

Principles of **Bystander** Intervention

We recognize that we are dealing with an unfamiliar situation with people we don't know. This means that direct confrontation of an attacker by us **as bystanders** is not the best way to respond.

We want to show moral courage:

- by acting from a centered place despite our fears
- by choosing principles over emotion (anxiety, anger, self-righteousness)

We want to engage in de-escalation:

- by limiting the ability of a situation to become more intense
- by reducing the drama in the situation

We want to shift the attention in the situation:

- by interacting as much as we can only with the targeted person
- by ignoring the attacker (freeze them out, even if they escalate verbally)
- by creating a safer space for the targeted person
- by bringing in other people for additional support and varied responses

We want to reach out to the targeted person:

- by being present as an ally
- by not taking away the ability of the targeted person to respond
- by asking if they want our help
- by asking before we touch them
- by asking how we can best help them
- by offering possible solutions (that the targeted person may reject)
- by offering emotional support and empathy (befriending/connect)

Each of these principles will be used in our training in response to a variety of scenarios. **REMEMBER:** you are there in solidarity, not as a savior!

Don't worry that you won't remember exactly the right thing to do -- think of this as improv around the principles we laid out. That way you will be adaptable to a situation no matter how it changes.

But you should think about whether you are actually ready to step into a dynamic situation that involves strong emotions where things can change quickly. We hope this training will prepare you for some scenarios, but it can't prepare you for everything you might encounter.