

GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSE
CONGREGATIONAL PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE
APRIL, 1997

PRINCIPLES:

1. In nearly all cases it is necessary to indicate that there will be a response to the present need of the complainant even before the matter of the complaint can be investigated and apologies made etc.
2. The approved process calls for "support" in the initial stages, and this response to the present need fits under this heading. Continuation of the initial support might then be part of the full response made to the complainant.
3. The complainant is seen as someone to whom we have a commitment of care based on our previous interaction with them. It is not based on an admission of liability for any action of any person.
4. The dignity of the complainant is to be a primary consideration.

THE RESPONSE COORDINATOR MAY EXPLORE WITH THE COMPLAINANT THE QUESTION "WHAT ARE YOU HOPING FOR?" OR "WHAT ARE YOU ASKING?" *"What would you like to see happen?"*
(I liked Myolene's wording & copied it down.)
 The following are examples of the type of thing which is frequently heard in response:

- some just want to be listened to with empathy
- some want acknowledgment that "it is true"
- some want an apology, private or public
- some, when informed that their complaint could be taken to the police, do not want to take this up
- many want some form of counselling (Myolene tries to involve them in the choice of the person, but insists that the counsellor or therapist be qualified and competent)
- some want spiritual direction
- some look for books or other information to read
- some want financial assistance to address some need in their lives
- (music lessons was a rare response)
- many want assurance that it is not still happening to others

THE RESPONSE COORDINATOR CAN OFFER AN IMMEDIATE SHORT-TERM RESPONSE

Examples would be:

- 6 - 10 session of counselling at an estimated cost of \$600 to \$1,000. The complainant would be involved in deciding who to approach, but the Response Coordinator will stress that the person has to have appropriate qualifications and/or experience as a basis for confidence that he/she can be of assistance to the complainant. ↓

I would think qualifications are a must in this day & age

- 6 - 10 therapy session or a short course, eg in psychodrama or in assertiveness skills

In general, the initial commitment would not cost the Congregation in excess of \$1,500 per person. The Response Coordinator would satisfy herself as to the suitability of the professional selected, then arrange contracts and payments in such a way as to safeguard the dignity of the complainant.

Where the complainant does not wish to take up an initial offer of support, the offer remains open until the process is brought to conclusion with a "facilitated resolution".

FOR REVIEW JUNE 1997

AUTHORISED BY :.....DATE:.....