

## Survivor Storytellers | Group Norms

*Crafted at the March 27, 2025 meeting with all attendees. We can review, edit, add, etc. as the group progresses and we see a need for an updated or new “norm” to be added.*

**The participants of the Survivor Storytellers group feel it is important for this group to be:**

- Confidential
- Collaborative
- Open and honest
- Kind

**To be those things, participants should come to Survivor Storytellers meetings with the below norms in mind:**

- Give and receive constructive criticism on shared work.
  - o *For writers/speakers/performers/artists:*
    - Be honest and open if you aren’t ready to hear feedback and only want to share.
    - Have an open mind to feedback.
    - Recognize that everyone has something to bring.
  - o *For readers/listeners/viewers:*
    - Respect it if someone has said they *aren’t* in a place where they can take feedback about a piece. Sometimes we need distance from the work before we can hear that.
    - Be helpful, not hurtful, in your feedback.
    - Have an open mind to different storytelling.
- Come to Survivor Storytellers group ready to grow and learn.
- “No” is always an acceptable answer.
- Respect different values and beliefs. For example, for some survivors, faith may be an important part of a survivor journey, and a source of strength and healing. For others, it may have painful memories attached if faith was used against them.
- Come to this group with no judgement of other survivor experiences and how another survivor survived those experiences.
- Come to this group with no guilt! Didn’t write or create that thing you wanted to make before the group meeting this month? That’s ok! No one is going to judge you

for it here. **Guilt and shame do not help us tell stories, and tomorrow is a new day.**

- If any participants wants to connect outside of the group with another participant, please email your request and contact info to Grace ([gkendall@safevoices.org](mailto:gkendall@safevoices.org)) and she will pass it along to the participant. This plan is intended to create less pressure on the person being asked.
  - o **Related:** Safe Voices staff members are here in a professional capacity and they **cannot** connect with participants in a social way outside the Survivor Storytellers program.

### **Some “housekeeping” notes/info:**

- Please be aware that Safe Voices staff members are mandated reporters. This means that if the abuse of a minor child is disclosed to us, we have to report it. If we need to report anything, we do so in the most ethical way we can, always notifying the survivor who disclosed it and offering to make the report together. We share this information here so you may have informed consent about anything you share at Survivor Storytellers.
- Currently, the Survivor Storytellers group does not offer childcare, and after researching best practices for groups like this one, we have decided not to allow children. What we learned when researching was that survivors (both parents and non-parents) are more likely to feel at ease and able to share if children are not attending. Safe Voices staff are looking into childcare options, but this may take some time (and may not be possible), because we have to look at local regulations, our insurance, etc. We know this is a barrier! We will keep looking at ways to help solve it.
- Gas cards will be available at future groups if anyone needs one to cover the cost of attending.
- Participants shared that writing prompts between group meetings would be helpful, so we will be sharing some of these. There is no pressure to work on them between meetings if you can't get to it!