

In Her Shoes – Reference Guide ¹

Materials: ²

Station Cards: 16 laminated 8.5” x 11” cards that you use to designate where the stations are (i.e. “Abuse Happens”, “Shelter”, “DV Advocate”, “Court”, “Police”, etc.)

Character Cards: 6 laminated 8.5” x 5.5” cards that give a short biography of the six characters whose stories unfold during the simulation.

Scenario Cards: 127 multi-colored cards (8.5” x 5.5”) that tell the characters’ stories.

How do I set up the room?

There are 16 stations in the simulation. Tape the Station Cards on the walls as equidistant as possible around the room. There is no set order for the stations, but keep in mind that the largest groups of people congregate around Abuse Happens and Shelter. Stations with the fewest cards draw the smallest crowds (e.g., Child Protective Services and Mental Health), so these stations can be placed closer together if the room you are working in is small.

- Put the corresponding Scenario Cards (text side down) by the Station Cards. You can put them on chairs or tables.
- Put Band-Aids and/or make-up my Abuse Happens.
- Put a coin and a watch/timer by Shelter.
- Arrange other props.

How do I get the participants started?

Give the following instructions to the group:

- 1) This simulation is based on the real-life experiences of women with abusive partners. In this exercise, participants will have the opportunity to walk in these women’s shoes for a short time. Participants will make choices based on what feels right to them.
- 2) Divide the group into pairs. If there is an extra person, s/he can choose to join a pair or play alone.
- 3) The simulation begins when the facilitator hands the victim a Character Card. The pair reads the card and hands it back to the facilitator. The game is color-coded. Participants must remember their color. Each card will offer the pairs a choice of actions to take or will direct them to their next station.

¹ “In Her Shoes: Living with Domestic Violence”. Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence: <http://www.wscadv.org/resourcesAlpha.cfm?aId=6388541A-C298-58F6-02A2A6CF514E6448>.

² Character cards and scenarios adapted by MSH-TA from WSCADV: “In Her Shoes: Living with Domestic Violence” to be culturally-specific to Native communities and survivors: Southwest Regional Training, 2003.

- 4) Each time the victims go to “Abuse Happens,” she or he should apply make-up or a Band-Aid.
- 5) If and when participants get to the end of one character’s story, they will ask the facilitator for a different Character Card and go again. This time reverse the roles of “victim” and “shadow.”
- 6) The simulation lasts for 45 minutes to 1 hour, with a discussion to follow.
- 7) There are 8 character cards, so more than one pair may be enacting the same character’s story. Hand out character cards and away you go!

How do I end the simulation?

Give a five-minute warning before the simulation ends. Then give participants a 10 – 15 minute break before starting the discussion. Provide snacks if you can – it could dramatically improve the debrief discussion!

The debrief is the most critical part of the simulation. Why? Because without a good discussion, participants might walk away with unanswered questions, or misconceptions about battered women. As you guide the discussion, keep in mind the goals of the simulation. Remember, we are trying to: increase awareness, illustrate that domestic violence is a community tragedy, show that we all have a role in ending violence, and think creatively about all the ways we can play out our role in day to day life.