

Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Mistreatment and Abuse of Adults by Adults

Suggestions for Ways to Explore and Understand the Policy

- ***Within Groups***

1. Watch part of a current, maybe controversial, film, or record an episode of a “soap” such as “Eastenders” or “Coronation Street”, and discuss the issues around mistreatment that may be demonstrated.
2. Read part of a book such as “Families and How to Survive Them” by John Cleese and Robin Skinner, or “Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus” by John Gray, and discuss what is written. Other books are listed at the end.
3. Use a well known novel, such as those by Jane Austen or Joanna Trollope, to find a theme which shows how people can hurt others, whilst apparently behaving in a conventionally polite way.
4. The group members may like to draw a picture on a roll of paper illustrating own experiences: this would be displayed but not necessarily talked about.
5. Using magazines, find pictures of groups of people and try and understand how each person in the group might be feeling, by their expression or the way they are standing or sitting.

- ***For Individuals or Couples***

1. Gain greater understanding of the subject through reading parts of “The Inner Voice of Love” by Henri Nouwen or “Healing Emotional Wounds” by David Bonner. “Sex in the Forbidden Zone” by Peter Rutter is uncomfortable but important in understanding how power can corrupt.
2. Meditation or contemplation on the “The Prophet” by Kahlil Gilbran or Bible texts as suggested elsewhere or “The Little Book of the Dali Lama”.
3. Read John Betjeman poetry and look for humour which nevertheless shows dark feelings or write a poem on the subject of relationships and friendships.
4. Other study books that will repay reading, even if only dipping into, are “Childhood and Society” by Erikson, “Sexual Behaviour in Britain” by Kaye Wellings, “Games People Play” by Eric Berne and almost anything by Michael Jacobs, Dorothy Rowe and Anthony Storr.
5. Novelists who often have much to offer in different views of relationships are Maeve Binchey, Alison Pearson, Joanna Harris and many of the earlier classics.

The Discussion Questions attached to the original papers provide another way of starting to ask oneself and others how we might know if we are treating people well, and, most importantly, how others see us. If group discussion seems exposing, then split up into twos and threes. Just ten minutes of this each time the group meets can enable consistent understanding. Each person needs to have a choice about any of the above. It is not necessary to agree with what you read for it to be useful.