

The 12 Guidelines for Safe Sharing have been developed from the 12 Traditions of SIA. Their purpose is to keep our meeting a safe place for childhood sexual abuse survivors to heal. Please follow the Guidelines during meetings, fellowship time, and in your communications with fellow Survivors outside of this meeting.

(read one or two guidelines and pass this along....)

Guideline 1: No Perpetrators

Perpetrators are not allowed at SIA meetings. We are here to heal from the wounds of sexual abuse by sharing our experience, strength and hope. We may talk about the incest, its effects, our memories, our feelings, our problems, our recovery, our dreams or any other experience, but not current or past adult perpetrating behaviors--including sexual objectification--in practice or fantasy or for personal pleasure.

Guideline 2: Identifying

We keep the focus on our own recovery and take our own inventory, not other survivors'. It's okay to identify with what another has said and share our personal experience about the same topic, but we do not name that person while we say that we are identifying. We give feedback only when asked.

Guideline 3: 'I' Statements

We talk in 'I' statements. However, if you're multiple or referring to you and your inner kids, feel free to share using the "We" voice, but please let the group know that your "We" applies to you and not everyone else.

Guideline 4: Non-SIA Literature

We care for fellow Survivors by trying to remember to announce when we are going to read or quote non-SIA literature, share highly graphic abuse memories or use four-lettered language. When we share non-SIA literature, we relate it to our recovery from the disease of childhood mental, emotional, physical and sexual trauma.

Guideline 5: Intense Emotions

We may safely express intense emotions—anyone may sob freely without interference, express anger, terror, shame or any other feeling through words, without risk of being asked to leave.

Guideline 6: No Discrimination

We do not express anger or criticism towards a group of people based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, affiliation or disability. It is okay to share that we feel triggered by a group because they remind us of our perpetrator, but anger needs to be directed at the perpetrator specifically, not general groups.

Guideline 7: Communication Boundaries

We respect and honor our fellow Survivors by refraining from name calling, criticizing, gossip, or violating communication boundaries. Likewise, we place other Survivors' needs on equal footing with our own in the context of the meeting.

Guideline 8: Anonymity

We do not break anonymity about what was shared in the meeting, outside of the meeting, or vice versa.

Guideline 9: No Cross Talk

We do not cross talk, which includes:

- Talking while others speak
- Giving advice or attempting to comfort others

Note: Using another person's name when thanking them for their share is not considered cross talk.

Guideline 10: Triggers

We attend meetings with the awareness that we may be triggered. We avoid turning the present into the past. Other Survivors' words, vocal tones, and responses may make us feel that we are dealing with perpetrators. Therefore, we caution Survivors to not treat other Survivors as if they are abusers. If someone at the meeting is triggering, we learn to deal with the evoked emotions responsibly by stepping out of the meeting during that person's share, setting boundaries with anyone that triggers us, taking evoked feelings back to the original abuse experiences, comforting our inner children, and refraining from any desire to gossip that may arise due to being triggered by a fellow survivor.

Guideline 11: No Physical Touch without Permission

For many survivors, touch is a loaded subject. If you wish to give someone a hug or touch them, please ask that person for permission first. If someone's touch is felt as unwanted, invasive, or in any way inappropriate, you have the right to reject it. We all have the right to reject physical touch at any time.

Guideline 12: No 13th Stepping

We maintain safety in and out of meetings by refraining from 13th stepping, or using the meeting contact list to ask someone for a romantic date.

What to do if Guidelines for Safe Sharing are Not Followed

We strive for meeting safety with our Guidelines, yet practice grace by providing a protocol for Guideline violations. When we feel a perpetration issue has been shared or a Guideline has been violated, any member may ask the leader to reread the Guideline. If the violation continues, any member may request a Group Conscience Safety Check, the format of which is detailed at the end of our meeting script.

We recognize that there may be situations not covered by these Guidelines. When situations occur that repeatedly create a lack of safety at a meeting, the group may meet to decide if a violation has occurred and may ask a person to leave the meeting under those circumstances.

A gentle reminder: as survivors we may walk into this meeting feeling dissociated, triggered, emotionally raw, vulnerable, devastated, and confused. When enforcing these guidelines, we need to be gentle with each other and ourselves.