



A Primer of Dealing with an Unhinged Guest

By Jake Sasseville

Handling a challenging guest at a retreat can be a delicate situation. Whether a guest is clingy, grumpy, or experiencing emotional swings, their behavior can affect not just their own experience but also the well-being and harmony of the entire group. This script provides practical steps and thoughtful questions designed to help retreat leaders manage such situations effectively, ensuring the safety and integrity of the retreat environment.

The Approach:

When confronted with a difficult guest, the goal is not merely to diffuse the situation but to understand and address the underlying issues compassionately and effectively. It's about maintaining the sacred container of the retreat while ensuring that all guests feel supported and respected.

Steps and Questions to Guide the Conversation:

1. Acknowledge Their Feelings

Explanation: Begin by recognizing and validating the guest's feelings. This can help de-escalate emotions and show that you are not there to judge but to support.

Question: "I can see you're feeling really upset right now, and I want to understand better. Can you share with me what's going on for you?"

2. Provide Space to Share

Explanation: Give them a moment to express themselves. Sometimes, people just need to feel heard.

discoverimiloa.com

Unlock Your Impact-Driven Playbook.



8. Follow Up

Explanation: Make a point to check in with them after the initial conversation to show continued support and care.

Question: "Can we check in later/tomorrow to revisit how you're feeling?"

9. Document the Incident

Explanation: Keep a record of what happened in case further actions are needed or the situation escalates.

Question: "I'm going to note down our conversation just to keep track of how we've handled this. Is there anything else you'd like to add?"

10. Seek Further Help If Needed

Explanation: If the situation escalates or the guest's behavior remains disruptive despite initial interventions, consider involving higher-level interventions.

Question: "I feel we need some additional support to resolve this situation. How do you feel about us consulting with someone else to get their perspective?"

Dealing with an unhinged guest is about balancing empathy with firmness. By taking a structured approach to conversation and intervention, retreat leaders can not only manage difficult situations more effectively but also maintain the integrity and positive atmosphere of the retreat. Remember, every challenge is an opportunity to strengthen your skills as a facilitator and deepen your understanding of human behavior.



CONFIRM AND CHECK

- *Explanation:* Ensure that the objection is resolved and reaffirm their readiness to proceed.
- *Question:* "Does this address your concern about [objection]? Are we ready to move forward?"

PROCEED CONFIDENTLY

- *Explanation:* Act confidently as if the commitment is natural next step.
- *Question:* "What are the next steps you'd like to take to secure your spot?"

Embracing these steps not only smoothens the path to enrollment but also builds a foundation of trust and respect. These conversations aren't just transactions; they're opportunities to create lasting relationships and deliver true value. Remember, every objection is a chance to deepen a connection and bring someone closer to saying 'yes' to transformation at Imiloa. Let's turn those objections into opportunities together.