

## #02



# Introducing Acknowledgement

Healing from child sexual abuse involves the practice of Acknowledgement, which is looking with clarity and self-compassion at where you have been in the past and where you are today.



Each Saprea Support Group meeting begins with 'Group Leader A' reading the script while participants follow along. The script will be the same for every group meeting. **To find the script, visit [saprea.org/support-groups](https://saprea.org/support-groups).** Below are the additional meeting materials for this course.



To watch the intro video for this lesson, scan the QR code or go to <https://vimeo.com/showcase/10293739>.

## Group Activity

### EXPRESSIVE WRITING

**Expressive writing is writing freely about whatever is on your mind.** It can serve as an **outlet to explore certain emotions and anxieties that may be otherwise difficult to express or acknowledge.** It may even reveal emotions that you weren't aware of. Many survivors of trauma feel like they are carrying around thoughts, emotions, and memories that seem impossible to unpack. The past might blur into the present, thoughts might feel muddled and disjointed, and emotions may seem either too overwhelming or just out of reach. Whatever the state of our thoughts and emotions, expressive writing can help to bring clarity and cohesion.

### ACTIVITY STEPS

There's no right or wrong way to do expressive writing, but here's one way to try.

**01 For the next 5 minutes, write about something you've been thinking about.**

It can be anything you feel ready to write about. Some examples might be:

- A recent argument
- An upcoming event
- A recurring dream
- A current relationship
- Changes occurring in your life
- A past experience
- A thought or emotion you want to explore

**02****Before you begin writing, here are a few tips:**

- Write continuously for the full 5 minutes, even if you feel you have nothing to write about. You can even write “I have nothing to write about,” but don’t stop writing.
- If you write about a specific event, be sure to include your feelings about that event.
- Give yourself permission to remember and to feel, as long as you can do so safely. Don’t pressure yourself towards feeling one specific emotion over another.
- Don’t worry about spelling, grammar, sentence structure, organization, etc.
- Write for yourself. No one else will read this, so don’t censor your thoughts or feelings.
- **If you start to feel triggered, take a break to practice some self-care.** After your break, feel out if you’d like to finish the activity to create closure, return to it later, or work on it with the help of a trusted therapist.
- While these writing sessions can be an effective way to sort through thoughts, memories, and emotions, they are meant to complement, not substitute, taking action, seeking therapy, attending support groups, or seeking medical care.

**03****Once you have finished writing, it might be helpful to reflect on your writing session with the following questions:**

- Should I write about this same topic next time, or am I ready to shift toward another topic?
- How did I feel as I was writing? Do I feel any different now than before I started?
- What do I want to do with this writing? Keep it? Throw it away? Burn it? Art journal over it?

# Grounding Exercise

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## BUTTERFLY HUG

The butterfly hug—sometimes referred to as the “self-love hug”—is an example of sensory grounding involving touch. It is also a self-soothing technique you can use any time you’re feeling stressed, anxious, or triggered.

### Activity Steps

- 01** Get into a comfortable position, either sitting up or lying down.
- 02** Cross your arms over your chest and rest the tips of your fingers on your collarbone, shoulders, or arms.
- 03** Next, gently tap your arms, alternating sides. As you do so, breathe in and out.
- 04** Continue this exercise for 2–5 minutes or as long as you need to.
- 05** When you are done, rest your hands on your lap and let your attention come back to the present moment.

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#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

If you are interested in learning more, we invite you to explore the following articles in the Online Healing Resources section of our website at [saprea.org](https://saprea.org).

- **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ITS ROLE IN HEALING FROM CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**
- **CREATIVE EXPRESSION**
- **BUILDING YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK**

#### NEXT TOPIC:

**#03**



#### UNDERSTANDING THE LIMBIC SYSTEM

Part of understanding trauma’s impact on the brain is learning about the limbic system and its drive to protect us from danger, even when no actual threat is present.