

WHEN SOMEONE CONFIDES ABUSE DECISION TREE

BY SHARON WEGMAN



The Trauma Informed Pastor

thetraumainformedpastor.com

Sharon M. Wegman, MA, NCP, LPC

A Decision Tree for Faith Leaders Handling Abuse Allegations

A tool to understand what is most helpful in times of crisis

On the next page, you will find a custom decision tree created to assist in the complex decision-making tied to abuse allegations. Decision trees serve as invaluable tools for faith leaders navigating the complex and sensitive landscape of handling abuse allegations within their communities. These structured models offer a clear, step-by-step guide to making informed, ethical, and legal decisions when confronted with such challenging situations. By leveraging decision trees, faith leaders can approach these delicate matters with a greater sense of clarity and confidence, ensuring that their actions align with both their moral obligations and the legal requirements.

This decision tree breaks down the decision-making process into manageable steps, making it easier for faith leaders to assess the situation from multiple angles. Each branch of the tree represents a potential action or outcome, guiding leaders through a series of questions that consider the nature of the allegation, the safety of the victim, the legal implications, and the community's welfare. This methodical approach ensures that all critical factors are considered before any decisions are made, thereby minimizing the risk of oversight or rash judgment.

Moreover, decision trees promote transparency and accountability in how allegations are handled. By following a predetermined and logical pathway, faith leaders can demonstrate to their communities that each case is treated with the seriousness and sensitivity it deserves. This can not only help in fostering a safer environment for all members but also in rebuilding trust in situations where it may have been eroded. In essence, decision trees provide faith leaders with a structured framework that supports the delicate balance between pastoral care and the imperative to act justly and protect the vulnerable.

