



## **The Care & Feeding of Law Enforcement for Advocates (and other professionals)**

What do cats and dogs have in common? Seemingly nothing. Cats and dogs have historically been seen as rivals and even mortal enemies!

Cats and dogs actually have a great deal more in common than we may think. What do advocates and LE have in common? Both are integral to ensuring justice and responsible for caring for victims. We have common ground and solutions towards making our working relationships better – for the benefit of everyone.

Although there are many competing priorities when it comes to victim advocates and other helping professionals who work to support victims and witnesses of crime and other catastrophic experiences, there are numerous similarities and common goals linking law enforcement and other helping professionals.

Participants in the criminal justice system are best served when the system works together in the pursuit of justice for all. Our society and the public we serve are dishonored and potentially harmed when there is conflict and infighting among criminal justice professionals. “Justice for All” begins with a realistic understanding of the core principles and precepts of “our” system and continues when we all understand each others roles and strive to work together for the greater good.

This presentation will explore the the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement professionals and how they may conflict with the roles and responsibilities of victim advocates and other helping professionals. The discussion of differences will then be compared to the overwhelming and overlapping roles and responsibilities of law enforcement and other helping professionals – including, but not limited to advocates.

Healthy and effective criminal justice teams are essential to serve the public good – they take a great deal of work to create and maintain authentic communication, manage conflict and achieve healthy professional relationships. The possibilities are endless – we can and must work together – no one profession can effectively support our communities alone – we have an ethical obligation to work jointly and can have fun and grow through the process.

### **Objectives:**

- Understand the overall criminal justice approach and response to crime and crime specialties
- Identify law enforcement needs and general policies
- Understand the investigative process
- Review best practices for multidisciplinary teams
- Identify ways in which victim advocates and allied professionals can find common ground with law enforcement
- Discuss handling professional conflict within multidisciplinary teams
- Build and maintain strong effective relationships with law enforcement for the betterment of our communities