



# EMPOWERMENT

THE NEWSLETTER OF FEAR 2 FREEDOM

SEPTEMBER 2021

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

September brings the hope of fall as summer peters to an end. For collegiate students this is a busy time adjusting to classes, reconnecting with friends, reveling in freedom away from home. But for many this time between September and November is marred with the Red Zone when over 50% of sexual assaults occur on campus.

That's why Fear 2 Freedom's Hour 2 Empower programs are needed during these critical months. After a year of virtual H2E programs we are excited to begin in-person programs again. Our fall schedule is filling up! As we empower students and communities through interactive educational programs to Be The Change, to combat sexual violence in all it's forms, we hope you will help us raise awareness, too. Please check out our website [www.fear2freedom.org](http://www.fear2freedom.org) for ways you can get involved.



This month F2F is also focusing on healthy relationships, something that takes lots of effort to maintain. Respect yourself, respect others – and others will respect you!

*Virginia Woodward*

## AWAY FROM HOME

It's hard when your children graduate and leave for college. Letting go is not easy in the best of times, but it's downright tough when the Red Zone clouds the horizon. Last year, F2F's Chief Operating Officer January Serda dropped her oldest son off at college for the first time.



*"Learning about the RedZone empowered me to have an honest conversation with my son before he left for college in hope of equipping him with information to help him make good decisions and to be the guy that helps someone get safely home after a party."*

- January Serda, COO, F2F



Learning about the Red Zone helped January proactively reach out to her son. Having difficult conversations with college-age children is not an easy task, but it's necessary. It's not just students who can Be The Change. By educating ourselves and our kids, parents can create powerful change too!

# HEALTHY COMMUNICATION

The ways in which we communicate with each other lay the foundation of the relationships we build, whether for better or worse. Although interacting with our loved ones can seem second nature, it can be easy for us to get caught in less than ideal patterns of communication. This is especially true for our listening skills... Looking at your phone & giving a few half hearted responses while your partner tells you about their day... Letting out a sigh/eye roll when your friend starts complaining about the same work problem for the millionth time... This self-improvement month lets learn how we can be more thoughtful listeners so we can build healthier, more fulfilling relationships.

## LISTENING

When we truly pay attention to what others are communicating to us, we're engaging in an act of caring & respect. Active listening is our key to doing this. Practicing this means approaching conversations with curiosity to learning others perspectives as well as listening with the intent to understand. This is quite different from conversations where we're only listening to what we want/expect to hear or where we're focused on formulating our response/quick fix when someone just wants to be heard.

## BENEFITS

Making active listening a regular practice can have so many benefits for all types of relationships. Doing so ensures that we really understand what someone is communicating to us which helps us clarify boundaries & avoid misunderstandings. This is especially important in sexual relationships, where making assumptions about others' perspectives can have severe consequences. When we recognize that the conversation is more about who we're speaking with than ourselves, we're able to be more open to understanding the point of view of another person & respond with empathy. Doing this helps us foster trust & deep connection in our relationships.

## TIPS

Understanding how much positive impact active listening can have is great but actually putting it into practice can be challenging. Check out our infographic to learn how to incorporate the key components of this free act of compassion into your regular conversations.

With these tips, listening can become a tremendous act of thoughtfulness you can share with others while building healthy, fulfilling relationships. Spending some time this self-improvement month to hone our listening skills is hopefully something we can all agree is worth the investment.

## thoughtfully LISTENING

tools for healthy communication



### Focus

- Give your undivided attention by eliminating distractions: put away your phone, move to a quiet environment, etc.
- Don't forget to pay attention to what your, as well as your conversation partner's, body language is communicating.

### Respect

- Uphold boundaries: avoid pressuring them to share more than they're comfortable & keep sensitive information confidential.
- Be respectful of others choices & viewpoints, even if they differ from your own.



### Encourage

- Keep the conversation going by posing open ended & reflective questions.
- Restate what has been said to clarify your understanding & show that you truly heard them.

### Empathy

- Create space for open communication by avoiding interrupting or dominating the conversation.
- Validate the feelings and reactions people are expressing to you & withhold any judgement.



[fear2freedom.org](http://fear2freedom.org)

# FOUNDER'S FEATURE

## CNU Orientation

Last month our fearless founder Rosemary Tribble shared her courageous story with 1,000+ CNU freshmen at Fear 2 Freedom's Be The Change orientation event. The fact that 1 in 5 students are assaulted during their college years is unacceptable! She challenged students to be aware of what is going on around them, to combat sexual violence in all its forms, to Be The Change. The event wrapped up with all the students standing together to pledge,

*"I pledge to help end sexual violence. I will stand firm to protect the people in my surrounding community. I pledge to be the change."*



*"I consider it one of my greatest privileges to be a voice for the voiceless, to walk alongside survivors helping them move from fear to freedom [...] The cycle of fear can be broken, lost joy can be found."*

- Rosemary Tribble, founder, F2F

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



## Topsy Samuelson

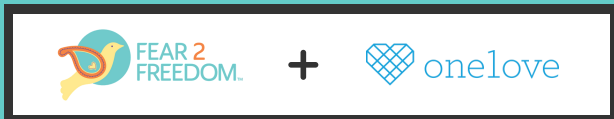
Topsy, THANK YOU for supporting our mission with your countless volunteer hours this summer. From writing notecards in Spanish for Spanish speaking survivors, to packing F2F Kits and supporting logistics, you truly are a Champion for F2F!

*"When I began volunteering at F2F, it was mainly to check a box, to get a signature for my time, and to fulfill a requirement. That was until I really got to know the people, what they do everyday, and who they impact. F2F is important to me because it shows me that everyone can make a difference. I am a sophomore in high school, and I may not be old enough to drive or to vote or to do anything that others may deem 'important', but I can write personal note cards and pack kits for survivors, and, in my opinion, that makes a pretty big difference!"*

- Topsy Samuelson, F2F Volunteer

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## SAVE THE DATE!



### Facebook Live

FRIDAY | SEPTEMBER 24TH, 2021 | 2:00PM

Tune into the conversation between F2F's Virginia Woodward & Annie Forrest, Director of Program Growth at One Love, as they discuss healthy communication & relationships

### Winery Event

FRIDAY | OCTOBER 22ND, 2021 | 5:30PM

We are looking forward to a fabulous evening at the Williamsburg Winery this autumn. Come celebrate our Ten Year Anniversary with a guided wine tasting from a seasoned winemaker, delectable food pairings, music from a jazz ensemble & much more!



## COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

### Waters Edge Church

On August 6 Waters Edge Church hosted F2F's Hour 2 Empower virtual program for its church members, followed by a 150 kit packing event! Ally & Andrew from Beloved Haven joined Waters Edges' many volunteers & made for an excited group of hands & hearts. UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center & Children's National were additional recipients of Waters Edge's generosity. THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING THE CHANGE!

