



FACING THE QUEEN BEE

FRATERNITY VALUE: SINCERE FRIENDSHIP

SUGGESTED FACILITATOR: VICE PRESIDENT MEMBER EXPERIENCE

Goals:

- To encourage healthy relationships among members rooted in encouragement and respect.
- To allow participants to understand the harmful effects of negative speech, bullying and the positive impact of encouraging supportive language and attitudes.

Room set-up/materials needed:

- Make sure you have enough room for participants to sit comfortably as a large group as well as space for small discussion groups.
- Wide-screen formatted LCD projector and large screen or a large, wide-screen television. Audio capabilities should also be provided.
- Internet access. Make sure you have the internet pulled up and cued to the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjPrc96W3Ck>.
- One copy of the, “Who Are You in the ‘Bee’ Dynamic” handout for each participant (two-sided).
- A pen or pencil for each participant.

Getting Started

Talking points are indicated with a callout bullet (☛). Please use these as speaking guidelines but be sure to jazz up the presentation with your own personality. Facilitation instructions are indicated with an arrow (➤) and serve as hints you might find helpful when administering the material. Most importantly, have fun!

➤ Introduce the activity

- ☛ If you’ve ever seen the movie, “Mean Girls” you’ll recall how the characters in the movie Cady Heron, Regina George, Gretchen Wieners and Karen Smith were high school girls who said and did things that were personally, physically and emotionally hurtful to each other and their classmates. While the movie takes an exaggerated and comedic approach to name calling, talking about people behind their backs, conjuring plans to embarrass and humiliate their classmates and more, there is an important question to ask. Is the fictional storyline really that far away from the reality we sometimes experience? Do we laugh at the movie because it’s funny or do we laugh because we know it’s true — we’ve all been in “mean girl” types of situations — but are we choosing not to admit the storylines could be somewhat realistic after all?
- ☛ We have all witnessed the mean girl culture at some point either in our personal lives or in the media. Why does our culture think the ideas of breaking someone down to “win” will somehow make us feel better about ourselves? Let’s look at some examples of this bullying attitude and how it affects us.

Female Relationship Aggression (RA)

- The more technical term for bullying between women is “Female Relational Aggression.” This term refers to the way we use relationships around us to hurt one another through verbal violence. This attitude of aggression is often driven by fear or threat, is mostly used by women, and is a behavior that can be changed over time with effort.
 - In April 2008, Pennsylvania State University held a conference called, “Girls Bullying Girls.” Let’s take a look at a short video produced by Penn State Outreach in relation to the conference.
- Switch to the Internet and show the video, “Penn State Outreach - Girls Bullying Girls” found at the link in the Set Up section of this seminar.
- After the video, pass out copies of the “Who Are You in the ‘Bee’ Dynamic” quiz handout and allow participants a few minutes to complete just the front side of the quiz.
- Take a few minutes to complete the front side of this quiz and then we will continue. Read each statement carefully and honestly answer with which statement describes you best.
 - Before we reveal the results of the quiz and which type of ‘Bee’ you might be, let’s talk about the various types of ‘Bees’. According to Cheryl Dellasega, author of, “Mean Girls Grown up,” any clique of mean girls can be broken down into several behavioral types: the Queen Bees, the Middle Bees and the Afraid-to-Bees.
 - Let’s first think about the Queen Bee. She is the type of woman who is often in charge, calls the shots, makes the plans and leads the show without asking for input from others; lacks meaningful friendships with women; forgets to apologize when she knows she is wrong; and is probably more irritated than intrigued by others.
 - If you have encountered a woman who spends a lot of time sharing information about other women, even if it isn’t necessarily true; provides the Queen Bee with regular updates on rumors involving her; is the Queen Bee right hand or best friend; or always seems to control the flow of information in the chapter; this person is known as the Middle Bee.
 - Lastly, are the Afraid-to Bees. These women are often the victims of another woman’s aggression; fail to express how she really feels out of fear of other women; often goes along with the group even if she doesn’t want to; will do almost anything to avoid conflict with other women and will often stay in an unhappy friendship because she is afraid if she leaves she will lose friends.
 - Now, let’s find out which category you are most likely to fit under according to your quiz results. If the A statements describe you best, You are likely a woman who has avoided the “Bee” style of interacting — congratulations! If the B statements describe you best, you may be trapped in a Middle Bee role, participating passively in aggression or doing nothing to stop it. If the C statements describe you best, you may be trapped in an Afraid-to-Bee role, being bullied by other women and lacking the strength to stand up against relational aggression. Lastly, if the D statements describe you best, you may be unable to avoid the Queen Bee role, unaware that your interactions with other women can be overly aggressive.
 - “It may be hard to face the fact that you relate to any of these relational aggression roles, but perhaps the hardest to admit to are the kinds of behaviors in the D questions — ones that describe a Queen Bee ... Recognizing your role for what it is helps you identify where change needs to occur”
(Dellasega, 2005, p. 154).

The Bee Hive

- At this point you may be thinking, “I’m not too keen on the results I got from this quiz.” In keeping with the “Bee” theme, let’s talk about the different types of “Bees” in the hive and how to move past the relational aggression model.
- As the Queen Bee, you may want to know how you can, “take off the crown” and become one of the worker bees. When thinking about Queen Bees, what are some ways you yourself can “take off the crown” or if you are not a Queen Bee, how can encourage other Queen Bees to “take off the crown?” How can you ensure you have the right motives for your actions and not malicious motives?

→ Call on participants to answer these questions and then continue.

- Queen Bees have a competitive drive, which should be channeled into achieving personal success; notice when disapproval and resentment toward other women becomes an issue; and before criticizing, ask, “Am I being honest because I want to genuinely help her or am I pointing out her flaws to make myself feel better?” Never feel as if you are competing with a true friend. True friends should celebrate the successes of each other.
- Middle Bees should step out of the middle and avoid the bee hive. What are some ways Middle Bees can avoid being caught in the middle of a conversation filled with gossip? When friends are being bullied or talked bad about, what can be done to intervene in this type of situation?

→ Call on participants to answer these questions and then continue.

- When Middle Bees hear other women, especially Queen Bees gossiping, they should commit to not sharing this or passing it along; when your friends are bullied, stand up for them; trust that your true friends will want to spend time with you for who you are and not what you can do for them; and finally recognize this relational aggression when you see it and avoid being in the middle of these types of relationships. Your true friends should never ask you to hurt another friend — they will respect your loyalty and friendship.
- Lastly, for those of you that are Afraid-to-Bees, it is time to find your voice. What are some ways Afraid-to-Bees can stand up against bullying or a bullying culture? What should others do when they see Afraid-to-Bees not able to stand against relational aggression on their own?

→ Call on participants to answer these questions and then continue.

- Afraid-to-Bees surround yourselves with supportive and encouraging friends; tell people when their words hurt you; don’t be afraid to walk away from the Queen Bee friendship; and forgive others that have hurt you. The friends that are really your friends in life should never make you feel bad about yourself but appreciate you for exactly who you are, want to spend time with you for who you are and not what you can do for them; and finally recognize this relational aggression when you see it and avoid being in the middle of these types of relationships. Your true friends should never ask you to hurt another friend — they will respect your loyalty and friendship.
- Now, take a few moments to answer the questions under the “Moving Forward” section on the back of your handout.

→ Give participants a few minutes to complete the back section and then continue.

Final Wrap-Up

- Thank you for taking time to critically reflect on the role you believe you play in the bee hive and how it affects the hive (our chapter) as a whole. Before we end today, I want to share with you three steps on how we can overcome or prevent a “mean girls” culture in our chapter.
 - Step one is to confront the mean girls culture.
 - We need to talk honestly and openly about any bullying or cliques occurring in the chapter;
 - Reflect on if you are contributing or helping to prevent a mean girls culture; and
 - Identify the effects this type of culture can have on our chapter’s success.
 - Step two is to commit to a stronger sisterhood.
 - Our chapter and Fraternity values should be the focus of our daily activities;
 - Mentor and support each other mentally, physically and emotionally; and
 - We should hold each other accountable for not participating in mean girl behavior.
 - The last step is to create an inspiring environment.
 - Let us all celebrate members individually and uniquely;
 - Each of us should highlight our individual and chapter successes; and
 - Break down cliques and build stronger relationships across the chapter.

- In our hive, there are no two bees that are exactly alike and each of us should strive to improve ourselves, the bees that live and work alongside of us and as a whole work to make our hive one that is free of relational aggression and bullying.

➤ Thank everyone for participating in this seminar.

Evaluation: Don't forget to help the Fraternity assess this program! The program facilitator as well as a member of each class should be asked to visit the *Leading with Values*® website, www.pibetaphi.org/leadingwithvalues, to fill out a quick survey. Remember, the name of this seminar is **Facing the Queen Bee**.

The chapter's Vice President Member Experience should remember to record the presentation of this program in the chapter's monthly regional report.

Who Are You in the “Bee” Dynamic?

The following questions are designed to help you assess your relational style and may require some soul-searching to come up with honest answers. For each question, select the one behavior that sounds most like you.

Attitudes

- A. I believe connections to women at home, work, and play are an important part of my life.
- B. Women are often an “ends to a means,” enabling me indirectly to get things I want for myself.
- C. I am somewhat insecure and afraid of women.
- D. I would choose to be with men rather than women, no matter what the activity.

Friendships

- A. I have a rich network of female friends.
- B. I am often dissatisfied with the female friends I have.
- C. I feel my female friends take advantage of me or abuse me.
- D. There is an absence of female friends in my life.

Relationships

- A. I respect and cooperate with women, even if they’re not individuals I consider friends.
- B. I am only interested in women for what they can do for me or enable me to acquire for myself.
- C. There are women I know with whom I have positive relationships outside of my friends and family.
- D. I only choose to interact with women I know I can lead.

Behavior

- A. I use many types of behaviors in the course of a day, most often relying on assertiveness to interact with others.
- B. I am often the woman who is a contact, passing along what others tell me, staying on top of neighborhood news and using information to control others.
- C. I usually allow others to call the shots, rarely speaking up for myself or expressing my true feelings.
- D. I rarely worry what others think.

Dellasega, C. (2005). Mean girls grown up. Adult women who are still queen bees, middle bees, and afraid-to-bees. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Results

If the A statements describe you best...

You sound like a woman who has avoided the “Bee” style of interacting — congratulations!

If the B statements describe you best...

You may be trapped in a “middle bee” role, participating passively in aggression or doing nothing to stop it.

If the C statements describe you best...

You may be trapped in an “afraid-to-bee” role, being bullied by other women and lacking the strength to stand up against relational aggression.

If the D statements describe you best...

You may be trapped in a “queen bee” role, unaware that your interactions with other women can be overly aggressive.

“It may be hard to face the fact that you relate to any of these relational aggression roles, but perhaps the hardest to admit to are the kinds of behaviors in the D questions — ones that describe a Queen Bee ... Recognizing your role for what it is helps you identify where change needs to occur” (Dellasega, 2005, p. 154).

Moving Forward

While discovering that you are a part of a relational aggression dynamic can be extremely difficult, it is a necessary step in confronting the mean girls culture in your chapter and moving your organization forward. Use the following questions to help guide you out of the relational aggression cycle.

Overall, I can best identify with: _____

What are the underlying emotions that drive my relationships with other women?

What are some behaviors that are common in my relationships with other women?

What are three things that I can do to change these emotions or behaviors?

