SOLUTIONS BASED ON SCIENCE AND THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Published on *The Center for Hunger-Free Communities* (http://www.centerforhungerfreecommunities.org)

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S.E.L.F. Groups

In our work with people who have experienced hunger and poverty, we have heard a lot of stories about stress, trauma, and violence. We have learned that these experiences are common and that people may struggle with traumatic events of both their past and present. We began running S.E.L.F. support groups to help the families we work with to move past these experiences and into a better future. The women of Witnesses to Hunger are involved in these groups along with women from Children's HealthWatch. Some of the women from Witnesses to Hunger have also been trained to lead these groups. In August 2011, the first group of S.E.L.F. participants graduated from the 12-week training including five Witnesses to Hunger: Angela S., Imani S., Nadja B., Sherita P., and Tianna G. More women are now training to run the support groups. They will then help to lead on-going groups with additional women throughout the City of Philadelphia.

Part of the trauma-informed Sanctuary Model®, S.E.L.F. [1] is a guide for healing from past trauma, violence, and other challenging life experiences.

S.E.L.F. stands for:

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afety – Group members learn about four types of safety: physical, social, moral, and psychological safety. They also learn tools for dealing with unsafe situations.

motional management – Group members learn the importance of naming their feelings and understanding how to control them.

oss and letting go – Group members learn that every change involves loss. Members learn how to deal with losses in a healthy way.

uture – A very important part of the healing process is looking toward the future. S.E.L.F group members learn to make plans for the future while remembering the past.

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Links:
[1] http://www.sanctuaryweb.com/self.php