

A woman with her arms outstretched and eyes closed, standing in a field of purple lavender. In the background, there are rugged, rocky mountains under a clear sky. The image is framed by a diagonal split, with a purple gradient on the left and a white gradient on the right.

FINDING *hope*

SUPPORT GROUPS

ONLINE GROUP SCRIPT



Welcome

Leader #1: *Welcome everyone. I'm [first name], and I'm one of the group leaders. Before we get started, I want to remind everyone that this is a closed meeting for survivors only. If you are not a survivor of child sexual abuse, you will need to leave the meeting now. [pause] We recommend that you find a private space and use headphones to ensure you are the only one participating. Please mute your audio unless you are speaking. My role will be to lead the meeting and make sure that we stay on track. We will be participating in a check-in shortly. If you haven't had a chance to fill out the worksheet, you can find it at www.findinghope.org. Select "Group Materials" and then "Participant" to find everything you will need.*

Leader #2: *I'm [first name], and I'm the other group leader. My role is to provide support by moderating the chat and helping maintain a safe environment. If you are feeling triggered, you can contact me in the chat. Throughout the meeting, feel free to ask questions or make comments aloud or in the chat. If you would like to share anything aloud, please be sure to unmute before speaking*

Leader #1: *I'd like to welcome any new members or visitors that are here. Our meeting will go in this order: I'll ask for someone to read the purpose statement aloud while we all do the same with our audio muted. I'll ask for volunteers to take turns reading our meeting guidelines, and from there we'll ask that everyone participate in the check-in. After check-in we will review last week's strategy, have an opportunity to share, and then focus on the strategy for this week. We will finish the meeting with a grounding exercise and a power statement. Now, let's read our purpose statement together—remember to keep your audio muted.*

PURPOSE STATEMENT

We are survivors. We share our courage, hope, and experience through this safe community of support. Understanding our trauma and the impact of abuse provides a foundation to apply healing tools and strategies. We use this meeting to strengthen ourselves through practicing the 5 Strategies to Reclaim Hope. We use the power of this safe community to move forward on our healing journeys and help others find their way. We will learn from each other and reclaim hope.

Leader #1: *Thank you. Now we're going to read the meeting guidelines. We read these every week to remind ourselves how we can get the most out of our time together and ensure everyone feels safe. Could I get a volunteer to read our meeting guidelines?*

ONLINE MEETING GUIDELINES

- We maintain confidentiality by using only our first names and not divulging what happens during our meetings, even to our families or significant others.
- We do not engage in other activities like texting or emailing while in the meeting.
- We use appropriate language and don't raise our voices, no matter the emotions.
- We don't give advice, only support.
- We use "I" statements.
- We don't share details of our trauma; we give "headlines, not details."
- We accept all participants regardless of age, race, religion, sexual orientation, background, or ability.
- We don't interrupt. We are quiet while someone else speaks and don't engage in side conversations.
- We don't make solicitations or assumptions related to religion, business, or politics (including selling or recruiting).
- We ask everyone to check in, but we don't require participants to share; sharing is always voluntary.
- We hold ourselves and each other accountable and enforce the guidelines of the group.
- We follow the script as it's laid out without deviating. In this way we are able to maintain a safe, predictable meeting.

If you are here with us, please make sure that you are the only one viewing and listening to our group today. If you are in a space with other people, please use headphones and tip the screen of your device so that you're the only one who can see it. Thank you for being mindful and making this a safe and private online setting where we can all share openly and honestly.

We also encourage you to share your camera. Two of the main goals of support groups are building community and safety. Everyone sharing their camera helps achieve both of these goals. However, if you are unable or uncomfortable sharing your camera, it should not stop you from participating. It's better to participate without a camera than to not participate at all.

Leader #1: *Thanks so much for reading those. Next, we'll move on to the check-in. Let's take a minute to make sure everyone had time to fill out their worksheet.*

Check-In

Leader #1: *I'll go first to give you an idea of how to do it. Please select three of the six questions to answer. You can choose different options each week. Make sure to keep your answers short, and we ask that everyone here participate in the check-in. After I share my responses, I'll invite each of you to do the same*

CHECK-IN WORKSHEET QUESTIONS

1. State your first name for the group.
2. How are you doing physically right now? (Think about where your muscles are tight or if you're feeling pain anywhere in your body.)
3. How are you doing emotionally right now? (Reference the Emotion Wheel for help if you are having trouble pinning down your emotional state.)
4. What was your Self-Care Practice last week? (Skip this question if this is your first week.)
5. Did you notice any triggers this week? Y/N What tools did you use to manage them? (It's okay if you weren't able to manage them.)
6. In one sentence, share a Triumph Moment from last week.

Leader #1: *Thank you all for checking in. Let's pause for a minute to see if there are any comments or questions in the chat. [pause] Now we'll review last week's strategy.*

Strategy Review-Previous Week

Leader #1: *Let's go to the workbook and read the first page about the strategy. Could I get a volunteer for that?*

Sharing

Leader #1: *Now that we've reminded ourselves about last week's strategy, we'll spend some time sharing about our last week. We'll spend about 20 minutes total for this section. Please be respectful of everyone here and our group size. Let's share our thoughts within the time frame. Please indicate in the chat if you would like to share and I will call on you.*

Keep in mind this is not a discussion. In this setting, listening is healing. Allow each person to feel listened to as she speaks. This is not the time or place to offer advice. Again, we are welcome to offer a few words of support after each person finishes. These can include typing in the chat things like: "I appreciate you sharing," "We're here for you," or "That resonates with me."

If you hear something that resonates with you, write it down. You can chat directly with the person after the meeting, if you'd like. I'll go first to give you an idea of how we do it. If you don't feel like sharing today, feel free to pass.

Let's take just a minute to gather our thoughts. [Pause.] Thank you so much for being here, for supporting, and for sharing. Now let's move on to our strategy for this week.

Strategy For This Week

If you have downloaded the video in advance, you should be able to watch it in your online meeting. If not, make sure you post it on your Facebook page or share the link for your group to watch it outside of the meeting.]

Leader #1: *We're going to focus on [strategy] in the book. I encourage you to read the full chapter in the book this week. Now, let's watch a video about it.*

[Watch video.]

Let's talk about what we've just watched or read for the next three to five minutes. How can you see this strategy helping you on your healing journey? Would two or three of you like to share? Please indicate in the chat.

Leader #1: *Let's choose one of the workbook activities to do together. You'll notice in our script there are a few suggestions for each strategy listed. Let's take the next five or ten minutes to begin working on an exercise that we chose from the workbook.*

SUGGESTED WORKBOOK ACTIVITIES

Trauma and the Brain: (Exercises 2 or 3)

Strategy 1: Awareness (Exercises 2 or 3)

Strategy 2: Acknowledgment (Exercises 1, 4, or 5)

Strategy 3: Power Through Surrender (Exercises 1, 4, or 5)

Strategy 4: Mindfulness (Exercises 1, 2)

Strategy 5: Faith (Exercises 1, 2, or 4)

Leader #1: *Now let's all take a minute to decide what we want our self-care practice to be this week, with the strategy in mind. There's a place at the back of our script to write it down as well as further instructions. [Pause.] Would anyone like to share what you have chosen for your self-care practice?*

Leader #2: *Now let's move into a group grounding exercise. This will help us all be in a present and grounded state before we leave. We can have the option to choose between a video or a group technique.*

Grounding Exercises

There are grounding videos available at findinghope.org. *[Download the video in advance to share in your online meeting.] If you are unable to use the videos, we have group techniques listed below that you can lead with your group.*

GROUP TECHNIQUES

5-4-3-2-1

This is a sensory awareness grounding exercise that can help us relax or work through some difficult emotions. Feel free to say your responses to yourself.

1. Describe five things you see in the room.
2. Name four things you can feel (i.e., the paper in your hand, the socks on your feet, etc.)

5-4-3-2-1 cont.

3. Name three things you hear right now (i.e., the clock ticking, traffic outside, etc.)
4. Name two things you can smell right now, or think of 2 smells that you like.
5. Name one good thing about yourself.

At the end of this you should feel calmer and more present. Feel free to repeat these steps again if needed.

Breathing Exercise

This movement and breathing exercise can assist with anchoring you in the here and now. This can be done sitting or standing. Take a deep breath in while raising your arms above your head and looking up while saying, "Right here." Then exhale deeply while lowering your arms and chin while saying, "Right now." Repeat this for at least 5–10 breaths to allow for a deeper connection with the present.

Self-Compassion Meditation

Pretend you are texting or speaking to your most trusted friend/family member. Imagine they are going through a similar experience as you, and you want them to know they are not alone and are safe to feel their feelings just as they are. Think of the words you want to say to them. Repeat the message to yourself, directing the empathy and love you feel towards that person also towards you.

Mindful Movement

Our goal in this activity is to increase the connection between our minds and our bodies. One way we can do that is by moving in an intentional and mindful way. As we do this activity, please do what feels comfortable for you. Everyone's body is different, and what feels right for one person might not feel right for you. Be kind to yourself, and don't feel any pressure to do anything that doesn't feel good for you.

- Throughout this activity I encourage you to notice the sensations and information your body is giving to you.
- I want to invite you to stand up, but feel free to remain seated if that feels right for you.
- Pick up your left foot and wiggle your toes. Now stop wiggling your toes move your ankle in circles. Next swing your leg forwards and backwards at your knee. And finally swing your left leg forward and backwards at your hip.
- Now let's move to your right leg. Pick up your right foot and wiggle your toes. Now stop wiggling your toes move your ankle in circles. Next swing your leg forwards and backwards at your knee. And finally swing your right leg forwards and backwards at your hip.
- Now let's engage your arms, starting with your left arm. Begin by stretching and wiggling your fingers. Now stop wiggling your fingers and make a few circles with your wrist. Next swing your arm back and forth at the elbow. And finally swing your arm forwards and backwards at the shoulder.
- Let's move on to your right arm. Begin by stretching and wiggling your fingers. Now stop wiggling your fingers and make a few circles with your wrist. Next swing your arm back and forth at the elbow. And finally swing your arm forwards and backwards at the shoulder.
- Now put your hands on your hips and stretch your whole upper body to the left. Now to the right. Now forward. Now backward. And now reach your hands up over your head and stretch for a few seconds.
- Let's finish our practice together with some shoulder and neck rolls. Let's begin by rolling our shoulders forward in circles. Stretch your shoulders back then up and then forward. Do that a couple of times. And then let's reverse directions and roll our shoulders back in circles.

Mindful Movement cont.

- And now drop your neck forward and make clockwise circles a couple of times. Now reverse directions and make a couple of circles.
- Now we're going to put everything together. I want you to shake every part of your body at the same time—your hands, your arms, your feet, your legs. Just shake things out to get any remaining tension out of your body. Be mindful of the sensations you're experiencing in your body right now.

Yoga Stretch

Start with wiggling your toes to feel the ground beneath you. If you feel uncomfortable at any time in today's group, you can always come back to this sensation of your feet connecting to the ground.

Inhale and stretch your arms out and up to bring your hands together. Exhale while you pull your hands down to rest in front of your heart. Reverse the movement and push your hands upward on an inhale. Exhale as you release your arms and bring your hands back to rest in front of your heart.

[Inhale] Take your left arm and stretch it over to your right side. Exhale and come back to center. [Inhale] Take your right arm and stretch it over to your left side. Exhale and come back to center.

[Inhale] Place your right hand on your left knee and look over your left shoulder for a twist. Exhale and come back to center. [Inhale] Place your left hand on your right knee and look over your right shoulder for a twist. Exhale and come back to center.

[Inhale] Straighten your left leg out in front of you and flex your toes towards you as you feel the muscles of your left leg, then return to center as you exhale. Straighten your right leg out in front of you and flex your toes towards you, feeling the muscles of the right leg, then return to center as you exhale.

Yoga Stretch cont.

[Inhale] With knees bent, lift both feet off the floor to feel your core activate, then exhale as you release and come back to center.

One more time inhale and stretch your arms out and up to bring your hands together. Exhale as you pull them to rest in front of your heart. Reverse the movement to push your hands upward as you inhale, and exhale as you release your arms and come back to center.

Again, wiggle your toes to feel the ground beneath you. You are here now.

Leader #1: *Thank you for being here and for participating. Please come back next week. It can sometimes take a few weeks to begin to see progress. Let's close our meeting by saying our power statement together—keep your microphone muted but say the words aloud with me.*

POWER STATEMENT

I am a survivor. I am reclaiming hope.

Leader #1: *This completes our group for the night. Thanks again for coming.*

Group Leader Roles

Participating in the role of Group Leader is an opportunity to serve the women in the survivor community. It also provides a way to quickly get invested in the community. You can find training videos online on the Finding Hope Support Group Webpage (Group Materials/Group Leader), or on our Finding Hope Support Group YouTube channel.

Group Leader 1

- Shares an online meeting link with the group in advance of your scheduled meeting
- Is familiar with guidelines for running an online meeting
- Sets the tone for the group
- Follows the script to ensure safety
- Upholds and maintains guidelines for the group
- Sets best example for check-in and sharing
- Manages time to ensure participants get a chance to share and meeting stays on track

Group Leader 2

- Ensures group safety
- Provides support for group leader 1 and group members
- Moderates the chat and pauses the meeting for comments
- Pauses the meeting if grounding is necessary
- Upholds and maintains guidelines for the group and follows the script

Importance of Rotation

Rotating group leaders is important. It provides an opportunity for deeper learning and service for those who are group leaders. Each group can decide how often the group leader roles should rotate (i.e. weekly, monthly, quarterly).

Online Meeting Technology

Find an online meeting platform that you are comfortable with. Some options include but are not limited to Zoom and Google Hangouts. Choose a platform that allows for screen sharing and chat functionality. Hold a practice meeting with a friend so that you become familiar with how to manage an online meeting. Create the meeting link and privately share it in advance of your scheduled meeting in an email or a chat. We recommend that you do not share the link in a public space.

Group Size

These support groups are designed for between three and twelve people. If you are regularly getting more than twelve, it may be time to consider splitting into two groups. A group should NOT be held with less than three people total.

Creating Your Own Group Culture

Each group will adjust and change to best meet the needs of the group members. We encourage this, with a few requests. Do not deviate from the script. There may be times where it seems monotonous or you feel like you know it, but the script is written specifically to be predictable and create a feeling of safety. Ways that you might create your own group culture can include your choice of location, the activities that you engage in after the meeting, whether you use a timer during check-in and sharing, or bring snacks to the meetings. If you have questions or concerns please email questions@findinghope.org.

Self-Care Practice for Next Week

What are you going to do for yourself this week to progress on your healing journey? You can choose an activity from the workbook or come up with one of your own. Try to pick something that you are 90% sure you will be successful in doing. For example, a goal of doing yoga every day for two hours may not be as realistic for you as deciding to try yoga once this week for twenty minutes. There is no wrong way to do this.

SELF-CARE IDEAS

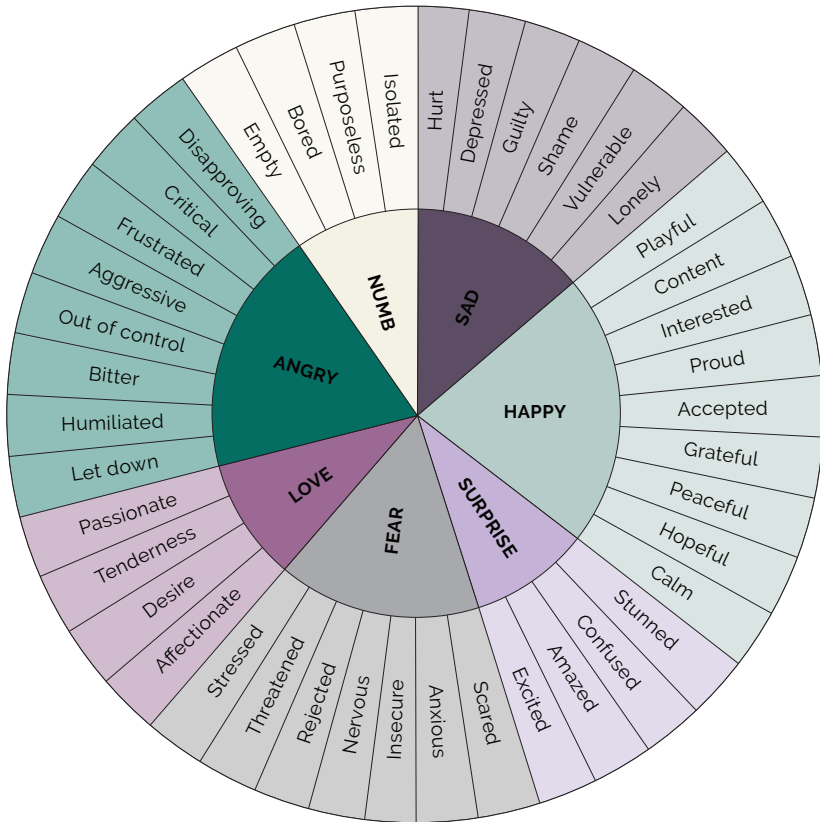
- Healing walking
 - Yoga
 - Reading
 - Running
 - Listening to music
 - Meditating
 - Writing in a journal
 - Guided imagery
- Hiking
 - Being in nature
 - Breathing exercise
 - Mindful eating
 - Coloring
 - Practicing assertive communication
 - Progressive muscle relaxation
- Playing an instrument
 - Muay Thai
 - Art journaling
 - Vision boarding
 - Saying positive declarations

Week # ____ Strategy # ____ My self-care practice will be:	Week # ____ Strategy # ____ My self-care practice will be:
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Wheel of Emotions

The Wheel of Emotions is a tool you can use to help identify what you are feeling. Over the years, you may have learned not to feel, which can make it difficult to identify specific feelings. Use this wheel to help you distinguish what you are feeling.



NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



www.findinghope.org