



Audrey's flowers

For years, Audrey has been helping her community centre decorate and prepare for special events. This summer the centre planned an event to raise funds for their seniors' facility. The event was well publicized, with invitations sent to local politicians and media. Audrey spent weeks planning and preparing a display which highlighted the history of the seniors' facility and was decorated with photographs, artwork and crafted items. She was proud of her work, especially after the director told her how honoured the seniors felt by the care and detail she had put into it.

Audrey arrived at the community centre early in the morning of the big event. She was shocked to find her display in tatters. Photos, artwork and other items had been ripped off the wall. Some things were missing, others were dirty and torn. The display looked terrible.

She did her best to salvage what she could and piece something together before people started arriving. But what was supposed to be a day of celebration was for her upsetting and confusing. She was plagued with questions. Who had wrecked the display? Was it deliberate? Was someone upset with her? She felt angry, hurt and embarrassed.

Toward the end of the day, one of the youth coordinators approached her. He told her that the previous night there had been an event for local youth that brought in troubled kids and youth-at-risk. An argument broke out between two young men. One left the room and the coordinator assumed he'd gone outside to cool off. Only later did he see the wrecked display.

"That young man has always been trouble," he told Audrey. "I'm going to make it clear to him that what he did was unacceptable and he will not be welcome back until he can learn to behave."

In the coming months, though she tried to let it go, Audrey was still saddened by what happened to her display and she still didn't really understand what had happened. Who was this young man who wrecked her hard work and undermined the community centre and the public event? She thought of all the time and energy she had invested in the display and how quickly it was destroyed. When it came time to plan for the Christmas party, Audrey did not volunteer again to help decorate.

As for the young man, the next time he showed up at the community centre he was met with a cold welcome and tongue-lashing from the coordinator. He left in anger, purposefully knocking over a potted plant on his way out, and never came back.

Questions for Discussion

Break into groups and discuss the following questions. After 5-10 minutes, return to the group and use a flip chart to record some of the responses.

- 1) Who has been hurt in this scenario?
- 2) What are do they need?
- 3) What was done to address this situation? What this enough? Did it satisfy the needs of those hurt?



