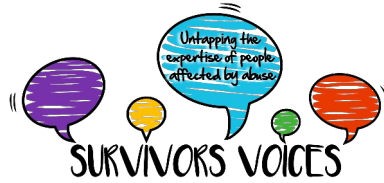


Survivors Voices: In Person Meeting Guidelines



Who are Survivors Voices?

Survivors Voices is a survivor-led organisation that harnesses the expertise of people affected by abuse in order to change society's response to trauma. We work with survivors of all types of abuse, whether experienced as a child or as an adult.

We are part of Reshapers CIC, a non-profit/social enterprise. Our work is undertaken by an experienced network of volunteers and freelancers from a variety of backgrounds. We are all 'experts by experience'. Please see our website for more information www.survivorsvoices.org.

Our Values and Principles

We operate from core values of trust, respect, and inclusion. You can learn more about our values on our website. The principles in our Charter [From Pain into Power](#) underpin all our work; the core principle is that everything we do needs to look unlike and be the opposite of abuse.

Safety Guidelines

Based on our values and principles, we aim to practice these in our meetings together. When we veer away from them, we can return here to re-orientate ourselves.

Anonymity & confidentiality

Our participation and personal information are private and confidential to the people present. It is fine to talk about topics that arise in the group with others, but please preserve other people's anonymity. Please don't disclose the names of any participants outside of this group.

Please be aware that if you share something that clearly identifies a child or adult is at risk of significant harm, our safeguarding responsibilities come into play, and we will speak with you about what needs to happen; see our [Safeguarding policy](#) for full details.

Your contact details will be stored securely according to GDPR requirements and will only be shared with the facilitators; and to provide contact information to essential services in the event of a risk of harm to yourself or others. We would always try to do this with your consent.

Care and Safety

In our survivor spaces, each of us is responsible for our own safety and participation. While we strive to create safer meeting spaces, we cannot guarantee that our meetings will never cause harm. We therefore aim to be caring and intentional about responding when harm does arise. Please care for and be gentle with yourselves and each other. Only share what you feel comfortable with and please don't ask others for personal details. While your story holds no shame, we are encouraged to avoid explicit descriptions of abuse that may be reactivating, as we want the sharing space to be as safe as possible.

It is impossible to avoid all triggers as they are unique to us as individuals. If you find something triggering please do whatever you need to keep safe. Take time out if you need to (someone will check to see how you are). Please let someone know if you decide to leave early. If you are aware of having dissociative parts of yourself please do what you can to support, reassure and keep those parts of you safe.





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Support

The facilitators/peer supporters can be contacted after the meeting for anyone wanting to debrief. Please let us know in advance if there are any particular ways we can try to support you during the meeting.

Survivors Voices offer regular peer support; details of this and other support organisations are on the website <https://www.survivorsvoices.org/support>

Participation

Your active participation is most welcome. We all bring valuable wisdom and experiences to share and learn from each other. We hope you will feel able to fully participate to get the most from the group. Please let us know if there is anything else we can do to support your participation .

Make space, take space

During our meetings, you are welcome to both take up space and make space for others. There are many reasons why it might be harder for some people to speak than others, and we ask that you also make space for those who are speaking less. We also ask that you be mindful of norms around who typically speaks first in meetings and help us to ensure that all voices can be heard, especially those often silenced.

Listen to understand

Often, we are socialised to listen so that we can share our opinions. This stops us from really hearing, respecting and learning from each other. Listen to understand and to challenge your own thinking. If in doubt, repeat back to check you have understood what another person is communicating.

Disagree with respect

We are diverse and have different experiences, belief systems, backgrounds and opinions; that is what makes us strong. Often disagreement is an expression of our diversity. Instead of arguing that our way is right, we can acknowledge our differences and try to learn from each other, by approaching difference with curiosity.

Challenge with care, by choice

In meetings, we might experience harm or dynamics that replicate racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, transphobia, ageism and other forms of discrimination. We are all invited to bring challenges or observations about oppressive dynamics. We seek to remain kind and remember our purpose is to deconstruct oppression, not recreate it. We acknowledge that deconstructing oppression is difficult work and we will not always get it 'right'.

Owning intentions & impacts

There is a difference between your intention and what the impact might be. It's important to acknowledge this and validate the impact that you have on others. When we are responsible for our actions, we can apologize for the impact whilst also acknowledging it might not have been our intention. When we get things wrong, we'll try to work through with equity and grace.

We are committed to being inclusive and anti-discriminatory and anyone who repeatedly uses offensive or discriminatory language or behaviour will be asked to leave.

We value your feedback about these guidelines and the way we run our meetings. You are welcome to make suggestions in the group, speak to the facilitators after the session or email connect@survivorsvoices.org

