TOPIC: DEBRIEF

The Bottom-Line Up Front:

- Debriefing as a Board is a healthy practice that can be used throughout the year to improve communication and teamwork. A debrief is like a verbal AAR (After Action Review). In a team context, it is a group discussion that assesses the mission's results.
- Debriefing can cover any part of the ministry—a program, the weekly schedule, watchcare, an outreach event, relationship with the Chapel staff, an area of challenge, an area of success—anything that impacts PWOC, positively or negatively.
- Discussion using the debrief model offers an opportunity for growth and reflection. *(This activity comes from the Team Building workshop in the Annual Core Training of the PWOC LDP.)*

FOUR GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL DEBRIEFS:

1. **Agree ahead of time on the process of each debrief.**
   - Read Colossians 3:12-17. What will the principles of this passage look like in your debrief? How will you treat one another? Set some ground rules.
   - Paul reminds us in Philippians 4:5, "Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near." Remember that our tone of voice is as important as the content of our message.

2. **Agree ahead of time on the goal of each debrief.**
   What is the desired end-result? Ultimately, we each want to walk away having LEARNED because of that debrief discussion. Learning requires us to have a posture of receiving. Think about what a difference this mindset can make in a group debrief.

3. **Ensure you have a mature moderator at the helm.**
   This individual will ensure that time boundaries, balanced feedback, and dialogue are the priorities. Your team needs to trust the moderator's leadership in this role.

4. **Finish well.**
   It's hard to receive feedback when it's not "everything about what you just did for PWOC was AMAZING!" It's hard to receive correction or ideas that are different from your own. But if your team can create an environment in which it feels SAFE to speak and receive loving and honest feedback, you as an individual will grow, your team will grow, and your PWOC ministry will receive the fruit of that labor.

PRACTICE A DEBRIEF:

1. **Stand in a Circle:**
   You are a single team with a single goal. No team in the world knows how to work well together without going through a process like this. It's not about *me,* it's about *us.* Our goal is to learn and grow *as a team.*

2. **Choose a Moderator:**
   Who on your team can listen well and remain neutral? The moderator will mostly withhold her opinion in order to draw out the thoughts of others in the group. She will clarify what she is hearing, as needed, to make sure she is representing each person's input correctly. She will treat each contribution of information with respect and dignity. The Board will choose to trust her leadership.

3. **Choose an Event:**
   What can you debrief? Try to think of an event or situation within the last few weeks.

4. **What Went Well?**
   Share the highlights of the event. The moderator will invite responses. What went well that you would like to duplicate next time? Brainstorm. Mention specific instances and specific people. Speak words of affirmation.

5. **What Could Have Gone Better?**
   Every event has room for improvement. What needs to shift for next time? The moderator invites responses. Be respectful to your teammates. Take ownership for improvements you can make.

6. **Summarize:**
   The moderator will summarize what went well and what the team would like to do differently next time. She will check to make sure her words are representative of the Board, giving opportunity for clarification.

7. **End Well:**
   The moderator will ask the question, "Are all hearts clear?" If anyone is burdened, let them share. Watch facial expressions. Make sure all your teammates are OK. If tears come, let them. Embrace your teammate. Affirm her. Encourage her. Be safe for her. Work through the issue. If needed, ask again, "Are all hearts clear?" Seal your time in prayer. Offer your future events to God. Thank Him for your team.

REFLECT: Do you have any take-aways from today's debrief? What do you not want to forget?