

## SAFE PLACE RULES

1. Members are free to tell each other how they feel.
2. Each person knows she will have a chance to be heard.
3. Members are comfortable touching one another appropriately (hugs, squeezing a hand, etc.) but it is always okay to ask not to be touched.
4. The emphasis is upon being direct and real with one another.
5. Conflicts are resolved, not avoided.
6. There is a consistent focus on valuing one another and respecting each other's feelings.

## WOMEN OF COURAGE SUPPORT GROUP GOALS

1. **Love** - The loving acceptance of each group member is unconditional.
2. **Sharing** - Telling and retelling the story, expressing feelings about past and present experiences and overcoming denial are primary tasks for the support group meetings.
3. **Mastery** - Each member is in charge of when and if she will share her feelings and/or story. Making choices is a learned skill and it is critical that the survivor have a sense of power or mastery in her own recovery. Each member is accepted wherever she is in the recovery process; there is no push to "hurry up and get in touch with all your memories."
4. **Boundaries** - Survivors are encouraged to stop blaming themselves for their victimization *as children*. Instead, there is encouragement to take responsibility for their own recovery *as adults*. Learning what appropriate boundaries are can be facilitated by leaders who offer support without taking inappropriate responsibility for others.
5. **Trust** - Appropriate trust for others and God is encouraged through modeling a trustworthy, nurturing "family" atmosphere. Attendance is a critical part of the group recovery process and of building bonding and trust within the support group. A member who does not take this commitment seriously will trigger the group's feelings of betrayal and abandonment.

Adapted from "We Weep for Ourselves and Our Children," A Christian Guide for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse (Joanne Ross Feldmeth & Midge Finley. Harper S.F., Harper Collins, N.Y. 1990)