

OUT OF THE SHADOWS

A practical workbook for champions



About

The Journey to Healing approach was developed through Tearfund's extensive work with peer support groups of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in South Africa. This approach is a successful and replicable model that can easily be adapted to different contexts.

This manual is intended for champions – the leaders of peer support groups – to help them facilitate a journey to healing with survivors of SGBV. It should not be used outside the target audience of survivors of SGBV.

Acknowledgements

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Immense gratitude goes to all those who supported this work financially and helped to create awareness and visibility of the survivor movement.

Special thanks to the writers of this manual who gave so much of themselves to develop this tool for champions so that the work of supporting survivors can continue.

Project lead: Solange Mbonigaba

Consultant writers: Wendy Poorter and Shannon Thomson

Design: www.wingfinger.co.uk

Contact: solange.mukamana@tearfund.org

All Bible references are from the New International Version (NIVUK, 2011) unless otherwise stated.

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Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE, UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 3906 3906

Email: publications@tearfund.org

Web: learn.tearfund.org/sexualviolence

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BACKGROUND OF THE JOURNEY TO HEALING APPROACH

This manual has emerged out of a long journey for Tearfund in learning how to support survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). In 2013, Tearfund commissioned research studies to hear the voices of survivors concerning SGBV in KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape of South Africa; Burundi; Democratic Republic of Congo; Central African Republic; Myanmar; and Colombia (see Further reading on page 93).

The study objectives were to:

- explore survivors' understanding of SGBV
- understand why survivors remain silent
- map and explore the impact of SGBV on the lives of individual survivors
- map the priorities of survivors
- begin to understand the process of healing and restoration for survivors
- determine whether individual survivors would benefit from a survivor movement
- ascertain the role of the church in handling SGBV.

The study concluded that survivors of SGBV are waiting to speak. The voices of survivors in each focus group discussion and one-to-one interview carried strength and hope that if society acknowledged their pain, if they no longer had to fear judgement, and if a forum existed where survivors could join in unity to overcome their trauma, their silence would dissipate, and restoration would begin.

Tearfund in South Africa began to form peer support groups to open up safe spaces for survivors to speak out and overcome trauma. Through extensive work with survivors in these groups, the Journey to Healing (J2H) approach was developed. This approach is a successful and replicable model that can easily be adapted to different contexts.

MANUAL 1 **A Shared Journey: A Training Manual for Champions**

There is a great depth of emotional and physical trauma that a survivor of sexual and gender-based violence can experience, and it is important for a group leader (referred to as a 'champion') to have gone through their own personal journey of healing so that they can better support survivors of SGBV.

A Shared Journey: A Training Manual for Champions is a set of activities and tools to train champions on how to facilitate group work when working with survivors of SGBV. It is designed to build their understanding of the guiding principles of healing work, to equip them with basic facilitation skills and provide them with knowledge on how to facilitate group work with survivors.

MANUAL 2 **Out of the Shadows, into the Light: A Practical Workbook for Champions**

Out of the Shadows, into the Light: A Practical Workbook for Champions is a set of activities that can be facilitated by a champion with groups of survivors of SGBV.

Note: The material will need to be adapted to suit different country and community contexts.

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual is intended for champions, to help them facilitate a journey to healing with survivors of SGBV. What follows are a series of activities that can be used with groups of survivors to encourage the three phases of the Journey to Healing process: connection, cohesion and consolidation. Each activity can take 1.5–2 hours to complete, allowing time for survivors to explore what comes up for them as they work through the material.

It is important that as a champion you allow enough time to work through each activity without feeling rushed or trying to accomplish too much in a short time. Healing is a slow process and it is not always linear, as you probably remember from your own journey to healing.

As a champion, you can decide with your group how to use the material provided in this manual. You will first need to decide when and where to meet as a group. Following that, you and your group will need to decide together how you want to move through the material. If you can remain flexible and open to what the group needs, you will be most successful in facilitating this transformative journey to healing with the women in your group.

As a champion, there are some important guidelines to follow when working with survivors of SGBV:

Do	Do no harm; do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• give emotional and practical support• listen and provide comfort to distressed people• refer to more specialised care if needed• provide support in decision-making• show respect• empower champions to make their own decisions rather than acting for them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• make promises you cannot keep• go beyond your role as a trainer to act as a therapist• break the rule of confidentiality• tell another person what to do or how to solve problems• show disrespect• probe too deeply – allow survivors/potential champions to share what they are ready and willing to share

The manual is designed for use in a group setting so that exercises can be done together, but the first rule of group work is to **listen to and follow the lead of the group**.

Out of the Shadows, into the Light is a **survivor-centred approach**:

- Each group member is their own best expert.
- Your role as a facilitator is to create a place for survivors to speak and a place where each story can be heard.

Rationale for group work

Many survivors of sexual and gender-based violence have had to remain silent for fear of being ostracised or ill-treated by others after the event. It is the aim of this movement to remove the shame and stigma of SGBV in a strong, supportive environment of women who have had a similar journey.

When facilitating group activities, remember that:

Group member	What group sharing provides
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each story is unique, each person is unique• Isolation leads to desolation• To share means you need to be vulnerable• Finding your voice is the first step of the healing journey• Sharing the details of sexual and gender-based violence is very personal• Remembering is often extremely painful and frightening• For restoration to happen, our voices need to be heard and our feelings validated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Often there are common threads in our collective story• Sharing in a group setting helps counter isolation• Care is found in the support of a group• Knowing you are not alone makes the journey a little easier• Being understood by others gives strength to survivors• Sharing in the safety of a group helps overcome fear• The group becomes the caring listener that the survivor needs

LAYING A STRONG FOUNDATION

Learning objectives

By the end of this section, champions will:

- understand how to mobilise survivor groups
- know about the different options for organising meetings
- feel confident to mobilise and organise their own groups
- understand the Journey to Healing phases and why peer support groups help to facilitate healing.

This section lays out the foundation of forming and organising peer support groups. As a champion you will probably be mobilising a group of survivors using your knowledge of your own community. This section provides some guidance on this process and how you can effectively organise your group.

Peer support groups have been formed in countries around the world and below are some examples of how you can mobilise your group.

1. The majority of Tearfund-supported peer support groups have formed out of an initial research study to explore the needs, perspectives and experiences of survivors of SGBV. Women who participated in focus group discussions went on to form peer support groups. Survivors were identified for the research study through interfaith and church networks. This process was used in South Africa, Myanmar, Brazil, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Colombia and Guatemala.
2. There are other ways to form peer support groups. Groups in Liberia were formed from participants in an existing SGBV project. The women who joined groups had already been part of the project and had been receiving one-to-one support to facilitate their healing. Peer support groups were introduced into this project and women were welcomed to join.

Usually a champion, like yourself, has been part of their own survivor group. As that group closes, champions are identified and sent out to mobilise other survivors to join the journey to healing. You are being asked to identify women who you think can benefit from this process and to welcome them to participate if they feel ready. Support is available to you as you do this through your trainer and mentors in your community. Tearfund works with local partner organisations who typically take the lead in mentoring and supporting champions. Tearfund provides support in this process to partner staff, and encourages them to have monthly meetings with champions to help them problem-solve and share any challenges they are facing. Champions are also encouraged to connect with each other for peer support.

A group should have no more than 12 members. This number allows for trust to be built between survivors, for the group to operate well and for the champion to manage facilitation of the activities effectively.

Once you have mobilised your group, sit together and decide where would be a safe and comfortable place to meet. It's important to consider a location that allows women to feel safe. Meeting in a public space may not be comfortable, and you might need to encourage women to share their feelings about the meeting location. Sessions should be held close to where most of the participants live.

As a champion you will be responsible for facilitating a process of healing with survivors of SGBV. As a survivor yourself, you already know that healing is not a linear process and looks different for every person. Your peer support group will need to decide for themselves when they would like to meet, how often and for how long each time. Your initial sessions with your group should be to lay this foundation and to come to an agreement about how the women you will journey with would like to meet. Try to choose a time, place and meeting length that works for the majority of the group, accommodating the needs of participants as much as you can. Groups meet at least once a month, but they can meet more frequently if the group would like. Sessions last between one and two hours.

When working in a group setting it is important to find out what the group wants. For example, if you are in a group that has many working women, meeting during the week might be difficult for them and attendance would be low. If it is a group that has a high number of unemployed women with children of school age you may want to meet in the morning. The group needs to decide for itself through mutual agreement what is best for the group, as well as what would work for the champion.

Factors to consider include:

- frequency of meetings (monthly, weekly, bi-monthly)
- availability of a venue
- length of meeting
- availability of the champion and group members
- size of group.

Planning

- Have a calendar where you write in important dates.
- Notify group members of the next meeting.
- Discuss in the group when the next meeting will happen.
- Be part of community-organised functions and other important local events, such as the ‘16 days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence’, and the Women’s Day celebrations, to increase awareness and visibility of the survivor movement.
- Know what is happening at a community level.
- Keep to committed plans as much as possible.
- Plan the day’s activities, but remain flexible. For example, if one of the survivors has just been through a traumatic experience, they may need to talk about this. Remember the group meeting is for the group; you are not here to do what you want to do. Allow the group to determine what is needed.

Expansion

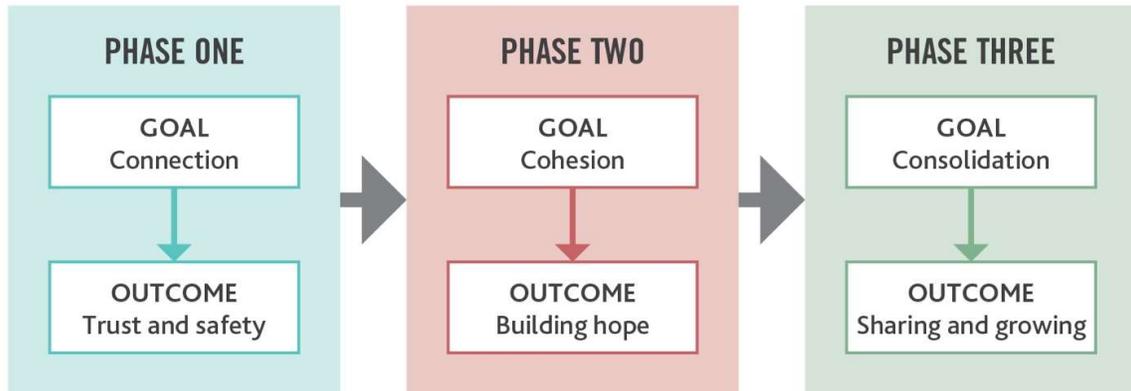
- Continue mobilising new members of the group.
- Reach out to new communities/churches to encourage other survivors to join.
- Build allies to support the network (interfaith, church and other networks).

What to do with children at group meetings

- Children (under 18) who accompany a group member, who may be their caregiver, to a group meeting could experience secondary trauma.
- This can happen when the child hears about the first-hand trauma experiences of their caregiver or another group member.

- During the group session, if it is possible, children should be introduced to different activities in a separate room to where the group meeting is being held.
- This is to prevent children experiencing trauma or being re-traumatised by hearing the adult survivors share their stories or seeing them process their emotions. Children shouldn't be in the same room with parents or caregivers for child protection purposes.
- To minimise concern about the protection of children, it is best for those working with children to work in pairs.
- Where it is not possible to have children in a separate room or have two people working with them, it is important to be aware of children in the room in the way the group addresses issues during group work.
- Ensure that group members are informed of why it is important to prevent secondary trauma in children so that they are aware of this when speaking with children around.
- Ensure that group members are aware of where their children are at all times.
- Each child will have a different reaction to trauma, and this will be unique to their experiences.

Journey to Healing phases



PHASE ONE: Connection

The key elements of this phase are **trust** and **safety** and the goal is **connection**.

Without building **trust** and **safety** in group work, it will be difficult to deal with trauma. SGBV often leads to isolation and harmed relationships. Working in a group setting helps to undo past hurts and create a new foundation for healthy relationships going forward. This phase seeks to build connections and form a safe environment in the group setting.

PHASE TWO: Cohesion

The key element of this phase is building hope from brokenness in the context of working in a group and the goal is cohesion.

The aim is to form strong, secure bonds between group members so that the pain of the past can be explored without the fear of being further wounded. Stories are told and pain is unpacked in the presence of women who care for and about each other.

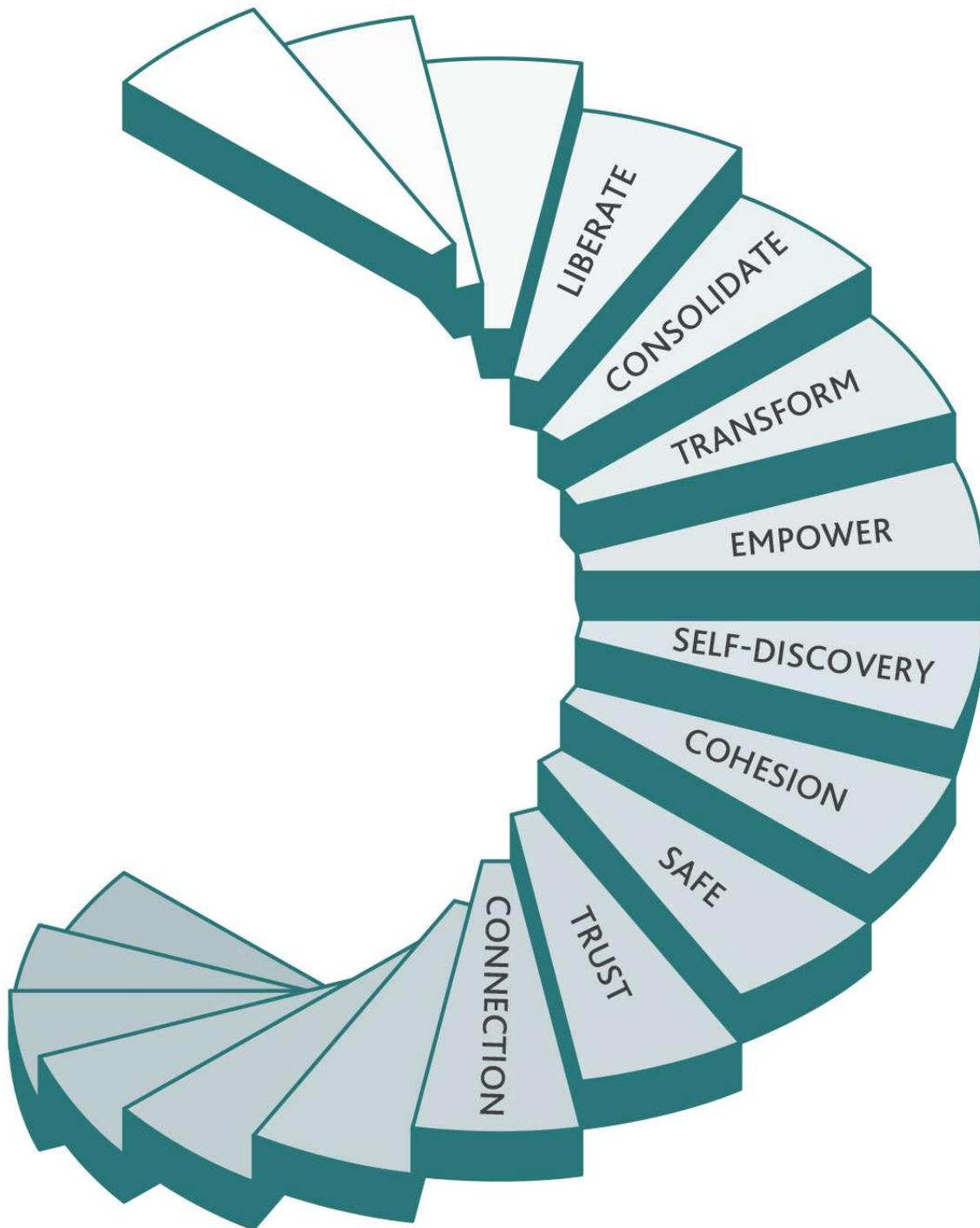
PHASE THREE: Consolidation

The key elements of this phase are **sharing** and **growing** and the goal is **consolidation**. This is the phase of group growth and expansion of the movement.

The illustration below represents a spiral staircase, a visual image of the process of healing from the effects of SGBV.

The healing journey: out of the shadows, into the light

Based on an illustration by Rayne Geddes



The healing process is a journey that is unique to each survivor.

How does the process work?

1. Survivors are able to verbalise their personal experiences of SGBV.
2. Safe space is created where new experiences can be embraced, so that survivors can rid themselves of the shame and guilt of the violation experienced, and move toward self-acceptance.
3. The ultimate goal is that healing begins and the person finds new strengths.

Use of song, dance, play and prayer

Song, dance, play and prayer can be used in group work:

- to open a group session
- to change the mood or energy in a group
- to allow for energy shifts, bringing a lightness to the mood if a very heavy topic has been discussed
- as an expression for emotion
- as a way of creating connection and cohesion
- as an icebreaker
- as creative self-expression.

Note: Watch the group for cues as to when these activities are needed.

Song

- Allow the group to choose what they would like to sing. See beforehand who enjoys singing, and allow them to lead the singing.

Dance

- Some in the group might have the gift of dance and this for them is a good self-expression. This may be used after a 'heavy' session of sharing to lighten the mood of the group.

Music

- You may want to use soft background music in a group session where you want the gentleness of the music to give a sense of tranquillity and peace. Music may be used to facilitate meditation, and as relaxation techniques for those battling with high levels of anxiety.

Play

- Creativity through play is important.
- Play can be group games, or it can take the form of creative expression – with clay, for example.
- Play changes the mood in the group.
- Children's games and word games can be played. These can be games that children in the community play, such as musical chairs, broken telephone (also called Chinese whispers), and pass the parcel.
- Playing games like these breaks down defences, allows for playfulness, and may be used to understand skills. In broken telephone it is a way of showing how a message can change when passed around a large group.
- Drawing can also be a way of releasing emotions and being able to put feelings onto paper.

- While play might be seen as a childhood exercise, often this is a counter-measure needed to deal with pain.
- Creativity and play takes one into a space of positivity and a place for self-expression that may be less threatening.
- For some, being able to draw may be easier than having to speak in front of a group. The drawing becomes the focus and not them. It is as if it creates a protective boundary for their vulnerability.

Prayer

- This can be used collectively or individually.
- It can be used to open or close a group meeting.
- It can be used to shift the energy in a group.
- Remember the cultural norm of how the group prays. If it is natural for them to all pray at the same time, do so. If the group prefers to pray one at a time then do so.
- Allow the group to lead you according to what they consider normal.

PHASE 1: CONNECTION

Learning objectives

By the end of this phase, survivors will:

- establish a connection with each other as a group
- understand foundational concepts such as confidentiality and care for each person in the group
- establish trust and safety within the group.

Note for champions

- Make sure that you have worked through the first manual, *A Shared Journey: A Training Manual for Champions*.
- The section 'A heart for healing' covers the concepts of respect, individualisation, self-determination and confidentiality and trust. These values are foundational for facilitating journeys to healing with survivors.

'A head for healing' covers the practical skills that you'll need to facilitate these activities and to be effective as a champion.

There are nine activities in this phase designed to help you as a champion to facilitate connection within the group of survivors you are working with. Each of these activities can take as long as 1.5–2 hours to work through, and the activities often bring up memories and/or difficult feelings for survivors as they work through them. It is important to allow enough time to work through the activity without rushing and to be available as a support for survivors if they need to talk or connect after the meeting is over.

As the group is working through this phase of the healing process, group members are asking themselves:

- Do you care for me?
- Can you help me?
- Can I trust you?

As a champion, your role is to help group members to connect with you as the group facilitator and with each other, through creating safety and trust.

Welcoming group members

As a champion, you can create an inviting space for people to speak and be heard with warmth, shown verbally and non-verbally.

As you welcome group members to a session, remember to:

- smile
- use the person's name
- use warm voice tones
- hold eye contact
- read the client to see if physical touch is appropriate and if so hug them if they want to be hugged. (Note: you need to be certain that it is acceptable for them to be touched, so ask before doing so.)

Building connection in groups

- Do not assume you know how another person feels. Sometimes it can be unhelpful and even hurtful when someone says 'I know just how you feel, I have been through the same thing as you.'
- Listen to survivors and instead of saying 'I know just how you feel', respond by saying 'I hear your pain.' To allow them to share their story is to allow them to release their pain.
- Being in a group where you can share is like having an unbreakable container into which you can empty all your pain without it making a mess anywhere.
- You as the group facilitator are not an unbreakable container: it is the group together that forms the unbreakable container.
- The group becomes the gentle hands that hold the wounded soul.

EXERCISE 1: Hello, my name is...

Learning objective

- To begin to create a safe space and to share within the group environment

Materials needed

- None

Begin this activity by explaining to group members that this activity will give them an opportunity to reveal a little bit about themselves to the rest of the group. Each person is free to choose how much information they wish to share with the group. Participating in this exercise gives you a chance to learn about other group members.

Step 1

- Each group member takes a turn to speak and introduce themselves. You can go around the room, sit in a circle or move spontaneously between participants.
- The champion should start off the process introducing themselves and giving an example of some information that could be included.
- Some examples of what to include might be:
 - Where are you from?
 - Do you have a family?
 - Do you know what your name means?
 - What are your favourite foods to eat?
 - What kind of things do you like to do when you have spare time?

An example: Hello, my name is Precious and I come from Rwanda. My grandmother named me 'Precious' as my family had waited a long time for my mother to have a child and everyone was so excited when I was born.

Note for champions

As the champion, you will gain information from this exercise. This is the first time these women will be sharing in the group setting.

- Try to remember who says what.
- You will be given clues about each woman and her situation.
- The words spoken may be directional markers that point to where there may be possible wounding.
- Information about family bonds may be given, eg a child that was wanted may be named to express this, or their name may carry another meaning, for example a child being named 'Happiness'.
- This process is like being given puzzle pieces; at this time you do not know what picture you are building yet.
- In time, as trust is built, the group members will reveal more of the picture as they give you 'pieces of their life puzzle'.
- The role of the facilitator is to 'notice' who is speaking and what is being said and to 'collect' the pieces of the puzzle through the information that is shared.
- While participating in this process it will become apparent who feels able to speak freely and who finds it more difficult to voice their thoughts and emotions.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ How was it received?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ How did group members interact with other group members disclosing their names?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 2: The handbag hunt

Learning objectives

- To highlight possible obstacles when dealing with personal matters
- To understand that each person has the right to refuse to disclose and to disclose only when they are comfortable

Materials needed

- Participants' handbags

Step 1

- Ask group members to sit in a large circle.
- Invite group members to place their handbags in front of them.

Step 2

- Explain that the handbag that is selected from a group member will be unpacked in front of the whole group.
- The owner of the handbag may immediately say 'no'. No one is forced to share. Each group member has autonomy and can choose what they feel comfortable with – without being forced.
- This is a point where you can highlight the importance of disclosure and privacy.

Step 3

- You as the group leader then walk around the group and select a handbag to look through or you can choose to use your own bag.

Step 4

- As you unpack each item you can discuss what it is with the group.
- For example, you may find a sanitary towel. Some might consider this something not to be shown in public and you can then discuss this.
- You could place an object that may be considered taboo, such as a condom, in the bag. You can then discuss this, bringing in the concept of non-judgementalism.
- Use this object to explain how we don't always know the whole story.
- You may find a picture of a child. Discuss this, and how we often carry things that remind us of relationships that are close to us.

Note: In contexts where women don't carry handbags, this could be adapted as an imagined process. Ask group members to sit in a circle and tell them that you will choose someone and go to their house to see their bedroom. Each group member has the autonomy to say no and no one is forced to take you to their house. The champion then chooses a woman and asks if she would be comfortable to show everyone the contents of her room at home. She will most likely say no. The champion can then discuss what you might find if you went through someone's bedroom – photos of

children, toiletries, sanitary products, condoms etc, and raise the points about disclosure, non-judgement and the uniqueness of each person. The exercise also helps us to understand vulnerability and how we need to build trust before we feel comfortable revealing who we really are.

Group discussion

As a large group, ask participants to reflect on the following questions:

- How did you feel doing this exercise? (Allow the group to speak freely. As the facilitator, listen to what is being said – this is feedback from the group.)
- Did you enjoy doing this exercise?

If you feel, as the facilitator, that there is enough trust built between group members, you can continue with the questions below.

- How did you feel having your handbag unpacked? Or the thought of your bedroom being explored?
- How did you feel if you did not have your handbag unpacked?
- Are there things in your life that you would rather others did not see?
- Would you like to discuss what these things are that you have not shared?
- What do the people in your life know about you?
- How does this make you feel?
- What is in your life that you don't want others to know about?
- How does this make you feel?
- Is there anyone that you can talk to about what is hidden?
- Who do you find easy to share these hidden things with?

Note for champions

Confidentiality should be emphasised and upheld by everyone – what happens in the group should remain in the group.

It has to be culturally appropriate within the context to look into someone's handbag. If not, the group leader should use their own bag or use an alternative that is more culturally appropriate to demonstrate the point and learning objectives.

If there is a high level of group trust you can add depth to this exercise by asking the questions listed above. Please only do this if the group is willing to. Ask for permission. The group may not be ready yet to go into this much personal detail.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ How was it received?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ How did group members handle the disclosure aspect of the game?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, A Shared Journey, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 3: Hard hearts, soft hearts

Learning objectives

- To understand how a similar life experience can be viewed differently by two people
- To gain a greater insight into how we view things and how this can shape us into who we are

Materials needed

- Cloth hearts: filled with a soft stuffing material.
 - Hearts should be made from two pieces of different material.
 - They can be hand stitched and made before the session or can be made during a group exercise by the group members themselves.
 - Have soft stuffing or material to fill the hearts with.
 - Have a piece of ribbon or string to be placed at the top of the heart to form a loop. (This can then be hung on a door knob as a memento for later. The loop is needed so that the hearts can be joined together to form a circle between each group member.)
- A heart-shaped stone.
- A long ribbon or long string – long enough to attach each heart to the string and be placed around the circle of chairs of the group members.

Note: Where these materials are not available, champions can use anything hard and soft as a visual to make the point about hard hearts and soft hearts. Examples could include: a rock (hard heart) and a piece of fabric rolled into a ball shape (soft heart); a bunch of pebbles and a bunch of grass; a piece of wood and a piece of cloth, etc.

Preparation: Pre-meeting set-up

1. Place a circle of chairs in the room.
2. If you have made the hearts ahead of time, place a heart on each chair. (The alternative is that each member makes their own heart. This is explained at the end of this exercise.)
3. Thread the ribbon between each of the hearts and join each heart to the other.
4. Place the stone heart and a soft heart in the centre of the circle.

Step 1

Explain to the group:

- Each of you has a heart on your chair.
- Each side of the heart is a different colour, yet it is still the same heart.
- Each heart is linked to the others with the ribbon.

Step 2

Ask the group:

- What in the past has made your heart hard or heavy?
- What in the past has made your heart soft?

Step 3

Ask the group:

- How can you link with those in your group to help you when your heart is feeling hard and heavy?
- How can you help others in the group when they are feeling that their hearts are heavy?

Step 4

Ask the group:

- Think about a time when if you had seen something differently, you might have reacted differently.
- How can you begin to see things differently?
- How do you see the world? Is it mostly positive, mostly negative, or somewhere in between?

Step 5

Ask the group:

- Untie a heart from the circle.
- Keep this heart in a place where you can see it and think about how you would like to respond to situations with a soft heart.

Alternative

- If each person is to make their own heart, place two differently coloured pieces of heart-shaped material on each chair. Place a needle and thread on each one.
- Have a bag of stuffing for the women to share as well as a few pairs of scissors. Have a large ball of string or ribbon to be used at the end of the exercise.
- Use the discussion questions listed above.

Materials needed

- Some tables to place all the materials on
- A few pairs of scissors
- Needles and thread or glue
- Stuffing
- A large ball of string or ribbon

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ How was it received?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ How did group members interact during the activity?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 4: The power of my story

Learning objectives

- To create a safe place, where disclosure can be made, free of judgement
- To demonstrate love, grace and kindness

Materials needed

- None

Note for champions

- To help you understand the theory behind Exercise 4 – **The power of my story** – it is important to refer to this in section 2 ('A heart for healing') and section 3 ('A head for healing') in the training manual for champions – *A Shared Journey*.
- It is your role as champion to create a space where survivors can speak and a place where survivors are heard.
- Each person has their own story to tell. In the group, there is an audience to hear each story with dignity.
- The intention of creating a space for disclosure needs to be explained to the group at the start of the session.
- Encourage questions from the group members if any of the concepts used are not understood.

Make sure the group understands these guidelines:

- confidentiality
- trust
- no judgement
- listen
- no advice
- no interruption when another is speaking
- allow the expression of emotions

Caution: Be mindful of children (under 18) during this exercise if they are accompanying a group member. If it is possible, introduce children to different activities in a separate room to where the group meeting is being held to allow group members to speak freely. Ensure that the caregiver gives their consent and knows where their children are at all times.

While each story will be unique, many survivors battle with similar emotions and when they are able to talk together, the isolation of the event is lifted and support is found.

Setting the right atmosphere for sharing

Before starting this exercise, it is important to discuss confidentiality so that group members can openly share. Explain to survivors what confidentiality means and how important it is to ensure that nothing shared in the group is shared outside of the group. Breaking confidentiality breaks trust, and trust is a key element in journeys to healing.

- The group should develop a group contract or agreement based on foundational rules that everyone agrees to. Some examples include: confidentiality, trust, conduct, behaviour, respect, participation, punctuality. This group contract should be written and displayed somewhere in the room where you meet.
- For many women, disclosing their story comes at a huge personal risk.
- Survivors need to know that their **story will be safe** with those to whom they tell it.
- It is important to discuss principles of non-judgement so that survivors know they will not be judged when sharing their story.
- This is not a space to give advice, but rather to encourage one another.

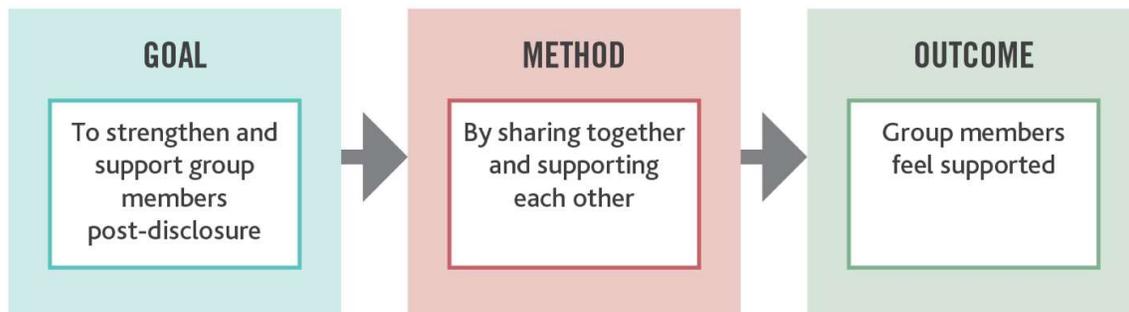
Step 1

- The champion opens the session with a story that describes an unfamiliar environment or an unfamiliar experience. (Analogies can be used to set the stage for group members to disclose.)

Step 2

- Start with questions related to the story or analogy. For example, if you describe being out in the cold on a winter's day, you could start the group sharing with questions such as:
 - Have you experienced a time in your life where you have felt the icy chill from pain, as described in the analogy?
 - If you have, think back to this time, and if you would like to share we would like to listen.
- Allow group members to speak spontaneously.
- Each person is given a chance to speak.
- They are not interrupted while speaking.
- Enough time needs to be given to each group member (this may be a lengthy process).
- When issues of shame are brought up a place is created where this can be explored.
- Questions such as 'Was it your fault?' can be addressed.

Dealing with post-disclosure emotions



- Allow plenty of time and space during the end of the session and the start of the next session for group members to express how they feel.
- It is important to address the emotional situation of each group member now that they have disclosed their story, and to support them in their journey of self-discovery.
- Ask each group member, 'How do you feel now that you have spoken about your pain?'
- It is common to feel 'emotionally naked' after speaking and to have a greater sense of vulnerability.
- A person's defence mechanism or coping strategy for handling painful emotions has been challenged by speaking out and sharing their story so it can cause one to feel extremely vulnerable.
- For example, it is like having a wound and taking the plaster off – which was protecting the wound – for fresh air. It is incredibly exposing and you may want to cover it up, but the more exposed to fresh air the wound is, the quicker the healing process begins. That is the process of telling your story.
- If there are individuals who seem clearly affected by telling their story, offer to spend a few minutes with them at the end of the session.
- When disclosure begins, watch out for **emotional fracture**. If you see this happening, this person needs additional emotional support.

Emotional fracture

Emotional fracture is being stuck in deep emotional pain where the fear of further pain leads to avoidance. Notice when survivors avoid or make light of their pain as this may be a sign of emotional fracture.

How to combat the effects of exposure

- How the group responds to one another is an important part of the healing process.
- Feeling **safe** and **held** by the group is important. A strong nurturing and caring group environment is essential.
- Bonds between group members need to be warm and accepting.
- Concepts of group care and self-care need to be discussed (See section 4 of *A Shared Journey*)
- Doing a checking-out process is important after disclosure, to give everyone who has shared a chance to express how they are feeling and those who listened a chance to explore the personal response or impact of

what they heard. Hearing someone's story can re-trigger trauma and having a check-out session as a way to debrief can help make each person feel safe before they leave the meeting.

Removing the mask, finding my voice

After the checking-out process, encourage your group by explaining that:

- it is important to speak about past trauma
- sharing in this way helps others discover untapped strength
- finding your voice is often linked with finding your choice
- in the safety of a group masks can be dropped, and there is a freedom to be who you are without the fear of rejection
- in the company of the support of others new ways of doing things and thinking can be explored, and links between how we think, feel and act can be visited
- new ways of doing things can be tested in the safety of a group of caring women
- each person's healing journey will look different and will happen at a different pace.

Note for champions

- It is very important to have a follow-up meeting soon after disclosure because it is damaging to have emotions exposed – to be left out in the cold – so to speak. It is also important to have a follow-up meeting to get feedback from the group.
- Giving continued support to group members in this way helps prevent regret from opening up old wounds.
- In the follow-up meeting any issues will be addressed. This meeting will take the format of a group discussion addressing the question 'Now that I have disclosed, what happens next?'

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to this exercise?
- ★ Were they willing to engage?
- ★ Did the group understand the purpose?
- ★ How did group members interact with other group members sharing their stories?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 5: Paired sharing

Learning objective

- To encourage disclosure in a safer environment (it may be easier for a person to speak just to one person instead of the whole group)

Materials needed

- None

Step 1

- Ask group members to get into pairs.

Step 2

- Ask them to share something of themselves that is unknown to the group.
- Explain that after they discuss in their pair, they will then share this with the group.
- This could be something very personal in nature or just something unknown, such as 'I dislike the colour yellow – it reminds me of a grade 2 classroom. I got sick one day and vomited all over the floor and I felt afraid and missed my mum when it happened'.

Step 3

- Each pair then shares with the group what they have learned about their partner.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to this exercise?
- ★ Were they willing to engage and work in pairs?
- ★ Did the group understand the purpose?
- ★ How did group members feel sharing in pairs and then to the bigger group? Did they feel safe sharing?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 6: The blindfold walk

Learning objectives

- To build trust
- To explore the idea of reliance on other people

Materials needed

- Blindfold

A key element needed in a group – like this group for SGBV survivors – that shares personal details is **trust**. We should expect people to have questions such as:

- If I can't trust you, how can I tell you what wounds I carry deep inside?
- Will you hurt me too?
- What happens if you tell someone else?
- Can I expose to you what I have never shared before, without you judging me?

Sexual and gender-based violence leaves many women isolated for fear of being rejected and hurt further. With this in mind, this practical exercise helps people to rely on others and be vulnerable.

Preparation: venue

- When planning this exercise, consider the space needed for it and whether group members would need to walk outside the building to do it.
- It is important for group members to feel safe and if walking outside blindfolded will make them feel exposed to others in the community, then consider a more secluded area or adapt this exercise to your setting.

Step 1

- Divide the group into pairs. (Participants can choose their partners or the facilitator may choose.)
- One partner in the pair will be blindfolded and the other will give verbal instructions to lead her as she walks.
- Explain to the one leading the blindfolded woman that it is their job to see for her.
- For example, if there is a step, the blindfolded woman needs to be warned. Maybe a chair is in the way and she will need to be prevented from injuring herself.

Step 2

- After five minutes swap partners, so the blindfolded person is now the leader.

Alternative blindfold walk – non-verbal leading

This exercise is best done outdoors with different obstacles. Remember, the job of the one leading is to keep the one being led safe.

Rules for alternative blindfold walk

- No speaking.
- Use only physical cues.
- If you want the person to move to the left and you are on their left you may gently pull their arm towards you.
- If you want them to move right you may lean into their right.
- If you are going somewhere difficult you may stop or stomp your feet or clap your hands.
- You will need to use your body creatively and not use words.

Step 1

- Explain the rules to the group.
- Allow group to pair themselves, or pair the group up.

Step 2

- Hand out blindfolds.

Step 3

- Once the exercise is complete the one being led then walks with open eyes around where they were blindfolded, and gets to see where they walked rather than where they imagined they had walked.
- To add another dimension to this exercise you could instead ask the one who was led to walk the path they thought they were led. This encourages a greater use of the 'mind's eye' and concentration, so that the exercise can be repeated.

Step 4

- Swap places – the one who was led now becomes the leader. Repeat the exercise.

What can be learned from this alternative exercise?

- It creates greater physical vulnerability.
- It teaches communication non-verbally.
- It allows the one being led to experience a heightened emotional experience.
- It allows for greater reliance on other senses.

Group discussion

- Come back together as a large group and use the following questions to reflect on the experience:
- How did it feel to be blindfolded?
- What emotions did you experience? (Were you frightened/calm/happy/scared?)
- What did it feel like to lead the blindfolded woman?
- Did she listen to your instructions or did she try to lead herself even though she was blindfolded?
- At some point did you begin to trust your partner?
- Why do you think we did this exercise?
- What did you learn from this?
- Are there places in your life where you could do this in other ways?
- Do you trust people easily or do you find it hard to trust people?
- What has happened in the past when you have trusted people?
- Have they let you down?
- Does this stop you from trusting people?
- Have you ever let anyone down when they trusted you?

If the alternative blindfold walk was done:

- How did it feel not having verbal instructions?
- Did you notice more about the environment?
- How much of what you experienced was real and how much was imagined?

Case study example

When doing this exercise, a woman was led over a piece of corrugated iron.

She imagined that it was suspended above the ground and was frightened to walk over it as she did not believe it would hold her weight.

When her blindfold was removed she could see it was placed on the ground, yet during the exercise she convinced herself it was suspended and felt very afraid. This is an example of perceived reality and actuality being very different. The perceived reality created emotions of fear.

Ask participants if they experienced fear during the blindfold walk and if once they removed their blindfold, they saw what they had been afraid of in a different way.

Ask participants to quietly reflect on the following statements/questions. Once you have read through them all, ask if anyone would like to share their response to them.

- Trust is built.
- Trust is valuable.
- Trust can be broken.
- Be the change you want to see.
- What change do you want to see?
- Am I trustworthy?
- Can I learn to trust others?
- Have I been wise with how I have trusted people?
- Can I be led?
- Can I lead others?
- Do I want to be a leader?
- Do I have the skills to lead?
- Do I have passion to lead?
- Would I rather follow?

Scripture meditation

'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.' (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Note for champions

- When working with a group as a champion, we need to be aware of a possible pitfall. The pitfall is forming, without realising it, a dynamic called the 'them' and 'us' or the 'in' and 'out' crowd.

There is a beautiful quote from John Mibiti who says: 'I am because we are and since we are, therefore I am.'

This describes the unity we are to strive for. While a champion may be further down the road to healing and restoration and may know a lot about this process she is never 'the expert'. Humility needs to be at the core of helping.

So we can learn together that:

- we are our own best expert
- we each bring our own uniqueness to the group
- a gift we can bring is to learn to see the world through the eyes of our neighbour (this takes time and the willingness to listen).

What is meant by this? How is it done? Who can do this? Imagine for a moment that I can take my eyes out of my head, and then you get to use my eyes as my neighbour. Then you would see the world as I see it, and as I use your eyes, so to speak, I see the world as you see it. This is how you prevent in-grouping and out-grouping.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ How was it received?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ How did group members interact with other group members leading them as they were blindfolded?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 7: My eyes work better than yours

Learning objective

- To understand how perspective shapes how we see things

Materials needed

- Sunglasses or thin fabric (semi-blindfold)

Step 1

- Give one person a pair of very dark glasses and ask her to put them on. If sunglasses are not available, use a thin piece of fabric as a semi-blindfold.

Step 2

- If possible, turn the light off in the room and then get her to describe what she sees. If you cannot turn off the light in the room, try to darken the windows by closing curtains or putting up fabric.
- Ask the volunteer to describe how she sees the room. What is different compared to before she put on the sunglasses/semi-blindfold?
- Our perspective shapes how we see the world. How do you see the world? Mostly positively? Or often negatively? Or somewhere in-between?

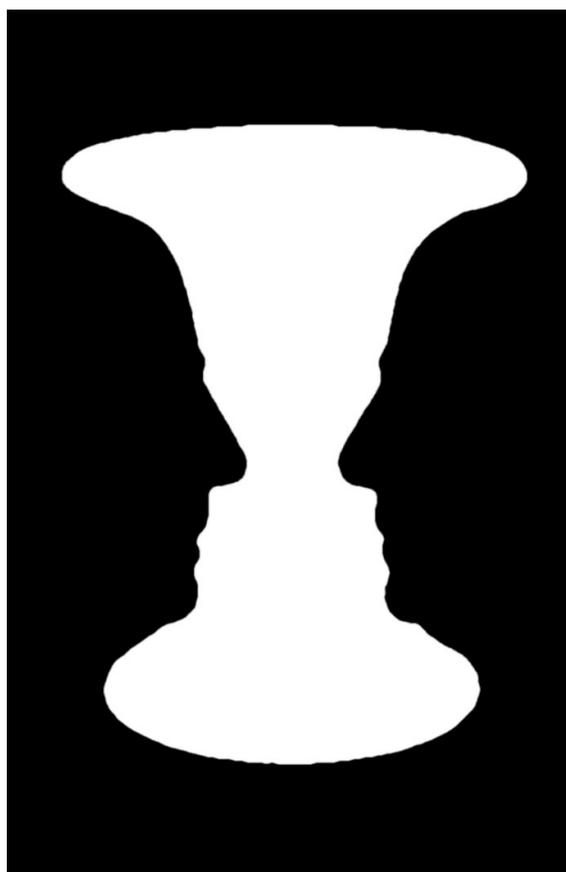
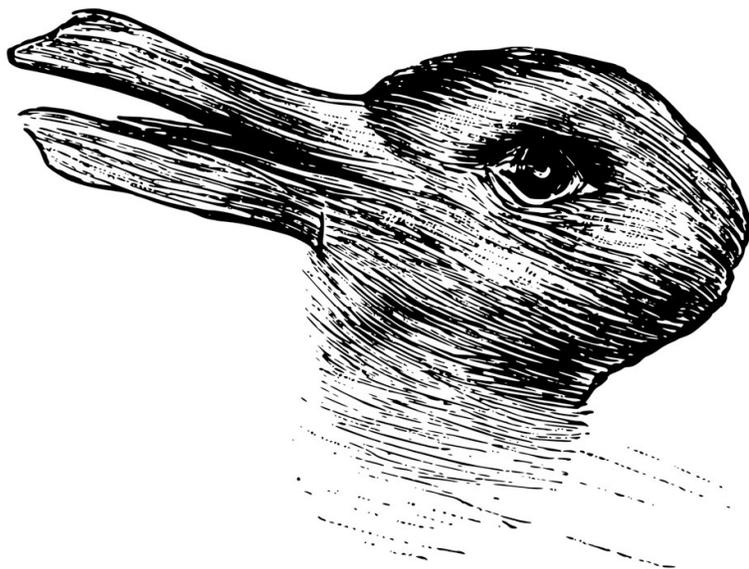
Alternative:

- If sunglasses and a semi-blindfold are not available, show the participants the pictures on the next page. Ask them to describe what they see and note the differences between participants.

The point of this activity is to highlight the idea that:

- **We frame things based on our own past experiences.** For example, someone who is terrified of tortoises may freeze in fear when they see one. They may not even know why these harmless creatures cause them distress. It would be easy for others to laugh and say that they are being silly, but for this person it is a very real threat.

Pictures for use with alternative activity



Note for champions

Remember:

- It would be presumptuous to say 'I know just what you feel'.
- Try to learn to understand, to really listen to what is said and what is not said. Try in a small way to see as they see (their world).
- Try not to jump to conclusions: listen to the whole story. Don't try to solve their challenges. Understand what their issue really is.
- In doing this, we stand together and forget what separates us and rather look at what unites us.

How do you do this? By listening. By using your ears and your heart.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ How was it received?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 8: How are you?

Learning objectives

- To connect with our emotions
- To assess the group's energy levels

Materials needed

- None

Ask the group to:

- rate from 1 to 5 how they are feeling (1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest)
- share one word that describes how they are feeling
- connect the word they chose with the number given. For example, an exhausted 2, a content 3 and so on.

The aim of the exercise is:

- to help individuals tune in to themselves and listen to how they are feeling
- to help them put words to the emotions that they feel
- a check-in to gauge the emotional temperature in the room and to inform the group.

Questions for discussion

- Were you able to accurately describe your emotions to the group?
- How did you find expressing your emotions? Often we feel things and we cannot describe in words what these feelings are or what they may mean.
- Are there emotions that you have been raised to believe should not be expressed? For example: 'It is not acceptable for men to cry', or 'I am richer for my loss'.
- How have you expressed your emotions?
- Do you see some emotions as negative and others as positive? If so how would you describe positive emotions? How do you describe negative emotions?
- How do you behave when you are emotional?
- Do you internalise your emotions or do you express them? Think of a volcano as being someone who is expressive when they are angry. How would you describe someone who internalises or buries negative emotions? What would this look like?

‘Emotional explosive expression’ (explosive emotion) vs ‘Emotional suppression’ (emotional implosion) – group discussion questions

- What do you understand about the above terms?
- Do you express your emotions or suppress your emotions?
- What coping skills do you use for dealing with emotions?
- Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with emotion?
- What do you need in order to learn new ways of dealing with emotions?
- How do you see emotions – dangerous, helpful, unreliable, pointless?

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ How did group members handle reflection on emotions through group discussion?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

Note for champions

The information below should be shared with the group. However, it is important to make this a discussion and not a lecture. You can personalise this with stories that your group will understand.

How does sharing in a group help?

- One of the functions of being in a group is that it is a place where we can openly speak about our lives and find the healing that we want together.
- Together we learn to talk about our painful experiences and slowly change how we are and how we see the world.
- In a group setting emotions are allowed to be given voice, even if they are painful.

How does this process happen?

- It is essential for the group space to be safe. Each member of the group creates this safety and maintains this safety.
- Together the group creates a group identity where we feel safe with each other.
- Group identity gives strength to each person. We begin to realise we are not alone; this helps give courage to face the journey of healing.
- In the group we also come to realise that we are unique individuals. The common thread is that we each have made the journey to being a survivor of SGBV.

Different perspectives

- The group allows each person the space to see things as they do personally. We are all unique.
- Being part of a group does not mean we all have to have the same needs and behave the same way.
- Some group members might need to talk more than others.
- Some group members will need to be held very gently.
- As a group we choose to allow for each person's uniqueness.
- Collectively each person is given the space to meet their needs in the way that they need to be met.

How we view the world will be shaped by what we have lived through. For some, having loving parents who cared for their children will be normal, whereas for another group member being raised by their grandmother was their normal. Allow each other the space to explain when needed how we see things, and remember it is good to be different and we do not need to win anyone over to how we see the world.

We are all unique – allow for this.

Emotions and feelings

- We are all different and we each respond uniquely to what we have experienced.
- In a group, we learn to accept our own uniqueness and the uniqueness of others.
- We also process things differently emotionally.
- Room needs to be given to each person to express themselves as they need to.

Questions to reflect on

- Am I willing to share my journey with the group?
- Am I willing to allow the things that are hidden in the shadows out so I can speak about these hidden things?
- Do I feel safe to speak?
- If your answer is no, what do you need from the group to feel safe?
- Do you need to give yourself something to help you feel safe to speak?
- Am I willing to listen to others?
- Am I willing to give to others what I ask them to give me?

EXERCISE 9: Mirrors and shadows

Learning objective

- To understand that one of the roles of the group is to help us see ourselves better

Materials needed

- None

One of the functions of being in a group is being a 'mirror' for your group members. Imagine holding up a mirror to your friend and saying, 'When you look at your reflection, what do you see?'

There are times in our lives when the picture we see is distorted by what we have experienced.

Imagine a little girl growing up in a home where she is constantly told she is ugly. Soon she begins to believe this and says to herself, 'I am ugly; no one can love an ugly child like me'. In the safety of the group our fellow group members can 'hold up the mirror' and gently whisper what is true. Slowly the lies that we have believed about who we are can change and fade away, and can be replaced with a new, whole truth.

Remember to 'hold the mirror' gently for your group members and speak truth with gentleness. Remember each person will begin to see the truth at their own pace; it is their choice and their right to give you permission to 'hold the mirror' so that they can see their reflection as it truly is.

Step 1

- Allow the group to pair up.

Step 2

- Ask each person to say something positive that they notice about their partner.

Step 3

- Come together as a group and share what you have just heard about yourself from the perspective of another.
- Try to encourage group members to think about things that have been observed that are not the usual examples like 'I see you are really pretty'. Encourage them to use insight and observation skills.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ How did group members understand their purpose and role in the group and the contribution the group can bring to each person's healing?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

PHASE 2: COHESION

Learning objectives

By the end of this phase, survivors will:

- foster strong bonds between group members
- create a supportive community that works together to find healing.

There are ten activities in this phase designed to help you as a champion to facilitate **cohesion** within the group of survivors you are working with. Each of these activities can take as long as 1.5–2 hours to work through and the activities often bring up memories and/or difficult feelings for survivors as they work through them. It is important to allow enough time to work through the activity without rushing and to be available as a support for survivors if they need to talk or connect after the meeting is over.

Explain to the group that you now entering the second phase of this journey to healing. The first phase was connection, and we worked to develop a safe space and trust within our group. We are now working to support each other and to develop strong bonds between us so that we can each continue on our journey to healing.

EXERCISE: Group discussion

Step 1

Reflect in pairs or in small groups:

- When are you happiest?
- Do you enjoy being part of a large group of people?
- What does the word 'family' mean to you?
- What does your family look like?
- Describe your family to the group. Do you have lots of brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, grandparents and cousins?
- What does the word 'community' mean to you?
- One of the characteristics of a good family is **commitment**. What does this mean?
- Commitment is more than making a promise, it is a decision to walk together and build bridges of trust between ourselves so that together we can cross the bridge and enter a new place of wholeness and healing. Discuss what this means to you.

Step 2

Print the word below on a large piece of paper and place it in the middle of the group.

- T** truth
- R** reliability
- U** unity (togetherness)
- S** selflessness
- T** time

Discuss:

- Describe what the word 'trust' means to you. What other words are similar?
- What does it mean to be reliable?
- What is a picture of unity for you?
- What factor does time play in building trust?

Note for champions

Remind the group:

- It takes time to build relationships and it takes time to heal.
- Allow the time needed for healing.
- Too often we deny our pain and don't allow time to heal.
- Be patient with yourself and others as you find healing.

Group discussion questions and reflection

- How does it make you feel knowing that this process takes time?
- How can you make time to heal?
- Think quietly for yourself: what have you been denying and not dealing with that has been painful?
- How can you be patient with yourself?

Step 3

Join hands in a big circle and have a moment of silence.

EXERCISE 10: The elephant in the room

Learning objective

- To understand what a taboo is and how to deal with them

Materials needed

- None

Note for champions

As the facilitator, you are introducing a topic to the group to generate group discussion. The purpose of this is so that the group can open up and speak freely about topics they may not have been given the chance to speak about before.

You could start by saying,

‘Today the elephant we are going to discuss is the issue of gender-based violence and rape.’

- Remember members in your group may have other ‘elephants’ they need to speak about. Ask open questions that are meaningful to your group. Remind your group members about the contract they agreed to when the group started and remember to emphasise the importance of **confidentiality** and **trust**.

An analogy: the uninvited visitor

Imagine inviting all your friends to visit you. You prepare for the visit. You put a big circle of chairs out in the biggest room of your house. To one side you have a table set up with cool drinks and tasty things to eat. When everyone arrives for the party, they are excited to see you and celebrate with you. Everyone is a little puzzled though, as sitting in the circle in a big comfortable chair is a real live elephant. People look at each other but are too afraid to say anything.

Questions run through their heads. Why is there an elephant at the party? Who wants an elephant here? And so the questions continue, but no one says a word.

Then you stand and say: ‘My dad always said, if there is an elephant in the room, introduce it.’

Say to the group that many of us have an uninvited ‘elephant’ in our lives – sexual and gender-based violence – and today we are going to share with each other, as we feel comfortable, about our own experience of this.

As a large group, use the following questions to facilitate a discussion:

- Are there things in your life that you cannot talk about in public or with friends?
- What are the things in your life you cannot talk about?
- Why have you felt unable to talk about these things?
- Are you scared to speak and if so why?
- What response have you had in the past when you spoke about things that were uncomfortable?
- How would you like to be able to speak about difficult issues?
- What would you need to help you speak up?

Questions on sexual and gender-based violence

- What do you think stops people from speaking about SGBV?
- How would you define SGBV? (Describe your 'elephant' to the group.)
- What do we believe about SGBV?
- Are there any myths about SGBV?
- What are these myths?

Breaking the silence, finding your voice

- If you choose to break silence, how would you like to break your silence?
- One-to-one, with the support of a friend, in public?
- What do you need to be able to find your voice?

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ How did group members handle the exercise?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 11: Big plate, little girl

Learning objectives

- To create a place for more inclusivity so all can feel comfortable to speak
- To ensure that each voice is heard and valued equally in the group

Materials needed

- None

An analogy: The loving aunt and the precious child

Picture the setting: a large family gathering. All the family are sitting together, with a big platter of steaming hot supper, ready to eat together. Tonight you are sitting next to your aunt. You know she loves you and knows you well. You are the youngest: a six-year-old girl. You eat slowly and you can't stretch easily to reach the tasty food. Your aunt knows this – in the past she has seen that you haven't eaten much and so tonight she brings you your own plate. She dishes up the tasty bits that she knows you like, passes the plate to you and says: 'Come sit next to me, my dear child, and enjoy your supper – tonight you will eat until you are full and not go hungry'. You smile into the eyes of your aunt, feeling so loved and important tonight.

Step 1

- Read the analogy of the loving aunt to the group.

Step 2

Group discussion

- Have you ever experienced something similar to what was described in the analogy?
- Who would like to share their experience of when this happened and what happened?
- Who can identify with the figure of the aunt?
- Who can identify with the child?
- What about the story stands out most for you?
- What role do you see this group playing for you?
- What role do you see yourself playing in the group?

What can we learn from this analogy?

- The gathering of the family is a picture of your group when you meet.
- When you as the facilitator are sitting with your group, you need to look for the 'small girl going hungry'.

- What does she look like?
- She is often the one who sits quietly and does not talk.
- She might be the one who begins talking but when someone talks over her, she stops talking.
- As a group, you need to see each person; in time you will learn how to encourage each person to talk.
- Remember each person is unique. For some it is easy to talk and for others they need to feel safe before they will begin talking.
- See how you can 'bring the plate' to help them – it might be something small. Listen for the words not said, eyes looking at the floor, arms folded, an angry face and so on.
- Remember you are here to listen and create a space for all to find the freedom to speak.

Note for champions

This can be a very heavy exercise. It is advised that it is followed by another activity that shifts the energy of the group. You could sing a song, play a game or pray – whatever is appropriate for the group. Consider using the icebreaker games mentioned in the introduction.

Note for champions

- Have you experienced this in your groups?
- How would you describe your different members?
- Who often speaks?
- Who keeps quiet, almost hiding?
- When you ask a question, who is quick to answer?
- Is there someone in the group who won't talk about certain issues?
- Do women who know their perpetrators speak more easily than those who don't know who violated them?
- Do any women show signs of denial? Evidence of this would be when another family member has first-hand information about the incident and discloses this to you yet the person concerned has simply 'forgotten'.
- This is a sign of dissociation (denial). Memories that are too painful will be blocked from conscious memory. This is a coping mechanism for dealing with extreme trauma.
- **Do not confront the denial.** Create a place of safety. When the person feels safe enough they may then speak about the occurrence. Allow for a silence around the issue and build a caring, trusting relationship.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ What do you think worked well?
- ★ How did group members handle the group discussion and did they feel comfortable to speak?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 12: Discovery lifeline

Learning objectives

- To be able to visualise, verbalise and process one's journey in order to integrate and heal past wounds
- To see how past pain has been dealt with and gain insight into personal coping skills

Materials needed

- Large pieces of paper (size A0 or large paper used for flipcharts)
- Pens, coloured pencils, crayons, coloured markers

Ask group members to take the following steps:

Step 1

- Turn a large sheet of paper to landscape orientation and draw a horizontal timeline across the middle of it.

Step 2

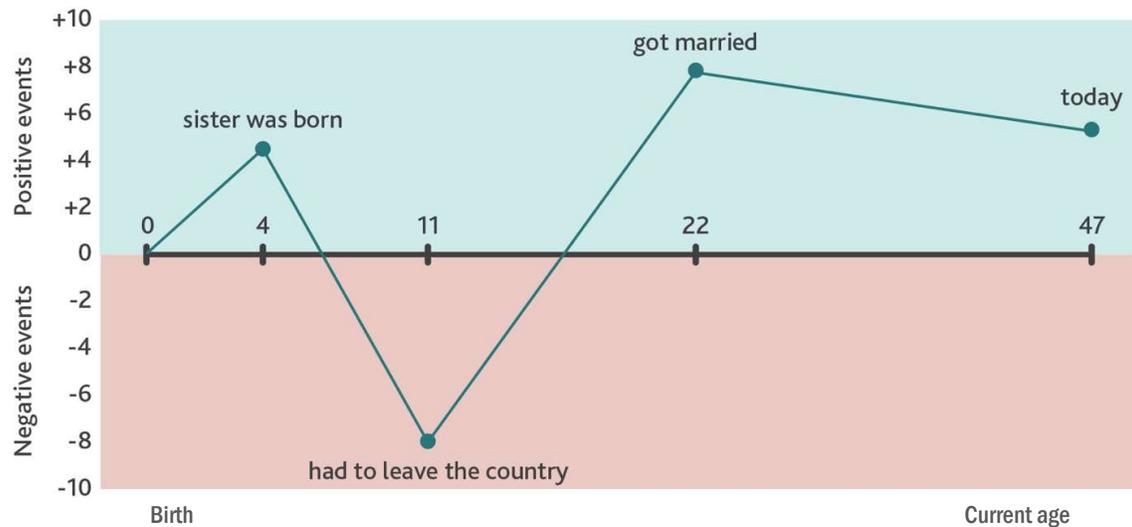
- Number the line from your birth to your current age.
- The distance between the ages on the line does not have to be equal. If you know a lot of events happened between when you were ten and twenty years old, for example, allow more space to write there.

Step 3

- Plot positive events above the line and negative events below the line. Plot as many memories as you can, or plot memories that stand out in your mind.
- The distance from the line represents how extreme the experience was for you. The further the distance from the centre line, the happier or more painful the incident.
- For example, if when you were five your grandmother died (and you were very close to her as she had helped raise you), this might be plotted as a '-6'. Alternatively, you might plot the birth of a child as a '+8' on the scale. Try to remember what memories are still affecting you. Mark them with a symbol.

Step 4

- Join the dots. Link the dots so that it forms a graph.



Step 5

- Once you have completed the exercise, discuss it with the group facilitator, or if the group chooses to, it can be discussed in small groups of three or four group members.

You could talk about how this exercise gives participants a visual representation/picture of their past, in the form of a graph. Often we bury painful memories or deny their existence. This gives us the chance to review our life and provides the space to speak about memories that are still unresolved. In order to heal from the pain of the past it needs to be acknowledged. This exercise allows pain buried deeply the chance to be faced and ultimately healed.

Note: For less literate or illiterate participants, have them draw their lifeline and draw pictures of events above or below the lifeline. Events that are more substantial are further away from the line, and less substantial events are closer to it. Have them connect the pictures to create a lifeline. If participants are not comfortable drawing pictures, they can use colours to represent the different events. What matters is that they can understand what the pictures or colours represent.

Group discussion questions (to use if needed)

- How does it feel seeing the events of your life on this 'lifeline' graph from the exercise?
- Is there something that you would like to talk about?
- **Champions:** Invite group members to describe their graph highlighting events that meant something significant to them. Allow them to lead the conversation and remain curious by saying 'tell me a bit more about that'.
- What coping skills did you use when you experienced a really bad event?

Note for champions

Look at the person's graph and try to ask open-ended questions so they can tell you more information.

Try not to ask questions that result in a 'yes' or 'no' answer.

Remember to listen.

This is primarily a time for them to talk. Help them to reflect on how they have coped in the past so that they can build on this for the future.

To conclude

- Find out from the group what they want to do with their papers.
 - For example, take them home, or have a burning ceremony (a candle is lit and then each person gets to light their paper and allow it to burn)?
- Listen to what they want as a group and then facilitate this as far as you are able.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ What do you think worked well and what was difficult?
- ★ How did group members handle the group discussion and disclosure? Did they feel comfortable to speak?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 13: Safe space

Learning objectives

- To practice the skill of quieting ourselves
- To learn ways to contain feelings of anxiety

Materials needed

- Comfortable chairs or mattresses, music

In this exercise we stop and invite God to walk with us and show us a safe place in our world. He is the one who can heal us of all our pain.

'I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry.' (Psalm 40:1)

Preparing the room

- Use soft lighting if possible.
- If it is daylight, close the curtains to darken the room.
- Provide comfortable chairs or mattresses on the floor for people to lie down on, and blankets if people want to cover themselves.
- Play some quiet music, if available.

Alternatively, you could invite the group members to:

- find a space anywhere in the room
- sit or lie down and get into a comfortable position.

Note for champions

- Your voice needs to be gentle and soothing.
- Allow group members to have time alone after this exercise. If you are meeting for the whole day, you may want to have a quiet lunch after this exercise.
- Explain at the start of the exercise that when it is finished, group members can quietly leave the room so that those who need more time in silence are not disturbed.
- Say clearly that if anyone needs to talk to you after this, you will make yourself available.
- Gently read out the instructions (steps 1 to 5). You don't need to mention 'step 1', 'step 2' etc.
- Allow enough time between instructions.
- Set a finishing time and ask the group to gather back together when the exercise is complete.

Step 1

- Find a comfortable position to sit in, or you might want to lie down. Take a few moments to settle down and be comfortable.

Step 2

- Take some deep breaths in, focus on your body, feel where you might be tense and try to relax.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to join you. Ask him to bless and protect you and to quieten your mind from the 'noise' of your daily life.
- Try to focus on the present moment. Even if you drift off, bring yourself back and refocus.

Step 3

- Ask God to give you a picture in your mind of a peaceful, safe place.
- This might be a place you have actually been to. Maybe a field near a river where you played as a child, or on top of a mountain you've climbed or it might be a picture you have seen. The place needs to be what you see as being safe and peaceful.
- Rest quietly in this place. See your surroundings, smell the smells, hear the sounds. Maybe a bird is quietly singing, or the sun is on your skin. Notice how you are feeling.
- Take your time to absorb everything about this place.
- What do you feel like? Happy? Peaceful? Strong?
- Allow time in this safe place. If you feel safe to do so, invite God to join you.
- Allow time to meet Jesus here. Enjoy your time with him, listen to what he has to say to you.
- Hear if he has a word for your heart. Rest with this word, hold it gently. It is here where he, your saviour, can work with the wounds left deep inside of you.

Step 4

Think about this verse: *'he turned to me and heard my cry.'* (Psalm 40:1)

Step 5

- When you are ready, say goodbye to the place you are in.
- Quietly begin to hear the sounds around you in the room.
- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

Note for champions

- Before the end of the session, group together and debrief with the group how they found the exercise.
- Give the opportunity for anyone who may want to share something significant that happened during their quiet time.
- End by encouraging the group that they can practise this in their own time, to listen to their inner voice.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ What worked well and what did not work so well?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 14: Where are you planted?

Learning objectives

- To explore ways to anchor and ground yourself
- To increase self-awareness

Materials needed

- Printed pictures of nature
- If it's not possible to print pictures, have participants imagine places in nature and to share an imagined picture that they identify most with

Step 1

- Read to the group (or ask if someone else would like to read):

*'He is like a tree **planted by streams of water**, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.'* (Psalm 1:3)

Step 2

- Allow group members to pick a picture that they identify with. This picture can later be taken home as a reminder of the day.
- Ask group members to consider individually where they are rooted/planted:
 - Are they near a river, like in the passage, or do they feel like they are in the middle of a dry barren land?
 - What season are they in? Is it a cold winter or a warm, sunny summer?
- Reflect individually on what helps you to feel planted or grounded in your life. What has been an anchor? This could include people, places, Bible verses etc.
- Share with the group some of the ways you have anchored yourself and how this has helped you.
- What do you need in order to nurture yourself?
- Do you feel that there are things that you lack and you are struggling to grow?
- What has helped you to grow?
- What has been like a stream of water in your life?
- How can you be a stream of water to others? How can you nurture others?

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?
- ★ What worked well and what didn't work so well?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 15: Overcoming giants

Learning objectives

- To find ways of dealing with fear and unresolved emotions
- To introduce journaling skills (if written format is followed)

Materials needed

- A pile of small rocks or stones
- Notebooks or paper for each group member
- Writing or drawing materials

Note for champions

- If the group has a good functional literacy rate this exercise can take a writing and discussion format.
- For groups with a lower literacy level, members can use drawing materials to draw symbols to represent their fears or the things they find emotional.
- **Remember** – your tone of voice needs to be warm and inviting. You are asking group members to think about things that they may have deep reservations about facing or discussing.
- The group needs to know that they will be safe together to explore the unknown.

Preparation: Preparing the room

- Place chairs in a large circle, and a pile of stones in the middle of the circle.
- If doing the written exercise, put a pen and paper on each seat.
- For the drawing exercise, place a large pile of big sheets of paper and crayons in the centre of the circle.

Step 1

- Explain to the group:

Today's workshop will deal with deep emotional issues. It is up to you how much you share. Remember that together we make this group safe for each other.

If I asked you right now, what would be the one thing you do not want to think about? That thing that makes you feel upset or angry. That thing you have pushed far away or that stands in the shadows – that you cannot quite see but you know is there.

Today I want to ask you to walk with me. Together we will hold hands and look at this thing that holds you terrified. Together we will slay this giant.

Step 2

- Ask who knows the story of David and Goliath.
- Allow the group to speak and see what they know, then read the passage or ask a group member to read 1 Samuel 17.

This exercise takes a biblical story and links it to the group members' personal life experiences. Make clear to the group that the giant in the story is a representation of our fears, concerns and situations that have created unwelcome emotional distress.

- Ask them to link the giant to the personal emotions and situations that they have experienced or are experiencing.

Make sure the group understand what you mean. Allow them to ask for clarification or give an example to clarify your point.

Step 3

Discuss:

- Who were the main players in the story?
- Who do you identify with in the story? David? Saul who was hiding in his tent? The one who was supposed to be able to kill the giant and yet was terrified? David's brothers?
- When David went to see his brothers, do you think that he was going to kill a giant that day?
- What prepared him for that day?
- How did he slay this giant?
- What was in his hand?
- Who was by his side?

Note for champions

Listen to the group's responses. It is not necessary for each person to speak, but allow enough time for those who want to speak to have the opportunity.

If you see that one group member is very quiet, address a question to this person. Some group members will speak easily and freely while others need to be encouraged a little. However, do not push – if someone is not willing to speak, let them be.

Step 4

If the group is journaling ask them to write their answers in their books.

If using the drawing format ask the group to draw a giant they have faced.

Ask:

- In your past what has saved you, and from what were you saved?
- What giants have you faced?
- The enemies of Israel had taken over land that was not theirs to take. Is there a giant in your life that has taken over land that is not their own?
- Name this giant, what is it?
- Describe the effect of the giant. What has this giant done?

An example

Maybe you were mugged while returning home from work at dusk, or maybe you were bullied by some thugs, or you were hurt. Now whenever you have to go home and it is dusk, a deep fear rises in you. You are terrified it is going to happen again. You may have changed your routine so that you don't need to face this fear. Maybe you lock yourself into your room at this time of night, afraid of what might happen. The response to this fear often leads to isolation and terror, an immobility and an inability to face the giant. So what do you do now?

Step 5

Discuss:

- Do you know what makes you fearful? Can you name it?
- What words do you hear when you think about your giant?
- How have you tried in the past to cope with fear?
- What stops you from moving forward?
- What has worked for you?

Step 6

You may have believed that your giant can't be conquered and this may have caused you to give up.

Ask:

- What is the truth when dealing with fear?
- How have you dealt with fear in the past?

Read the passage of scripture:

' "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied." '(1 Samuel 17: 45)

Matthew 10:28 says: 'Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.'

- Words can be hurtful and can destroy our minds.
- We get to choose what we allow to affect us.
- When we focus on our God, we see the real truth: it is this truth that will heal us.
- David looked at the giant, but instead of being fearful he looked up and saw his God.
- David's God was bigger than any giant and David knew his God well.

Reflection

- Spend time reflecting on some of the things in your life you are fearful of and some unresolved damaging emotions.
- Reflecting on the character of David in the Bible, how can you deal with the fear in your life that feels like giants, knowing God is on your side?

Faith can be what helps many in the struggle of past pain and hurt. The word of God is more powerful than the word of the evil one. Allow the word of God to heal the words of pain and brokenness.

What is fear?

- F** false
- E** evidence
- A** appearing
- R** real

What lessons can be learnt from the passage?

- The giant was real for David, and so are our fears, but David saw the big picture and, with his knowledge of his God, David knew God was with him.
- Actions driven by fear often leave us in a weak position, but when we turn to God he has said he will never leave us or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6).
- When we move what holds us prisoner and we turn on the light of God, we can step out of the shadows of fear.
- What has held you as a prisoner? (Give the group an opportunity to write their answers down.)

What is the antidote to fear?

'You have given me relief when I was in distress. Be gracious to me and hear my prayer! '(Psalm 4:1, ESV)

An analogy: The first aid box

Visualise a spiritual first aid box. Unlike a normal first aid box, this is a very special box. It contains very special things to keep your soul and spirit healthy – food for your soul. For some this will be music to lift you up, for some it will be prayer, for others the word of God, and for others the beautiful creation of the Creator, to be able to wander in the garden he made to restore our sometimes-weary souls. Take out of the box what you need to find restoration and strength.

Some homes have first aid boxes for when people are injured. They contain things like plasters for a cut, bandages for a sprain, maybe some special cream for a burn. The box is kept in a place that can be accessed easily in case of an emergency. The first aid box is a help for those in need. Being able to see when we are in need is key.

Understand what it is that will meet your spiritual need, or how to remain spiritually healthy. Look inside the box. What do you find when you open the box? For some of us we connect with God when we sing spiritual songs and hymns. If this is you, then sing! This will connect you to our Healer. For another it will be prayer. For another it will be the word of God. For another it will be his creation, nature. Understand for yourself what soothes your soul and access that when needed.

God is the only truth that can heal our souls.

Remember what holds you in fear so that you can ask God to restore your soul, and with this restoration will come, with renewal and liberation with our God who sets the captives free.

Step 7

- Close this session by drawing the attention to the stones in the centre of the circle.
- Tell the group:
 - David used a stone to slay a giant.
 - Please choose a stone for yourself.
 - Write one word on the stone that has held meaning for you today.
 - Take the stone home and place it where you can see it during the day.
 - Remember that knowing what the giant is in your life helps you to know what type of solution you need.
 - Each of us has a stone we can use to help slay the giants in our lives.

Step 8

- Close the group by standing together in a circle, holding hands.
- Choose what is best for a group closing – a prayer, a song, or a moment of silence.

Note for champions

Try to have a follow-up meeting fairly soon after this exercise. The content is deeply emotional and you need to make sure that group members feel supported.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ Were they able to understand the life application of this exercise?
- ★ What worked well and what didn't work so well?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 16: Forgiveness

Learning objectives

- To gain insight into areas of forgiveness
- To begin the process of forgiving and releasing past hurts and resentments

Materials needed

- Paper and writing materials
- Soft background music
- Comfy pillows to sit or lie down on

Note for champions

This exercise is best done in a written format, but as needed, adapt to the context you are working in. If the venue has a safe outdoor area group members can go off alone for between 45 and 60 minutes. Set a finish time and ask the group to meet back together when the exercise is complete.

Step 1

- Explain to the group that the goal for today is to gain insight into areas of forgiveness.

Step 2

- Read the story about the rocks in the well:

Story: The rocks in the well

There is a story told that embodies beautifully what forgiveness looks like.

Our hearts are created like deep wells. The water is sweet, and we need it to live. But as we live, things happen. Sometimes other people do very bad things to us. Each time they do something bad to us, it's like they are throwing a rock into our well. Every day we drop our bucket into the well and draw water to drink. Eventually we drop the bucket into the well, but it can't reach the water because there are too many rocks. We have to clean the well.

If we leave the rocks, we won't be able to draw water. We must go down into the well. We must pick up each rock one at a time, and put it into the bucket. Then we must lift the rocks out of the well and throw them aside. It's hard work and it takes time. Our wells might have many rocks or just a few. When we have taken them out, we can draw sweet water from the well again.

McCord K (2012) *In The Land Of Blue Burqas*. Chicago: Moody Publishers.

- Forgiveness is a process and it takes time.
- Some survivors feel that they need to learn to forgive themselves.
- So often after sexual and gender-based violence we carry such a burden of guilt that we fill our own wells with rocks.
- When we let God in to the places that we hide deep within us, he is able to heal where no one else can heal us.
- Healing takes time, as does learning to forgive.
- We all need to walk at our own pace and choose for ourselves what is best.

Step 3

- Place this list of questions in the middle of the circle to discuss as a group, or invite group members to take a copy of the list of questions to a quiet space and reflect on their own.
 - What are the rocks in your well?
 - What have these rocks cost you?
 - How did these rocks land in your well?
 - How do you forgive someone who has not said they are sorry?
 - Is there anything that you have not forgiven yourself for?
 - You could also ask the group what they think of this quote: *'I had to forgive a person who wasn't even sorry... That's strength.'*
- Later, come together as a group to share your reflections with each other.

Step 4

Lead the group in the following exercise and activity:

- Think of two symbolic gifts:
 - one gift that symbolises the pain
 - another gift that symbolises forgiveness or acceptance.
- In your mind's eye give this person both gifts. What would you say to them?
- Quietly in your soul, speak as if they were sitting right opposite you.
- Sit quietly for a few moments and breathe deeply.
- Ask yourself: How am I feeling? Give yourself permission to let the pain go as best as you can.

Well done for doing this exercise. It takes strength to let go and forgive when many times the one who has harmed us will never know or ask for forgiveness.

Write a letter to the person who has placed the most painful rock in your well. In the letter, write two lists (as follows) and anything else you may need to write that you would like to say to this person. The two lists:

1. The accuser's list. Everything that you can possibly think of about how you were hurt.
2. What I have learned? List what you have learned from the pain or the situation.

For less literate or illiterate group members, imagine what you would say to this person if you could say everything you need to say. Think about everything to do with how you were hurt (accuser's list) and everything you have learned. If you feel comfortable, speak these things aloud with someone else in the group.

Step 5

- Come together after a break and check in to see how each person is feeling.
- Discuss when you are next to meet.
- Encourage the group to make a list of others who have harmed them and try and do this exercise at home to deal with unresolved issues.
- Remind the group that should they need to call you, you will be available for them should they need to speak.

The follow-up meeting

- This is when you will check to see how each person is. Ask questions such as:
 - Did you find the exercise of forgiveness helpful?
 - What did you learn?
- Evaluate the process and give assistance where needed.
- Try to keep the follow-up meeting light and fun if at all possible.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group find this exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ Did they feel like they reached this goal?
- ★ How did group members find the process of identifying areas in their life that needed forgiveness, and releasing past hurts and resentment?
- ★ What was some of the feedback from the group from the follow-up meeting?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 17: Body outline map

Learning objectives

- To have a visual representation of how we see ourselves
- To see how we are shaped by what we believe
- To gain a more accurate picture of our true selves

Materials needed

- Large pieces of paper (A0 or flipchart paper size)
- Tape or sticky tack to put paper on the wall
- Marker pens in black, blue, green and red

If large paper is not available, this exercise can be done outside, outlining the body in the sand/dirt.

- Choose different objects to represent lies that were spoken over you, lies you believed, and how God sees you.

Ask the group to take the following steps:

Step 1

- Get into pairs. Choose who will be drawn by the other.
- Pin a large piece of paper on the wall.
- The paper needs to be slightly longer than the person being drawn.
- Take a black marker and draw the complete outline of the person.
- Repeat for the other person.

Step 2

- With a blue marker write down the lies about yourself that have been spoken over you from outside.
- For example, a teacher might have told you that you were stupid, so write the word 'stupid' next to your head or on your head.
- Try and remember your earliest memories. These words might have been spoken or might be unspoken messages about yourself that you received from others.

Step 3

- Now use a green marker.
- Write down the lies that you believed about yourself from others (outside of you), from your earliest memories until now.
- These words may be the same words that were written in blue – if so circle them in green.
- Stand back from your outline and see which words carry the most emotion.

- Where do you still carry deep pain?
- Remember that these words are the 'lies' others have spoken over you.

Step 4

- The next step in the process is trying to see yourself as God sees you.
- When you see the picture of yourself you may see how the enemy has used these lies to disempower you and rob you of the joy that God has planned for your life.
- When we live with the dark lies of the enemy it is God who is light and can dispel these lies.
- We need to invite God to show us what truth is, and what the lies are that we believe about who we are.

Step 5

- Next lay your hand over each lie and give it to God. This is best done with another person standing gently by your side.
- See how these lies have affected your life and hand them to God.
- Pray over each lie and ask for God's healing and his release from the lies.

Step 6

- Once you have looked at each lie take a red marker and write the truth over the lie. Ask God to show you the truth for each lie.

Step 7

- Lastly, with a red marker, draw a red line from one shoulder to the other and from your head to your feet.
- Yes – a cross – each of us is declaring that in Christ we are made new by his death and resurrection and in him we are made new.

Celebrate who you are in Christ; he sets the captives free. It is these lies that often make us prisoners to the lives of others. In Christ this does not need to be this way.

'I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.' (Galatians 2:20)

Step 8

- Finally, take a step back.
- Look at what you have drawn and written. Read and think about everything before you and review what you have just written.
- Take a moment and ask yourself, how do I feel?
- Breathe and have a moment to consider quietly the process you have just been through.

Note for champions

Close the session with a prayer, dance, song or a moment of silence. Try to fit the close to the mood of the group.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to the exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ What were some of the lessons taken away?
- ★ What worked well and what did not work so well?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 18: Windows of our souls

Learning objectives

- To increase self-awareness
- To create greater group intimacy through sharing

Materials needed

- Johari window handout (printed)

For many, life has been hard and the scars of past wounding run deep. In the gentleness and support of a group, we are able to go to our place of wounding and allow for healing to come.

Our minds are like icebergs. The memories that are threatening, that would harm us and would interfere with being able to function daily, get pushed deep underwater. It is in a group like this, where there is a deep bond of trust and kindness, that these suppressed memories can rise to the surface and can be revisited so that healing can take place. In order for healing to happen we need to unpack the pain of the past. This helps us to understand what has moulded us.

In the following exercise, we will explore what is known as the Johari window. Through understanding this concept, the goal is to gain greater self-awareness and greater intimacy in the group.

The Johari window

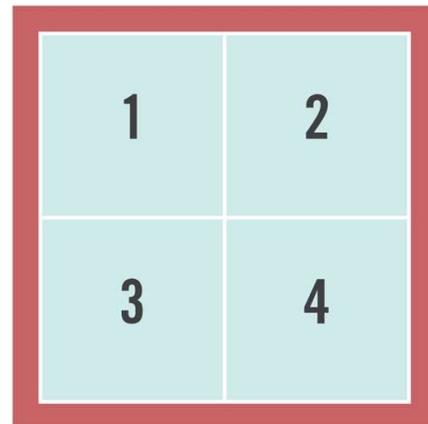
The Johari window has four panes.

Pane 1 – the **open window**. This is the window pane that is **known to us** and **known to others**.

Pane 2 – the **blind window**. This is what we do not know about ourselves but others know about us.

Pane 3 – the **hidden window**. This is what we know about ourselves but is hidden from others.

Pane 4 – the **unknown window**. This is what we do not know about ourselves, and is yet to be discovered, by us and by others.



Note for champions

This exercise is a written exercise. If running this exercise in low literacy groups, have participants work in pairs to share with the other person what they think fits in each pane of the Johari window.

The following two stories illustrate panes two and three of the Johari window. Should you have other stories that explain the same concepts please use your own stories.

Analogy 1: Pane two of the Johari Window – the blind window – not known to us but known by others

Imagine that you grew up with a very cruel parent who beat you any time you made a mistake. If you knocked over your cup of milk, your parent slapped you, saying, 'Don't waste milk, we don't have money to buy more, you stupid child.'

Now that you are a mother you have chosen never to be a cruel parent. One day you are visiting a close friend and your little girl spills her juice all over the floor and without even thinking you grab her by the arm and smack her harshly. Your friend (we will call her 'Anna') who knows you well, knows that you want to be a good mum and that your behaviour is not in line with what you want. If she had to tell you quietly what she just saw you do to your child, how would you respond to your friend?

Imagine Anna sits with you and says, 'Kate, remember the other day when you hit your little girl harshly when she accidentally knocked over her juice?'

Kate replies, 'I never did that. You must be imagining it.'

Anna says: 'Kate, this is not the first time I have seen you do this.'

Kate sits back and begins to think and realises that what Anna is saying is true. Maybe she needs to figure out how she can change.

Kate then says to Anna, 'When you see me being too harsh please will you take me to one side and talk to me gently? I want to be a good mum – will you help me?'

Anna replies that she is happy to help her friend.

Kate felt safe to ask her friend this as she knew she could trust her. She also knew her friend was not judging her. She knew she needed her friend's help, she wanted to change, and she saw her own need to change. Together they worked to make things better. Kate gave permission to Anna to speak into her life. Anna was not interfering.

What can we learn from this story?

Sometimes there are things about ourselves that we cannot see that those close to us can see. Listen to those who you trust.

Analogy 2: Pane three of the Johari window – the hidden window – known to self but not known to others

Imagine you walk into a room filled with people. It's a party you have been invited to join. Over in the corner you see a woman beautifully dressed. Her hair looks beautifully set. She has lovely clothes on, and you stop and think, I wish I looked like her. You hear her laughing and joking with everyone around her. You only wish you could be just like her, the life and soul of the party.

You soon see your friends and you join them, chatting about what has happened in the week before. After having a few drinks you need to go to the bathroom. You walk to the bathroom, and open the door. There before you stands the woman from across the room but, instead of seeing her with a happy face, you see she is visibly unhappy. This woman did not hear you come into the bathroom, and suddenly she realises someone else is there. Her face transforms to the face you saw earlier.

You finish using the bathroom and you walk away puzzled. Was she wearing a happy mask, did you see the real her in the bathroom? What face does this woman wear for the world, is it all a mask? The party ends and you leave thinking about that woman; you wonder who she really was – the life and soul of the party, or the sad woman in deep distress?

In life, many of us wear masks. For different reasons we either cannot or choose not to show the world who we really are. This is pane three of the Johari window, the hidden window, or what some call 'the window of the mask' or 'the window of the façade'.

The Johari window

(Handout for group members)

<p>1: Open area (Known to us and known to others)</p>	<p>2: Blind area (Not known to us but known by others)</p>
<p>3: Hidden area (Known to us but not to others)</p>	<p>4: Unknown area (Not known to us or to others)</p>

Explain to group members: This exercise is for your own benefit. It is your choice whether to share what you write. Take 15 to 20 minutes to follow the steps below. Answer as much as you can. (If groups are choosing not to write their answers, have them sit in pairs to explain to their partner what would fit in each of the panes. After one person has finished, the other can take their turn to explain the panes.)

Step 1

- In **pane one – the open window** – write down things that **you know about yourself and that the group knows about you**. For example, your nationality, whether you are married, how many children you have.
- The amount people will know about you is often based on how long they have had to get to know you. Some people are more trusting and feel less need to hide who they are from others. We are all different and how much we disclose to others is based on past personal experience and personality.
- **This area is known as the area of self-disclosure.**

Step 2

- **Pane two – the blind window** – is an area for **self-discovery from the input of others**. List the people you give permission to see into this window. How do you respond when someone tells you something about yourself that you do not recognise?
- Write two things that you have learned about yourself from being with your group in the last few months.
- By listening to our group members and asking for information about ourselves that we don't see, we are able to enlarge the known area of ourselves. After this written exercise you may choose to ask a trusted person to share with you something you may not be aware of about yourself.

Step 3

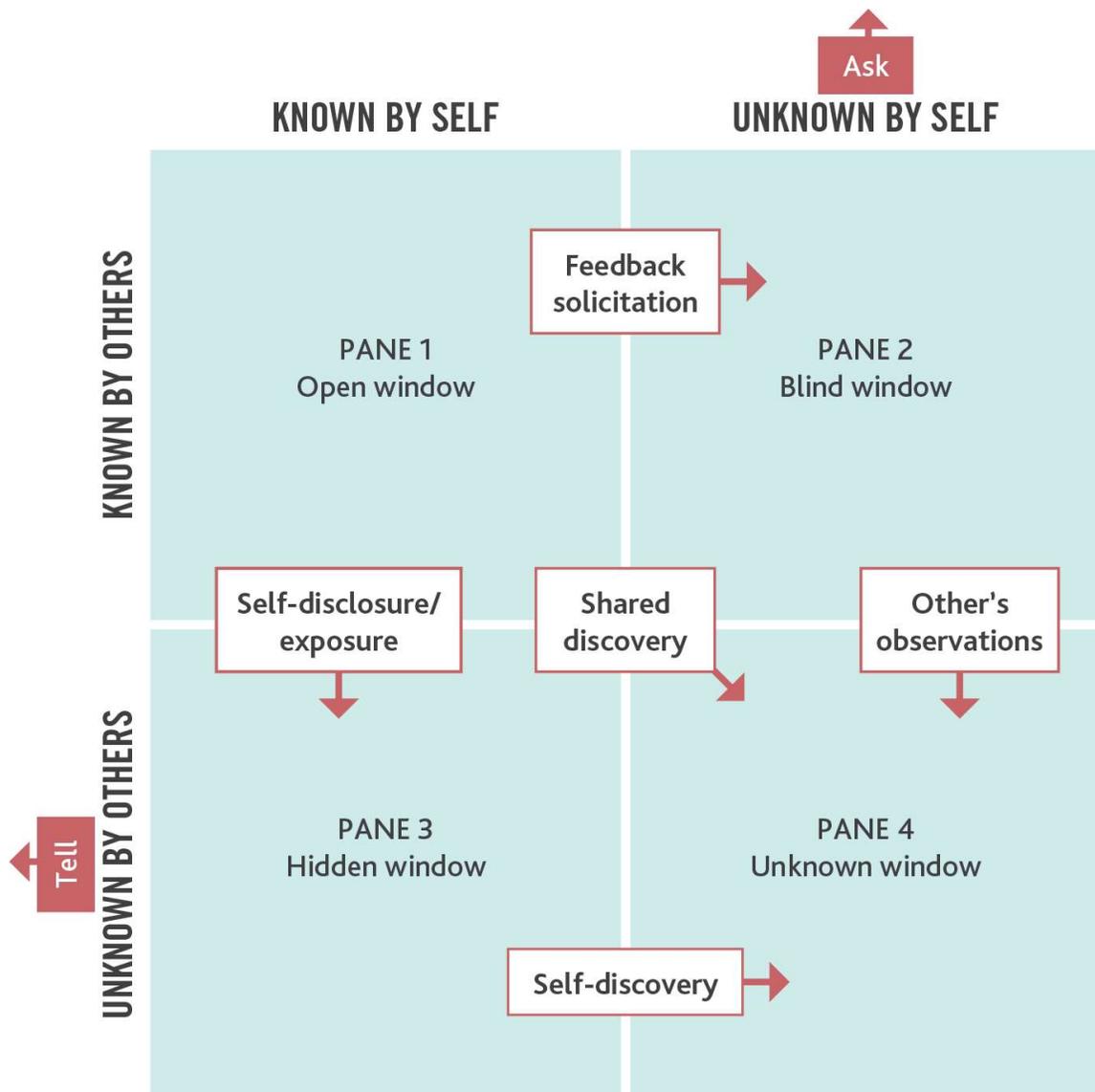
- **Pane three – the hidden window** – is an area of revelation of self to others. Consider these questions:
 - Who have you hidden things from?
 - Why have you hidden things from these people?
 - What has happened to you in the past when you have shared hidden knowledge? For example, maybe you shared a deep secret with a friend and she told your neighbours, and from this you learned that it was not safe to share your secrets.
- In pane three, write down things that you have had to hide from others. Try to understand and unpack why you have had to hide these things from others. Add the names of those you are willing to share hidden information with, and try to understand why you feel safe with these people. In your group, as you feel safer to speak about the hidden parts of yourself, this window will shrink.
- Is there anything that you would still prefer to hide? Why?

Step 4

- **Pane four** is the **unknown window**. This is what we and others do not know about us.
 - Have you noticed repetitive behaviours in yourself that you don't understand?
 - Are there areas that worry you?
 - Are there things that confuse you?
 - With greater self-awareness, the help of the group and the help of God, this area of the unknown can grow smaller.

This is an area of new discoveries or future discoveries.

Johari window model



Who really knows our 'unknown window'?

- The 'unknown window' – pane four – is what we do not know about ourselves and what others do not know about us.
- This is the part of us that is hidden in our subconscious mind. It is hidden because it is too dangerous for our conscious mind.
- This is the area of our minds where trauma and pain are hidden. This can be seen as the 'dark' part of our minds.
- Pane four also contains things that are hidden because we have yet to discover them – such as talents that you have yet to explore or things you have yet to learn.

Imagine for a moment a little girl who grows up in a home where the girls are not allowed to dance or sing as it is against the norms of the family. Many years later this little girl becomes a woman, and decides for herself after meeting someone who encourages her to sing that she has a beautiful voice and there is nothing bad about singing. Hidden deep inside this woman was always a beautiful voice but it took the gentle encouragement of another, and the testing of a boundary that said singing was a taboo, for her to uncover this hidden talent.

Questions for reflection

- Since joining this group have you discovered hidden talents that you were unaware of? If so, list them.
- Are there areas that you are fearful of? List these areas too.
- Bring these fears to God. Ask him to show you if there are other areas that are hidden and to help you discover and find the strength to face them.

Note for champions

Close this session with a moment of silence or a quiet song.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group engage with this exercise?
- ★ Did the group understand the purpose of the exercise?
- ★ Were they able to gain self-insight and discover more about themselves?
- ★ What worked well and what did not work so well?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

EXERCISE 19: Little houses, big windows

Learning objectives

- To increase self-awareness
- To create greater group intimacy through sharing

Materials needed

- Pictures of the four houses to use when telling the stories

This exercise gives an alternative explanation of the Johari window concept using four short stories.

Note for champions

Decide if it is better to work through one story at a time or if you can work through all four stories and then have the discussion.

Story 1: The welcoming, open house

Picture a beautiful house. It is surrounded by flowers and there is a lovely pathway leading to the front door. At the front of this house is a lovely wide veranda, with a big white wooden front door. On the veranda are beautiful outdoor chairs with comfortable cushions.

You walk up to the house and the owner of the house invites you in. She asks you if you would like a cup of tea and if you would like to join her in the kitchen while she makes it. You join the homeowner in the kitchen as she makes the tea, and you feel welcome in her home.

After a while it is time for you to go, and the owner of the house says you are welcome to visit any time you want to. You say goodbye knowing that you are welcome back any time. You have felt her openness in the way you have interacted with this lady; you know that what she says and what you have seen is authentic.

- Why do you think this house was called the welcoming, open house?
- How can we be welcoming to each other?
- Was there anything hidden in this house to the visitor or the homeowner?
- What can you learn from this story?
- How can you be more open with the group? Do you feel safe enough to be open with this group?

Story 2: The 'blind' house

This house is different from the first house. It may look very similar, but there is a big difference.

You walk up to this house, and there is a lady sitting in the chair on the veranda. You ask if you may join her. She says, 'Yes, sure, but I am afraid we can't go into the house.' You are a little puzzled by this, but you don't want to upset her. You can see that the door is closed, but surely there must be a way in.

You sit in the chair next to her and begin to talk. You ask, 'Why can't you go inside your home?' The homeowner replies: 'I have been told that I can't unlock the door because no key will fit in the lock.'

You are really puzzled. 'So, have you lived outside this house on the veranda all this time?' you ask. She replies, 'Yes of course I have. There's no use trying to go in, and after all it is so nice out here.' You then lean in gently and say to the homeowner, 'Surely we can get a locksmith to help us open the door.'

The lady looks at you, rather frightened. 'Do you really think we can do that?'

The locksmith is called and the homeowner discovers a whole new world she owns behind what was once a locked door. What once was veiled from her because of not seeing the situation as others did was revealed with just one simple conversation with a caring friend.

- Why do you think this house is called the 'blind' house?
- Are there times where you have been blind to things in your life?
- What have you learned about yourself from the group since you joined it?
- Who have you allowed to be the voice in your life to speak to you about areas that you are blind to?
- Why have you allowed this person to 'be your eyes'?
- What characteristics do they display? Are they trustworthy, kind and truthful?
- Have you been invited to be the 'eyes' for someone in your life? If so, why do you think that you were asked to be someone else's eyes into their life?
- How can the group be better 'eyes' to see what is 'blind' for each other?

Story 3: The house of the beautiful façade

On the same street as the first two houses stands a home with a beautiful façade. This house has beautiful long pillars that soar up high and a beautiful statue on the front lawn in the middle of a grand fountain. Everyone who walks past this house admires it but no one ever gets invited beyond the foyer.

One day a neighbour decides to knock on the door and see if she will be welcomed in. She goes up to the door and rings the bell. Somewhere deep within the house she hears the doorbell and after a short while she hears footsteps and the door is opened. It is the owner of the home, who tells her she is very busy and the neighbour will need to come back another day. The neighbour leaves, thinking, 'I will try again, next time I will bring her flowers. Maybe then she will let me in.'

After greeting her neighbour whenever they meet out and about, she finds the courage to try again.

A few weeks later the neighbour is walking past the house and she sees the lady is out in the garden. It seems like she is in distress. She opens the gate and runs to help her. The owner has had a fainting spell and the neighbour needs to get her inside the house, out of the hot sun. She asks the homeowner, 'Is there anyone inside who can help us?' The woman murmurs that she is all alone. The neighbour helps her to her feet and they walk slowly into the house.

When they get inside she discovers that the house is very different to what she had imagined. The carpets are all threadbare and there is the distinct smell of old mould and dust. It is so dark that she keeps walking into things, as the curtains are drawn and it is hard to see.

She gently lifts the lady onto a sofa and props her head up with a pillow. The lady is embarrassed that her neighbour has come into her home but is grateful for the help. That day a special friendship begins. The neighbour from down the road becomes a regular visitor at the house with the beautiful façade and soon she understands that all that looks grand on the outside is not always the same on the inside. She soon finds out that the homeowner is often sick and cannot take care of her home, but her new friend is willing to help her and soon the house looks better inside than it has in years. After all, there's nothing like a little bit of hard work to get things good as new.

- Why do you think the third house was called the house of the beautiful façade?
- What other words can you use instead of façade?
- What can you learn from this story?
- What was the story behind the story?
- Has there been a time when it has been necessary for you to hide your true self from others?
- Is it good to keep some things private?
- Is there a difference between what we keep private and what we deliberately hide?
- What is the difference between hiding and being private?
- Discuss as a group how to facilitate a space where it is acceptable to be your real self without having to hide or wear a mask or façade?
- Where have you felt safe to be your real self?

Story 4: The house of the unknown treasure hidden within

This little house is the last house on our street. It looks so much like all the others. A pretty little garden, with flowers in the flower beds and a beautiful big white door.

This is my immediate neighbour; we know each other well. Her name is Sue. She is kind and friendly and always up for a little fun. One hot sunny day I run in to fetch the tray from the kitchen with juice we were about to share on the front veranda, but in my haste I trip on the hall carpet and fall down with a loud bang. The next second the floor gives way. I yell, 'Sue! Come and help!'

To our shock and horror there is a trap door hidden in plain sight and I have fallen into it. Sue helps me up. We look at each other. What should we do? The area under the trap door is dark, so Sue she runs to get a torch. 'Since it's my house, let me go first,' Sue says. 'The stairs down there are rotten and I would not like you to get hurt.' Sue looks up at me. 'But if you don't mind will you wait at the top so that if I get into trouble you will be there to help, or call for help?' 'Sure,' I reply. Slowly Sue descends down the mysterious staircase only to soon discover hidden treasures she never imagined were there.

- Why do you think this house is called the house of the hidden treasure?
- Do you think we as individuals may have hidden treasures in us?
- Since being part of this group what 'hidden treasures' have you discovered?
- How has this changed your life?

In closing

As a group, join hands quietly and ask God, who knows all the hidden treasure in us, to reveal these treasures to us so that we can grow and change into the women he destined us to be.

PHASE 3: CONSOLIDATION

Learning objectives

By the end of this phase, survivors will:

- have instilled a desire to see others join the survivor movement
- develop strong relationships with the community and with available support services
- look to the future and decide how the group will move forward.

There are three activities in this phase designed to help you as a champion to facilitate **consolidation** within the group of survivors you are working with. This phase is about closing the work you have been doing as a peer support group and strengthening the survivor movement. It can bring up emotions as survivors reflect on their time together and begin to look at how they can move forward.

Each of these activities can take as long as 1.5–2 hours to work through. It is important to allow enough time to work through the activity without rushing and to be available as a support for survivors if they need to talk or connect after the meeting is over.

Explain to the group that you are now entering the final phase of this journey to healing. The first phase was connection and we worked to develop a safe space and trust within our group. The second phase was cohesion, where we worked to support each other through our journey to healing. We are now looking forward at where we go from here and how we can support the survivor movement.

EXERCISE 20: Strengthening the movement and moving forward

Learning objectives

- To reflect on what this group has meant to each member
- To understand how survivors have grown and changed through the healing process
- To look to the future and begin to think about how survivors move forward

Materials needed

- None

The purpose of a peer support group for SGBV survivors is:

- to create a place where survivors of SGBV are able to speak

and

- to enable the group to become a silent witness to what happened before, creating a space where it is safe to ask questions such as 'Do you see me?', 'Can you hear me?', 'Am I significant?', 'Did it hurt as much as it did?' and 'My soul is bleeding – can you see my wounds?'

It is in seeing and hearing the past of the person speaking that the group gives significance as the witness to the event, even though they were not there. We all want to feel significant.

What does the group bring to each person?

- In a group we are to hold each other with warmth and care.
- The speaker is then able to respond from this place of care.
- Insight to injury occurs when spoken out loud.

Too often we are not sincere with ourselves. We say things like: 'I am richer for my loss.' But it is in this space that we can discover our adaptability. We are able to discover what coping mechanisms we used to deal with trauma and survive.

In the safety of the group:

- We are able to explore what it means to have our own 'shape'.
- We can step out of our role we play in the world we function in. Here in the space of the group, we can drop our masks and reveal to others and ourselves our true selves.
- We are able to examine how trauma is dealt with using the coping skills available and how separate individuality is found in the collective. Each person responds as they are able to with trauma. An examination of the past helps with an understanding of the future.

Discuss:

- What has your group meant to you?
- What have you learned most from working through the exercises?

- What do you want to do to move forward in your journey?
- What struggles have you overcome?
- Can you speak to other survivors about your own journey?
- What can you share with others who have faced a similar journey?

Note for champions

Use questions relevant to the group and allow them to speak about what they need to speak about, exploring their own questions. You are there as a guide only.

Connecting survivors to supports

Remember you cannot heal your survivors, only they can heal themselves. You can provide a place that is safe for them to discover their inner healing surrounded by compassionate people who have walked a similar road. It is very important to remember that you cannot fix another person. They are their own best experts but there are times when they are so broken that they cannot give to themselves what they need most.

As a champion you are there to help survivors identify their own strengths and coping skills, to help motivate them to push through when things get tough.

There may come a time when someone in your group discloses something that is too big for you to deal with, and you can assess from what they are saying that they are not coping with life. So what do you do? This is when you need to know about the resources in your community and how to access them.

Community resources

As champions it is vital to know what you are able to help with and what you are not. Some situations require the help of trained professionals. It is important to map what resources are available in the community. Are government services available? Where are they situated? What do they offer? Build bridges between you as the champion and the stakeholders of these services in the community. Build relationships where possible with the law enforcement agencies; there may come a time when you need their help. Find out if there are community meetings that you can attend so that people in the community get to know you and what you do. Finally build strong links where possible with your local church.

Some survivors may have experienced severe trauma and while you may be able to bring comfort to them in their time of need, they may well need the support of social workers, psychologists, doctors or ministers of the church.

Signposting and referral pathways

There will be times where it is necessary to refer a group member to someone in the community for further help. Know the limitations of the support that can be provided by you and connect people who need specialised support with the appropriate specialists such as professional counsellors, doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, social services, legal services, local police stations, etc. It is important that you know who to go to and for what. Accompany the group member if they would like you to. Be supportive but remember to follow their lead.

What if the person is not part of the group?

You might find out, for example, that someone in the group has a child who has been raped and the mother does not know what to do. You might find out that the rapist is the child's father. He works, and the mother does not. She knows that if she tells the father to stop he will throw her and her child out of the house.

So what can you do?

You know that there is a social worker in the community and you find out if she can see you and the group member. But remember that you need the group member to agree to this pathway of help. It is important to remember that what is happening is against the law and so to remain quiet is not the correct thing to do, but you also need to respect the fact that the group member may have spoken to you in confidence.

Once the mother agrees, you then support her in her decisions and if need be you go with her to see the social worker as her moral support.

EXERCISE 21: Passing on the candle

Learning objectives

- To understand the benefit of being in a support group for survivors of SGBV
- To see the value of sharing with others who are lacking the support of other survivors

Materials needed

- None

Think back to before you joined this support group. Imagine you were in a dark, cold room, alone and silent. One day someone came into that room holding a lit candle and invited you to join them on a journey. This person had another candle which they gave to you and helped you light. Soon more people joined you and before you knew it the room was ablaze with light.

The desire of support groups is to have been with you on this journey of discovery from darkness into a place of light – to have passed a candle to you in your darkest hour. To have brought meaning and understanding, but most of all hope.

Group discussion

- What was it like before you joined this group?
- Did you feel like you were in darkness?
- If so, describe what the difference is now that you have been part of a supportive group.
- How can you help someone else who is in this same dark silence of being sexually violated?
- How can you reach out to others? Discuss this as a group.

Case study

Not too many years ago a young girl had heard of a support group. At the time she was struggling with her own identity; she had discovered that her father had fathered other children and people who she thought were friends were actually her siblings. The truth of her family roots had been shaken. This was what was troubling her, but deeper than this were other hurts. As she gained trust in the group of women she was in, she began to reveal more of her painful past. She gained the courage to speak openly and explore very painful issues. In doing this she discovered her inner strength as she found her voice. With the help of staff from Tearfund in South Africa, she gained courage to share her healing journey with others. This young woman has gone on to touch many lives. She has started several groups and reaches out to many women in her local community; hence the survivor movement formed.

When you first meet her, she is tiny in stature and quiet of voice, but quietly – without being seen – she speaks to women one-to-one in her place of work and invites them to join her in the journey of finding healing and restoration with other women.

What can we learn from this case study?

- Discuss as a group how to reach women in the community who have not been reached.
- Each survivor carries her own unique story; it is with your own unique story that you can reach out and touch other survivors.
- It is estimated that one in three women will be sexually violated. Stop and think when you walk down the street and you look into the eyes of another woman; she might be a silent survivor who has yet to find hope. Will you be her hope? Will you reach out with a candle and light her way home, to finding her voice and finding meaning when all seems lost? I encourage you to step out and shine light in darkness and bring hope to another.

A heart for healing

To be an effective champion when working with survivors it is important to have a heart of compassion. This is not a job but rather a walking together with other survivors so that healing can be found together. Someone considering becoming a champion should ask herself these questions:

- Do I really know who I am?
- Can I think about how I think and behave?
- Do I know how to show compassion?
- Do I know how to really listen?
- Is it all about me?
- What is my agenda?
- Do I believe that if given the right environment people can learn and grow?
- Am I real or do I wear a mask?
- Am I trustworthy?
- Do I know what empathy is?
- Do I think I am the expert and everyone must just listen to me and do what I tell them to do and they will get better?

When forming a group to help survivors, champions need several important qualities. These are:

- realness / authenticity / congruence (you are who you say you are and you speak the truth – this builds trust)
- empathy (the ability to care, to see the world through the eyes of another)
- acceptance of others (being non-judgemental).

Group members need to know that they can trust you, and if you are not being real they will quickly pick up that they cannot trust you and this will stop healthy group formation.

One of the hurdles you need to cross as a champion is that trust was shattered for many survivors. This needs to be re-established in their lives. The survivors' group creates the environment for this re-building of trust to take place.

These are some further questions to answer:

- Do you want to become a champion?
- Do you have the qualities to be a champion?
- Do you want to undergo the training to be a champion?
- Do you know other SGBV survivors in the community?
- Do you have the time to form a group and facilitate a group?

EXERCISE 22: Dealing with closure, saying goodbye

Learning objectives

- To understand the concept of closure
- To understand the importance of ending well

Materials needed

- Clay and heavy cardboard

Note for champions

For some who come to this process of joining a group to deal with forms of sexual violence like rape, they will come with the goal of finding a place to heal, and once this goal is achieved they may leave the group. As a champion, it is easy to take this personally and feel that we have somehow failed as a leader, but remember each person is in the group voluntarily and they may leave at any time. This is no reflection on you.

Group members who have chosen to leave after working through their story of being SGBV survivors have attained the goal they set for themselves. As a champion, it is not correct to tell a group member they must stay. Allow for each group member to plot their own journey. Make sure that the group is a welcoming place and in so doing, strive for the group to evolve into something new rather than fail to meet. The group might choose to meet less frequently. Listen to the needs of the group and try to accommodate all group members.

Remember that closure and denial are very different. Denial is like sticking your head in the sand, hoping things will get better. This is an unhealthy coping skill. Closure is different. It is the natural process that happens at the end of going through a period of change.

How to say goodbye

Discuss:

- How have you dealt with goodbyes in the past?
- Do you have unresolved issues with past goodbyes?
- How would you have done things differently if you could have said goodbye differently?

Looking back on how we did things in the past can give us clues if we want to do things differently now, and it is with this understanding that we can make other choices.

There is a saying: 'Some people enter our lives for a reason, a season or a lifetime.' Some might join you in this group journey for a lifetime, but others only for a reason or a season.

Remember, the process of liberation to real freedom is never complete. It is a journey and as we gain more insight into who we are we discover our strengths and ability to choose how we respond to the events in our lives. This grounds us

and we discover that who I am is not based on external things like what I do, where I work, whether I am married, or any other factor.

We discover ourselves and what our life purpose is. Each of us is unique and we carry a gift to share with all humanity. We learn to love and accept each other in spite of our differences.

Step 1

- Give each group member a large piece of clay as well as a square of heavy cardboard to place the clay on. Ask them to fashion out of clay a symbolic goodbye.
- If these materials are not available, participants can draw pictures of how they visualise goodbye. If that is also not possible, participants can explain a mental picture of goodbye to another participant in pairs.
- This piece of art is to represent for them something of their journey of recovery.
- Allow an hour for the activity, plus discussion time.

Step 2

- Come together as a group. Give time for each person to explain the meaning of their art.

Step 3

- Close with a celebratory prayer or song.

A last goodbye

Being a survivor of SGBV living in the isolation of silence can be like having a heavy bag on our back. When we meet other survivors of SGBV, this heavy bag of abandonment, of being a survivor all alone, is lifted and our burden begins to grow lighter. When survivors are able to share their story and break the silence, it is as if they are released from what has held them in shackles. Silence is broken, as we learn that we can and will speak out in the company of other SGBV survivors. In doing so the movement can grow, and change can happen not only for us, but our communities too. Liberation is found by speaking out, moving forward, out of the shadows and into the light.

Evaluation of the exercise

- ★ How did the group respond to this last session?
- ★ Did the group understand the goal?
- ★ How did group members deal with closure and saying goodbye?
- ★ Were they able to link this to any past life experiences to understand their patterns of closure?
- ★ What worked well and what did not work so well?
- ★ Thinking back over the session, what would you do differently?

Note to remember:

- ★ You can use this evaluation of the exercise for report writing (see Appendix 3 and also Manual 1, *A Shared Journey*, section 4).
- ★ When writing a report, all names and important details that can easily identify a person **MUST BE ANONYMISED** unless permission has been given by the group member.

APPENDIX 1: CRITERIA AND EXPECTATIONS FOR CHAMPIONS

Basic criteria for champions

- A champion must be a survivor of SGBV (lived experience of the effects of SGBV).
- A champion must be a survivor who is healing (steeped in the process of healing).
- A champion must be living and working in the community, with a good understanding of the community situation.
- A champion must be involved with or linked to local government structures.
- A champion must be passionate about working with survivors of SGBV.
- A champion must be willing to reach out to all survivors of SGBV from different racial groups in the community.
- A champion must be willing to take up an advocacy role.

Champions are expected to:

- transfer knowledge received to other members of the peer support group
- map the needs of the members of the group
- report back on the development of the group-based reporting format provided by the team
- attend regular meetings of different structures in the community and share with the group information received
- stand up to be a catalyst for change
- be able to read and write (English or local language) in order to report on their activities on a weekly basis to the team leader or coordinator
- show interest in personal development
- have good communication skills and manners in their interactions with members of the community in general and survivors in particular
- be able to motivate more survivors to join the movement
- avoid any unnecessary argument in the community.

APPENDIX 2: WHEN TRUST LEFT THE VILLAGE

High up in the beautiful mountains stood a village. It had been there for many years. That village had no community hall where the people could meet. The children did not have a school building either. The children met together under the trees, but when it rained there was nowhere for them to meet so they stayed at home and missed school.

One day the community elders called a meeting and asked the villagers if they wanted to construct a building that they could all use: a building that the children could use for school, and a place that the villagers could use to host celebrations or meet together.

They discussed how to make this happen for themselves since they were long forgotten by the outside world. One man stood up and said, 'I have some roof sheets from when I built my house – I can give them to you.' Another said, 'I have good clay at the bottom of my property and we can make bricks from the clay.' Another stood up and said, 'I can build a well and I don't mind helping. I will come every weekend and I will help build.'

More and more people joined in. This was something all the villagers wanted and so they were willing to help. It was a dream they had held for a long time; they were so excited that now they could make it happen if they all worked together.

At first things went well. Each person brought what they could and those who said they would help build came to help build. Then one day the man who said he would make the clay bricks overheard one of the builders saying that the bricks were not all the same size, and this made building difficult. This hurt the man making the bricks. He went home muttering to himself, 'Why should I help when they are so ungrateful? It is hard work making bricks and rather than say something to me they talked behind my back. I will show them.' So the next day when he made bricks he did not try as hard, and the bricks were all shapes and sizes. He waited for them to dry and then delivered the bricks to the builders. He walked a distance away listening to what would be said, and true enough it was just as before. The builders started to talk about him, saying how useless he was. They did not know that the brick maker was listening to them.

The brick maker walked home angry. He called out to his wife and told her what had happened. She became angry too. She went to her friend and told her how her husband had been insulted and before she knew it the whole village was talking about the brick maker and the gossip of the builders. Soon it turned into a fight. Some were on the side of the brick maker, others chose the builders' side. Soon the village was divided and the builders then threw their tools down saying they would not build any more. The dream of the community building was fading fast. Everyone was angry.

Then a wise old lady from the village called a meeting. She asked everyone to come to the building site that evening. Everyone arrived – those supporting the brick maker on one side, and those supporting the builders on the other side. They stared at each other angrily. Then the wise old lady began to speak, and the grumbling ceased as they leaned forward eagerly to hear what she had to say.

'People of my village, was it not a dream we all carried in our hearts to see this building built? Did we not all come together to say we would work as one? Why then are we fighting? Do you think by fighting the work will be done? It does not matter who started the fight or why it started, but do you not think that when hurtful words are spoken, hearts get broken? Does it help to tell your friend what is wrong with someone else? Surely it is better to go to the person you have difficulties with and ask them if you can talk together and find the answers together? Careless words are like setting fire with just one match to a dry field of grass.'

The wise old lady then asked the brick maker to go and speak with the builders and share why he was so unhappy, and she asked the builders to think about their careless words and say how they planned to mend the hurt caused by these words. The men all agreed to meet later with the wise old lady to talk together.

The builders and the brick maker came together with the wise old lady. They listened to each other, each saying what had made them angry and frustrated. The brick maker was able to explain why he had been struggling and together the men found a solution to their problem.

Later that week they began to work together again without conflict. The building began to take shape and soon it was complete. The community then asked the wise lady if she would open the new building officially. The whole community came out to the opening ceremony. She stood quietly and began to speak:

‘My dear friends, there was a time in this building project where I thought we might never finish this work. I hope that you learnt how easily we can break the trust of those we care about. A careless word can cause us to build invisible walls of mistrust between us where we can hide and think unkind thoughts about our neighbours. If we want to achieve a dream for our village, it is us that can do it, when we work together patiently. We are all different, but when we work as one strong unit, more can be done than when we work alone. At first many of us remained silent about our dream of wanting a gathering place for us all. It took one brave person to speak up, and as one spoke, more voices joined us and look at what we did together.

‘It is not always easy to follow our dreams; we can easily grow tired and give up. It is then that we must try harder and encourage each other. Together we can have a better life filled with more beauty when we stand together. Well done for overcoming all the obstacles that you met on the way. You showed that together we are stronger. Now join me as we celebrate together our new achievement.’

And with that, she cut the ribbon that was hung in the doorway and invited all the community to join her in their new building.

The tale above illustrates:

- respect for each other
- an understanding that we are all different and unique
- allowing each person the right to choose for themselves
- being able to work towards a common goal without losing our own identity
- the building of trust and the breaking of trust (through gossip and broken trust)
- the value of communication
- how miscommunication can lead to tension and anger and can lead you away from a goal or dream.

Monthly report for champions leading survivor groups

Champion's name:

Month:

Name of the group:

Number of survivors:

New survivors:

	Description of activities	Objective to achieve	By who / Stakeholders
Individual activities			
Group activities			
Next plans of action			
Recommendations			

APPENDIX 3: REPORT TEMPLATE

Limits to confidentiality vs legal obligation

A breach of confidentiality in group work by an individual could result in the individual being asked to leave the group because as discussed above, this breaks trust within the group. However, there are some limits to confidentiality and some circumstances where it is necessary for the group facilitator to break confidentiality. For example, the group facilitator may be required to do so as part of a police investigation or by the court of law; or where the survivor is at risk of harming themselves (suicide) or harming others (murder); or where a child is at risk. In such circumstances, confidentiality can be broken but the group member has to be informed before any action can be taken. The group leader (group champion or trainer of champions) must make sure they understand the laws of the country and know who their initial contact person is in a given situation to seek correct advice.

If wanting to use information from a group member for a case study or a report you must obtain informed consent from the person. They need to agree – without being pressured – that their story may be shared (also agreeing on how and where it will be shared).

Note for champions

Unless trust is built and confidentiality upheld, group work cannot be effective. Trust needs to be maintained by each person in the group. This needs to be a conscious effort on the part of each group member. It is good practice when building a new group to emphasise the importance of trust and confidentiality. The group as a whole has to adopt this as a **group value**. It needs to be modelled by the group leader (champion/facilitator) at all times.

If confidentiality needs to be broken, inform the person involved and try as far as possible to empower and not disempower the person in the process. If there is a situation where there is personal harm to a survivor, listen to how they want to be assisted and assist them as you are able.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: The story of ‘When trust left the village’

If required, use the additional activity in Appendix 2. This is a story that illustrates the effect of broken trust on people individually and collectively. This is an activity that can be used in a group setting. The story can be read and then group members can be asked if they have experienced something similar. Then discuss this as a group.

FURTHER READING

Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse, Guidelines for health and psychosocial service providers in humanitarian settings www.unicef.org/protection/files/IRC_CCSGuide_FullGuide_lowres.pdf

Dykes F, Postings T, Kopp B, Crouch A (2017) *Counselling Skills and Studies*, Second edition

Lay Counselling – A Trainer’s Manual (by Psychosocial Centre IFRC & RC, WAR Trauma and Danish Cancer Society) <https://pscentre.org/?resource=lay-counselling-trainers-manual-english>

Tearfund Psychosocial Support Post-Disaster – a resource kit for NZ churches

A Tearfund New Zealand resource – please email solange.mukamana@tearfund.org for a PDF

Thea L (2017) *Women healing from trauma: facilitators’ guide*

<https://pathssk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/TIC-Women-healing-from-Trauma-Lynn-Thera.pdf>

Research with survivors

The following reports can all be found by going to learn.tearfund.org/survivormapping

Warning: please be aware that some of the accounts in these reports describe sexual violence in graphic detail and may be distressing to some readers.

Are we listening to survivors? (2017) presents a summary of the key themes that emerged in our qualitative baseline research with survivors of sexual violence undertaken between 2013 and 2016 in South Africa, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Myanmar and Colombia.

Breaking the silence: a needs assessment of survivors of sexual violence in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (2013)

Waiting to speak: a needs assessment of survivors of sexual violence in the Western Cape, South Africa (2014)

Breaking the silence: a needs assessment of survivors of sexual violence in Burundi (2014)

If I speak out, will it change? Listening to survivors of sexual violence in Eastern DRC – (Democratic Republic of Congo) (2014)

To make our voices heard: listening to survivors of sexual violence in Central African Republic (2015)

Our daughters’ voices: working in faith communities to heal the wounds of sexual violence in Myanmar (2016)

Lifting our voices, building hope: listening to survivors of sexual violence in Colombia (2016)

