

Confidentiality:

Trust is critical in our healing environments. We only share a member's identity and other personal information with that person's permission.

Respecting each person's right to privacy is critical to the creation and maintenance of a healthy and healing environment. For many of us, our childhood trust was violated by the effects of trauma, and thus confidentiality is paramount in our adult life. For all of us, we can heal more effectively when we make the choice who finds out about our histories, and when that happens. Personal information, such as our last names, telephone numbers, email addresses, mailing addresses, workplace or occupation must remain private unless given the permission to share by the individual in question.

The establishment of confidentiality does not come at the cost of appropriate healing dialogue. It can be helpful to talk to a peer/mentor or a therapist about the contents of a meeting, but the identity of the individual members of that group should never be revealed.

Personal safety or the safety and integrity of the group and its healing environment can, on rare occasions, be cause for breaking confidentiality. There may be times that the actions or activities of an individual may bear discussion at a business meeting or a called moment of collective wisdom. However, this should be done with as much care and respect as possible.

Example 1: In listening to the powerful sharing of Rick in her last Vital Cycles meeting, Sue came to some valuable and profound insights that support her own healing journey. In her next therapy session, Sue discusses those insights; referencing Rick's sharing with her therapist, but does not reveal Rick's name or any other identifying information. The point, after all, is the power of the information and insight presented in the sharing.

Example 2: In a group, a member embarks upon behavior that is persistently and consistently destructive to the safety of the meeting. He calls phone numbers that have been released to him in confidentiality, and speaks with spouses about the sharing of the individual in the group. In the next business meeting, the actions of that individual are discussed, and a course of action to review the behavior with the individual is developed. The group concludes that either the individual needs to modify his behavior or be told to not attend. While this is a difficult decision, the group reflects that the decision sustains its sense of safety.

Example 3: Pierre sees a newcomer who has just started attending his home Vital Cycles meeting, and the newcomer is standing with what appears to be a group of the newcomer's co-workers as they head out for lunch. Pierre greets the newcomer, but never gives any hints about knowing him from Vital Cycles.