

GUIDANCE ON IMPLEMENTING MANY MEN, MANY VOICES (3MV) IN A RETREAT FORMAT

OVERVIEW

This document provides information on how to plan and implement the 3MV intervention in a 3-day retreat structure. Typically, Sessions 1 to 6 are delivered over the course of 3 days during the retreat. Session 7 is delivered 1 to 2 weeks after the retreat as a booster session. It is recommended that you limit the size of your retreat to 10 to 12 participants and 2 facilitators.

The main advantage of delivering 3MV as a retreat is that, except for an occasional unusual experience, there is a high retention rate because all of the participants complete the first six sessions of the intervention. You do not have to worry about following up with participants to ensure they attend each session. Delivering 3MV as a retreat may also allow you to deliver the intervention to people who would be unable to attend 3MV in the weekly format. The main disadvantages of the retreat are the additional planning and costs associated with finding an appropriate location and arranging transportation, lodging, and meals.

It is up to you to decide how you will conduct the retreat—as an overnight or nonovernight retreat.

Nonovernight: A retreat may be held in a room at the sponsoring agency or at a hotel conference facility rented by the agency. The participants receive two or three 3MV sessions during the day and then return home at night. Conducting a retreat in this format can reduce costs and make the intervention more accessible for participants who simply cannot attend for an entire weekend. However, there is a chance that participants may not return for the remaining days/sessions.

Overnight: A retreat may be held at a hotel conference area or a retreat center, where you will provide food and lodging so that participants can stay overnight throughout the entire weekend. Conducting a retreat in this format can improve the chances that participants receive Sessions 1 to 6.

Planning and Preparing

You will need to do the following action items when planning and preparing your 3MV retreat.

1. **Develop retreat budget.** You will need to develop a budget to determine whether you can afford to conduct a retreat. A sample budget is provided below. Please note that costs can vary on the basis of location and time of year, so you will need to determine the costs of your specific retreat. Please note that this sample budget does **not** include labor and other costs associated with implementing 3MV. Please refer to the budget in the Preimplementation section of this manual for additional costs to consider.

Item	Cost
Transportation: A small bus or large van to transport 15 persons and luggage to and from the retreat	\$300
Hotel rooms: \$150 per room for 2 nights for 15 people	\$3,000
Meeting rooms:* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 large room for 15 people (3 days)—\$350 per day • 1 breakout room for 7 people (2 days)—\$150 per day 	\$1,350
Meals (for 15 people; average cost of \$18 per meal): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day 1—dinner • Day 2—breakfast, lunch, and dinner • Day 3—breakfast, lunch, and boxed dinner 	\$1,890
Incidentals (\$100 per day times 3 days)	\$300
Total	\$6,840

*Meeting room cost does not include renting audiovisual equipment, flip charts or easels, etc.

2. **Find and secure a retreat venue.** You will need to consider the following when selecting a venue for your 3MV retreat:
 - ▶ **Suitable locations:** When planning a retreat, it is important to consider whether the hotel or retreat facility will be a comfortable and safe place for black gay men. Perceived racism and homophobia can be a negative distraction and may inhibit the ability of the participants to share personal information and experiences in the 3MV sessions. The main consideration is that the participants will feel safe and confidential in disclosing private and personal issues. The space must be private and as soundproof as possible. It is desirable that the travel time be less than 3 hours by bus, with consideration of delays due to traffic and winter driving conditions when relevant.

- ▶ Rooming arrangements: Ideally, each participant should have a single room. This allows time for private emotional reactions and personal reflection on the issues covered in the intervention sessions. Participants who attend with a partner may, however, want to share a room. Special accommodations, such as down-free bedding, accessible rooms for people with disabilities, and so forth, should be made in advance. Ideally, the rooms should be near each other, on the same floor, and close to the meeting rooms.
 - ▶ Room reservations: Rooms should be booked at the last possible day allowed by the facility. Most facilities give a large discount if more than 10 rooms are booked. The agency should attempt to negotiate a reduced rate for the number of rooms booked.
 - ▶ Meeting room space: For 12 participants and 2 facilitators, you will need one large room to accommodate up to 15 people for the full-group activities. One smaller, breakout room to accommodate six or seven participants is needed for small-group sessions. Ideally, these rooms should be close to each other and should be accessible to all participants.
 - ▶ Retreat menu: In general, a buffet style is preferred because it provides the most choices for the participants. Alternatively, family style is desirable as a means to provide more choices and varying quantities. Special dietary accommodations, including vegetarian, low sodium, and gluten free, should be made in advance. You should ask participants about their dietary needs during registration.
3. **Schedule transportation.** Arrange transportation with a private company that can provide a small bus to hold up to 15 persons with luggage. The company should have adequate insurance and allow cancellation up until 24 hours before departure, if possible. Ask for references or names of other agencies that have used the service to verify reliability and adequacy of service.
 4. **Recruit and register participants.** Use the same recruitment methods outlined in the Implementation Manual to develop a list of potential participants. Recruiters should screen potential participants for HIV status, age, and willingness to attend a retreat. If a participant is eligible, explain more about the retreat format, location, logistics, and so forth. Create a retreat registration list that includes each participant's name, contact information, lodging and dietary needs, and the dates he is available. If the participant is not available during your retreat dates, put his name on a wait list. Also, if your retreat is full, place the participant on a wait list and tell him he will be contacted if there is a cancellation.
 5. **Provide participants with information packets.** Provide each participant with a written packet of information about the retreat dates, location, and logistics, including phone number of agency staff to call if there is a change in plans. Advise participants that the agency will contact them within 3 days of departure date to confirm reservation. Tell participants to gather at the agency 1 hour before the bus will depart.

6. Prepare materials. You will need to bring the following materials to the retreat:

- ▶ Two standing easels with flip chart paper (four pads)
- ▶ Two laptops with DVD player and PowerPoint and two LCD projectors
- ▶ Rolls of masking tape (six)
- ▶ Markers (two packages)
- ▶ 3MV Facilitator's Guide (two; one for each facilitator)
- ▶ Ties That Bind cards (two sets; one for each facilitator)
- ▶ Sex in the City manual (one set)
- ▶ Slide sets on CD-ROM (one set)
- ▶ *The Party* video on CD-ROM (two sets)
- ▶ Sign-in sheet
- ▶ Daily feedback form
- ▶ 3MV Participant Satisfaction Questionnaire
- ▶ 3MV KAB Survey, to be administered before and immediately after intervention

Implementing the 3MV Retreat

1. Contact participant within 72 hours of departure. Contact participants on your retreat registration list to verify their reservations. If a participant is unable to attend, agency staff should put his name on a wait list for another date. Contacting participants will increase the chances that all participants will show up.

- ▶ Common reasons for a participant to not show up include the following:
- ▶ He is in transient housing and in the process of moving.
- ▶ He is uncomfortable traveling alone and/or distrustful of agency staff.
- ▶ He has family matters to deal with (illness, death, and so forth).
- ▶ He has a work schedule conflict.
- ▶ He is ill.
- ▶ He is not openly gay and is concerned about being seen.
- ▶ He lied about HIV-negative status and knows he is not eligible.

2. **Meet at agency.** Using the 3MV Retreat registration list, check off participants as they arrive. Provide name tags, light refreshments, and activities for the participants while waiting for all to arrive. Consider the use of an icebreaker activity to help participants meet each other. Provide identification tags for all luggage.
3. **Travel to the retreat.** While in transit, it may be possible to cover some introductory material on the agenda. This can save time later in the evening and help the participants to feel more comfortable with the group process. Tell participants what to expect at the facility; some participants may never have been in a similar setting and may have questions about the dress code and other items. Provide each participant with a written agenda for the evening's activities and discuss the timeframe for room check-in, dinner, and Session 1. Participants should not be given a detailed agenda of each session in advance. Cover the Ground Rules and gain agreement from participants to follow them. Discuss the role of the facilitators—not as educators but as processors of the men's responses and participation.
4. **Check in at the retreat.** Upon arrival, have one agency staff member go to lobby to check in while another provides each participant with his room assignment and distributes luggage. Tell participants the time and place to meet for dinner and what time Session 1 starts.
5. **Conduct the sessions.** During the retreat, you will conduct Sessions 1 to 6. A sample agenda is included at the end of this guidance.

You should conduct the sessions as you would if you were conducting them in a weekly format. Since participants will not have the opportunity to do the homework assignment they received at the end of Session 4 (“Getting Ready for Action”), you will need to modify the assignment and tell them they can do it after the retreat. Then, during Session 5, you won't ask them about their experiences doing the homework.

At the end of Session 6, give participants a brief preview of what will be discussed in Session 7 and provide information about when and where it will be held.

6. Establish additional retreat guidance.

- ▶ It will be up to your agency to decide how to handle the possibility that participants may choose to hook up and have sex during the retreat. It will be important for you to address the possibility when discussing the Ground Rules. At this time, make it clear that your agency promotes HIV/STD prevention embodied in the 3MV intervention. Therefore, your agency could provide condoms and lubricant in the participants' packets and encourage participants to use those items and keep themselves and each other safe.
- ▶ Another Ground Rule is that illegal drug use is not allowed and participants who use illegal drugs will not be allowed to continue the 3MV sessions.
- ▶ Sexual contact between 3MV staff and participants should not be allowed. The agency should have a specific, written policy indicating that staff are not allowed to have sex with participants. The policy should include a mechanism for participants to report if they feel staff are coming on to them.
- ▶ You will need to have a plan for providing transportation for participants who have to leave the retreat early, whether it is for a family or medical emergency or for fighting, drug use, or other inappropriate behavior.

After the 3MV Retreat

1. **Follow up with participants.** Within 2 or 3 days after the retreat ends, call participants and check in about their experience, see whether they have any questions, and remind them about attending Session 7.
2. **Conduct Session 7 one or two weeks after the retreat.**

MANY MEN, MANY VOICES (3MV)

AGENDA—RETREAT FORMAT

Friday Evening

Time	Activity	Notes
1:00 to 4:30 p.m.	Travel to the hotel	
5:30 p.m.	Registration	Hand out name tags, participant packets, etc.
6:00 p.m.	Welcome and announcements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome the group; thank them for their participation • Introduction of facilitators, coordinators, and observers • Give them a context for the next 3 days: why we are here, how the intervention started, why they are in the room, what role they are expected to play, what they will be taking back to their agency, and so forth • Go over the agenda for the next few days (where you will be expected to be and what you will be doing there) • Introduction of participants • Ground rules • Opening ceremony and invocation 	
6:45 p.m.	Session 1 Who Are We and What Are Our Risky Behaviors? Dual identity and black gay men and STD/HIV risk behaviors	1 hr
7:45 p.m.	Break	15 min
8:00 p.m.	Session 1 continues	1 hr
9:00 p.m.	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review: What impressed you the most during the first session? • Question and answer session (Parking Lot) • What to expect tomorrow 	

Saturday

Time	Activity	Notes
8:45 a.m.	Hospitality	
9:00 a.m.	Welcome and day's opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome back Revisit agenda Question and answer session (parking lot/reflections) 	
9:15 a.m.	Session 2 STD/HIV Connection STD/HIV issues for black gay men: the roles and risks for tops and bottoms	1 hr
10:15 a.m.	Break	15 min
10:30 a.m.	Session 2 continues	1.5 hrs
12:00 p.m.	Lunch provided	1 hr
1:00 p.m.	Session 3 What Are My Options for Prevention? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> STD/HIV risk assessment and prevention options 	1.5 hrs
2:30 p.m.	Break	15 min
2:45 p.m.	Session 3 continues	1.5 hrs
4:15 p.m.	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review: What impressed you the most during the day? Question and answer session What to expect tomorrow Benediction 	

Sunday

Time	Activity	Notes
8:45 a.m.	Hospitality	
9:00 a.m.	Welcome and day's opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome back Revisit agenda Question and answer session (Parking Lot/reflections) 	
9:15 a.m.	Session 4 How Can I Make Changes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentions to act and capacity for change 	1 hr
10:15 a.m.	Break	15 min
10:30 a.m.	Session 4 continues	1 hr
11:30 a.m.	Lunch provided	1 hr
12:30 p.m.	Session 5 What About My Partner(s)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship issues (sexual relationships, skills, self-efficacy) 	2 hrs
2:30 p.m.	Break	15 min
2:45 p.m.	Session 6 Practice Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem solving to maintain changes (sexual relationships, skills acquisition, finding substitutes, social support) 	2 hrs
4:45 p.m.	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing ceremony Benediction 	
5:30 to 8:30 p.m.	Travel to agency (drop-off location)	