

## Narrative Flow of Schwartz Rounds

*This framework for the Narrative Flow of Schwartz Rounds was developed by Schwartz Center Chief Medical Officer, Beth Lown, MD. By focusing on the Narrative Flow, Schwartz Rounds Facilitators will lead panelists and participants through a structured discussion of the social and emotional experiences of caregiving.*



### Introduction and Setting the Tone

- Welcome everyone and acknowledge current events in your organization and globally.
- Express appreciation and gratitude to all who are present.
- Explain the purpose and history of Schwartz Rounds and Ken Schwartz's story
- Consider reading a brief reflective quote or poem.
- Consider taking a moment for a few deep breathes and enter the space together.
- Explain the Schwartz Rounds safety guidelines with attention to:
  - Confidentiality
  - Offering empathy and compassion
  - Managing distractions (pagers, cell phones, email)
  - Focusing on creating a shared experience of support
  - Honoring and appreciating courage
- Briefly describe the topic or case for this Schwartz Rounds
- Remind participants that this is a time for collective restoration, not a time for problem solving or addressing the many systemic and national challenges we face.

### Panelists Share Experiences

- Introduce the panelists.
- Allow panelists to share the social and emotional aspects of their experience with the case or topic.
- Ask the panelists to speak for 2-5 minutes each.
- Ensure that the panelist have finished sharing by 25-minutes past the hour.

### Opening the Discussion

- Express gratitude to the panel.
- Summarize the theme of the panel's experiences.
- Offer a moment for participants to reflect silently on what they have heard. Use an introspective question prompt, for example:
  - Shall we take a moment to reflect?
  - How are you feeling in this moment?
- Invite participants to share a story, experience, or feeling related to the theme.
  - What is uppermost in your hearts and minds as it relates to the theme?
  - What resonates as you listen to others speak?
  - What are you thinking or feeling right now?

## Building the Discussion

- Reflect on what you are seeing and hearing from participants.
- Notes that, while our common humanity and challenges can unite us, each of us responds to unique ways in stressful events. Stress may look like frustration, anger, sense of moral duty and moral distress, anxiety, and/or grief.
- Use Trauma-Informed Facilitation Skills to build sense of safety, calm, connection, self-efficacy, and hope.
- Help participants moderate emotions and engage in cognitive reframing of extreme statements.
- Express and reinforce expressions of compassion, respect, and appreciation.

## Deepening the Discussion

- Summarize overarching themes as you go. Acknowledge difference in perspectives
- Manage digressions by:
  - Asking participants to maintain a respectful tone regardless of differences
  - Asking participants to share an experience in which differences were resolved with positive intentions.
  - Acknowledging frustrations related to systemic or organizational processes and respectfully remind participants of the purpose of the Schwartz Rounds forum.
- Facilitate with compassionate behaviors including modeling a non-anxious presence, curiosity, active listening, respect, appreciation, patience, tolerance with uncertainty, and comfort with silence.
- Continue the use of Trauma-Informed Facilitation Skills.

## Supporting Participants

- Ask the participants to voice how they find support and solace for themselves.
  - Who do they turn to?
  - How have they found support in the workplace? What has helped?
  - How have they supported others?
- Share resources for supporting the community. Sharing information from EAP, Behavioral Health, and Pastoral Care at your organization.
- Consider providing additional resources that are related to the specific topic or case.

## Closing Rounds

- “Signpost” the end of the conversation. For example, “I’m going to ask one more question before we wrap up”.
- Summarize key themes that have emerged from participants’ comments.
- Thank those present and any co-facilitators.
- Offer a closing reflection. Some examples are:
  - “Compassion can come from anyone at any time”
  - “We are grateful for the multiple perspectives, experiences, and stories of colleagues”
  - “We value teamwork, connection, and supporting each other”
- Encourage conversations to continue but remind participants to maintain confidentiality.
- Close with whatever rituals you generally use. This will help people feel a sense of continuity with the past.
- Leave time for recovery, by offering a closing reflection, poem or brief meditation if there is time. Ensure that there is space between Schwartz Rounds and returning to patient care.
- Supply information for resources and support.
- If you can, let participants know when the next Schwartz Rounds will take place.
- Remind participants to complete session evaluations.