



Tools to Build African Australian & CaLD Men as Leaders in the Prevention of Domestic Violence Project

WORKSHOP: HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS (Refer to Fact Sheet: Healthy versus Unhealthy Relationships)

Participants: Mixed or single sex

Total time: 60 minutes in total

Materials:

- Large pieces of paper and felt pens.
- Paper and pens for each participant.
- A flip chart or white board
- Masking tape or blue tack

Introduce members of the group to each other and provide an overview of the workshop.

Activity 1: My ideal partner 40 minutes

Step 1. Divide the large group into smaller groups of about five people each.

- If there are both women and men in the workshop, divide the groups by gender so that participants are working in same-sex groups.
- If there are only one or two women, have some men join this group and take part in the discussion as if they were women.
- If there are no women in the workshop, ask one of the groups of men to do the activity as if they were women.

Step 2.

- Give each participant a piece of paper and a pencil or pen.
- Ask each participant to write on a piece of paper all of the qualities they would want in their ideal partner. Let them write as many possible qualities as they can for five minutes.
- Check in with the groups as they write their responses, and make suggestions (concrete examples of qualities) when they get off track.
- If participants are only listing physical characteristics, encourage them to think about other qualities that they would want in a partner.

Step 3.

- When time is up, ask participants to share with each other in their small groups what they have written.
- Tell each small group to decide what they think the three most important qualities are and to write these in large writing on a large piece of paper with a bold felt pen.
- When the groups have finished, ask each group to stick their large paper list on the wall for everyone to see and then to present their list to the rest of the participants.

Step 4:

After each group has presented its list, discuss the activity using the following questions:

- How similar are the qualities of the ideal partners as defined by the different small groups?
- What are the similarities and differences between what women and the men want in their ideal partner?
- How equal are the roles of men and women in relationships? If unequal, is this fair?
- How well/badly do you think men and women communicate with each other about what they want from a relationship?
- What do you think women and men need to do differently in order to be able to let each other know what they want from each other in a relationship?

Step 4. Ask the group for any suggestions for action to support women and men in forming and maintaining better relationships.

Activity 2: Ingredients of a healthy relationship

20 minutes

Ask participants what they understand by the term 'healthy relationship'. Make a list of their suggestions on a whiteboard or flipchart.

Use the points below and the Fact Sheet on 'Healthy versus Unhealthy Relationships' to guide discussion.

In a healthy intimate relationship between two people, both people feel supported and connected, but they still feel like independent people.

Both people:

- treat each other with respect
- feel supported to do the things they like
- don't criticise each other
- allow each other to spend separate and together time with friends and family
- listen to each other and compromise
- share some interests such as sports, dancing or music
- are free to have separate interests
- aren't afraid to share their thoughts and feelings
- aren't afraid to differ or engage in conflict
- celebrate each other's successes
- respect each other's boundaries

- trust each other and don't require their partner to 'check in'
- don't pressure the other to do things that they don't want to do
- don't constantly accuse each other of flirting, cheating or being unfaithful.

Facilitator notes:

There are two essential ingredients for healthy relationships

- 1. Respectful, open communication:** This requires them to listen to each other and talk openly with each other, without fear of being criticised or judged, so they can feel heard, understood and accepted when they express their thoughts and feelings.
- 2. Setting boundaries:** There are two separate people in a relationship and it is important that they have their individual and joint needs met. Each person should be able to express to their partner what they are and are not comfortable with, especially when it comes to their emotional needs, sex life, money and property, family and friends, personal space, and their separate interests and needs.