

# Know Your Rights Trainer-Training

3 trainers; 4-9 participants; 1 hour and 50 minutes

**Materials:** Know Your Rights “Trainer-Training” handout, simple KYR training agenda, cop hats and batons, butcher paper, markers, dates of future trainings, paper for contact info

## I. Intro (10 minutes)

- Who we are.
- We're not lawyers.
- Go 'round: What's your name, why are you at this workshop?
- What experience do people have going to and leading workshops?
- Anyone can do a Know Your Rights training. You don't need any special skills, acting ability, or legal experience.
- You don't have to take notes because we have handouts on all this information.
- Introduce the Sample Training: This is a typical “Know Your Rights” training.
  - We choose from about 20 role plays we have so we can tailor each training to what the participants need.
  - In this Trainer Training, we're going to go over how to turn the information in this guide into a fun, informative training. We'll cover acting basics, how to act like a cop, and how to lead a focused group discussion.
- Our goal for this training is not for you to be able to immediately be able to give a full training. The idea is that you'll have the skills to take the Sample Training, a couple of friends, and many hours of practice and turn *that* into a full workshop.
- How do people feel at the prospect of leading or helping lead a “Know Your Rights” workshop? [Write answers down on butcher paper]

## II. Finding Your Inner Cop (5 minutes)

- Go 'round: How do people feel at the prospect of acting like a cop?
  - We act like cops in our trainings because it gives people the chance to experience what it's like to be harassed by the cops without actually getting arrested
  - It's also more fun and effective than a lecture.
- Being a “realistic” cop means, first of all, going with your personality.
- Brainstorm different cop (stereo)types from movies and TV: The bored/lazy cop, “by the books” guy, angry cop, bad lieutenant...
- At first, don't try to be the cop you're not, unless it's part of making a role play work.
- You learn more range with time.
- Take a look at our handout regarding boundaries, like not using hate language.
- Do people still have any concerns?

## III. Cop Skillz (Total: 40 minutes)

### Intro (10 minutes)

- Who's done theater before?
- There are two basic theater skills we use: Blocking and projection.
  - Blocking is where you stand on the stage. For us it just means you and the participants don't have your backs to the “audience.”
  - Projection is the art of being loud without yelling. [demonstrate]
  - One trick is to act like you're speaking to the person in the back of the room.
  - Projection is really important, because sometimes you'll be doing a training where

no training was ever meant to be done: outside in a noisy park, in a big room with 4 other workshops happening, in a wind tunnel, underwater, etc.

- [Anecdote] The night before the big protests against the World Bank and IMF in Washington, DC, in 2000, Midnight Special gave a training for about 400 people in a gymnasium – without microphones or anything. You can do this if your projection is solid.
- When you're being a cop, your first task is to use body language to make the participant feel uncomfortable.
- [Exercise!] For your first exercise, you'll stand uncomfortably close to someone and just have a normal conversation with someone. [Have a participant stand up and model this with them] Everyone try it for two minutes. [Trainers walk around; if a group is too comfortable, “double team” someone in the group]
- How did that feel? Extremely uncomfortable, right? That shows how easy it is to act like a cop.
- Now let's act a little more like cops.
- When two cops are talking to one person, one of the cops should lurk right behind them on the opposite side of the other cop. [Model it while making generic cop talk: “What are you doing here?” “What's your name?” “Where are you coming from?”]
- [Exercise] Everyone stand up. Now stand tall, with your shoulders back, chest out, and feet planted far apart.
- [More exercise] Now, everyone practice cop harassment. Two of you will be cops and one person will be the participant. Make sure everyone has a chance to be the cop and participant.
- Make sure you and the person you're talking to are both facing the audience. You can do this by positioning yourself at an angle to them, or by physically moving them (they usually get it).
- You can also use props, like these hats and paper batons.

### **Talking like a cop (5 minutes)**

Here's some tips to talking like cops:

- [Trainers model the examples of cop phrases]
- Tell, don't ask: “Get off the bike.” “Answer the questions.”
- Immediately answer all questions in your favor: “Do I have to give you my bag?” “Yes, you do.” “Can you do that?” “Yes. I'm a cop, I know the law.”
- [Exercise] Everyone stand up, adopt the cop posture, and do “repeat after me” with cop stock phrases: “Stop!”, “What's your name?”, “Where are you coming from?”, “Let me see what's in the bag,” “You're under arrest, you're coming with me.”

### **Practice! (15 minutes)**

- [Model the “Stop and Search” role play with one of the participants as the “activist.”]
- Try to use the cop body language and speaking style to manipulate the participant.
- [Ask the “activist”] How did that make you feel? Why? [They should talk about personal space, questions keeping them off balance, threatening language...]
- [Exercise] Get into groups of 3 to practice the role play. Make sure everyone has a chance to try each role. Remember to use cop body language and speaking style.
  - [Trainers listen and give each person they observe 1 positive piece of feedback and one thing for them to work on.]
- Debrief.

### **Arrest (5 minutes)**

- Arrests are an important part of the training. Role plays usually begin or end with an arrest.
- Face the participants and make sure the arrestee faces the participants.
- Tell them, "You're under arrest, you're coming with me."
- Hold them by the elbow. Then put their hands behind their back and grab their wrists with one hand and their elbow by the other. [Demonstrate with a participant while facing the participants and with your back to them so they can see what it looks like.]
- If the arrestee resists, you can tell them not to.
- Cops often read people their rights in a border and uninterested way. [Model]
- Sometimes we read people their rights, sometimes we don't. We usually have a reason for whichever it is, so try to do what the role play suggests.

### **Practice! (5 minutes)**

- Get into groups of 2 and practice arresting each other. The trainers will work in as difficult participants.
- [Make sure they don't yank people around too hard.]

## **IV. Yo! MSLC Raps (Total: 45 minutes)**

### **Intro (5 minutes)**

- The point of the raps is to draw answers from the participants. This gives them confidence in themselves and is a more effective way of teaching than just lecturing.
- We ask questions, use brainstorms, occasional cold-calling and other tools to encourage people to participate.

### **Practice! (25 minutes)**

- We're focusing on the Weed in the Park rap because it's the simplest, and has one of the two most important lessons: Don't trust cops.
- [Model the role play]
- Ideally, you'll be able to mix asking participants questions and using their answers to guide the discussion.
- [Model the rap]
- Did people see how we used the questions to guide the discussion?
- [Exercise] In groups of three, everyone practice giving the rap.
  - [Trainers listen and give each person they observe 1 positive piece of feedback and one thing for them to work on.]
- Debrief

### **Challenges (10 minutes)**

Our goal for these raps is to lead a discussion where everyone participates equally and comes up with what went wrong and how to fix it.

- [Exercise] Brainstorm challenges/problems with making this happen:
- [Trainers model each problem behavior named.]
  - **If someone dominates conversation:**
    - [Model] "Oh, oh, me! Over here! I know! I know"
    - Be clear you are trying to let everyone's voice be heard

- Remind folks that people should raise their hands
- Remind them you're trying to hear from everyone.
- Try to catch this one *early* in the training or it sets the tone for the whole training.
- **If someone is consistently off topic:**
  - [Model] "So this one time, some friends and I? were at a protest in Canada, and..."
  - The key is being willing to stay after the training to answer their questions. Then you can just say, "That's a little off topic. Why don't we talk about it after the training?"  
Don't be afraid to (politely) cut people off and draw boundaries about what is going to be discussed and for how long.
  - Explain that the training is designed to take up about all the time given for it.
  - Be flexible. If everyone is fascinated by the new topic, you might want to make time to explore it for a while. This is a judgment call.
- **If some people won't speak up:**
  - If they're shy, don't be obnoxious, but try to draw them out. Ask them questions. Make a point of call on them if they raise their hands.
  - Try calling on someone who's shy by connecting the current topic with something they've spoken on before: "Max, you mentioned searches before. Do you think it's a good idea to let the cops search your bag if you know for sure there's nothing incriminating in it?"
- **If no one speaks up:**
  - [Model waiting for a long time. ]
  - Don't be afraid to literally wait in silence for 30 seconds or so.
  - This happens sometimes; it's hard to keep folks' energy up for two hours.
  - Use jokes and anecdotes to get people more engaged.
  - Ask if anyone has had an experience like the one in the role play.
  - Don't be afraid to have everyone get up and stretch for a second.
- **If a role play goes wrong:**
  - Briefly describe what went wrong and should've happened before moving on to the next role play.

### **How to Practice (5 minutes)**

- It can be hard to practice the raps, but it's important to. Don't just glance over the scenarios and bullet points.
- With some friends, practice the role plays. Then practice them again.
- For the raps, do the same thing. But each time have the participants be a little more difficult. It can be fun to model the problem behavior we just listed, and give your friends a (constructively) hard time.
- At first you'll want to choose your parts based on what's easiest for you to do. Eventually you'll choose the roles that are more challenging to you. Ideally, you should be comfortable in any role and giving any rap.

### **V. Wrap-Up (Total: 10 minutes)**

- There are more resources at [www.MidnightSpecial.net](http://www.MidnightSpecial.net), including a full list of all the role plays we have, and the handouts that go with the training. You can even find this trainer training on our web site!
- How do people feel *now* about the prospect of leading a workshop?

- [Address any lingering concerns.]

## **VI.Evaluation (5 minutes)**

# Know Your Rights “Trainer-Training” Handout

## Stop & Search Scenario

**Scenario:** Participant is riding bike away from a protest where demonstrators were blockading. Two cops stop her and tell her she has to give them her ID. One cop does most of the talking. The other, less talky cop throws in quick, off-topic questions when the participant tries to think or asks questions. (Example - Participant: 'Umm, do I have to answer your questions?' Less Talky Cop: 'Is this your current address?'). Both cops stand menacingly close to the participant (right next to her and right behind her).

They question her about the protest they saw her come from, and ask her to confirm that the organizers are Joe and Mary from the Anarchist House. After getting that confirmation, the cops demand to search her bag. Whenever the participant asks, 'Do I have to answer that?', the cops answer, 'Yes, you do.' Cops can also ask confusing questions like, "So you're saying you do not deny permission to examine the bag?" and no matter what the Participant says, "Thank you for your consent" and grab and search the bag.

The role play ends when the cops find her 'Slingshot' anarchist day planner and start copying down all the names and phone numbers in it.

**The second time** doing the role play, the cops ask the same question but the participant (hopefully) asks if she's being detained and does not consent to a search. The cops reluctantly say she's not detained and let her go.

**Role Play Cards:** You are riding your bike home from a blockade and you get stopped by 2 cops who ask you questions. You are confused and often ask the officers if you have to do what they say. You reluctantly answer all of their questions, show them your ID and let them search your backpack.

**Intro:** In this next role play, (Participant) is biking home from a blockade and gets stopped by two cops. Let's see what happens.

# "Weed in the Park" Role Play

## 1. Weed in the Park

**Scenario:** Participant is walking in the park. The Narc asks if she wants to buy pot. Participant asks, "Are you a cop?" The Narc says no, and they smoke up together to prove the Narc isn't a cop. When the Participant pulls out money to buy the pot, the Trainer behind the bushes pops out and arrests her.

When the Narc offers to sell you weed, ask if she's a cop. Then ask her to smoke up with you to prove she isn't a cop. Then buy the pot. (When you get arrested, **do not resist.**)

**Intro:** (Participant) is walking through the park after a hard week of work and is looking for a way to relax. She runs into (Trainer 1), who's actually a narc. (Trainer 2) is a cop hiding in the bushes. Action!

### Lessons:

- Cops are allowed to lie about being cops - otherwise they wouldn't be effective undercover.
- Cops are allowed to break the law - same reason.
- This isn't entrapment. To use the entrapment defense, the cops basically have to coerce you into breaking the law, and you have to look like an angel to the jury (no previous record, etc.). The entrapment defense is almost impossible to use successfully.
- It's not just Narcs you have to look out for. Sometimes people you know might be helping the cops because they are in trouble (maybe facing a third strike, etc.)
  - This is very common with drug offenses.
  - They look right, talk right, and have familiar faces.
- Infiltrators are the political equivalent of narcs.
- When people at meetings ask members of the media and law enforcement to identify themselves, they give people a false sense of security.
- If you are going to do risky things, make sure you know and trust the people you do them with.

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## Doing "Weed in the Park"

### • **Setting up the Role Play**

- Usually, the person giving the rap will "set up" the role play for the audience with a couple of short explanatory sentences. For example:
  - "In this role play, Marcia is walking home through a park after a long week of organizing. Let's see what happens."*
- Some prefer to explain a bit more, especially if the "cops" are not in costume:
  - "Greg is a cop crouching over there behind some bushes, watching as Ariel (a narc) tries to sell Marcia some pot. Let's see what happens."*

### • **Practicing the Rap**

We try to make raps as participatory as possible. One way to do this is by asking questions about what they think and about their experiences. It's hard to practice engaging the audience when there is no audience. Have other trainers give audience responses. Also, have them ask questions if something's confusing or not clear – answering them will help you become more comfortable conveying the information.

- **Weed in the Park Rap**

Q. So did anyone see anything that was illegal?

A. *Person did drugs, cop did drugs, cop lied about being a cop*

Q. First, what did the cop say when \_\_\_\_\_ asked her if she was a cop?

A. *That she wasn't!*

Q. Does a cop have to tell you if he's a cop?

A. *Yes, No*

Q. How many people think that cops have to admit to being a cop if you ask them?

A. *Show of hands*

- Lesson 1 – Cops are allowed to lie about being cops — have to to be effective undercover.

Q. How many people think it's illegal for cops to do drugs?

A. *Show of hands*

- Lesson 2 – Cops are also allowed to do drugs and break the law — same reason.

Maybe some of you have heard of entrapment/ I heard someone say that this was entrapment.

Q. [Who knows what entrapment is?]

A. *maybe, maybe not.*

- Lesson 3 -- This is not entrapment. Basically, entrapment is a legal defense that rarely works. To be entrapment, the cops basically have to coerce you into breaking the law. Was this person coerced? Tricked maybe, but not coerced.

Q. So cops can lie about being cops, cops can do drugs, cops can urge you to break the law. So buying drugs from someone on the street probably isn't such a good idea. Is there a safe way to buy drugs?

A. *(hypothetically) Buy from your friends, people you know; get a green card, grow your own.*

- Lesson 4 – Watch out for informants. Informants are regular people who have made a deal with the cops to turn people in in exchange for reduced charges or a lesser sentence). They look right, talk right, and you may have a history with them, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's safe.
- Lesson 5 – In a political context, infiltrators are the equivalent of narcs. The same rules apply – cops are allowed to lie about everything, and you can get in trouble for breaking the law even if an infiltrator encouraged you or helped you do it.

Q. Has anyone ever been to a meeting where someone has asked members of the media and law enforcement to identify themselves?

A. *Yes.*

- Lesson 6 – But cops don't have to identify themselves. This question gives people a false sense of security. If you are planning direct action or civil disobedience of any kind, but especially if it is high-risk, it should be with people you trust, not someone



you just met at a meeting.

- Lesson 7 -- If you are going to do risky things, make sure you know and trust the people you do them with.

# How to Act Like a Cop

## **Speaking in Commands**

When you talk to participants, don't ask them questions – give them commands:

- Not “May I please see your license?” but “Show me your license.”
- Not “Can I search your bag?” but “Let's see what's in your bag.”

## **Doing A Job**

Usually cops don't think of what they do as harassment but just as doing their job. You don't have to yell at people or even be mean or obnoxious, you can just be bored and business-like.

## **Talking to “suspects”**

Unless you're playing a “bad cop”, don't yell or threaten physical force. If a participant's being obnoxious (by swearing or using their rights), you can be condescending, sarcastic, or even insulting and threatening without being overly aggressive.

At first, when you're asking questions, don't act eager or interested in the answers. You're just scoping out the situation to see if you can move in for a kill; you don't want to frighten away the prey, now do you?

Sometimes, people get nervous and laugh at you. It's hard sometimes not to break character and laugh along with them. One line that always comes in handy, the one we've all heard at least one authority figure say – “You think this is funny?”

## **Body Language**

If you're a cop, you have power, you know it, and you act like it.

- Stand tall with your shoulders up, chest out, feet planted far apart.
- Get uncomfortably close to people you're talking to.
- If you have a billy club, hold it, caress it, tap things with it.
- If it's two cops talking to one person, one of the cops should lurk right behind the person on the opposite side of the other cop.

## **Handling/Arresting “suspects”**

Grab them by the elbow then put their hands behind their back; grab their wrists with one hand and their elbow with the other. Don't jerk the person around by the arm, but hold their arm firmly and guide them from behind.

## **Realism vs. Fun**

Role plays are designed to have a balance of being fun and entertaining enough to keep people interested, but scary enough to be realistic and prepare people for interacting with the cops. As a cop, it's important to stay in character to make sure the roleplay is realistic enough, but it's equally important not to harm a participant in any way.