. I think that you really captured it well. At this point, I think it would be useful to start to move into thinking about how this work is really positioned

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historical, what got us here. This may be a review for some of you but I want to reflect back on the history of this work that has happened in our country and around the world to try to advance the interest of women and safety of women's women. Historically, it has been well accepted in this country and around the world for men to use ethical violence as a means of disciplining or controlling or exercising authority over there why

>> That began to change a little bit in this country in the mid-19th century were Tennessee was the first state to outlaw wife beating. It took 100 years or so for the criminal legal system and law enforcement to begin to arrest for these kinds of crimes unless there was significant harm that was done or someone was killed. Bree, can you start talking about how advocacy forms within that context and to advance the agenda in our country?

>> I am proud to do that. You know, back then, years ago, what was happening with women were often seeking help from other women. Women were offering homes to a sister or a neighbor or a friend for a safe place to stay when their home was not a safe place to stay. Through these connections with each other and this type of sisterhood, they were able to join together in name. They began to articulate their needs to the system. They began making demands for protection. The women's movement in the 60s and later the battered women's movement in the 1970's pressured states to move towards arresting to violence violence offenders. There was orders for protection and other protection orders and they were developed. Also, women's shelter started opening and this was rooted in the sisterhood of women helping women.

>> And I assume that you agree that really what we are talking about is a form of violence that we often call battering in the work that we do. People use violence on time to time in relationships not everyone but many people do. The violence for most, we are concerned that it has this added component of control and

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intimidation and domination of a victim, usually a woman by her partner and usually a male. Although we acknowledge that LGBT Q and non-binary people are affected by violence. Most people see this visual representation of what battery is. We continue to see violence and battering in this context. That is the kind of violence that we are concerned about for the rest of our conversation within that framework.

>> Advocates you started working with women in this situation in this context started seeing a shift in agencies. They began to recognize that the state needed to take control and there needed to be some community responsibility for stopping the battering and it could not be done one woman at a time and seeking shelter was an important thing but did not do anything to stop the violence. Back in 1980, the domestic abuse intervention program began to organize around this. They identified battery as a criminal issue with the notion that the state needed to protect victims of violence and that the intervention should focus on victim safety an offender accountability and it needed to take responsibility for eliminating harm to women and children in society and also at the same time, wanted to offer them an opportunity to change. The shift began to be focused on the institution rather than the individual that was battered. With this philosophy, they formed what is known as the first coordinated response in Duluth. The CCR was funded with that notion that they would test this model of arresting batterers and providing additional opportunities to change the result in prosecution. They started to work together in a different way, based on this model called the intervention project. CCR was modeled. Based on that, St. Paul decided to build on that. With that, can you help us with making this transition to the -- this particular CCR?

>> If you are talking, we cannot hear you.

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>> What we see is the cover of the blueprint for safety. We are lucky to have the the blueprint coordinator with this, Bree, I would see if you would share with us how St. Paul did create the blueprint out of this history and context of advocacy and moving into CCR work. How does -- did St. Paul put this blueprint together out of that?

>> Thank you. It started before 2007 but I will talk from two 2007 on. What happened was St. Paul decided that they wanted to strengthen the response to domestic violence crime. They already had built into their response, a great many foundations of the Duluth work. They wanted to do more. I keep saying they but I am talking about St. Paul, the government. They had a long-standing community response. They realized they could do better. St. Paul and in partnership with the agency I work for which is the St. Paul intervention project, and with a faith based coalition at more than 100 members in congregations that are working on racial and economic equality, together, we petitioned and receive support from the legislature for the creation of a framework that would delineate the way the legal system should respond. The project which is known as the blueprint for safety brought together agencies and with our advocacy program, to develop policies which you know as blueprint for safety. Over the next two years, about 2007 and 2009, we had multiple victim advocates and criminal justice panels where we would do a focus group with victims and another with advocates and support. We work together with a team of researchers to advise and we spent a year writing the final document. St. Paul launched their blueprint for safety and the first blueprint for safety was in 2010. Also, in 2013, we received new funding and more funding that has enabled us to enhance our implementation efforts and assess our progress.

>> I know you have so much really good things you can say about the work that is being done in St. Paul. The conversation today will focus on what advocacy work

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looks up like. We encourage everyone listening to please utilize your Q&A box. If you have comments to share or questions, please do not hesitate. Using the Q&A box and one of us will share your comment or question with the audience an answer that.

>> Six foundational principles were put together in the creation of the blueprint for safety. These principles really guide not only the work of advocates but the work of the practitioners responding to domestic violence. The blueprint calls upon all agencies involved in the blueprinting, including advocacy partners to adheres to

>> Adhere to these principles. And inter-agency can -- polls is a recognition that everyone has to work together to be successful. Attention to context and severity at every point of intervention, you know, this idea is to adjust the response based on the type and level of the domestic violence is occurring and recognizing that all is not the battering that Denise previously described. We should adjust our response. The third one is recognizing that domestic violence is a pattern crime requiring continuing engagement. Rather than the frustration that can sometimes happen with practitioners who might have to respond to a particular survivor a number of times, you know, as opposed to a point of frustration, these are points of opportunity to build that relationship with victims over time and let them know you can come back to us as many times as you need. We are going to be here whether it is the first or the 15th time. It is a pattern crime. It is hard to make that decision to leave. The system needs to send those messages of being consistently presents. With consequences, the research and doing this work in the field for over 30 years, it tells us that consequences do not have to be extremely harsh or severe but they do need to happen swiftly and they need to be consistent. It needs to be clear that known consequences will happen every time there is an incident of violence or battering. Messages of help and accountability go to both

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the victim, the batterer and children who are about. At every point of intermission, every advocate should send messages to the victim Kyle -- countering the messages of the batterer. Not say no one will believe you but we should say the there is help and we believe you. If she believes it is all her fault, we are there to say it is not your fault. We will do the holding of accountability for you. To the batterer, you know, if you choose to stop, we will connect you to services. We will help you but if you do not stop and you do not choose to stop, we will make your experience very uncomfortable for you. Of course, the children, it is not your fault and we are there to help and not hurt your parents. Avoiding hurtful consequences is a recognition that the system produces unintended consequences. We should work as hard as we can to recognize what are the unintended consequences impacting victims and offenders? Are any populations of our community experiencing the system response any way that we could reduce or get rid of? At least attention to that and a recognition and working to reduce those consequences as much as possible.

>> We have talked about the blueprint for safety being that type of comprehensive project that incorporates all agencies within the system. We wanted to visually demonstrate who all is included. Everyone from 911 through probation, which includes the judiciary law enforcement, the sheriff department, whether they are law-enforcement or operating the jail, prosecution and bit moistness, the judiciary -- Bree, can you talk about why advocacy is in the center of the circle and where the blueprint coordinator and the advocate kind of fit within this grouping of partners but really within CCR in general?

>> Definitely. I would love to. Let's start with why advocacy is in the center. It is literally in the center before you. Advocates intersect with many other and I work. We intersect with medical, protection orders, child protection, education, housing. One of those intersections happens to be the criminal legal system. We

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make a diligent effort and commitment to understanding the individual victim circumstances and ensuring the victim needs and wishes are brought forward, respecting the individual victim need for privacy and continuously engaging with them. Of course, advocates will be at the center. We are the liaison and the bridge from the victim to others and back to the victim. In that regard, we are central and best positioned to be at the center in the blueprint committee or any other coordinated response because we are closest to the victim. If you think about it, this is about the core, it is the victim. That is really what it should be in the community surrounding the victim. As advocates who are closest to the victim, I think it makes sense while -- why advocates should be there. How does the blue credit -- the coordinator -- the blueprint for safety, it is the experience of the victim. I shared that when it was developed, we utilized focus groups of victim survivors to inform the blueprint. The blueprint is grounded in this lived experience of the victim. Advocates bring the voice of victims to the system and work with the system to adjust the response to improve the victim experience with intervention. The coordinator listens to the advocate and believes of the advocate is saying. Because of that alone, the coordinator joins with the advocate to be a victim voice at the table. The blueprint and the coordinator and the advocate facilitate the work of the project together. They bring representatives from each partner agency together for problem solving through the process. They are really a team. The blueprint advocate and coordinator do part of the function is advocacy which is creating [Indiscernible].

>> I think that is a helpful breakdown but also realize that some people are visual based. I am visual based. This diagram, I guess we can say, that is on this green. I think what it is showing is a little bit of what you just described in terms of how information is getting exchanged, to make sure the victim experiences stay at the center of the work that is being done. Can you describe for us what this exchange of information looks like here.

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>> Yes. Thank you. I think this is visual and I am a visual learner, it is such a great display of what I was trying to convey. It is supporting why advocates are central. And the blueprint coordinator is connected. I love this visual. If you see the victim up on the screen. That victim is connected to community-based advocates and blueprint advocates. Sometimes, they are one and the same, like me and they see that I work with them. The advocate is the one to best evaluate the risk and danger with the victim. The best one to understand the specific circumstances with the victim. It is upon the advocate to bring those risk factors and concerns and hopes and fears and so on and so forth for the word to the coordinator part you see how the community-based advocate and a blueprint advocate are going to the blueprint coordinator. It is really the advocate and the coordinator who then both address together with the system on behalf of the victim. Okay? Because advocates understand the system and terminology and processes outlaws, we have to understand as much as we can so we can communicate such things to victims anyway that is understandable. Likewise, it is also true that advocates, especially with the coordinator must also go back to the system and translate for them the victim experiences and pity those within the system response language terms. It is not saying that victims will not directly be speaking with the system. It further supports why advocacy is a critical role in any CCR and why it is that the center of the blueprint.

>> Bree, you try to balance what you said so far with pointing out the difference between what happens with direct service provision versus what is really happening with system advocacy. Talk to us about why this kind of tool role is so important. Why are both ever present and important in the role of advocacy within blueprint or within CCR.

>> Sure. Just as we realize individual women need support, we know from years of supporting women on the individual level that all women and children will not

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be free from violence and less and until societal norms and beliefs about violence change. That is how they are connected. The criminal legal system is a significant part of that change. Even if we recognize there may be things we want to change about the system, they are a significant part of the change. We need them with us to change, especially with the societal norms and beliefs. While we continue to work to clear pathways or the individuals I walk with them along the path, we must also have parallel efforts to create a brand-new path that will liberate all victims, create a new one. Both types of advocates require -- I describe it as claiming and owning our advocacy role, our dual advocacy role. It is tapping into the most competent part of our being to shape what needs to be. Really, the reason why advocates should be is because it makes things safer for victims. That is why we do it. We do it so that one day we do not have a job because we have ended domestic violence. It is funneling a passion. These are injustices we see every day and doing something about it. Even if our boys shakes and we have to fake it until we make it, we have to do both.

>> I am so happy we spent a little bit time here at the beginning emphasizing why both are very important. Particularly within the context of blueprint or CCR work, the main focus that we will talk about now for the rest of the webinar will be primarily on system advocacy. I am glad we took that time. I really like this visual that you give us about clearing a path to walk alongside somebody versus creating a new path. With that, share with us what the pillars of system advocacy, particular to the blueprint and once we talk about what it looks like within the blueprint, Denise will shift gears for us to the roles of advocacy.

>> Sure. You know, there are a few key components to system advocacy. Is definitely a responsibility of the blueprint advocates. What we facilitate is before you. First, is the initiated response. Establishing this response is critical. This is where patrol officer or law enforcement provides immediate information to local

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advocacy programs. The point is so the advocate may have contact with the victim as soon as possible. We want that to happen at the earliest point after the police respond to a domestic crime. That is one thing. Another is representing the victim voices. We are creating written materials. It is literally being present to create and adapt and make sure that policies and procedures and protocols and that they are actually institutionalized in the practice. I think at this as a magnifying glass, if you will. And advocate magnifies the areas in written materials that may cause more harm to victims or help victims. That is how in my mind I see that and look at that. The next is representing victims -- eggs -- examine any gaps in acting and that is literally taking the problems that you see and you identify, whether that is through the written test or other ways and you have to actually act on it. It is not just about writing it down and complaining about. Acknowledging that it is wrong. No. We have to act you have to do what you can to change. We are out to change the world. That is what we use to do that. Then, we have to be present. We have to participate. We need to challenge the system when necessary. We have to be vigilant here we have to identify, name, and respond when change is necessary, when change is needed. We have to learn and understand and examine the process. We have to know what we are doing. We have to devise a course of action. It speaks to the whole acting part that I just said before. What is the best way to take action? Monitoring and adjusting based on what we learn. The blueprint advocate is involved in all things. That is meetings and activities and monitoring. That is ongoing work of a CCR and definitely work of the blueprint for safety community. Those are a few examples of pillars for system advocacy. There are more but those are the few that I think that speak to what we are talking about today.

>> We did get a question in from the audience. I don't know, Bree, can you give a short response and maybe you will go in more depth as you keep presenting. The comment in question is that we have started in our community, we have eight law

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enforcement officers. They vary by permit. Any suggestion for encouraging those departments that are reluctant?

>> I think we will touch about this in a little bit. I do want to say something about it. It is true. This speaks to the whole vigilant part that I was saying. Evening the establishment of AIR and having a good protocol process, we have to be Bill Jill and all the time on the practices. This is something that makes me think of that. One suggestion I have with encouraging departments, especially those that are reluctant, I would like to say things like, it is really the law enforcement officers benefits to connect us with victims because quite frankly, the piece of it, it speeds up their Mac time. I know that sounds horrible but that is what advocates will do. We will do the safety planning. We will listen to the store, her story. We will take the burden on finding safe housing and getting different provisions, legal provisions. Is taking some burden, if you will, off law enforcement and connecting with advocates right away so we can take on these other pieces that often times will fall on law enforcement. I try to do that. Finally, doing as many row calls as we can and talk to the people that are responding. Speaking to them and not just agency help.

>> Thank you. I think those are excellent suggestions. You know, my initial thought about the question is, some things take more time than others. You have to keep at it. We are in it for the long haul. And so, I think by following some of the suggestions that you have put forward, Bree, and talking about what we mean by doing system advocacy, hopefully we can advance the process in places where it seems like the door is closed or only opened a little crack. I want to talk to you a little bit about what we have identified as what we call the four Golden rules of advocacy. There are these roles, centralize victim safety, well-being, Anna Tommy, developed a strong knowledge base and operate from that knowledge

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base. Use change analysis and a model of constructive engagement. I want to briefly talk about what these mean.

>> Of course. That is what advocates do with individual women all the time. We're working to really make sure that the work that we do is focused on what it is that an individual victim needs. It is easier for advocates to think about how to do this in context. Bree, can you offer an example of how to ensure that that thinking is infused in the system reform efforts as well.

>> Sure. One thing I think about as far as the hands on approach and making sure we are centralizing victim safety while being Anna Tommy, is incorporating as much [Indiscernible] into every single conversation. It is making it known what advocates do from that advocacy perspective. Any time we talked to a practitioner or a group of practitioners, we cannot assume that everyone has the same knowledge than actually, we should assume otherwise and look at ourselves as teachers and educators on how to centralize victim safety. It is owning that competence and saying here I am to help you, if you will, not being condescending but owning it. Another thing is our role is we have to pay attention on the impact. That is equal to everything else that we do. We know that we do not experience the world in the same way. We know realities are constructed by our differences. We have a whole national platform to use to really have an honest conversation about this and connecting it to centralizing victim safety. One quick thing around to educating and promoting, that is another way to centralize, especially after problems are identified, we are a part of the solutions. We have to do what we can to engage and involve others to feel like they are part of the solution with us. I hope that is enough to talk about that golden rule but yeah.

>> That is helpful. I think it is also important to recognize that people in the institutions are not necessarily uncaring about what happens to victims. They

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organize work to make it easier for themselves. The experience of real people lives can get lost. It is not intentional but it institutions, they do not see this as being part of their job. It has to be part of somebody's. We make it part of bars. Right?

>> Yes.

>> The next is developing a strong knowledge base about the experience of the victims or your institutional response. Can you talk about why that is important?

>> Yes.

>> The knowledge base, I look at advocates as being more prepared than anyone I am meeting with her talking to. We always need to be so prepared and feel like we probably even know more than them simply about research and issues and policies and procedures. Our knowledge base is critical. It is absolutely critical. We have to start building this knowledge base of any system but of the criminal legal system so that we know what we are talking about when we are talking with practitioners. It goes to what I was saying before about advocates have to be able to translate criminal legal terminology with victims. It is so different. Is pretty different. We have to do the same thing when we talked to practitioners. There is language so that we hear what they are saying. We cannot solve a problem if we do not know what is causing it. We cannot identify a problem if we do not know how to name it. I prepare my knowledge base literally having it in front of me when I am at a meeting or if I am on the phone with somebody or I am talking to a group of people or one on one. I literally happy for me my tools to tap into my law knowledge base because I am a visual learner but also to keep me on the straight and narrow and the fork it -- locus. Whether it is the blueprint policy or whether it is different research articles, whether it is a statue, I have as much as I

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can support what I'm here to talk about. I think that is absolutely critical. We need to know how to say it so we are heard with the system.

>> You know, many of us in our early days of advocacy, I think we have stumbled into a meeting without an adequate knowledge base. We found it hard to be taken seriously, I think. Your points are really well taken.

>> Can we talk about how we develop that? Weird talking and I have been thinking about you know, one of the things about advocates that is different than anybody else, we are the first people and the only people who will sit down with a victim of violence and say tell me. What is it like to be you? What is your experience? I mean, how is the intervention affecting you and going on? It is so important. I am learning how that fits into the criminal legal system. We need to talk about the ways in which we do these things.

>> You know, the first one, we need to talk with survivors. You are right. Were the only ones that are really doing that and it is critical. It also is connected to why it is so important for us to know the criminal legal system inside and out. Victim survivors will begin speaking about their experience. Because they are looking at it and they experienced it themselves, they are not necessarily using language that the system uses. We need to know what you are talking about so we can then with system practitioners go back and say this is the experience that I heard from a woman related to -- no contact order. This is what I heard and maybe it is related to the fact a case was to miss before trial. We need to make sure that we are using an example of victims true experiences while we are speaking to anyone in the system. We should be doing it. There is a way to do it. We are not dishonoring confidentiality. It is our responsibility. The other thing is making sure we are talking with other advocates in our programs or others in the community. We want to make sure that there is a connection with cultural specific programming for culturally specific issues are included in these conversations and

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making sure that we have as much information as possible about populations in our community especially those that are underserved. Another example is you know, when we talk about reading case files. Literally reading every police report and look for trends. Ask victims about the reaction to what is written. You know, if the advocate, are they highlighting in the police report when something sticks out, pull the highlights out and begin a list. That is how you begin documenting the problem. Finally, I want to say, there is a piece about learning statewide and national trends and research. Also talking to coalitions and national groups so we are prepared and can incorporate these trends that we see and speak with NRO community. It is amazing how many people do not know what is going on in the community but there is a great deal of interest. Again, those are some of the examples. Those are important ones on how to develop the knowledge base.

>> This notion of being connected and trying to learn about national trends because there are thousands of people doing this work around the country. They are identifying trends and talking with each other and putting out information and we bring that back to our communities and see what others are experiencing that is happening locally as well.

>> Let's move on to rule number vintage, using a systemic and social change analysis. That is looking at the notion of whether or not something is an isolated case for an individual survivor or this is a trend. How do you figure out, you know, one versus the other? How big does it need to be before you decide you will say we think this is a trend. What are your thoughts?

>> This is important because as advocates, we need to know. We absolutely do. I mean, some of the things that comes to mind, I can recognize a situation is isolated. I see it as that. When I do not hear the same issue by many victims. It is my responsibility as an advocate to check that out. I have my coworkers. I connect with other advocates and try to find out, you know, utilize other people and their

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Mac knowledge about what is happening and basically comparing it to my am. An example would be a situation where it took an hour for police response to a domestic violence case. That is unacceptable, too long and not okay. As I learn more from the victim and others, it really was an anomaly. I learn from other advocates that they have not heard that happening. I look to see what are the trends and what are the response times in our police districts. I have information to find out if it is isolated or not. When I learn in this example, there was an officer involved shooting that happened and pulled patrol officers off the street to respond to that. That is an example. That was an isolated situation. It did not mean that we have a problem with our police department response time. This is an example why it is so important to track what is happening and why tracking legal cases and domestic related cases are important. You will see the problems. You will see potential gaps. Constantly paying attention to unintended consequences, you know, there is court observations and attend court hearings for victims. We need to see for ourselves what is going on and we need to include our coworkers and others that see what is going on. Of course, documenting those experiences and articulating those two the system, to make social changes. You know, that is being prepared. It is having talking points ready and having examples and being ready to sit down and have a one-on-one, you and the advocate and a group of people and continuing in that conversation because you have so much information that you are able to out talk everybody.

>> In order to do that, you really need to have not just a presence and access to information that you also need to create some sort of process or structure for documenting these things when they occur. Who will documented in what ways? Where? Who was it routed to? Who will approach the system partners in what ways? How does it affect this blueprint response? How does your CCR structure and how can advocates shake that out? Is there anything you can add to that? Is there anything you could add to that?

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>> No. that was a phenomenal summary. There's this one piece I want to say. I have I dry board on my office wall because if something comes out, I quickly write it down because I am busy. Even that is a starting point for documentation. It does not have to be sit down at your computer and type. But you need to capture what is happening.

>> That is an excellent point. It is easy to get busy and tell yourself you will do it and later never comes.

>> I will not spend a lot of time on this slide but this is the framework that we use here for analyzing where problems occur. When problems are recording, we usually believe it is located in one or more of the puzzle pieces that we call the eight methods of organized workers. It is something related to a rule or policy with a administrative practice and linkage to how people are connected. We want to try to absorb this and warn about it. I say if you are interested in accessing more information, there is a time available and you can email us and we can give you more information. This is a good construct for thinking about how and where problems occur. In summary, we want to make sure we are fracturing -- focusing on structures. The last method is to use a model of constructive engagement. Sometimes for advocates, it can be difficult to do. Sometimes, we really feel like we are invested in what is happening. We feel strongly about what is occurring. It is hard to build our response in a way that thinks about what is the most effective way in engaging people. I know you spent a lot of energy working on this in St. Paul in the context of blueprint. And you talk about what this means?

>> Yes. You know, I have always known this is important. I really challenge myself even more because this is so critical, especially with CCR work and a blueprint for safety. I've had to do, you know, touchups or tuneups on my approach. Approach is something that can be easily adapted. It really can. There is a way to be respectful without -- be respectful but still challenge a decision made. There is a

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way to approach a situation diplomatically. You know, it is common and I feel like I need to say this aloud, especially initially, to not want to agitate or push others in the government or systems. Sometimes we want change so bad but then sometimes there is a fear about what will happen if I keep pushing? Will they throw in the towel and not participate? You have to think about and critically think about, you know, what are we weighing here? We do want participation. We need participate

>> Participation. We do. We need to make the assumption that they will not throw in the towel. They are there for a reason. They will help us. They will help us as advocates. They will help victims. It is a way of creating a relationship and trust. As advocates, we are creating relationships all the time. We do that with victims. We have to do do that with victims. There are skills that allow us to be able to do that. We are talking about a group of people that have no reason to trust anybody else. We are able to do that with victims. What skills work there and apply those to engaging in this particular way. I see it connected. You know, is perfectly common to feel uneasy about having to confront an issue. That is true but advocates say the things we must say, even if our voice shakes. We do it in a way that is constructive so we are heard. I really see that as being the role of the blueprint advocate and the coordinator. I think that is definitely tied. Some of those things I say is I will literally use practitioners. I say things like what are we going to do with this? Or I am at a loss. I do not know where to go with this victim feels this way. What do you think? You know? Even if you do not trust the answer they will give you, give it a chance. You might be surprised. Include them and make them feel like they are on an equal level with you and they are, you know, problem solvers with you. This whole judgmental approach, we need to have the assumption -- the blueprint has assumptions and advocates have assumptions when we do CCR work. At the end of the day, everybody wants to do good and

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sometimes they do not know how. Let's help them with the how. That is how I think about it.

>> I think if you make a mistake, particularly a big mistake, sometimes it takes a long time to undo it. Once trust is broken, it can be hard to restore. And so, I think it is important to be thoughtful and taken approach that is open and curious and accepting. One of my colleagues used to say, is sounds touchy-feely but I think it is true. She used to say that you really have to approach this with an open heart. You have to believe and trusting that people want to do well and they are interested in working with you to do well and that carrying that attitude is important.

>> Denise, just something that you said, those things are what advocates already have to do with victims. That curiosity and listening, we have to take those steps and we take those skills and incorporate those into engagement with others. That is constructive. Thank you for saying those things expect that is a segue into our next section when we talk about navigating relationships.

>> We can stick -- dig into this. One of the things that I think has happened is that as advocacy programs have become more and more a part of the community fabric and programs have developed program to program an individual to individual relationships within agencies, you know criminal justice agencies and others, sometimes practitioners develop expectations about what advocates should do or what they want them to do. What those expectations are not met, it can cause problems. We have things happen like as advocacy programs have become more a part of the community fabric of services, you have to find funding to keep your doors open. Oftentimes, we get funding form the agencies that we find ourselves wanting to do work within to try to produce change. That can cause conflicting loyalties where we have to keep the doors open and yet we see things that we think are problematic for the victims we are serving. The raises issues

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about accountability to the lenders and the victims of violence. How do you work that out? What do you think about? How do you manage those expectations?

>> That is a big question. It is an important one to ask. You know, how do advocates push for victim rights without including with the system? How do system workers fulfill mandating duties without causing harm or safety risks. I look at working so hard. We still are loyal to the victim. Honestly, how do you do that? What I can tell you from my experience and the experience of my agency, we are pretty direct. I think that has been received well. Will name what the conflict is. You know, we name it. We engage in a way with an institution that allows them to name their conflict. Again, recognizing they do not match up well so what are we going to do about that together? I know that sounds very general and basic. It is this approach that is important. At the end of the day, what do advocates want? We want the victim and the survivors to be seen, heard, and honored. At the end of the day, the institutions have mandates that they have to follow. And fulfill. What is the best way to do that while we are making sure that victims are represented and voices are heard and honored? It is not easy to do. Quite frankly, even with decision-makers, again, as advocates, we are the best movers and shakers. Okay? We get to do what others are not position to do. I mean we are community-based. We do not work for the system. They may give us money but they give us money to be advocates. For example, it is happened where we received money from the city to do specific things. There is time when the city is mad at us because we will not stop pushing them to do better. And then it is a good reminder to just name it to them. This is what you are giving us money for. You know? I hope that makes sense to people. Again, when loyalties do not match up, looking at, is there an overlap? Is there an overlap that may identify and maybe we can enjoin together and maybe that will impact the conflict. It is a lot of work. It is not easy. As we discussed already, we have to continue as advocates and not stop. Again, we are best positioned to do that

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more than anybody else. We will not show up in court and making an argument in front of the judge and the judge being mad at us and not doing what we want. That his prosecution. You know, we do not have the same risk. Our risk is tied to victim safety but again, if you remember, and remind yourself that really, everybody at the table does want the same thing. They do want victims to be savored. They want offenders to be held accountable. Engaging with that bottom line and bring it back to the table.

>> That is great. And you talk more about what steps you take and expand a little bit more about how you build those relationships. The thinking within my head is how you can really weather more of those challenges if you have the relationship in place. Right? How do you build them?

>> Yes. The diplomatic approach, which I think is critical. This is what I do. I engage. Okay?

>> From a place of being well-informed. I almost approach it as if I am initially not well informed. That sounds silly. This is what I mean. I will start out by saying, will you help me understand something? I am confused about this. Or, would you walk through something with me? You know? How I am approaching it, I am engaging with them to help me work through something. I found that practitioners respond to that. I respond to that when people approach me. You know? Instead of starting out with I would like to know why you made a certain decision. You know? That is one concrete thing that I think I have found. Again as advocates, we are kind of like the ace in the deck. Do you know what I am saying? We are the trump card. You know what I mean? It ends with the advocate. Wide? Because we know what survivors are saying and experience and what victims are saying and experiencing. We do not want to go that route where we are flipping over the card and leaving the room. Right? I found that practitioners are the most responsive to me when I say what victims are experiencing. I name it. You know? I

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do not use, I know this and I know that. I literally, you know, word word is like this is what I am hearing from the victim. Or let me try to explain what the victim told me at about how she feels about this. That is a part of relationship building an important one where you do -- your honoring the victim but at the same time, you are challenging an institution practice or mandates. And then you know what? I always include the individual practitioner, if you will and problem solving. Honestly. If they are telling me they cannot do something, right? I cannot. It is the law. And so on and so forth, I understand. What do you need from me so we can change this? What do we need to do to make it better? Can you tell me your content so I can go to that because that needs to be changed. If you do it in a way -- if you set the tone diplomatically from the beginning, usually I found that they are saying I think it needs to change also. Remember, we make the assumption and have to make the assumption that practitioners want the same thing we do. They want to do a good job. Do you know? Those are specific rings. The other thing I would say in this is being direct. Sometimes you have to work out an issue with the practitioner. You have to be bold and sit down one-on-one and have an off the record conversation to move forward. I have had to do that. I have only found positive results from doing it. Those are specific things with the relationship building.

>> You know, I think those are excellent points in suggestions. You know, the other thing I was thinking of, I think a lot of us sort of mind our own things that work for us also. I mean, people have individual skills and personalities and ways of being in a row and to look for strategies that help them. I think a lot of people use humor. It is important to be careful about that because you do not want to use it at someone's expense. They have to be in on the joke. You cannot do that but Alan was effective at using humor. Sometimes, when I was doing direct advocacy, I would often develop relationships with one or two individuals within an agency that became my go to people. I really had a strong relationship if I had

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a question or was trying to strategize and that is a person that I can have an off the record conversation and they could help advise me or sit down and take something through with me. Anyway. Excellent point. The last point about this constructive engagement role is about working within some kind of collaboration, particular the blueprint for safety and what it means to be engaging in this way within the context of a collaboration or a blueprint kind of response. Talk about that for a little bit.

>> Sure. This is especially one that I've had to develop a lot of skill over the last couple of years. Simply maintaining -- I should say sustaining and enhancing our collaboration in St. Paul, Minnesota. You know, there is always maintenance. If you begin like you are establishing a collaboration or you were trying to maintain one, I do what I can. If we have created a shared vision, I bring us back to the shared vision and rally around the shared philosophy. Do you know? It could be something like I want to start this meeting with what we said eight years ago and we were going to do this together. It could be that simple. I have had to do that. I try to do that. I thought it would be helpful and it was. We know that trust and respect does develop over time. That is true. Always approaching our engagement and maintenance with effective collaboration. You know what? Doing so opens up our possibilities beyond the ability. It is not possible for me -- I cannot arrest a domestic abuser. I cannot do that. But guess what. Within this collaboration, I know a particular law enforcement person who is sitting across from me at the table, I can ask for help. You know? As far as the whole -- you know, there is this maintenance. There are other things that I think are important. What was the community role that was first generated to bring you together at the table other than the shared vision and philosophy? What was the community will at the time? What is it now? If there were changes common name the changes. Be honest and open about it. The other thing as far as establishing a collaboration, bringing specific literature with you. In Minnesota, we have a

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domestic violence homicide report. I will bring that out and whether it is establishing a relationship or continuing one, this is what we are trying to avoid. I bring it to homicide prevention. That is one strategy that I've used that has been effective. You know? And just to say about developing trust and mutual respect, it ties into the last bullet. I tried very hard and advocates -- to make sure I am not assuming that everyone knows what my role is. Not everybody knows what an advocate is. People forget. Even those I worked with for a long time, I have to hear I did not know you did that. Oh but you do this. And both could be wrong. What I am engaging, I am coming to from a place of from the advocacy perspective or as advocates, we do not know what we can do here to increase victim safety. Can you help us? We are constantly solidifying our advocate role and advocate perspective but saying that. Our role is block, block, block. And I think it is a learning opportunity for everybody else and advocates cannot be so -- we cannot have an ego that we should not have to explain ourselves all the time. Whether it's true or not, we want people to do better and we are the best ones to say we need to do better.

>> Thank you, Bree .

>> We want to talk about the second part of this relationship and that is navigating relationships and moving that towards using the relationships that we gathered and developed and leveraging that to create system change. Amalfi , can you take us through that?

>> Yes. Bree, you talked about representing the voice of victims. There are so many different ways that can be done. What we are talking about and what you have shared examples about our, you know, engaging with survivors directly and bring those voices to the system, you know, when you're working with the system and making sure you are breezed representing the survivors. Can you speak to us a little bit about that piece about reaching out to other community-based

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organizations that may not necessarily be service providers but they are representing populations that might be overrepresented or underserved in the criminal legal system? I know you have talked about documenting and writing things down and building up your body of information. Share with us a little bit about why it is important that you might bring other community-based organizations and in the process of representing the voices of victims.

>> Definitely. This is critical. One that is more important than I have seen, you know, in my 20 years of being an advocate, engaging with other organizations and when I say that, I am not talking about domestic violence agencies. Is important. Okay? What we know is that every single victim, they do not call the police. As wonderful and great as AIR is, it will not connect every victim. Right? Not every victim calls the police. Crisis lines, you know? Not every victim calls the crisis line. They do not always seek an order of protection. They go places. They are all over the place. We are all over. Just that alone, we want to connect with organizations and actually rally around topics like what do you see with overrepresentation for example of black men in the criminal legal system? How does that impact the community you serve? What kind of trends have you seen yourself with the trust between, you know, the population you serve and law enforcement or what have you? It is not only learning from them. They learn from advocates because we are bringing him stuff. Also, engaging a whole other base, a whole another, you know, part of your community to help you problem solve, to help you change the world. You know? As I said earlier, we do not experience the world in the same way. We do not. The social reality is, those that are constructed by differences need to be represented and accounted for. You know? One way of doing that is making sure we go outside of our profession, if you will or discipline, I look at it like further inter-agency work in a weird sense. We have 911 and police and we put things together. We also have domestic violence organizations and other community-based organizations looking at things together. I hope that makes sense.

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>> It does. It is important that there is that recognition that we are not all going to experience the world in the same way. Social realities are constructed by differences in different experiences, different traditions and cultures and all of that. To really understand how that is different for different people experiencing abuse is so important as part of what you are saying. You have to know what you are working for. If you are working for change, particularly for those most vulnerable communities impacted by the system, to really know them, you might have to reach out to those in the community working with them and they can help you build your knowledge base in that area. You know, even when I first introduced you, I mentioned how you can be in focus groups and you talked about how focused groups was an important way that women voices were contributing to the development of the blueprint. There is so much more than what you have shared with us today beyond focus groups. You have already talked about establishing an AIR program. A couple of the other tasks that can tangibly be done in this process of system advocacy is going to court and being very vigilant of that experience of going through the court system. There are safety things that can be observed but also how the cases are handled before the -- the prosecution and the victim safety is tracked or monitored within the courtroom but court observation also allows an advocate to see a trend that might appear across different cases. You might go to court with a particular individual when you are providing direct services one-on-one but to see the bigger picture, to see the trends that are occurring across cases, that can be very telling for building the knowledge base and for knowing what you are bringing back to the system. Similarly, whether you are doing the tracking from court observation or you know, tracking back at your desk in terms of keeping track of what is happening with all cases that you know are moving through the system are coming to your agency, the whole idea of looking for those trends across the board, things that you might want to create a new new path for as opposed to

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just helping that individual navigate the system one person at a time. You know, documenting the findings has been talked about today and securing the seat at the table, Bree, how were you able to institutionalize this process of building in these various tasks of the system advocate? How are you able or your organization, institutionalize that process of doing system advocacy work?

>> Quite frankly, you know, for us, it started with victims of domestic violence should not have to leave their Mac homes. What are we going to do about what is happening in our community and work with those that are going into shelter. Then, there was the whole community advocacy approach. Then, that is tied to, you know, the battered women's movement and as we discussed in the beginning, that is not enough. Direct advocacy is not enough. Going beyond focus groups, to me, it is like focus groups are help so that we can learn. Weekday -- they inform. Groups are literally like all of the work is the system advocacy itself. We learn from victims what is happening to them. We learn what would be more helpful to them. We learn all of these different things and then we have to go further. That is the system advocacy peace. It is the moving and the shaking that we have to do. It is not accepting no for an answer. And approach to doing some of the system advocacy paresis, being polite and questioning and I know there is concerns about that weakening our voice but there is all different approaches to do that. It is literally sitting down and saying to a group of people enough is enough. I may say that when I'm talking about system advocacy. I am saying we have had enough. Enough is enough. We need to discuss and do better. It is being that bold. We knew at this agency -- we are for nominal advocates here. The direct services are amazing here. They truly are. That is really why I am here.

>> We cannot be as effective doing image -- advocacy if we are not changing system response. They go hand-in-hand. We saw that. Actually, that was part of

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the reason why the agency was created. We need it good responses and institutionalized and continuing to get better.

>> Thank you, Bree. This is Denise. I am not going to cover the last slide because we got a good question typed in from Diane who is asking about the notion of, you know, I think the effectiveness of our advocacy and having to be cautious and not wanting to ruffle feathers or hurt people's feelings. The differences that women often are faced with in having to have these conversations with systems people than men are. I hope I summarized that okay. This is an important and valid question. One of the things that I often was taking when I was doing direct advocacy was that I was not setting -- not setting out to offend people but I never did it, I was being too cautious. While I think we want to say that all of these strategies are effective strategies for system reforms, sometimes they are not that effective. Sometimes we need additional outside pressure from people. That can happen with advocacy. Sometimes it is the community partnerships that we are developing with people outside of our own kind of programs. Diane, I do not have a super well-developed answer for you except to say that I totally agree with you. I do think that sometimes we can also error on the other side of being too cautious because we are reformers at the very least. Social activist and agitators, you know, at times. You should call me sometime and we can have more conversation about this but I think it is a valid question and a good reminder that it is also possible to be too cautious. Bree or Amalfi, do you have anything to add to this?

>> This is Bree. You are exactly right. Sometimes , it leads to, you know, sometimes it leads to arguments. Sometimes it is being so direct by saying you are doing it wrong or what have you. There is different approaches to different situations. They always have to be adaptive. Always. At that point, that is so right

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on and we need to speak to it. And I'm glad, Denise, you are willing to talk to her more and maybe that can be another webinar.

>> That is at least another webinar, isn't it?

>> [laughter]

>> Amalfi?

>> I do not have anything to add but I think it is a good question. I agreed that it takes us into a deeper level of what we talked about today. Could be very well the next step of this conversation to have an another webinar. With it being 3:31, I want to thank everyone for joining us today and for your time. Thank you so much, Bree, for sharing all of your expertise and really helpful examples of how you have done this work. I want to remind everyone that there is an evaluation link under web links on your platform. Please fill out your evaluation. We use the feedback to make our webinars better. Also under materials, the PowerPoint is available. Thank you for all of your time today and have a good afternoon.

>> [Event Concluded]