



Survivors' Voices Changemakers

Safe Practice Guidance

Our Principles

We ask all Changemakers to join us in signing up to the principles in *Turning Pain into Power*, our Charter for survivor engagement. This means that we will all try to participate in a way that promotes these principles, and will challenge and seek to address situations where we believe the principles are not being followed.

The principles affirm that engagement with survivors, for research, education or services, should be:

- Safe
- Empowering
- Amplifying survivors voices
- Promoting self-care
- Accountable and transparent
- Liberating
- Creative and joyful.

For more information about the Principles, and what they might look like in practice, please read *Turning Pain to Power*.

Our Values

As an organisation, Survivors Voices is committed to work in a way that is safe, fair and inclusive. This means:

- We are committed to the inclusion of all, in all our diversity (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, experience, culture, faith)
- We will promote a safe space based on a culture of tolerance, mutual respect and co-operation
- We seek to remove barriers that divide people and we encourage everyone to participate as much as they want to
- We will strive to develop a culture of openness, learning and fun where it is okay to make mistakes as well as celebrating success.

For more about our core values and how we work, please see our website.

Our Organisation

Survivors Voices has always been a survivor-led organisation. We recognise the shared perspective of anyone who has experienced abuse, trauma or violence as a child or an adult and the power of sharing stories with those who understand. We call this enlightened self-help and our passion is to see this available for all survivors who want it.



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We believe that survivors are experts in their own healing and as such their stories and perspectives need inform policy and practice in response to abuse, trauma and violence. We have felt the empowerment of being heard, finding the help you need and enabling things to be better for those that come after you.

We have needed the strength, wisdom and love of those that support us, whether family, friends or professionals and recognise that often our pain is their pain. So Survivors Voices has always involved supporters and offered support, resources and training for families, friends and professionals.

Survivors Voices is a project of Reshapers Community Interest Company (CIC), a social enterprise that promotes creativity, learning and activism to transform people's lives. We have a high standard of ethical practice, including safeguarding, DBS checks and a complaints process, and are accountable to our community of practice, board of directors and the CIC Regulator (see www.reshapers.org/about for more info.)

Keeping Safe

Once you have joined the Changemaker group, if you choose to take part in an activity that is organised by Survivors Voices, then your involvement may come under our safeguarding and health and safety practice. We follow standard good practice for the voluntary sector, full details are our in our Handbook which can be found on our websites.

If you are unhappy with anything about the way we are working, our complaints process is also in the handbook and on the website. If you get involved in a Changemaker opportunity where you are representing Survivors Voice in any way, such as speaking at a conference, this is also the process we will use if anyone makes a complaint about the activity you are part of. It is always based on the aim to facilitate open discussion based on restorative justice principles.

Being a survivor activist, using your experience of abuse and trauma to create change, can be both empowering and costly. We have developed safety guidelines for our peer support groups and events and we encourage Changemakers to read and use these to keep safe and adopt self-care. We will be developing more guidelines for Changemakers about keeping safe when sharing your experiences and other trigger points as a survivor activist. These will also be topics for discussion in the peer support networks we are piloting and through the Changemaker network communications.

Feedback

This is your group, so we need your voice. Please get in touch with your ideas to shape the vision and improve the way we work and our impact.

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