

Social Movement Victories

We can feel overwhelmed when we consider the enormous change required to end violence against women. How can each of us actually make a difference? WCADV developed a brief exercise to take a fresh look at how we can make change happen. The exercise aims to:

- Identify social change movements in the US and beyond
- Link our work to these movements
- Explore elements that have helped changes become permanent

Materials Needed: White board or large paper, markers

Length of Time: 15 – 45 minutes (depends on group size and discussion questions used)

Directions:

The facilitator sets the context by describing your understanding of social change movements such as: 1) Movements are born from grassroots engagement, “people power”; 2) Movements capture a trend or need that a community or group of people feel passionate about; 3) Movements have identified an unjust social condition and policies and they seek to change them; 4) Movements are about action by ordinary people

Ask the group to name social movements or social changes that have occurred in their lifetime or before that have impacted their lives or the lives around them. (Attached is a list that can be given to the group after the exercise) Try to get a lengthy and diverse list – prompt people to consider various sectors such as schools, churches, etc or groups of people such as people of color, people living with disabilities, etc.

Once you have a large list ask people about their observations:

- What do they notice about the list?
- What movements do they feel a part of? In which movements do they know people who are involved?
- What changes have stuck?
- What changes are still being worked on?
- What are some characteristics about these movements that have helped them achieve their goals?
- How are these characteristics similar to DV movement work?

Ask the group for a final reflection of the list and our observations:

- What inspires you about this list?
- What feels challenging about this list and our discussion?
- What is one way you can incorporate thinking about movements into your work at your program?

Facilitator Note: There are no right and wrong answer to these questions. This exercise is geared toward generating dialogue amongst staff and volunteers to help them see for themselves where they fit into social movements. You can record the ideas on paper or just generate the conversation with the group. Try to elicit one answer from at least every person but don't force it.

This exercise can be followed by watching a film about social movements.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

USA:

- Abolition of Slavery
- Right of Labor to Organize
- Child Labor Laws
- Right for African Americans **and** Women to vote
- 1960s voting rights for Blacks in the South
- Anti -Vietnam War Movement
- Civil Rights Movement 1940-1960's
- Environmental movement
- National Parks set aside
- Reduced pollution Alternative energy sources Clean Water
- Anti-nuclear power/hazardous waste awareness
- Tobacco Cessation campaign
- MADD Drunk Driving Ethical treatment of animals/ Busters Law-felony for hurting a pet
- Disability movement, ADA passage
- Seat belt & child restraint safety campaign
- Minimum drinking age
- Childhood vaccinations
- Reduced lead levels in paint
- Gay/Lesbian rights Don't ask don't tell
- Cesar Chavez's farm workers movement regarding use of pesticides, wage increases
- Mental Illness reforms- seen as health problem not demon possession
- Modern Abstract Art accepted as legitimate art
- Family Planning
- Litter control (not to be confused with Family Planning)

Worldwide:

- Ended Apartheid in South Africa
- Ousted dictators in Eastern Europe, Philippines, Haiti, Latin America, specifically Pinochet and the Mothers of the Disappeared)
- "Wins" over colonialism - Zimbabwe, India
- HIV/AIDS movement
- Infanticide, killing of female infants because they are unwanted due to their sex
- Female Genital Mutilation

Progress in Women's Movement:

- Women can now own property
- Pay gap improving (slowly)
- More job opportunities for women, more management level jobs
- Interview questions now limited. No longer, "Are you using birth control? Are you married? Do you have children?"
- Sexual Harassment laws
- Criminalization of domestic violence, Mandatory arrest for domestic violence
- Marital rape laws
- Title IX
- Pro Choice/Abortion rights Roe v Wade
- Women's Health Movement...Breast Cancer Awareness
- Women allowed credit in their own name when married
- Women in Politics