

Conversations that Matter 2020-2021

Dear Friends in the Lord,

Thank you for your time and participating in this year's *Conversations that Matter* (CTM). The pandemic, combined with the ongoing crises with regard to race, abuse, and the abuse of power brings us to a potential turning point both as a Church and religious community. As Pope Francis has noted, we are not living through “simply an era of change, but a change of era.” This difficult time brings us to our knees in prayer and we hope will also bring about conversion and renewal.

The above crises—clerical sexual abuse, racism, and the abuse and misuse of power—have caused great harm and scandal and forces us to step back from our traditional approach. Instead, we will consider more reflectively how we live as a community, how we promote a “culture of safeguarding,” and how we live out our commitments to each other and the most vulnerable. This year, then, we shift our focus away from “testing” and invite you to prayerfully consider these topics.

Beyond our aim of preventing abuse, we will examine more closely the dynamics behind abuse. Above all, we will look at the ways we can better promote a more mature culture of safeguarding that aims to protect vulnerable populations. Such a culture is one rooted in spiritual and psychological safety and accountability, which are necessary for building and maintaining a healthy community life. These issues are also intimately connected to our own ways of proceeding and touch on Ignatian freedom, self-surrender and spiritual trust, and communal intimacy. With all of this in mind, we will present some information on these subjects and **then solicit your opinion, feedback—no right or wrong answers—**on where you find yourself, your community, and your province in terms of “cultural maturity.”

The second section will survey your experiences with survivors of trauma, particularly those who have been victims of clerical abuse. Similar to the first section, this is not a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. This is simply our attempt to gather information in order to formulate future programming that places the abused first.

Lastly, at the end of this questionnaire, you will find some review materials and a more traditional set of questions. Based on the results of the past pre-test, we will again present some very important information on offenders, mandated reporting, and reporting guidelines.

Let us hold each other in prayer, while also praying for the poor and vulnerable, our beloved Society and Church, and especially all of those harmed by the centuries of abuses of power.

I. Cultural Maturity and Promoting a Culture of Safeguarding

Suggested time: 15-20 minutes to complete.

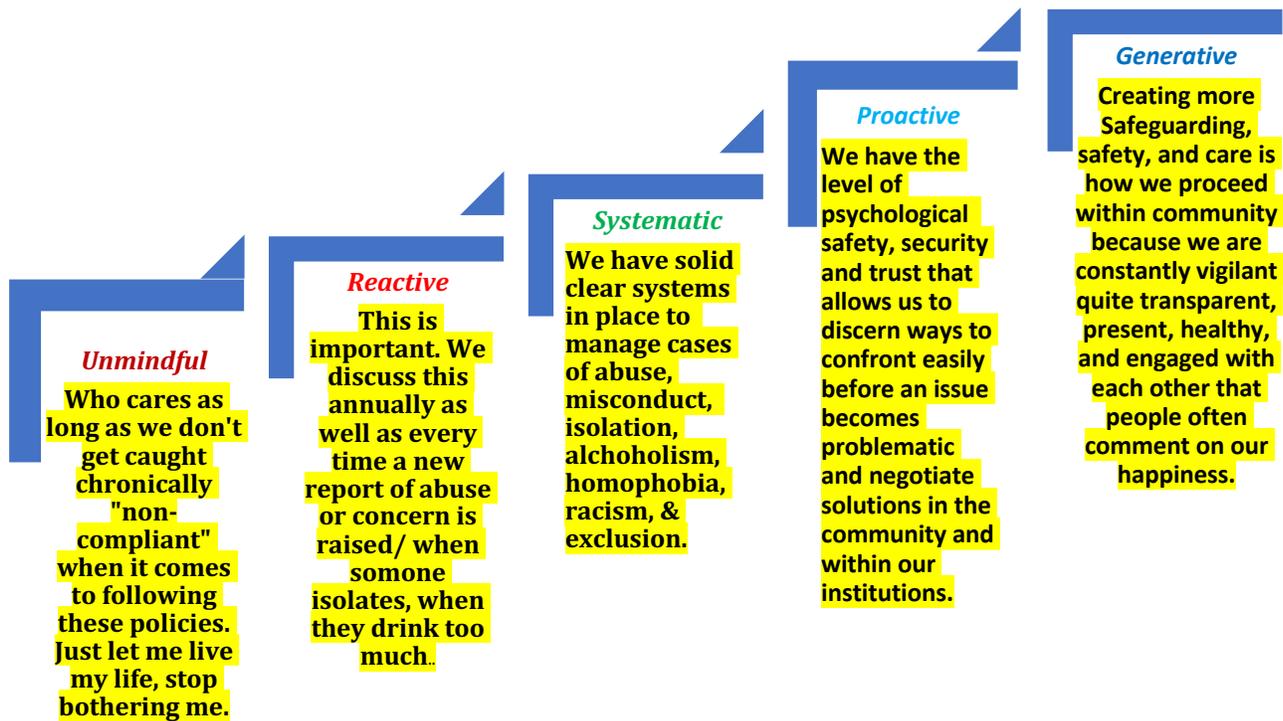
Father General Arturo Sosa stated recently that the Society of Jesus must be about “creating a culture of safeguarding in all Jesuit works and missions.” In the Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus, 2019-2029, he also expressed the commitment of all Jesuits to “help eliminate abuses inside and outside the Church” and “effectively promote a culture that safeguards all vulnerable persons, especially minors.” Further, he stated, “We commit ourselves to help eliminate abuses inside and outside the Church, seeking to ensure that victims are heard and properly helped, that justice is done, and harm is healed. This commitment includes the adoption of clear policies for the prevention of abuse, the ongoing formation of those who are committed to mission, and serious efforts to identify the social origins of abuse. In this way, we effectively promote a culture that safeguards all vulnerable persons, especially minors.”

A culture of safety is an important component of any healthy high school, parish, college, university, or organization. One way that we can better understand how these organizations value and support a culture of safety is by looking at recent studies on “cultural maturity.” Organizations that promote a “culture of safeguarding” do more than simply follow a set of rules, standards, or policies. Rather, they have a deeper way of relating to self, others and their ministries.

Perhaps, it might help to see this as representing a “spirituality of care and safeguarding,” or even a “way of proceeding.” Moreover, as we will see below, safeguarding and safety are intimately connected to healthy community living, and thus fits quite well with our new invitation to see “community as mission.” Lastly, promoting a “culture of safeguarding” would seem to follow through on what Pope Francis and Father General have in mind when Fr. Sosa suggested that we are moving from “compliance to commitment.”

According to recent studies on various organizations committed to safety and safeguarding we see a spectrum of cultural maturity that ranges from “unmindful” to “generative.” These levels reflect the growth and integration over time. We believe that a corresponding spectrum for cultural maturity exists within religious communities. The following four concepts, then, form the foundation of a community committed to developing and nurturing a culture of safety and care: psychological safety, accountability, healthy community living and communication, and negotiation. All of this works together to create healthy community living for each other, the Society of Jesus and the Church: the People of God. And with healthy community life, we believe that there will be an even deeper level of care, protection and safety, as well as a greater availability for mission.

In supporting safeguarding, the following chart explains the various levels of maturity at work within any of the concepts listed above:



Psychological Safety

Psychological safety promotes a climate in which people feel accepted and safe, and thus free to express themselves and empowered to speak up. This encompasses a variety of realities, including differences in ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, or even ecclesiology. When we don't feel accepted, safe, and empowered, we may not feel comfortable speaking up when we notice something that isn't quite right.

We know that in high-risk, high-demand environments, such as hospitals, healthcare facilities, children's care facilities, and schools, a variety of safety plans, policies and protocols have been developed to promote safety. Despite these efforts, such systems often fail when individuals do not feel safe enough to speak up. Examples of this lack of safety include retribution or adverse consequences for speaking out, limited resources, and a lack of incentives to be proactive.

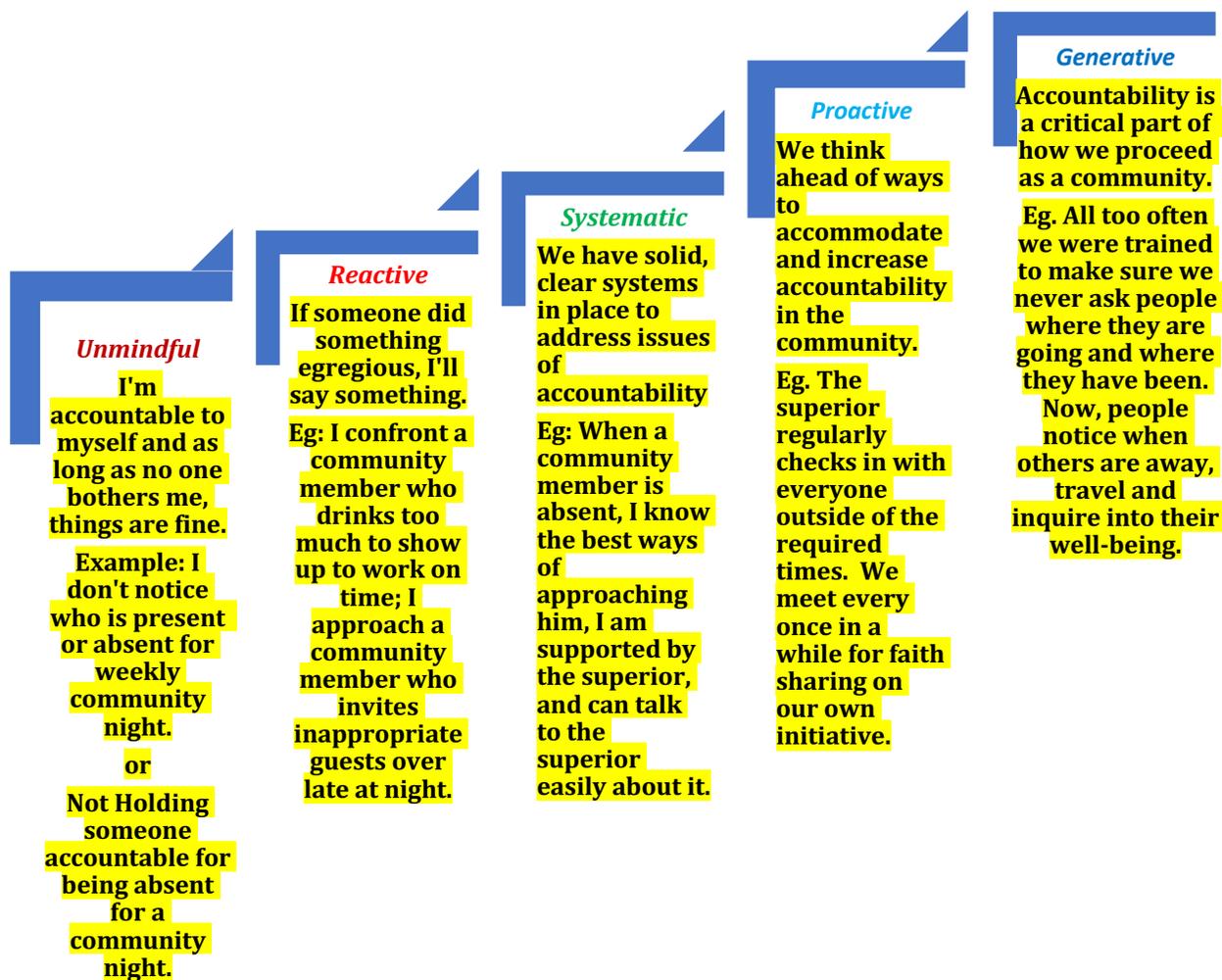
The same is true for Jesuits living in community and engaged in ministry. The more we feel safe and empowered, the more we are free to labor for God's kingdom, to integrate ourselves more fully into the Society, and to enter into the peace and silence necessary for a healthy prayer life. Such a culture of safety also makes us more likely to feel an increase in productivity, health, well-being, and communal intimacy.



Key questions for Jesuits: How safe or comfortable would you feel speaking up about a community member’s drinking problem or someone who is never present at community meals and events? How about when you see racist behaviors, overheard homophobic comments, sexist behaviors and comments, or when someone is dismissed for their ecclesiology? Most importantly, do you feel that what you bring to community members, superiors, and your provincial is appreciated, considered, and addressed?

Accountability

Accountability is another significant aspect of a creating a safeguarding culture and environment. Accountability is the willingness to take responsibility for one’s own actions. Moreover, effective and more mature levels of accountability include differentiating between individual issues (“I failed to report abuse”) and systems/communal issues (“the community is not a safe place to talk about this”) when holding individuals accountable. Healthy accountability also requires creating ministerial and communal environments that are perceived to be both just and fair, and a place where one can flourish and grow.



Key questions for Jesuits: In which ways do I and the other members of the community hold themselves accountable for living in community? Do members compliment and thank other members? Are people acknowledging others and interested in another's welfare? Are community members frequently absent from community prayers, meals, and events? If so, are you able to talk to them about it? Are you able to speak to the rector/superior about it? Does it seem acceptable to the greater community? In what healthy or unhealthy ways does your community deal with such issues?

Communal Living and Healthy Communication

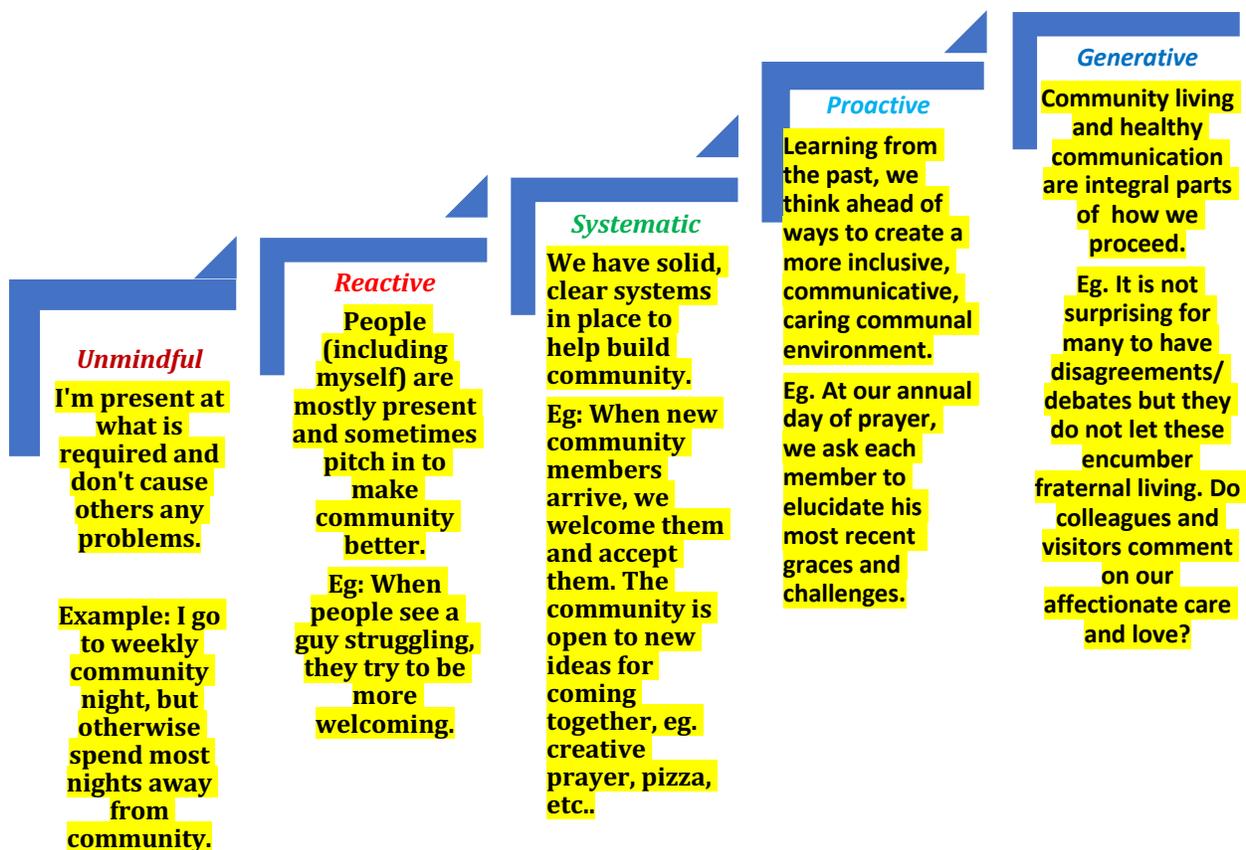
Creating a culture of safeguarding requires healthy communal living and effective communication among Jesuits.

There are four tenets of effective communal living:

- Planning forward.

- Reflecting backward.
- Communicating clearly.
- Resolving conflict.

Much like with psychological safety, good communal living and communication are correlated with improved care, safeguarding, and safety compliance. Looking back at the above graphic, a more generative level of cultural maturity values healthy community living and continuous learning. These things can be deeply embedded in a culture, and healthy community living is something that must be continuously taught and modeled across the Society of Jesus to avoid some of the tragic outcomes with which we have become all too familiar.

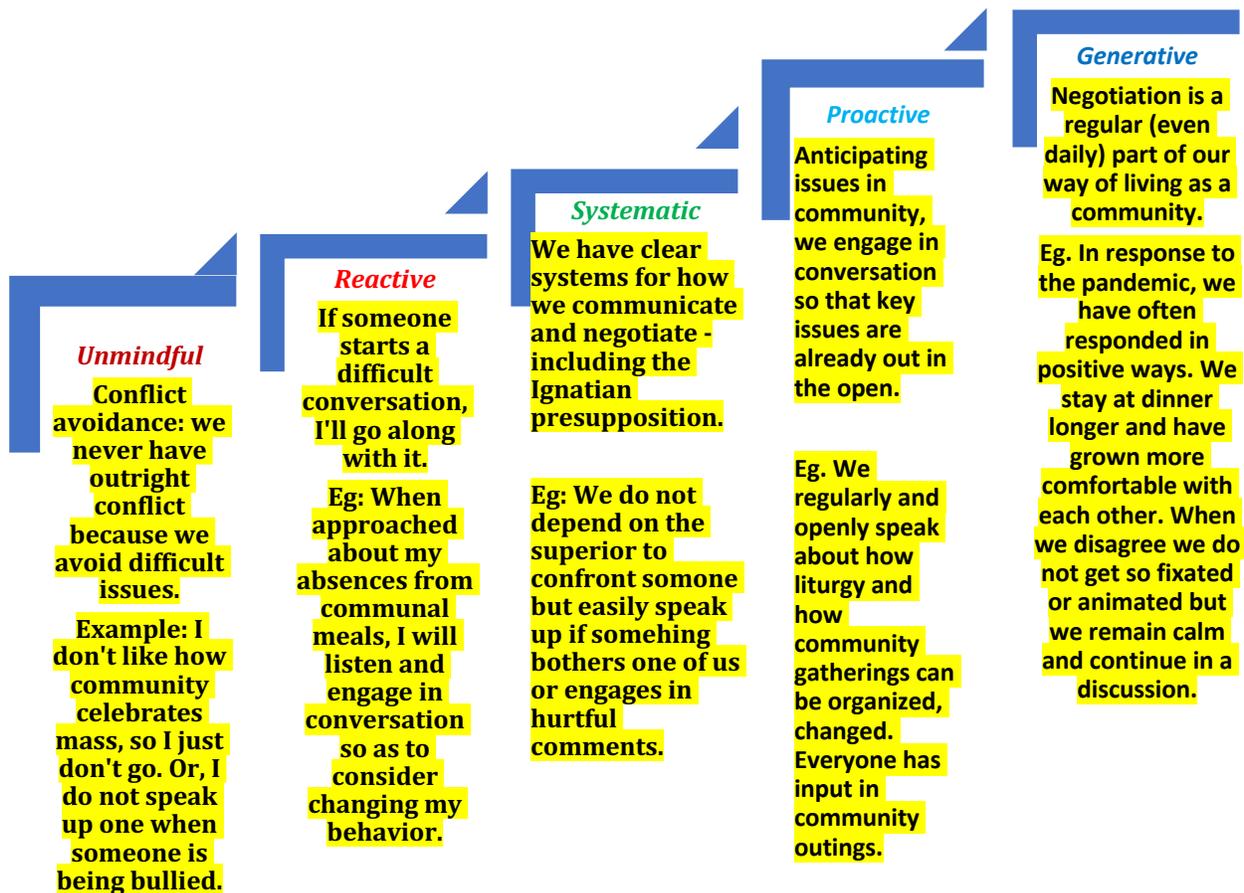


Key questions for Jesuits: Are we present to one another? Do we readily reach out to community members? Can we rely on one another? Am I available to others and are they available to me? Do we consider community to be important? If not, are we able to address these differences in healthy, constructive ways? Do I care for the communal "home" while also being detached so that "my way" is not the "only way" to live here?

Negotiation

Conflict is unavoidable in community. Negotiation is a process whereby people settle differences. Whenever there are more than two people involved in an organization, there will be conflict. But conflict does not have to be negative or degenerative. With collaboration and negotiation, conflict can be addressed effectively, and thus help encourage a more robust culture of safeguarding.

Negotiation is a process that involves discussion from two or more parties to reach an agreement. Previous trainings have focused on the need to learn and apply healthy conflict management skills and healthy anger management. Healthy negotiation involves those same skill sets. Negotiation should involve collaborative forms of the engagement and dialogue. Additionally, no one negotiates in a vacuum. Thus, healthy negotiation also differentiates one's position from one's interests, and it should use forms of what is known as appreciative inquiry.



Key questions for Jesuits:

How easy is it for you and your community to engage in difficult conversations without getting overly emotional, angry, or upset? Are you able to constructively discuss new ways

of approach community living, liturgy, community events, etc.? How much avoidance do you see in community? On the other hand, how much do you see community members actively engage with each other, especially when it's over things we don't agree on?

I. Reflection & Survey

Having read and reflected on the above materials, please answer the following questions on where we stand in terms of promoting a culture of safeguarding. There are no right or wrong answers.



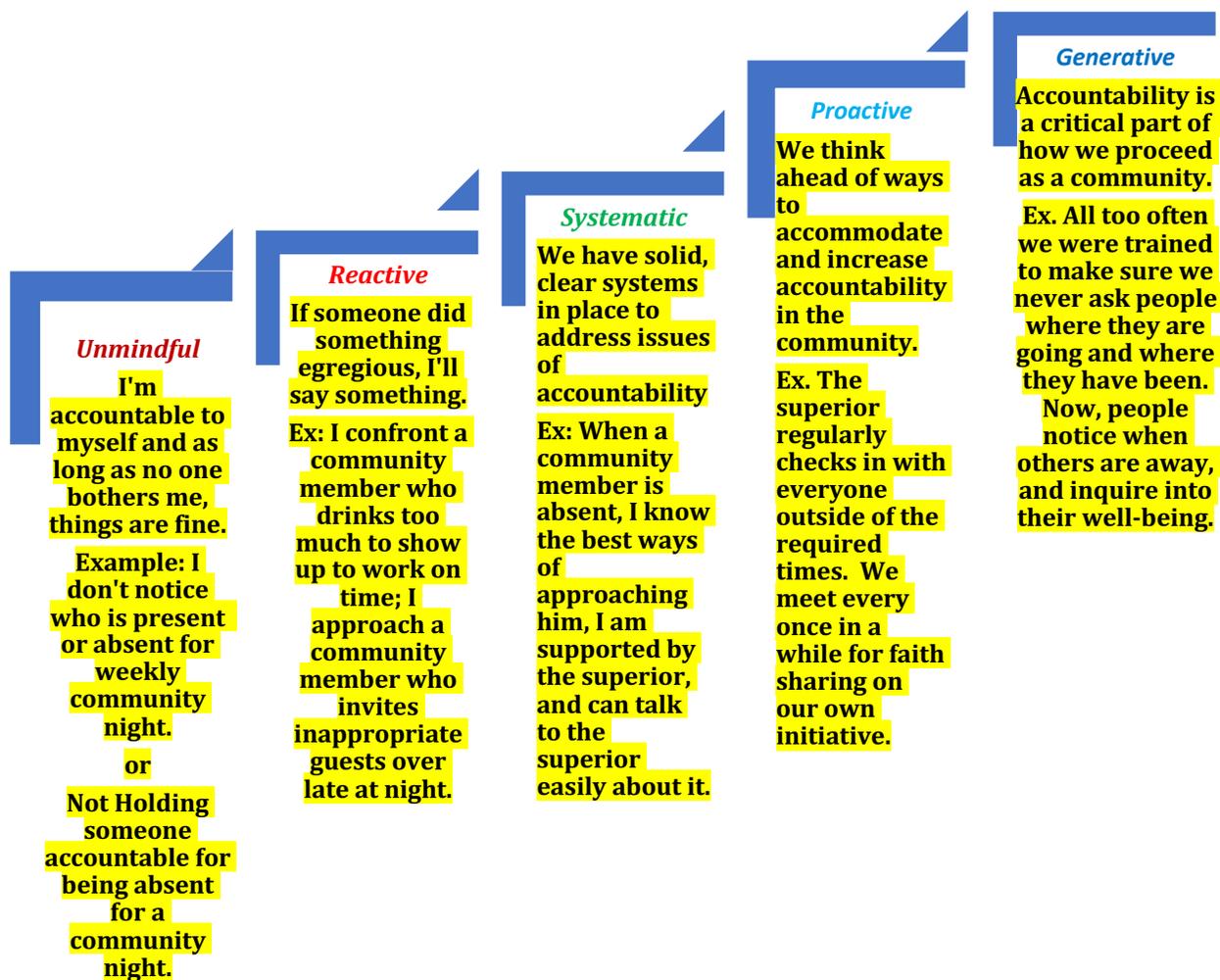
With regard to **Psychological Safety** (feeling safe and empowered to speak up, especially when we notice something that isn't quite right), please answer the following questions:

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE.

1. In your opinion, where do you find ***yourself*** in the model of cultural maturity?
 - A. Unmindful
 - B. Reactive
 - C. Systematic
 - D. Proactive
 - E. Generative

2. In your opinion, where do you find ***your community*** in the model of cultural maturity?
 - A. Unmindful
 - B. Reactive
 - C. Systematic
 - D. Proactive
 - E. Generative

3. In your opinion, where do you find ***your province (the one in which you reside)*** in the model of cultural maturity?
 - A. Unmindful
 - B. Reactive
 - C. Systematic
 - D. Proactive
 - E. Generative



With regard to **Accountability** (the willingness to take responsibility for one's own actions), please answer the following questions:

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE.

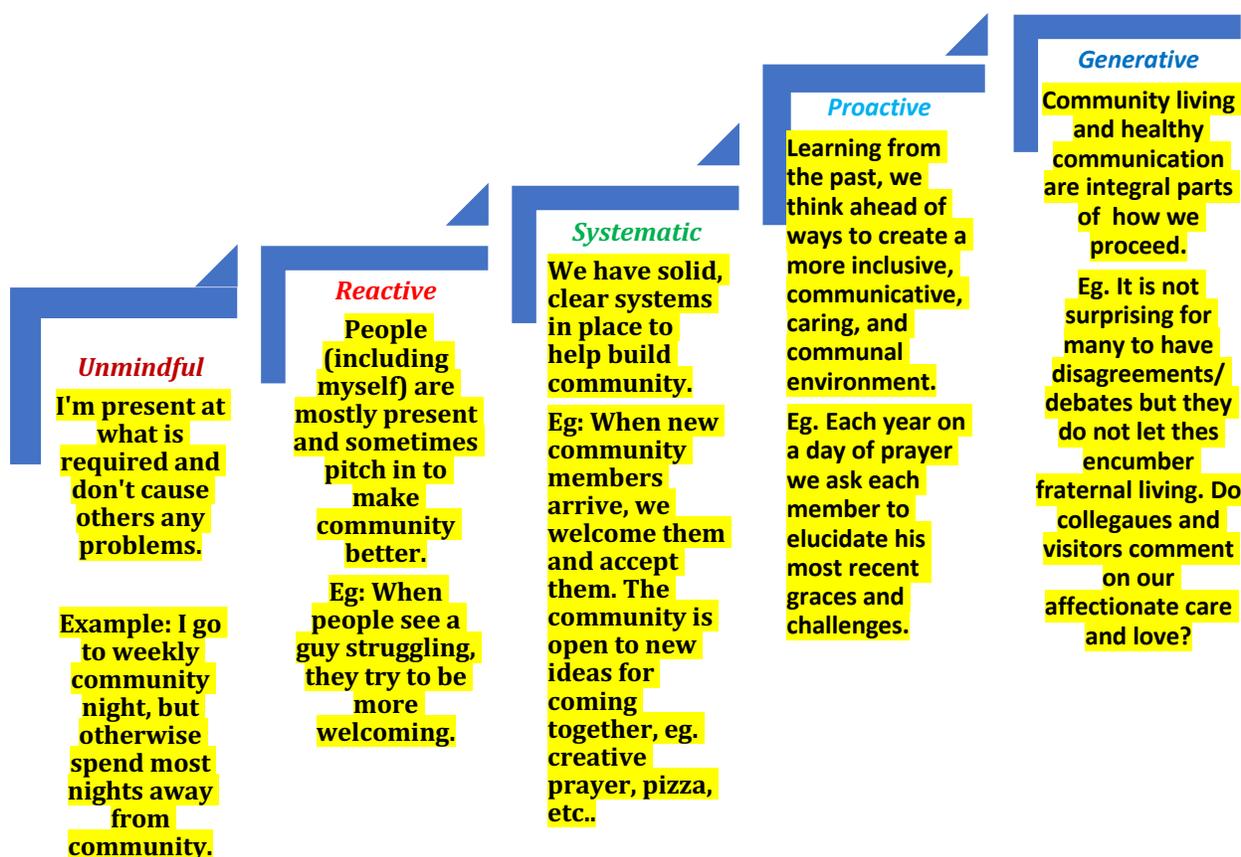
4. In your opinion, where do you find *yourself* in the model of cultural maturity?
 - A. Unmindful
 - B. Reactive
 - C. Systematic
 - D. Proactive
 - E. Generative

5. In your opinion, where do you find *your community* in the model of cultural maturity?
 - A. Unmindful
 - B. Reactive

- C. Systematic
- D. Proactive
- E. Generative

6. In your opinion, where do you find ***your province (the one in which you reside)*** in the model of cultural maturity?

- A. Unmindful
- B. Reactive
- C. Systematic
- D. Proactive
- E. Generative



With regard to **Communal Living and Communication** (the four tenets of effective communal living include planning forward, reflecting back, communicating clearly, and resolving conflict), please answer the following questions:

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE.

7. In your opinion, where do you find ***yourself*** in the model of cultural maturity?

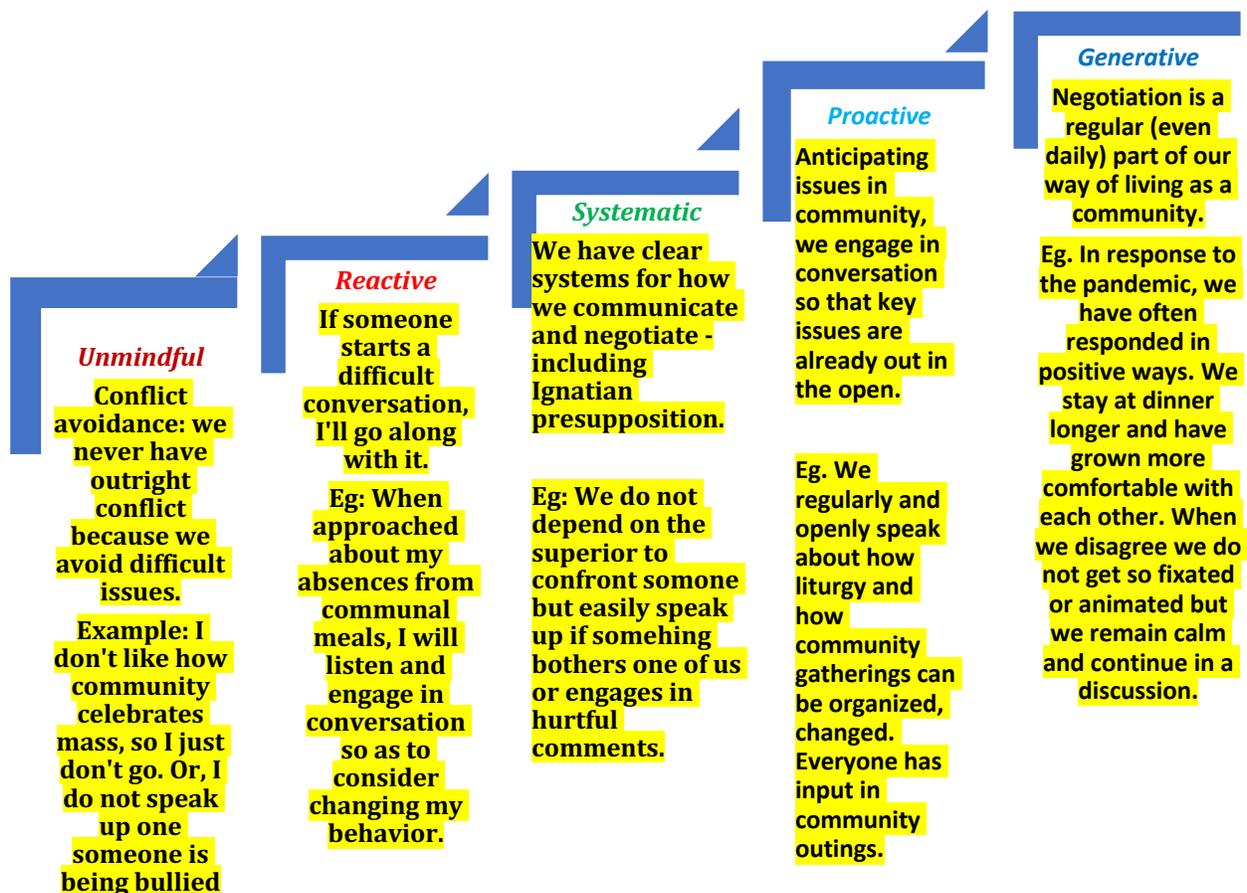
- A. Unmindful
- B. Reactive
- C. Systematic
- D. Proactive
- E. Generative

8. In your opinion, where do you find ***your community*** in the model of cultural maturity?

- A. Unmindful
- B. Reactive
- C. Systematic
- D. Proactive
- E. Generative

9. In your opinion, where do you find ***your province (the one in which you reside)*** in the model of cultural maturity?

- A. Unmindful
- B. Reactive
- C. Systematic
- D. Proactive
- E. Generative



With regard to **Negotiation** (Negotiation is a process whereby people settle differences. It involves discussion from two or more parties to reach an agreement. Negotiation should involve collaborative forms of the engagement, dialogue, and resolving conflicts.), please answer the following questions:

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR RESPONSE.

10. In your opinion, where do you find *yourself* in the model of cultural maturity?
 - A. Unmindful
 - B. Reactive
 - C. Systematic
 - D. Proactive
 - E. Generative

11. In your opinion, where do you find *your community* in the model of cultural maturity?
 - A. Unmindful
 - B. Reactive

- C. Systematic
- D. Proactive
- E. Generative

12. In your opinion, where do you find *your province (the one in which you reside)* in the model of cultural maturity?

- A. Unmindful
- B. Reactive
- C. Systematic
- D. Proactive
- Generative

II. Survivors of Abuse

Suggested time: 5-10 minutes

Ron Rolheiser's classic [article](#), "On Carrying the Sexual Abuse Scandal Biblically," suggests that often the Church and Christians find themselves at the foot of the Cross, something that seems apt in these times of scandal. Without volition, we feel powerless and horrified at all we see, especially in the recent McCarrick Report. With the approach of the Cross, few were able to companion the Lord, and many ran from that moment. We might feel both of these tendencies. Yet considering these ongoing crises as a Third Week grace and experience for the whole Church and the Society, how can we re-examine the way we can accompany Christ, particularly in the most vulnerable?

The Scriptures often gift us with parables, prophetic witnesses, and other stories that allow us to see ourselves and each other differently. In fact, listening to stories is also one of the most powerful tools we have for increasing understanding of and building engagement with complex issues. Telling them well can drive belief and behavioral change. Narrative practices have a long history of helping to bring healing to various forms of trauma. Moreover, [studies](#) suggest "the use of personal narratives can de-escalate violence and trauma and aid processes of reconciliation."

Encountering and listening to various stories is not only important for others, but it is critical for survivors as they process their own suffering, anger and/or hurt. After decades of inadequate responses from Church and religious leaders, there is consensus among researchers and leaders of the need to address the scandal from the perspective of survivors. The prophetic and courageous witnesses, voices and stories of survivors must be heard, known, and seen.

The following section serves to survey Jesuits with regard to survivors of clerical sexual abuse. As such, there are no right or wrong answers.

With regard to abuse, in general:

PLEASE ANSWER AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

1. Have you personally had first-hand experience with survivors of trauma/abuse?

_____YES. _____NO.

IF YES,

- a. How often have you had such first-hand experiences? (No. of times) _____
- b. If so, what was that experience like for you?

- c. What did you learn? _____

2. If not, have you read, watched films, or listened to stories of survivors of trauma/abuse?

_____Yes _____NO.

- a. What did you learn?

3. If none of the above, would you be interested in learning more from survivors of abuse?

_____Yes. _____NO.

With regard to clerical abuse, specifically:

4. Have you personally had first-hand experience with survivors of clerical abuse?

_____YES. _____NO.

- a. How often have you had such first-hand experiences? _____
- b. If so, what was that experience like for you?

- c. What did you learn?

5. Have you read, watched films, or listened to stories of survivors of clerical abuse?

- a. What did you learn?

6. If none of the above, would you be interested in learning more from survivors of clerical abuse?

_____YES. _____NO.

With regard to future community conversations:

7. Would you be interested or willing to participate in additional community conversations this year about these topics (abuse, racism, clericalism; grieving in general)?

___YES.

___NO.

IF YES, PLEASE SPECIFY.

III. Review of Previous Topics

Suggested time: 5-10 minutes

In this section, we will review previously covered material. After reading through the review materials, you will be asked to answer six questions. The answers won't be graded, as such, but if your responses are not correct, you will be redirected back to the review material and given another chance to answer the question.

Types of Offenders. There are generally two types of offenders. You should be familiar with the "warning signs" that pertain to each type as they are different and predictable according to their definitions. Both types of offenders can and might desire sexual relations with adults. In fact, most offenders in society are heterosexual, married men.

- 1) **Preferential offenders.** The preferential offender desires the company of children over adults and targets a specific "type" or age of a child.

Warning Signs of Preferential Offenders¹

- Finds reasons to spend time alone with minors.
- Prefers time with minors to time with peers.
- Gives gifts to minors, especially without permission.
- Goes overboard with physical contact with minors.
- Always wants to wrestle or tickle minors.
- Shows favoritism toward certain minors.
- Treats minors like equals or adults.
- Keeps secrets with minors.
- Ignores policies about interacting with minors.
- Breaks the rules.
- Uses inappropriate language with minors.
- Tells "off-color" jokes to minors.

¹ Taken from Praesidium.

2) **Situational offenders.** The situational offender will target almost any vulnerable or easily manipulated individual: children, elderly, physically or mentally challenged, vulnerable adults. Abuse occurs when the “situational” stressors in his life become overwhelming or out of control.

Warning Signs of Situational Offenders²:

- Excessively using alcohol.
- Use of drugs.
- Experiencing anxiety or depression.
- Having trouble coping with loneliness.
- Facing rejection or disappointment.
- Poor coping skills with personal loss.
- Feels unappreciated and unrewarded for hard work.
- Becoming increasingly dependent on a “convenient” relationship with a minor, such as a minor who works in the house, rectory or community or is already involved with the individual.

PLEASE CIRCLE THE CORRECT RESPONSE.

1. Which of the following might be a warning sign for a "situational" offender?

- A. Becoming increasingly dependent on a “convenient” relationship with a minor, such as a minor who works in the house, rectory or community or is already involved with the individual.
- B. Poor coping skills with personal loss
- C. Drinking too much, and increased isolation and depression.
- D. Feeling unappreciated and unrewarded for hard work.
- E. All of the above.
- F. None of the above.

2. Which of the statements below best describe a warning sign of a "preferential" sexual offender?

- A. Breaking rules or ignoring policies about interacting with minors.
- B. Showing favoritism towards certain minors.
- C. Preferring the company of minor to peers.
- D. Treating minors like equals or adults.
- E. All of the above.
- F. None of the above

² Taken from Praesidium.

Praesidium Guidelines and Jesuit Provinces

(Important note: Praesidium Guidelines only apply to American Jesuits; Canadian Jesuits should consult the Canadian Province Policies and Procedures)

Mandated Reporting & the Law. Mandated reporting to civil authorities of known or suspected sexual or other abuse of minors is required by law in most states. You need to be aware of these laws, which vary from state to state and from province to province. Know the requirements of the state(s) or province(s) in which you work and/or reside. These laws are constantly being amended by legislatures, so it's important to keep up to date on them. Ask for help if you still do not understand your responsibilities.

As a **mandated reporter, YOU** are responsible for reporting any allegation of current abuse or neglect of a minor in any form – physical, emotional and sexual – to the appropriate authorities. You must do so immediately or in a “timely” manner according to the laws of the jurisdiction within which you reside.

In some jurisdictions, you are also mandated to report any past abuse, in addition to any current/ongoing abuse or suspected abuse.

In those jurisdictions with mandatory reporting requirements, a person making a report is immune under the law from any legal liability for making the report in good faith even if, after the act, the report turns out to be inaccurate in any respect.

Mandated reporting is also an obligation of the *2020 Standards of Accreditation* (by Praesidium, Inc.) adopted by the Conference of Major Superiors of Men. **These standards require that each Jesuit “report all known or suspected sexual abuse of a survivor who is currently a minor to the appropriate authorities.”** Similar standards are in force in the Canadian Province.

This obligation applies regardless of the requirements of state or provincial law. In those jurisdictions requiring you to report, all the specifics of civil law must be followed. But even in those jurisdictions that do not require you to report allegations of sexual abuse of a minor, U.S. Jesuits are still obliged by these 2020 Standards to report these allegations to civil authorities. Contact your provincial or diocesan office if you require assistance with making this report.

You must also be aware of the Province policies with regard to receiving and reporting allegations of sexual abuse of a minor and also alert the local Superior and/or provincial delegate who handles these situations.

Best Practices for Mandated Reporting

Below are a few “basics” of mandatory reporting to keep in mind:

- **Don't panic.**
- **Know who to call in your jurisdiction.**
- **Ask for help. Your Province office is your best bet. Every office has someone who can assist and advise you. This person can help you make the required report.**
- **You must be the person to report. You can't delegate this responsibility to anyone else, although you can seek assistance in making the report.**
- **Do not delay in responding; typically, most states require an immediate and/or timely response.**

PLEASE CIRCLE THE CORRECT RESPONSE.

3. Which of the following statements best describes your time requirement for responding to an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor as a "mandated reporter"?

- A. There is no requirement to report anything immediately.
- B. Usually, there is a large window of time to make a report as a "mandated reporter."
- C. Jurisdictions differ in this requirement; it is my responsibility as a "mandated reporter" to know and comply with these laws.
- D. Timely reporting is not relevant as a "mandated reporter."
- E. None of the above.
- F. All of the above.

4. Which of the following are included under your responsibilities as a "mandated reporter"?

- A. In some jurisdictions, you must report both current and past incidences of **abuse of a minor** or suspected **abuse of a minor**.
- B. You can delegate reporting responsibility to another party-you are not required to directly report abuse.
- C. You do not need to know the law in your jurisdiction.
- D. All of the above.
- E. None of the above.

PLEASE CIRCLE THE CORRECT RESPONSE.

5. Best practices for reporting include which of the following?

- A. Know who to call in your jurisdiction.
- B. Ask for help, particularly from your province office.
- C. Do not delay in reporting abuse or suspected abuse of any kind.
- D. All of the above.

6. During spiritual direction, an older directee mentions being abused by a priest when he was in high school. In this state, past abuse must be reported. Which of the following should you do?

- A. Call your province office.
- B. Directly report the incident to the proper civil authorities.
- C. Respond immediately.
- D. All of the above.
- E. None of the above; you have no responsibilities as this is a past case of abuse.

NAME (PLEASE PRINT) _____.

SIGNATURE _____.

DATE: ____/____/____.

SUPERIOR'S Signature _____.

DATE: ____/____/____.

THANKS FOR YOUR PARTICPATION!