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Engaging Men to End Gender-Based Violence

Pheng Thao, ManForward

April 18, 2018

>> Hello everyone. Welcome. On behalf of Praxis and office on violence against women, I welcome you to today's keynote address. As a part of the ALC course, the keynote program explores thought provoking subject matters and encourages advocates to think creatively about how to end gender violence. In the past, we have learned from academics, beauticians, activists and organizers who are working for social change to build a just society and adjust world for that matter. Today, we have an activist and community organizer who is dedicated to approaching the issues of gender-based violence from a different perspective. Today's speaker, Frank Towle, has worked with a strategy of ending violence against women and girls. He is committed to ending gender violence and brings energy and resources to this work. Before I introduce today's discussion, let me remind you of the purpose of the keynote program. The keynote address program occupies an important place in the -- of the advocacy Learning Center. It is designed to inspire our thinking and provide us with information about social change work that is going on all around us. It pushes us to stretch our imagination, develop our analytical skills, and encourages us to take a look at how the advocate builds coalitions and shapes our work. In fact, what we learn from organizers and activists challenges us to do better in our work. Before I introduce today's speaker to you, I am going to ask Liz to help us navigate this wonderful tool that we will be using. Lives, can you talk to us a little about the logistics of this particular slideshow?

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>> Certainly. Thank you. Hello class. Delighted to be with you again. We love keynotes so we are always happy to be able to present one and -- have you join us and be inspired with us. Just the typical reminders that you all are so familiar with. The ways in which we will be able to get your questions and thoughts will be through a Q&A box on your screen. Utilize that throughout the presentation at any time. And Chamita will make a point of getting your questions and comments answered within the presentation. If you are connected by voiceover IP, always remember, if the sound quality becomes unsteady, connect by telephone, trigger speaker volume off and your sound qualities should improve. Remember you can adjust the display boxes on your screen for your preferences and connect with either Patricia our webinar host, or myself if you have any technical issues. With that, Chamita, I will turn the webinar back to you.

>> Thank you. Today's speaker is Frank toe. He is the founder and director of man forward. He works to transform the culture of traditional masculinity and build new practices of brotherhood among men and boys to end gender violence and promote gender equity. Fang will share with us his work and experience. Without any more ado, welcome to thank. Thank toe. -- Fang et al., we are looking forward to hearing from you.

>> Thank you Chamita. Hello everybody. It is good to be with all of you. Today wherever you may be joining us from, I want to start off by sharing a little bit about man forward. Chamita shared about what I do with my background already. I thought it would be important to share some of the history of man forward. We started back in 2010 and it was really because we were doing a call to action. Men and boys, particularly for those who are in the Asian American divinities here in the Twin Cities in Minnesota and wanted them to wake up and

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sort of say, hey, attention to domestic violence and sexual violence that is happening in our communities.

>> After those today conversations that we had, about a group of 10 men gathered together on a Friday for a whole day long. One of the -- they said hey, actually we need spaces like this. It is really important to create spaces like this for Asian American men to get together and have these kinds of conversations about Escalante and manhood and power and relationships with our fathers, relationships with other men. How we were raised. Sort of like our fears, our questions of vulnerability and talking about those things. What that came to be was it helped us create this name man forward. We did not want to say man up, so we said hey, what about man forward. Our mission is really working and engaging men and boys of masculine identities. To create identities and expressions around that so that men and boys cannot be so constricted to a rigid standard idea of what it means to be a masculine and mail in this society or in the community. We hope that it will help lessen the violence in the community or help and it towards women and girls. So that's it in a brief nutshell. This is how we got started. Since then, we have been doing a lot of community-based organizing activities, particularly his -- in the -- community. There is the biggest Southeast -- Southeast Asian population here in this community. Whitley we got folks from the -- community to join our group. We are just starting to venture into work and the -- community. This is particularly around deportation issues. I might address that a little later on.

>> I might address that later, about men who may have committed some crimes, and then being deported back to the country where you were born but not necessarily raised. That is some of the issues that we work on. Again, this group is all volunteer. Who we engage with in our group, we want to say we engage with

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those who are impacted and those are mostly men who have been impacted by the justice system they may have made bad choices in their life and wanted take a different path now that's -- that's one group of men we work with. The other group we work with our [NULL] men. We have where men's group within Man Forward and then we have a trend men's group within Man Forward as well. They organize themselves but some of the leaders who are hosting our parts that are part of Man Forward as well.

>> We have a young man's group called Sun Rice and that started about a year ago. We do yearly retreats with boys and with the man as well.

>> What is it that we do? The question is really we want to be thinking about, what are we helping them do? Man Forward we want to help men get a good gender analysis. Here is a quote I thought was really good from the men's resource international report. I thought that this quote summarizes pretty much what Man Forward encompasses in terms of why we engage the men and boys in our community. It is really for them to understand the root causes of violence through the lens of women and girls and [NULL] folks. And understand that you don't necessarily have to be engaged in this work and engage in this work to be committed to ending this type of violence and our community. Whatever the their goals are in life, that they have a good gender analysis, the issues of -- that are impacting the lives of women, girls, [NULL] and trans folks. That's what we are engaging them on and deepening their understanding. It's not just about awareness building. I think that will be one of the pieces I will talk about later on, is that we want to go to the part where we can actually change the behaviors of these men, change the thinking, change the way they use their language about how they associate and have relationships with women and girl's -- girls and [NULL] folks.

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>> Is not actually a lot of men who are in our community there are being paid to do this work.

>> I have a question here. You said something that is interesting to me. You said a systemic gender analysis. Would you elaborate on that? What does that mean?

>> Yes. I think for us, the way we can define it is like what are actually the practices? What are the practices embedded in those systems that hold women and girls back? I think the other part of it is for us, because we do our work and some very specific ways, because of the push to assimilate and the push to culture rate, men or young boys and young men in our community tend to think that, especially the -- culture that is really bad and that treat women this way and treat girls this way. In actuality, helping them pull that apart, we actually get them to see that it's the system of the -- that is embedded that promotes these practices. There is victim laming or women being pushed to go back to the person who was abusing them or the women who were have experienced sexual violence being forced to marry the person who [NULL] them . I don't know if that gives some idea of what I mean by that idea of systemic analysis.

>> Yes it does. I also want to invite all the listeners today that if you have questions, please go to the chat box and write it in. I know Liz is keeping an eye on it and we will ask Frank and others. We will all try to respond to it please do right in your comments and questions

>>> I think what we really need to think it is at what point can we really engage men? There are three parts it can be broken into. In our activities and in our strategies, if we were to really engage men and a strategy to end violence, whatever that gender-based violence looks like, at one point should be due the

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engagement? Obviously, you have intervention programs that engage with men after the violence has happened. They get sent to -- programs. That's the after part. After they have been found guilty through the courts. Their partner and say hey, you need to go to this program because you are making choices that are hurtful towards the family. So it is like after the incident has happened or the harm has been done.

>> The other part of it is the right before parts, which is what we see in terms of a lot of bystander intervention, that we see in awareness campaigns. We see right before or during the incident, is getting somebody to intervene, getting the men to intervene, stop their friends from behaving the way they're going to behave. A colleague of mine said that she was talking to her partner about it, and about all these issues, and one day her partner was attending a birthday card -- a bachelor party and then the men were talking about maybe going to the strip club and what's night -- and whatnot. And he was able to shift the conversation and suggest they do something else. That's an example of right before or during the incident, is like being able to engage men at that point.

>> The other part is really well ahead. That is the part I am talking about here. Man Forward is working on that part. We are engaging them before anything happens. We are engaging them because, even if they don't believe that they are being harmful, we are engaging them in the community. We are helping and supporting their processes and understanding themselves and the relationships they have with women and girls and [NULL] folks in the community. So that is the well before parts, and that actually is -- it goes beyond the education for us and the awareness of building. We do trainings and community conversations that we host, we host quarterly community conversations. The last one we had three eggs that three weeks ago was about men who were formerly incarcerated and how

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we can help those men. Also understanding that you may be the one sitting in jail or in prison because of the choice you made. But your family is being taken care of by your partner or your wife or mom, and they are the ones who are coming to visit you in the present, or they are the ones sending you money. For the essence of the men who -- I was talking to you all about who are deported, it is the men who are working here and sending money back to them once they have been deported. So the family here, which is particularly the women and the girls here, the that's right they are sending money back to them so they can survive in a country they don't even know. So that is the part, the well before, where we are moving beyond.. We are moving beyond the awareness and we are going into looking and saying hey, how can we help you change the way you think about women and girls? How do we change the way in which you are thinking about your relationship with women and girls?

>> I think that there are many organizations that do the bystander intervention. There are many organizations that do the awareness and education piece. There are organizations that do the batterer intervention programs. So they are at all different levels. For us that Man Forward, we are intentional about where men are at and being able to ensure that we are engaging all parts of it and not only just one piece of it. Obviously, that comes in with people's capacity and the organization's capacity and what you could actually do. So I think part of that is being able to really ask us these critical questions, if we are going to take this on a do it. Like who was actually going to be holding the strategies? Are they only go to be held by one person? Does the organization have any commitment to what?

>> Frank. I'm going to stop here.

>> I wanted to ask a question before we move to the next topic. One of the things I saw in the previous slide, Man Forward is working and really trying to affect

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deep changes, deep social changes, right? You are trying to change the whole mess, and socialization. That is a deep social change you are progressing on. One of the things -- I have done a little bit here and have looked at research in this area. One of the things that has come up, particularly with young men, teenagers, is trying to assert their masculinity. For the first time they are becoming man. There is so much, and one of the things in this research it tells us there is so much pressure on them to fall into this quote unquote man or male thing. I don't know how to put it. They have to assert themselves. I'm a man now. So there is an identity that they are trying to assert. There is so much peer pressure on them to do that. Anybody who is transgressing from that align or not towing that particular definition of masculinity gets harassed, and in fact, there is a lot of aggression on them also. How do you engage young men where they are actually challenging and learning new ways of becoming man? Why is there this larger society that is forcing them into a particular line of masculinity? Please give us your thoughts on it.

>> That's a great question. It's one of those questions where it comes down to, I said they that's what I should say a couple of things. It comes down to power and privilege, for me at least. Men and boys are socialized to be really constructed to these rigid ideas speak even if if you see that women and girls have changed over the years and it is more acceptable in terms of the way that they behave. But the ways that men and boys are supposed to express their masculinity is supposed to be into the these rigid ideas that you were talking about. And there are consequences to that if they step outside of that copying label to feminine or gay. So the home of Desmond the homophobia piece comes out. It's important for us to create peer support spaces where -- the men and the boys and the masculine folks who are committed to what we are talking about here to help me shape what it means to be a man and to express masculinity in the world without the

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pilots, without the aggression and domination, that they can come to that group and that space to draw support from. So the men and boys will be who are engaged in Man Forward are engaged in those spaces when we meet monthly. The relationships that we have with each other and the intimate relationships that we build and in the way in which we organize when we are working together and in the retreat spaces. So it is a series of building intimate connections and relationships. In that, it helps these young men push the edges a little bit in terms of expressing themselves and the way that back in the way that they want to, knowing that they are not crazy or they are not the only one. There are other men actually supporting them and standing behind in them. They know that they can keep drawing support from this group of people who is actually supporting that trajectory of where they are going. They feel that they can take more risks. They feel that they can actually challenge the rigidity of masculinity a little bit more and not feel -- and feel like they do have consequences. They can actually go and process with somebody else and have a conversation with this person.

>> That is a part that it seems sometimes that if we cannot create these spaces that where men and boys can feel supported, some other men and other boys who also have masculine identities, then it will be hard for them to make and take those risks that you are talking about because they will feel like they are alone. They will revert back quickly to. They will go back to what is easier. They will go back to the default. So it keeps them accountable. It keeps them responsible. It creates the conditions for accountability to take shape and responsibility to take shape as well.

>> Thank you so much. I am sorry if I am interrupting you.

>> It helps. It helps because those are really critical questions. Sometimes that is why we don't see change happening so much. I was talking about going beyond --

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the events. Going beyond education. Going beyond conferences. They have the tools but they need guidance in the doing part of it and they need to be able to bounce ideas off of other men to say oh, this is how you dealt with that situation. So even -- this will be the funniest thing from some of you, as well as that -- one of the organizers in Man Forward, he was very young when he came to Man Forward. He was about 21 of 20 to and he is about 26 or 27 right now. He said at that time when I came to Man Forward I understood gender equity and I wanted to make sure this was not happening in our community. With everything you said did not make sense at all and I thought you were crazy. Even though he understood all those things, but he was just like, what are you talking about? What did you say we can only do these things? What did you say we cannot do these things? Even for the men who are well-meaning and have an understanding about gender equity, their understanding is still very surface level. So it is very important to create these spaces. We have to uncover all of these layers. Even this one young guy, he was talking to me and he -- he was like, oh my God, does that mean that I cannot feel like I can't have a desire to have sex?

>> Does a couple things here that we have to unpack. Just because it's not legally wrong does not mean that he didn't commit any harm. That's one thing. The other thing is it's not saying that men cannot want sex and asked for that. But it would be okay if it is rejected. Will you learn how to actually --

>> He said I understand all of this, I understand equity. In this me to movement in me to moment in our country, it is really a lot of confusion that men are -- experiencing and there are a lot of fears men are having. Men who have not been convicted by the courts and have not done any harm, men who say and think that they have good intentions and believe that they do have good intentions and good actions, they are unsure. It's like, can we hug a woman now or should we

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not? What actions can I do? There are a lot of those actions happening. But those conversations don't happen easily in public spaces like at a bar. It doesn't happen. We have this one group that just started in Northeast Minneapolis, and it is mostly white men going to that group some of the men who came to that meeting were like,, I actually had to make up something so I can come and have this conversation. Again, -- these are the places. I think the other part of it is really getting men to be owning their vulnerabilities and their fears learning how to live with those fears and those vulnerabilities. That is the space we try to create in Man Forward. If we can get them to that place, and other men can accept them, then they are much more apt to start healing quote unquote from those places as well and undo some of that socialization.

>> Thank you very much.

>> You're welcome. Feel free to eat -- keep asking me questions and I won't feel like I'm talking by myself.

>> Yes, thank you, I will.

>> And I would invite to the audience to participate. Asked me questions that you are pondering about. Questions like how do you do that if you only work 9-to-5? What I'm talking about isn't done 9-to-5. It's really not the work I'm talking about here. It's about building a community of men. It is about building a group of men who are connected and this is the part where I always say it is a foundation of people who fund our work, will we get the opportunity to be funded, I say to them, what you don't actually track as you don't track the 10:00 phone calls I get at night when this young gentleman is so placed off, and the choice of committing harm is such a low bearing fruit and he sees it right in front of his eyes. Those are moments where that is the integral meaning. Those are important places and us

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doing those work, it does not necessarily fit our 9-to-5 schedule. I'm not asking all of you to do that in any way either, but I think it is important for us to be thinking about the kind of relationships and the kinds of communities that we want to build. The kind of change that we really want to make. Sometimes it is a hard balance between going to meetings during the day and then keeping these relationships going. It is hard because sometimes it feels like a tug-of-war. Part of it is if we can really build relationships that are sustainable relationships, relationships that are meaningful, then it helps sustain us. The other part is being able to draw good boundaries for yourself that are flexible as well. You, take the time to actually care for your own well-being. Take care of your own here lean your own healing and your own trauma. This is the part where I think it is sometimes hard, navigating those roles and boundaries. C-- going on that going back to where I left off, some of these are questions that are critical questions. Another critical question is who will be doing it? What will be in engagement look like? I was joking with Jimmy to earlier, like why are we worrying about all these issues? You all could just imagine that that is what happening at this moment. Joking aside, these are some questions that you ought to consider or if you are just thinking about wanting to engage men and boys. What does that really mean? These are some of the things that are important to do. Even for those who are doing it already, it is important to think about how are we doing this. Why are we continuing to do this? Why do we believe it is important? Has it been fully embedded in our institution or organization? Do we still have battles in the organization? We have seen that. We have seen it in organizations where they would hire men to do the work and they have not fully figured it out yet. The organization does not fully support it all the way. So these are conversations we must have in the organization because man could do a lot of good but they can also do a lot of damage as well, once they come into the organization. For us in

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Man Forward, one of the critical questions for us to ask is what if women and girls and feminine folks want to join Man Forward? What do we do? We have always been open to that idea but we haven't explored how to do it. We were saying once they come in we will just see what happens we know we need to be transparent about our work. We know those are the folks we need to be accountable to and we want them to witness our work and be a part of that work and give input. How do we navigate those relationships? How do we navigate those moments of tensions? Or if this is a mail only devastation, what do we do? Our feminine folks and women and girls, are they able to be in that space? It changes. We know that the presence of other genders into a homogeneous gender group changes the conversation in different ways. That's one of the pieces we have struggled through.

>> Some women and girls really like what we are doing and want to be a part of it. We will see how it goes. We have always been intentional about making sure the work we do is always paralleling the work that the women and girls do in our community. We are always making sure we are partnering with them. We are partnering in workshops as well. An example is last year, we went -- and 2016, we hosted the first -- we brought them to Thailand and we talk to them about domestic and sexual violence. There were only five men who were invited and three of those were from our group already. One guy voice from France.

>>> One guy was from France. -- We also knew that because of the voice that he had in the community and because his privilege in the community as a male person, his story would be the dominant story of what happened and what took place.

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>> What does this really look like? Where do we start and how do we get more concrete and how do we get more specific? What do you talk about when you talk about these conversations? How do we do that? Part of it is being able to think about these are not just conversations. It is a matter of how we design these conversations to prevent domestic or sexual violence. It is really important. We have to be strategic about designing these conversations. Sometimes people will think that it is just people having a conversation and that is going to make a change? But there is a relationship that is being built. So we have to understand what is our plan and where are we going to do this and who are we going to do this with and how and when are we going to do this. Is being able to think about the quality of relationships that we want to build with these men. Having deep intimate relationships and creating space where men can have this. One of the ways in which the benefit of living in a collective community is that home is the center of place of how people build relationships. Our conversations are designed to be done at somebody's home. So they come to my house or one of the men will invite us to their house. There will be a meal there. Weather they could get ahead of time or they invite us to cook it with them. And then we have conversations. Are conversations are about our relationships and our feels and responsibilities within those relationships. How are we honoring ourselves and honoring the women and girls and [NULL] folks in our lives. So it is getting them to slow down. They think that this is -- it is really getting them to slow down and reflect. You are building spaces where men can process. Men are so oriented towards go, go, go all the time. So it's what's next? And battered intervention programs, the facilitators would often hear the men say, she is just yakking all the time and she is -- I am just quiet and she is yakking all the time. We talked to the men about that, that you are not actually listening at that moment. You need to pay attention. And these spaces, it is about getting them to slow down. It is about

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getting them to be reflective of their patterns and their behavior and their habits. And other men get to call those things out. Last month, you reported this to us. This month, you reported this. There is a contradiction here, right? Or how did you reconcile that difference? If there is a gap in the way they are telling about the relationships they are having. It is important that we do those things. We talk about harm that we have created and we have committed, the harms that we have committed in our own lives. It is important for us to talk about the ways in which we have attributed or have caused harm to women and girls in our lives. It brings a sense of building communities, if we are able to do that and get to those spaces, to have these conversations.

>> This is the point where I was talking about earlier. These conversations and spaces need to be very visible. We don't often see these spaces visible in communities. The way that men usually meet up and talk is at the bars. May be at family gatherings.

>> We want to go beyond those kinds of conversations. We want when -- meant to show up with their whole cells and we will accept them as their whole selves. That is why it is important for us in Man Forward to build a visible community space where men are having these conversations visibly. That group I was talking to you about in Northeast Minneapolis, they meet in a very visible space. There is another group of gentlemen that I met who have a group that meets on the west side of St. Paul monthly as well that just started not too long ago. It is visible. We need more visible support spaces where men can actually feel like oh, these conversations are actually happening? Men can talk about their places of fear and vulnerability? It's okay that we have those conversations and community and in family with each other, right?

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>> I have a question. Have you been successful in bringing people together from different classes?

>> I would say that, I think we have. The short answer is we have. The long answer is, in the community, there is a small percentage that is in the upper class. In the -- the mud -- about 85% of the community the Hmong community are still in poverty. That is why we don't talk about class as much. But we do talk about other men -- other men that are privileged and have higher paying jobs, they do come into our spaces and have conversations with us. We leverage that privilege in different ways, and it tends to be true asking them to donate or to support us financially so that we can continue to do the work. We have them support us in that way. I think that is a little bit of a challenge.

>> I was going to ask you about the cross culture space, but I will wait until you come to that. Again, I want to remind everyone that you do have a chat box open. Please feel free to chat in your questions or comments. Thank you. Please go ahead.

>> Can I have a time check?

>> You have about 20 minutes more.

>> Okay, great. Thank you. I want to go back to this slide this is an important point all that I have been talking about, all of you have been hearing me talk about relationship, relationship, relationship, and that's really hard to do. Over the years, I have come to understand that that has been our mode of how we organize in community. There is often a push and a pole around relationships and getting hundreds of men to show up. We need that to. We definitely need that as well. It is important for us in our planning, and then in our engagement, to understand that what are the spaces we can create that can bring hundreds of

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men, but what spaces can we create so men are not just checking off the lists. They have to start somewhere. How do we do activities and engagement strategies that actually engage men where they are at at the moment? Whether that is just the walk a mile in their shoe -- that or whether it is getting them to rally to the capital for women's action day. Lobbying day or the spaces that we are organizing. A long period of time in Man Forward, we did just the quality. Focusing on relationships and focusing on building connections. We still do that we want to go to this place where we have more impact, of reaching larger audiences. We have been doing that through our workshops and trainings on college emphasis. But we want to reach further out. How do we use our platform on social media and Facebook to do that? How do we design conversations on that platform to reach a wider group of men? These are to things that we have to go parallel to each other and that we should not do one without the other. Obviously, it goes back to capacity and it goes back to who does what at what moment. What makes sense? What activity makes sense at what moment? Is it in education events that

>>> Is it an education event where we bring hundreds of men together? Or is it an event where only 10 men show up at a gathering car to have a conversation about building relationships. If five men moved forward with this, we count that as success. This is about planting seeds for the next generation to help us keep to and these things.

>> Some change takes hundreds of years to end. That is why I put polity versus quantity, is for us to focus on both and not to pick one over the other. This is a question around class, is for men of color in particular, in terms of what we have known and seen, when I first started out in this work. When I first started in this

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work as the for -- only Southeast Asian man, and in Hmong particular the only man. It was difficult to share all these things. How do I do these things? I don't know where I should go and who I should go to. I happen to go through reaching out and connecting with people there there was this group called 100 men take a stand. It was black men meeting every month talking about domestic and sexual violence in their community. They came from all walks of life. They were old, they were young. I went and met with the person that was coordinating and hosting and facilitating that group. He and I met for breakfast but we did not order breakfast. We did not order anything except water. At the end of the meeting, what he said was he was glad he actually connected with me. He was like, I thought I was just going to come in here and I was desperate we were going to talk quickly and I would leave. That's what I did in order breakfast. That is what he said to me. But he found out that he genuinely wanted to do this work and engage in the community in ways that were vulnerable. He invited me to go and sit with his community. Every month I went and sat with black men in North Minneapolis and heard their conversations around domestic violence, sexual violence, around racism, around violence. About incarceration, the mass incarceration of black men. And as a guest in the community and in that space, I did not talk much. I made myself invisible because he had to vouch for me to be there. He had to vouch for me, and so I did not want my presence to impact the conversation. I quite -- I tried to be as quiet and invisible as I can. In that looking back, I also had to work now, during that time I didn't know this, but looking back in hindsight, it was also me working on my own anti-blackness in that part. Like, I was taught to fear black men. I was taught that black men were dangerous. I was socialized in all those ways. That I was sitting with them, and being invisible was helping me to slow myself down in that way. To take away those biases myself. To take away the way I was taught to view Batman. -- Black men. So when I was able

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to work through all of that, I was able to see that black men were beautiful. They were brilliant. They were geniuses. They cared for their community. They cared for the woman they were in relationship with. They cared for their brothers in the community. They were great dads. To all this popped up. -- All of this worked on my biases. This is an important factor. When we think about how we engage with men outside of our communities and considering and thinking of that. Particularly if they are men of color, you think about those things. With being men of color, we struggle with those things. An example of that is, what are you talking about? An example is three months ago, there was a domestic violence situation. It started as a domestic violence situation and ended up being a police put polity situation because the man was killed. He was under the influence. He had to doctors in the home. That's what he had to daughters in the home he and his wife had an argument. He had a gun. The police were called. He ran out of the home. He eventually got killed by the police. It community, people were like oh my gosh, this is another police brutality situation.

>> There were community activists and organizers in the community who were like, we need to hold a candlelight vigil for him we need to make the police know that they cannot be doing this in our community. But nowhere in that conversation to anybody talk about the domestic violence. Nowhere in that conversation did any talk about, what about justice for her? Nowhere in that conversation to anybody talk about the impact of that violence on his wife and daughters who were in the home. Nobody was going to hold a candlelight vigil for her. When we live in communities of color and there are these tensions of race and gender, that is a moment where it we can go against each other. Race and gender can go against each other. Race often wins work the strike. -- Let's make sure that the voice of the survivor and the victim gets hurt as well. I was very vocal about that. But they still only did the candlelight vigil for him and forgot

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about her. This is a part where men of color in particular, this is sort of the justice position that they have to constantly battle between race and gender.

>> For communities of colors that is the part we have to always be pushing. We have to push the community to pay attention to the violence that is happening to women and girls as well. We have to make sure and pay attention to the way that race impacts. Sometimes it is not, and people do not get on the gender train even men who understand gender equity. They don't get on that train easily as well. It was funny because I was talking to someone a couple of years ago. He was a white man and had been doing this work preliminary a very long time. He was saying, it seems like in mainstream America this seems to be more attention paid to gender rather than race. It's sort of the opposite a communities of color, where it seems to be more attention paid to race rather than the issues of gender. I said, yeah, that might be true. But part of what I'm saying is even though those things might be true, you need to pay attention to those tensions. Whether it be class, disability, race, gender. When he to be looking at these all the time. Will yes, you may face classes of because you are a poor person but this -- let's look at it through a gender lens. What does that look like for women that are poor and kids in the community? What does that look like as well? That is what I am talking about here.

>> I have a question that came in. It is about crossgenerational organizing. Is it successful in the way you are working? Not cross but multi-generational engagement strategies?

>> There has been a challenge for us a little bit. Part of that barrier is because of the way in which our community is structured is very hierarchical in which there is a certain setting and a certain position or role that men play, depending on where they are in their lifespan. It has been hard for us to get older men to sit with

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younger men. Not only is it those barriers that I just talked about, there is a barrier of honor and respecting your elders and not challenging your elders. But there is also a language barrier as well. Some of the young men that we engage cannot even speak Hmong fluently. And if they can speak the language, how did they talk about it? We haven't done very well in being able to connect those to groups. I know for the men who come to my program, they are much older and I am often the longer one that the younger one who was educating them. I am sort of seen as the teacher, and so there is more respect in that way.

>> We talk about these issues. It has helped me. But it is a little bit harder because the young men in our community have to overcome the disrespect part, like feeling that they will be disrespecting their elders because of expressing who they are. Men who they may address as father figures in the community, that is harder for us and a little more challenging and we have not been able to think how we can do this in a way that feels good.

>> Thank you.

>> I think we are able to see it when we build cross-cultural spaces. It seems that somehow those spaces get people to different places. I don't know. Maybe it's because people throw those barriers out. Like the black man's space I was telling you about. There was actually no young man that no young men there. It was generally older black men that came to that group to have the conversation. When we build cross-cultural spaces, it is a different story. We actually see men from all ages and backgrounds coming together and having conversations. The other part of my time, in my life, I run this network called the men and masculine folks network which is a collaborative organization. They are individuals who are invested and are wanting to do engagement as a strategy work to end gender-based violence. You could see the local there. The colors are -- from the

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indigenous community. We asked them if we could use those colors for our logo. You can see the judge assigned in the middle there. You can see the bubble for the conversation. This is more of a cross-cultural space. Building cross-cultural spaces, it is important to not try to dictate, like how these issues are supposed to be talked about there are so many nuances that if anything I have learned in being in different communities and seeing how they talk about these issues, it is so different in each community of how they talk about these issues about sexual violence. And one community, we don't say domestic or sexual violence often. There is no literal translation for that so we have to explain it in a way in which people understand it in our community. It's I think it's important to build costs -- cross-cultural spaces. Paid the check paying attention to those nuances does not mean we have to be the ones who know about those nuances. It just means we have created spaces where people feel they can bring those nuances up. It's not just one story about how sexual are domestic violence looks like. But it's a multicultural story of how domestic violence manifests in the community.

>> I think that this is the part where it is important to be very broad about the way in which we talk about domestic violence. Beat broad about the way we talk about sexual violence. One of the ways in which we did that is that we just wrote the word patriarchy, just wrote the word domestic violence, on a board. We did an association to those words. What do you think of when you hear or see these words? It was important for us in this network to also create spaces where men of color can also have conversations among themselves that white men can have conversations among themselves. And it was important to separate out further, that men who associate as being gay or [NULL], that those men have conversations among themselves. It is very important that we hold space and comfortability. This network exists to support strategies that are happening in community. Prevention strategies that are happening and looking at those

This project is supported by grant #2015-TA-AX-K004 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U. S. Department of Justice.

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different strategies and start connecting them together so we can have a more important impact in the community. Is about sharing those nuances. This coming year what we are doing is a series on statewide -- on sexual violence. We're going to different communities and asking men in those communities what sexual violence looks like and what are the ways we can prevent sexual violence. Then it will be shown to other communities. We can get men from other communities to understand and learn how they can -- would sexual violence happens and that community. Do you have a question about building cross-cultural spaces?

>> I do have one but one of the things I was curious about is the success of the group. Can you address how long, say if men are going to a program, and they are there and they have a conversation and they are thinking about it, but they also go out in the real world, right? Have you seen and watch them? Is the change permanent is what I am trying to ask, or do they revert back to their own -- old thinking.

>> At Man Forward, we try to maintain an open relationship. There is no beginning or end date in terms of their engagement with us. We do not actually have a set curriculum. There are tons of curriculums out there, engaging men, which is happening out there which is really great. But part of what of where looking for him Man Forward is building long-term relationships. We see more success when men stick with it and when the men are consistently engaging with each other and having those support spaces. We see more success and more permanent changes. Left success happens when men are just -- they get it and understand it, but then they don't have the support basically. In my domestic violence group, they stay with us for about six or seven months because it is a minimum of 24 sessions. Some of them will revert back to their old ways quickly because they are no longer in the space with us. So those are the spaces that I am

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talking about. The shorter timeframe once, and if the engagement is shorter and the men are not able to build and find faces for support, then the change will be less permanent.

>>

>> I am glad you said will change, because a lot of times what ends up happening is they learn the language but you don't end up seeing actual behavioral changes work it is really great that that is what you are singing. It cannot be easy work. It must be so hard.

>> Yeah, because it is like what I said earlier. I had this one young man who I was coaching for a while and he was really upset. We talked about it. His sister was involved and was being harmed by his brother in law. He goes, I don't know what I'm going to do. We had several codes -- phone calls. One day he called me, and said I want to beat him up. I said okay, let's talk about why that came about and why do you think that is the best choice to do. The behavior change is really important.

>> I talked a lot about this part. A lot about how we do our engagement strategy. This is what it is really about. About creating mail peer spaces. Being able to retreat we do a lot of workshops on college campuses and a lot of trainings as well. These are some of the things that our men have participated in. I wanted to share with you. The first video, if any of you want to watch it, it is a good video about all the things I talked about. It speaks to a lot of what we talk about. The rigidity of how men are supposed to be and how they can break out of that as well. The other to are just done in our campaigns. Those are all the materials that I have.

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>> It was extremely thought-provoking. I'm thinking about what hard work you are doing. This is such a fundamental change in society. As I said before, it is such deep change that you are working on, that it cannot be an easy job. I want to thank you thank you for this amazing work. Sherry your experience with all of us. Even if we are not working with men directly, men are always there in our lives. As advocates, we have to intervene often. This really helps us see things through. What was very interesting for me is your example of organizing against -- against different barriers and across cultural barriers. I think you for Sherry your work with us. Is there any last thing you want to say?

>> I appreciate everybody for listening. I hope that all of you got something out of it. There were a lot of concepts that I shared. I hope that I was specific enough to give you something to think through it a little more and to help you push forward and think about what does it really take to help gender-based violence. It is critically needed. I wish you all the best. I am always open for consultation, so feel free to email or call me for consultation if you have anything you are wondering about.

>> Thank you so much. If you have any questions later on, if you think of questions, please send it to Praxis and we will send it to Frank and get back to you. Thank you for joining us for today's keynote address. The next keynote will be on July 18. We will have another exciting speaker for you take you for joining us today. This was wonderful. Thank you again. I cannot thank you enough for your vision and the wonderful work you are doing. Liz, do you have anything to say?

>> I do not, other than thank you.

>> Thank you very much. Goodbye. [Event