



## MEMBER SAFETY PROGRAMMING

### HEALTHY BROTHERHOOD DISCUSSION GUIDE

#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Chapter's most recent Annual Membership Survey (AMS) Report
- This discussion guide is also needed and is beneficial to read through ahead of the program.

#### TIMEFRAME

- This program should run around 30-40 minutes.

#### PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Explore the concept of brotherhood.
- Understand how a sense of belonging and culture of accountability support a healthy brotherhood.
- Identify areas of opportunity to improve their brotherhood.
- Identify practices that do not support a healthy brotherhood.

#### FACILITATOR NOTES

This session is designed to flip the script on hazing prevention presentations by discussing what contributes to a healthy brotherhood. If a chapter can support a healthy brotherhood, especially one that has a high sense of belonging and accountability, it is less likely to resort to hazing practices.

#### Facilitation tips:

- If you have a large group, try using small groups, pair sharing, collecting responses on notecards, and tools like Poll Everywhere to encourage participation.
- If doing this session virtually:
  - Try using break out rooms and polls to help keep members engaged and thinking.
  - Use a virtual white board, message board, or Google Doc that members can add their thoughts and questions during the session.
  - When posing a question, give them a little extra time to think about their answer and either come off mute or type it in the chat box.
- Look for other *facilitator tips* throughout the document, as shown in red italics.

#### INTRODUCTION

- *Share:*
  - In this session, we will be exploring the concepts of brotherhood, specifically, what contributes to a healthy sense of brotherhood in a local chapter.
  - To start, let's think about the concept of brotherhood in general.
- *Discuss:*

- How would we define brotherhood?
- Why do fraternities talk about brotherhood so much?
- What does a healthy brotherhood look like?
  - What are signs/indicators would we look for?
  - How about signs of an unhealthy brotherhood?
- *Share:*
  - As many of you may know, Phi Sigma Kappa is currently working with an organization called Dyad Strategies, a fraternity and sorority research firm, to help us better understand what the Fraternity's brotherhood looks like, where it is strong, and where it could use some improvement.
  - Dyad Strategies working with a number of fraternities across the country to learn more about the concept of brotherhood. This includes the Annual Membership Survey that comes out each spring term.
  - They look at brotherhood based on four different factors: solidarity, shared social experience, belonging and accountability. We will be looking at the last two today during this conversation.
  - Let's take a quick look at the chapter's most recent AMS report to see how we scored in each of the four areas.

***Facilitator Tip:** The AMS report provides a quick description of each area, as well as an "ideal range" for each area. The report will also show where the chapter is in relation to Phi Sigma Kappa as a whole as well as the change from the 2019 AMS and 2020 AMS. Even if the chapter decreased in an area from 2019 to 2020, as long as it's getting them closer to the ideal range, that is a change in the right direction.*

- *Discuss:*
  - What do you think about the chapter's scores in each area? Or how the chapter compares to the Fraternity at large?
  - Did the chapter change from 2019 and 2020 in a significant way?
  - Why do you think the ideal ranges for belonging and accountability were set higher than the ideal ranges for solidarity and shared social experience?

## **EXPLORING BROTHERHOOD AND BELONGING**

- *Share:*
  - Now that we've analyzed our chapter's scores in the four areas of brotherhood, let's dive deeper into what we think brotherhood and accountability mean for our chapter.
- *Discuss:*
  - When we think about belonging, what do we mean? What does it look like in a group like a fraternity?
  - Why would belonging be important to the concept of brotherhood?
- *Share:*
  - Dyad explains brotherhood based on belonging as: "Members who feel a sense of belonging with the Fraternity see brothers as family and the chapter as a 'home away from home'. Brothers feel appreciated for who they are/despite their flaws."

- Feeling like we belong to a group can have a positive effect on our motivation and persistence, which can help members stay involved with the chapter longer and even after graduation.
- We might think of belonging like “fitting in”, but Brene Brown (you may know her from her TED Talk “The Power of Vulnerability”) looks at “fitting in” as an active, but not always conscious, process of changing ourselves to better match with the group. Belonging focuses more on feeling a part of the group without having to change yourself.
- *Discuss:*
  - What are some examples of “fitting in”, in a fraternity context?
    - *Facilitator tip:* If they need any example, have them think about whether they started to dress differently or act differently once they joined their chapter, or if members have seen it happen with members of other fraternities on campus. Ask them to consider the ways members drink now compared to before they joined (how often, how much, did they change what they drink, etc.).
- *Share:*
  - It is likely that, when we joined the Fraternity, we did a little “fitting in”, and that’s okay, as long as it is balanced out with a sense of belonging to the group.
  - In most situations, people are doing a balancing act between “fitting in” and belonging in any of their social groups, even in their families.
  - The hope is that their sense of belonging is stronger than their need to “fit in”, especially for close groups like family, close friends, and our Fraternity.

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND BROTHERHOOD

- *Discuss:*
  - The other area of brotherhood we are going to explore in this session is accountability.
  - What part does accountability play in developing a healthy brotherhood in the chapter?
- *Share:*
  - Dyad’s research suggests that chapters who have a brotherhood based on, or with a high level of accountability, have a mutual commitment to making one another better. This is done both through formal methods like Judicial Board, and through informal peer to peer methods.
    - Think about those times you’ve sat down with another brother and told him that you were worried about him, or just spent time with him when you knew he was going through something.
    - These kinds of informal check-ins and support contribute to holding each other accountable and pushing each other to be better.
- *Discuss:*
  - What kinds of things do we hold members accountable for? Are there other things we should hold members accountable to?
    - This could include, but not limited to, things like the Fraternity’s Creed or Cardinal Principles, or more specific things like learning how to consume alcohol safely and not punching holes in the walls of the house.

- How can we use accountability to help members become better Phi Sigs, or support them in their everyday lives?
- How can we switch the perspective of being held accountable from a negative to a positive?

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- *Share:*
  - We've talked about two factors that can contribute to a stronger and healthier sense of brotherhood; belonging and accountability. Based on Dyad's research, belonging and accountability both positively contribute to members having a better experience in the Fraternity, staying involved longer, and becoming better humans, members of Phi Sig, brothers.
- *Discuss:*
  - How does belonging and accountability interact with each other? Do they?
  - How can we use our understanding of belonging and accountability to support a deeper sense of brotherhood?
  - Are there practices that we do in our chapter now that negatively impact the sense of belonging or accountability in our chapter? How can we change those practices?

## WRAP UP

- As a way to wrap up the session, it is important to think about an action step that we can take, either individually or as a chapter, to help us make our brotherhood stronger.
  - Members can either think about an action step by themselves, talk about it with a partner, or jot their action step anonymously on a notecard that is collected and read to the group.
  - Some ideas could include:
    - Making an effort to get to know a member that they don't know well or spending time with a member they don't regularly hangout with.
    - Joining the chapter's Judicial Board or Character Committee next semester.
    - Offering to help organize a future brotherhood event.
  - Remind all members that they should also complete the next Annual Membership Survey so that they will have even better brotherhood data to work with in the future.
- The intention of having a strong brotherhood is to help give members a place where they feel supported and challenged to become better.
- Whether we take this conversation as a starting point to working on developing a healthier sense of brotherhood or need to work on changing practices that are actively hindering our brotherhood, it will take time. Culture change is a gradual process, this conversation and the action steps we just developed can get the ball rolling.
- If you want to discuss any of this further, feel free to visit an Executive Board meeting, talk with our Chapter Adviser, or visit the campus fraternity and sorority life office.
  - *Facilitator tip:* Share the name and contact information for your Chapter Adviser, any Alumni Advisory Board (AAB) members, or the campus fraternity and sorority life office location and contact name.
- Be sure and thank participants for engaging in the conversation.