SHE RECOVERS®
FOUNDATION

SHE RECOVERS SHARING CIRCLE FACILITATOR OVERVIEW & TOOLKIT

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SHE RECOVERS® Foundation Sharing Circle Program

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST

We are grateful for your interest in learning more about the SHE RECOVERS® Foundation (SRF) Sharing Circle Program. This document will provide you with an overview of the program and introduce you to some important directives from SRF Headquarters that are in place to maintain consistency between all SHE RECOVERS® Sharing Circles (SR Sharing Circles), and to ensure that all SR Sharing Circles are hosted in adherence with our 510(c)(3) non-profit charitable requirements. Please review this document closely as you launch and host SR Sharing Circles.

This 'Sharing Circle Facilitator Overview and Toolkit' includes:

- The *her*story and the evolution of SR Sharing Circles
- The purpose and objectives of SR Sharing Circles
- Guidelines for launching and facilitating SR Sharing Circles
- Resources for facilitation

Companion documents covering marketing and branding of SR Sharing Circles include:

- Trademark, Marketing, Style & Assets Guide
- Voice & Tone Guide
- SRF Global Brand Guide

These companion guides contain detailed information about how to be most successful in the launch and continued growth of your SR Sharing Circle. These guides include templates and tools you will need, including an Introductory Letter for Potential Sharing Circle Venues, suggestions for promoting your Sharing Circle, Sharing Circle Agreements, a Sharing Circle Script, and more.

We have a lot of work to do, and a lot of women to help. Your willingness to be part of this next part of our movement's growth is greatly appreciated. **If, after reviewing this overview and guidelines document, you are interested in facilitating an SR Sharing Circle, please:**

1. Complete an expression of interest form HERE > sherecovers.org/sharing-circles/#professionals

2. Fill out an SRF volunteer application HERE > sherecovers.org/get-involved/#advocate

If you have any questions or curiosities about Sharing Circles please contact Lisa Wall, Director of Community Engagement & Online Programs via email at lisa.wall@sherecovers.org.

Yours in recovery,

Dawn Nickel & Taryn Strong
Founders, SRF

Susan Carter
CEO, SRF

ABOUT SHE RECOVERS® FOUNDATION

As a designated SHE RECOVERS® Certified Professional you are already familiar with the SHE RECOVERS Foundation (SRF) Vision, Mission, Values, and Intentions & Guiding Principles. They are provided below as a refresher, and so that you can see how closely our Sharing Circle program aligns with our overall philosophy and approach.

SRF Vision

A world where all women in or seeking recovery are celebrated, supported, and deemed essential to healthy communities.

**all expressions of women and non-binary individuals who identify with women's communities are welcome.*

SRF Mission

To **redefine recovery**, inspire hope, reduce stigma and empower women in or seeking recovery from life challenges including mental health issues, trauma and substance use, to increase their recovery capital, heal themselves and help other women to do the same.

SRF Core Values

Commitment to Mission. All SRF programs, activities, and efforts should support the mission.

Integrity. SRF acts with uncompromising honesty, integrity, and openness. Public trust and confidence in SRF's stewardship of resources is critical to the achievement of our mission.

Accessibility. SRF believes we are all recovering from something and that ALL women must be supported to find their individual pathways and patchworks of recovery. We create and hold healing spaces to serve women from all walks of life.

Diversity. SRF recognizes that diversity is our strength and all women and non-binary individuals who identify with women's communities are welcomed and respected in our movement. We honor, celebrate, and make space for difference in our healing communities.

Collaboration. SRF works collaboratively with individuals, organizations, and institutions whose missions align with SRF. Collaboration maximizes impact and enhances outcomes for individuals who engage with our organization.

Trauma-Responsiveness. SRF is committed to being trauma responsive. We examine every aspect of our language, programming, environments, and values to ensure trauma-sensitivity, trust, and inclusion.

Impact-Focused. SRF believes that success is measured by outcomes. We strive to deliver results that benefit our constituents and society at large.

SRF Intentions and Guiding Principles

- We are all recovering from something.
- We don't have to hit rock bottom to pursue recovery in any area of our lives. We believe in early intervention.
- We must be supported to find & follow individualized pathways & patchworks of recovery.
- Recovery is a journey to wholeness. We learn to take care of our body, mind, emotions, and spirit.
- We answer the call to heal our past wounds and intergenerational traumas so we can live fully in the present.
- We focus on our strengths, not our defects. This is how we change.
- We do our individual work in order to create & hold healing spaces for everyone. All women deserve recovery.
- We understand that the practice of radical self-love is paramount to our well-being.
- When we're ready, we recover out loud so that women who are struggling can find and join our movement.
- Connection is our sole (soul) purpose. We're stronger together.

ABOUT SHE RECOVERS SHARING CIRCLES

SR Sharing Circles are intended for women and non-binary individuals—who are in or seeking recovery—to connect, learn, heal and share within a group of like-hearted

individuals. These local community circles of support are recovery-focused, free to attend and voluntarily facilitated by a SHE RECOVERS Certified Professional. SR Sharing Circles celebrate diversity by embracing all pathways and patchworks of recovery and by welcoming all races, sexual orientations, and all those differences of life situations, backgrounds and abilities.

Why Sharing Circles?

"Energy moves in cycles, circles, spirals, vortexes, whirls, pulsations, waves, and rhythms—rarely if ever in simple straight lines." - Starhawk

Like energy, recovery is rarely linear. Many individuals describe their healing journey in recovery as *cycles* that move, turn, and deepen over time. SR Sharing Circles are named as such to create a container reflective of this cyclical nature; not only of recovery, but of our lives and the world around us.

***Her*story, Resurgence and Power of Women's Sharing Circles**

"Circles with a sacred center are ancient, the oldest form of social interaction."

~Ann Landaas Smith~

Human beings have gathered in circles across time and across cultures. In ancient times, women gathered ceremoniously in their communities in circles to connect with one another to share wisdom, traditions, medicines and more. Such circles began to decrease in popularity between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries when male religious leaders started to express fear of women's power and to persecute female spiritual leaders.

A resurfacing of women-only circles in North America began in the 1970s and can likely be traced back to the feminist spirituality movement guided by social activists and eco-feminists such as Starhawk. Largely due to its non-linear and matriarchal approach, this ancient and cross-cultural form of gathering has proven, over time, to be particularly healing for women, non-binary, and two-spirited individuals. Bringing back the healing power of sharing in community is part of the collective recovery process occurring across our world today.

The Evolution of SR Sharing Circles

SR Sharing Circles were first held during SHE RECOVERS retreats. Feedback from attendees indicated that women wanted these Sharing Circles as part of their regular recovery program so that they could foster in-person connections with like-hearted

individuals in their communities. With that in mind, the first two SHE RECOVERS Sharing Circle groups were born!

The first SR Sharing Circle was formed in Seattle, Washington (USA) in September 2017, shortly followed by the Victoria, British Columbia (Canada) Circle. Private Community Facebook groups were created to help build community and enable communication for these two inaugural Sharing Circles, and other coaches in other cities soon launched Sharing Circles and FB groups of their own. By March 2020, there were over thirty Sharing Circles across the world, including 24 in the United States, 5 in Canada, 2 in the UK, 1 in France, 1 in Australia. Sharing Circles were hosted monthly, in-person by SHE RECOVERS Coaches, averaging 10-20 attendees per Circle. With the arrival of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Sharing Circle program was put on hold, although some Sharing Circle coaches and members met virtually or outside over 2020 and into 2021 and 2022.

SRF set Fall 2022 as the appropriate time to relaunch – and grow – SR Sharing Circle offerings. And here we are!

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF SR SHARING CIRCLES

SRF is a leader in the recovery community when it comes to providing free online support – something that became an important focus in 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic shut down most in person offerings. As we round out 2022, SRF is committed to getting back to supporting women through in-person recovery groups.

Each Sharing Circle plays an integral part in achieving the mission of the SRF Foundation by:

- Providing a holistic and unique recovery experience that is peer-supported, topic-focused, trauma-informed, and voluntarily facilitated by SRF Certified Professionals.
- Celebrating diversity through embracing all recovery pathways and patchworks, all races, sexual orientations, and all those differences of life situations, backgrounds, and abilities.
- Supporting individualized recovery pathways to help women build recovery capital and utilize all holistic practices and resources.
- Serving as a free healing resource within a recovery-oriented system of care that complements other professional recovery supports such as, but not limited to,

trauma therapy, counseling, addiction treatment, coaching services, psychiatric and/or medical care.
- Fostering co-created experiences built on a foundation of set intentions, agreements, and mutual respect for all participants, volunteers, and facilitators.

ORIENTATION & TRAINING

Each SR Sharing Circle Facilitator is required to complete a Volunteer survey and execute an agreement. **Please complete these steps above to become a volunteer prior to continuing by visiting sherecovers.org/get-involved/#advocate**

SR Sharing Circle Facilitators will receive training (live or recorded) in their role as volunteer facilitators (starting Autumn 2022) as well as an SRF Orientation, Trauma-Informed & Inclusivity Training (coming 2023) that will provide key information about the organization including but not limited to its history, trauma-informed practices, DEI, and policies. Refresher training will be provided periodically for SR Sharing Circle Facilitators on certain mandatory topics. SRF HQ staff will be available to assist them with program or administrative questions that arise.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING A TRAUMA-INFORMED & INCLUSIVE APPROACH

"Core experiences of psychological trauma are disempowerment and disconnection from others. Recovery, therefore, is based upon the empowerment of the survivor and creation of new connections" ~Judith Herman~

As SHE RECOVERS Designated Professionals, we have the privilege and responsibility of holding space in a trauma-informed way that welcomes women and non-binary individuals of all races, sexual orientations, and differences of life situations, backgrounds, and abilities. We do this by:

- Adhering to Sharing Circle agreements and encouraging all participants to co-create a welcoming and supportive environment
- Infusing the SRF Intentions & Guiding Principles into the experience
- Supporting all pathways and patchworks of recovery and criticizing none
- Recognizing trauma and its associated manifestations

- Providing resources for a higher level of care to those who appear to be in distress/crisis/ in need of trauma-focused, therapeutic support
- Using inclusive and invitational language and practices
- Maintaining consistency in frequency, duration, and format of Sharing Circles
- Encouraging participants to identify and build healthy support systems and relationships
- Adopting healthy communication processes to address and navigate situations where potential hurts, conflicts, misunderstandings or disagreements might arise
- Empowering participants to develop and practice personal agency
- Guiding participants to identify their own pathways and patchworks of recovery

SHE RECOVERS SHARING CIRCLE FACILITATOR GUIDELINES

This guide will serve as a template to provide information on the practical aspects of creating, promoting, and hosting SR Sharing Circles for continuity and consistency in our practices. Participants attending SR Sharing Circles will recognize commonalities and feel a sense of familiarity between Circles regardless of where they are being held.

Promoting Sharing Circles

Facilitators are responsible for promoting their Sharing Circles; the SR Sharing Circle Facilitator companion documents provide guidance on this topic. SRF Headquarters will also provide a listing of Sharing Circles on the main SRF website.

Hosting an SR Sharing Circle

All SR Sharing Circles must be voluntarily facilitated by a SHE RECOVERS Designated Professional (SHE RECOVERS Coach, SHE RECOVERS Yoga Teacher, or other SHE RECOVERS Professional Designees).

Facilitators are part of the SRF Volunteer Network

As will all SRF volunteers, SR Sharing Circle Facilitators are required to complete a volunteer survey, execute an agreement and to participate in any SRF volunteer training (or refresher training) deemed requisite by SRF Headquarters.

Financial Accessibility

In keeping with SRF's mission, we must remove barriers to accessing lifeline recovery resources and support for all women in or seeking recovery; therefore, all SRF Sharing Circles must be offered free of charge. Facilitators will be provided a Letter of Introduction about SRF to help secure free meeting space.

Location of Sharing Circles

SR Sharing Circles must be held in neutral, public spaces or within private recovery-focused facilities (such as a residential treatment center, yoga studio, wellness space, recovery house, hospital, jail) and cannot be held in a private residence.

Safeguarding

It is the responsibility of the SR Sharing Circle Facilitator to prevent unwelcomed participants such as men or participants who have repeatedly violated the SR Sharing Circle agreements from entering the space. Please use your professional training and discretion to respond to potential issues with unwelcomed participants.

Managing Expectations

We suggest being mindful of your group's size so all who wish to participate may have a chance to do so. Determine how you want to physically host your circle and outline for your potential participants what to expect.

Holding Trauma Informed and Inclusive Space

SRF is currently developing an SRF Volunteer Trauma-Informed & Inclusivity Training program. All current and new SRF volunteers will be asked to take this 20 hr training when it becomes available in 2023. In the meantime, Facilitators are expected to access and watch the following trainings:

- Holding Trauma Informed Space with Taryn Strong
- Creating Inclusive Spaces with Lisa Wall & Liana Kennedy
- Cultivating Safe Spaces with Elaine Alec

Access @ https://vimeo.com/showcase/8574105

password: SRFVideos123!

Coaching vs Facilitating

"When I approach the concept of holding space, I approach it as an inquiry rather than an expertise. It's not something to be mastered, but rather something into which I will inquire for the rest of my life. Holding space is what we do when we walk alongside a person or group on a journey through liminal space. We do this without making them feel inadequate, without trying to fix them, and without trying to impact the outcome. We open our hearts, offer unconditional support, and let go of judgment and control."—Heather Plett, The Art of Holding Space

When we are facilitating we are holding space for those sharing their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Holding space refers to deep, attentive and non-judgemental listening to the participant and can be followed by a reflective thought, a word of encouragement or an expression of empathy and compassion. Sometimes the participant may preface their share by asking the facilitator to withhold any reflection. This act of practicing agency is part of creating a trauma-informed space.

This exercise in active listening does take emotional energy even though sometimes it feels like we're not "doing" anything. As coaches and professionals one of the hardest things to do when listening is to not coach or engage in therapy. When we're facilitating we don't ask questions to dig deeper, we don't engage in motivational interviewing and we don't offer advice. The act of sharing alone is often enough for the participant to have a shift, feel seen and leave the SR Sharing Circle with a greater sense of clarity as a result of processing out loud what was on their mind.

The Transformative Art of Active Presence

"I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship. Empathy fuels connection. Sympathy drives disconnection."—Dr. Brené Brown

Holding space is a state of active presence where we intentionally remain fully engaged emotionally, mentally, energetically and physically with each individual, dedicating to them

our full and undivided attention. Some ways of maintaining a state of active presence include:

Emotional Active Presence:

1. Bearing witness - deeply seeing and hearing participants
2. Recognizing emotion in another person that you have maybe felt before and sharing you recognize that emotion
3. Creating emotional containment by inviting participants who appear to be activated or trauma flooding through present moment awareness of unconditional love and relentless support from the people sharing space with them *(as outlined in the 'Creating Inclusive Spaces' training)*

Mental Active Presence:

4. Reflecting back what is heard
5. Using affirming and validating language

Energetic Active Presence:

6. Imagining your nervous system co-regulating and sending relentless support, care and unconditional love to those who are sharing
7. Practicing a sacred pause once someone's share appears to be complete before stepping in to speak

Physical Active Presence:

8. Non-verbal gestures that acknowledge what is being heard such as: hand on the heart or gentle nodding
9. Using the physical body to interrupt experiences such as trauma flooding or heightened activation in participants by inviting them back to the present moment through shared breaths / feeling their feet on the ground / using the senses *(as outlined in the 'Creating Inclusive Spaces' training)*

Frequency & Duration

Sharing Circles must be held on a consistent basis: weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, and be hosted at the same time and same day of the week. Sharing Circles should be 60-90 minutes in length, but exceptions can be made depending on the availability of the venue and at the request of participants. For example, in some communities an SR Yoga Teacher

will offer a yoga class before or after the SR Sharing Circle hosted by her or another SR Certified Professional.

The Value of In-Person Connection

Uncertainty and social isolation during the current pandemic has thrown our world into a mental health crisis. Increasing levels of anxiety and depression are being reported, and the risk of suicide is rising proportionately. Those recovering from substance use disorders are extremely vulnerable to recurrence and eating disorders are being ignited in individuals facing so much uncertainty. SR and its volunteers have established deep and meaningful connections online and it is time to strengthen these threads of support in local communities through in-person connection.

In the event an in-person SR Sharing Circle is not possible for reasons such as:

- Remote location
- Participants are attending within a private facility (residential addiction treatment, recovery house, hospital, jail, mental health institution)
- The venue requires the option to attend remotely
- Public health restrictions
- An accessible venue is not available

An SR Sharing Circle may be permitted to be hosted online. Please contact Lisa Wall, Director of Community Engagement & Online Programs vial email @ lisa.wall@sherecovers.org for an exception to host an online SR Sharing Circle.

Accessibility of Venues

We ask that all prospective SR Sharing Circle venues be as accessible as possible. Accessibility criteria can include:

- Near public transit and passenger drop-off areas
- Free and ample parking available and in close proximity
- Clear and easy to read signage
- Dedicated and private
- Little to no noise pollution or distractions
- Wheelchair accessible entry and washrooms

- Outdoor and indoor surfaces and pathways free of barriers that might cause problems for people who use canes, crutches, or walkers
- Automatic doors or ability to prop open doors
- Accessible seating (chairs provided) with enough room to space out chairs
- Good acoustics (minimal echo) and appropriate lighting for folks who are hard of hearing who may lip read
- A relief area for service animals

General Insurance & Liability

All registered SRF Volunteers are covered by SRF general & liability insurance to host SRF Sanctioned events (i.e. Sharing Circles and Movement=Medicine Fundraisers). Individuals who are not volunteers who host activities aka “meetups” within a Community Group do so at their own risk separate and apart from SRF sanctioned events. Unsanctioned events must not appear to be endorsed or supported by SRF and cannot have an associated cost or be hosted by a for-profit business.

Public Health Concerns

In-person SR Sharing Circles are permitted as long as there are no restrictions on in-person gatherings imposed by local/state/province Health Departments due to public health concerns.

Reporting and Monitoring

Public trust and confidence in SRF’s stewardship of resources is critical to the achievement of our mission and we strive to have processes in place that demonstrate this commitment while still protecting participant privacy. We also believe that success is measured by outcomes, and we strive to deliver results that benefit our constituents and society at large by providing timely and relevant program information for each of our Sharing Circles. We want to hear about the outcomes of Sharing Circles so we can amplify the message and reach even more women in or seeking recovery.

SR Sharing Circle Facilitators will be required to submit monthly attendance reports (#s only) and provide online voluntary SR Sharing Circle experience surveys to all participants for SRF to gain feedback, review impact, and evaluate program outcomes (resources

coming January 2023). This outcome and programming data will be gathered anonymously to protect the privacy of Sharing Circle participants.

SR Sharing Circle Facilitators & SRCPs are not permitted to use participant data to:

- Share with 3rd parties
- Promote their services and/or offerings outside of the Sharing Circle
- Add to a newsletter mailing without informed consent
- Provide direct communications separate and apart from Sharing Circle specific communications
- Engage in any other promotional activity or opt-in process

Confirmation of Attendance

SRF is able to generate letters confirming attendance for SR Sharing Circle participants. These letters are completed on a **monthly basis** and include the dates, location and duration of SR Sharing Circle(s) attended by a specific individual. These letters act as official confirmation of attendance for those who may be participating in a monitored recovery program or require confirmation of attendance for other legal purposes. If a participant requires a letter of attendance please notify SRF via email to casey.carroll@sherecovers.org and CC the participant with the following information:

1. Participants full name and email address
2. Date(s) and time(s) attended
3. Facilitator present

Please note - a two week turnaround time is required for all confirmations of attendance.

SRF Headquarters Support for Facilitators

SR Sharing Circle Volunteer Facilitator meetings and trainings will be held quarterly so all can learn from and with each other, share ideas and tools, and maintain a connection with SRF HQ.

Onboarding & Orientation

1. Join the appropriate SHE RECOVERS Certified Professionals group:
    A. SHE RECOVERS Coach Collective:
    facebook.com/groups/sherecoverscoachcollective

   B. SHE RECOVERS Trauma Informed Yoga Teacher Collective: facebook.com/groups/sherecoverstraumainformedyogateachers/
   C. SHE RECOVERS Dance Facilitator Collective: facebook.com/groups/sherecoversdancefacilitators/
2. Complete SRCD, SRYT or SRPD training and obtain certificate of completion
3. Complete the volunteer facilitator expression of interest form
4. Complete a Volunteer survey and execute an agreement. sherecovers.org/get-involved/#advocate
5. Join the SHE RECOVERS Volunteer Facebook Group and introduce yourself: facebook.com/groups/SHERECOVERSVolunteers
6. Complete self-orientation by reading this toolkit, watching the onboarding videos and reading associated documents and any other information in the SR Sharing Circle Facilitator Toolkit webportal
7. View the Trauma-Informed Facilitation training videos @*https://vimeo.com/showcase/8574105* pw: *SRFVideos123!*
8. Attend 5-10 SHE RECOVERS Together Online gatherings facilitated by a variety of SR Certified Professionals
9. *Attend the Trauma-Informed & Inclusivity Training (coming 2023) that will provide key information about the organization including but not limited to its history, trauma-informed practices, DEI, and policies.
10. *Submit responses to questions in self-assessment questionnaire.
11. Source and secure a free venue with (optional) assets provided in the Outreach section of the SR Sharing Circle Facilitator Toolkit webportal
12. Request custom assets and web listing to be created as outlined in the 'Trademark, Marketing, Assets & Style Guide

**This training and assessment will be available in our online learning platform coming in 2023*

STARTING & MAINTAINING A SHE RECOVERS SHARING CIRCLE

SRF Certified Professional Volunteer Role

If an SRF Chapter is not in place, the SRF Certified Professional Volunteer is responsible for:

- Setting up, promoting, and hosting their local Sharing Circle(s)
- Conducting outreach
- Providing any materials required such as SRF information packets, participant documents, and/or their own professional promotional materials
- Maintaining the relationship with the venue provider
- Following up with participants if needed
- (Optional) Creating, managing, and moderating the Community Facebook Group to maintain connection between SR Sharing Circles, and share announcements.

If there is more than one SRF Certified Professional hosting an SR Sharing Circle and/or within a Local Community Facebook Group, it is the responsibility of each individual to define the duties and responsibilities of each to avoid miscommunication, poor representation, and/or interpersonal conflict.

Starting an SR Sharing Circle

- Poll the local community to determine the best frequency, duration, date, and day of the week
- Promote your SR Sharing Circle within your Local Community Group as an 'Event' (if there is one active)
- Engage potential referral sources and behavioral health providers (outreach documents provided).

SR SHARING CIRCLE FORMAT

A potent and transformative SR Sharing Circle begins with clear intentions of our collective purpose and focus.

Supplies

For every SR Sharing Circle you should have:

- Signage if needed so participants can find you
- SRF printed materials:
    - Crisis support lines
    - SRF trusted resources
    - Sharing Circle agreements
    - SRF brochure
    - SRF Intentions & Guiding Principles

    - SR Sharing Circle Facilitator Script
- Your business card and/or business related promotional materials
- A notepad and pen
- Chosen a topic
- Tissue
- Topic-focused resources for sharing or taking home if desired
- Determined the Indigenous Land/Territory you are joining from. If you aren't familiar with Indigenous land acknowledgements we suggest exploring these resources:
    - Map of local territories, lands, languages and treaties: native-land.ca/
    - Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgements: nativegov.org/news/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/
    - SRF HQ's Land Acknowledgement: sherecovers.org/land-acknowledgement/

Prior to opening the SR Sharing Circle:

Take a few moments to ground and center yourself so you may be as present as possible in your facilitation. Spend some time clearing the space both physically and energetically. Some examples of space clearing include:

- Ensuring a comfortable room temperature, natural light, ambiance and clean surfaces
- Using the energetics of sound such as a singing bowl
- Vocalizing your intentions
- Diffusing essential oils (please ensure all participants consent to the use of essential oils)
- Calling upon the wisdom of mentors, elders, ancestors and/or any other influential guides (human and/or spiritual) whose essence may bring the qualities of groundedness, protection, connection, support, and empowerment to the space.
- Having a personal practice of meditation, breathing, affirmation, movement, and/or self-reflection to notice:
- What energy feels stuck from the day?
- What needs to be moved inside the space and in your body?
- What opportunities for connection do you seek to create?
- Who do you desire to reach?
- What values do you wish to nurture?

- Does your chosen topic feel resonate and timely?
- What transformations do you intend to facilitate?
- What do you wish to give a voice to?
- What does leading with courageous vulnerability look like for you today?

This practice can help you create a clear transition from the noise of everyday life to the healing potential of the circle. It is also proven to have a positive impact on the regulation of your nervous system as a facilitator, and as a result, can impact and co-regulate the nervous systems of your participants.

- Provide printed copies of the Sharing Circle agreements, other SRF materials, and your professional services materials if applicable

Opening the SR Sharing Circle:

- Be mindful of time, starting when intended
- Take note of how many participants are present to determine if a time limit on shares will be required. *For example, if you have 20 participants and are meeting for 1.5 hours, each participant should have approximately three mins to share if you also include the optional introductory round and four minutes if not)*
- Introduce yourself and your practice if applicable
- Acknowledge the Indigenous lands you are gathering on.
- Review format (grounding, check-in, sharing circle agreements, topic discussion, sharing resources, closing the circle)
- Welcome new participants
- **Read the disclaimer & opening remarks script**
- Thank all participants for coming and review any housekeeping items (washroom location, lighting, temperature)
- Invite participants to settle / get grounded (3 shared breaths, short meditation or similar)
- Have a willing participant read out the Sharing Circle Agreements
- Ask if there are any questions
- Set the tone before opening the floor to sharing by leading with courageous vulnerability, using strengths-based language and weaving the SHE RECOVERS Intentions & Guiding Principles into your own share

During the SR Sharing Circle:

- *Optional Check-in round.* This is a quick introduction (one min or less per person) opportunity to check the temperature of all in the space and a great exercise for smaller groups. You may invite them to share:
    - Name
    - Pronouns
    - What brought them there
    - One word to describe their present state of being
    - Coach should go first to set the tone and to give an example of length of intro
    - Participants may pass
- *Optional time-keeping.* Use a gentle timer such as chimes on a mobile device or soft bell to acknowledge when a participant should begin wrapping up their share.
- Introduce the topic, do a reading or reflection
- Deeply listening to participant shares, keeping commentary and responses brief but affirming and supportive. Please don't engage participants in coaching questions or giving advice. Our primary purpose is to hold space
- You may be asked by a participant not to provide reflections. Please thank them for sharing and move on to the next participant
- Take note of and pass on issues requiring reparative action from the Foundation
- Offer the participants an opportunity to provide or receive resources from the group, announce/discuss the date and time of the next Sharing Circle

Closing the SR Sharing Circle:

- Be mindful of time, closing when intended
- Lead a brief checkout
- Take note of any resources requested and/or offered by participants and share them within the Community Facebook Group or via direct or BBcd email (be careful to protect participant anonymity by not sending a CCd email where all contacts are shown to the whole)
- Share the next sharing circle time, location and topic
- Invite participants to subscribe to the SHE RECOVERS Newsletter by visiting www.sherecovers.org or via paper form
- You may offer the opportunity for the participants to socialize afterwards
- Thank everyone for their courageous vulnerability and for holding space

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- **Read the closing remarks script**
- Observe how the circle seems to be landing for people. Is it your sense that participants felt heard and are comfortable to depart? If not, when the circle is complete, consider checking-in and being available to those you feel may need to connect.

Following the SR Sharing Circle:

- Record attendance #s for reporting to SRF HQ
- Clean up the space
- Report any issues requiring reparative action from SRF Headquarters

Additional and optional activities:

- You may want to having sharing go around the circle and/or use a Talking Piece/Touchstone
- Search “sharing circle” in the SR Coach Collective and Support Facebook Group for inspiration (thank you to all the coaches who have shared in the past)
- Identify a fellow SHE RECOVERS Certified Professional to debrief with and/or reach out to the SHE RECOVERS Certified Professional Coordinator for support
- Keep in mind some members may have no circle or group discussion experience or may be new to your circle. Ensure all members feel welcomed and supported

PARTICIPANT SUPPORT

Reporting Issues to SRF

SR Volunteers are not responsible for managing interpersonal conflicts or complaints about the program or SRF more broadly. If any participants contact you about an issue or if you see something that requires reparative action from the SRF team, please take appropriate action and provide your feedback to Community Engagement via email to community@sherecovers.org.

Please include:

- Date
- SR Sharing Circle location

- Reporting/involved participant name and contact email
- Participant remarks
- Your reflections
- Actions taken

Some examples that may require action from the foundation include: intention to harm others in the space i.e. verbal abuse or harassment, racist remarks, non-inclusive behavior towards trans women, members who are sharing under the influence, and any other violations of the Sharing Circle Agreements.

A follow-up communication will be shared with involved parties when appropriate upon resolution and/or decision of follow-up action.

Responding to members in distress/crisis

As per the SR Sharing Circle Agreements, all individuals participating in this space agree to contact a higher level of care when in distress. As appropriate, please share SRF trusted resources:

https://sherecovers.org/trusted-resources/

and/or crisis hotline info

https://sherecovers.org/together-online/together-online-guidelines/#crisis

Please follow the reporting process and wait for guidance from appropriate team members before continuing to engage with a person in distress.

Debriefing & Emotional Support

If you would like to debrief or receive guidance and support in your role as a volunteer please reach out directly to one of the following contacts:

- **Debriefing Support:** SHE RECOVERS Certifications Lead, Liana Kennedy @ liana.kennedy@sherecovers.org

- **General Volunteering Support:** SHE RECOVERS Operations & Volunteer Lead, Elise Padilla @ elise.padilla@sherecovers.org

You are also invited to attend the bi-weekly 'SHE RECOVERS Professionals' Support Group' meetings facilitated by Liana.

All community members deserve respect and discretion when it comes to any crisis situation in our spaces. Information on crisis situations should only be shared with relevant volunteers and team members.

APPENDIX: RESOURCES

Sharing Circle Sample Topics

To maintain consistency across both our online and in-person gatherings, Sharing Circle Facilitators should choose a strengths-based topic for each session. Participants are invited to share in relation to the topic, or whatever may be on their heart and mind. It is suggested to provide topics that may be relevant to a collective of people who may be recovering from a myriad of life experiences.

A sampling of suggested topics include but are not limited to:

- A SHE RECOVERS Intention & Guiding Principle
- Celebrating recovery
- Boundaries
- Building recovery capital
- Celebrating our diversity
- Cultivating mindfulness
- Developing a positive mindset
- Discovering our voices
- Embracing our strengths
- Exploring self-love and healthy relationships
- Finding balance
- Focusing on financial awareness
- Forgiveness
- Gifts of recovery
- Identifying our personal and collective values
- Letting go of perfection
- New beginnings
- Nurturing creativity
- Radical responsibility
- Reclaiming lost parts of ourselves
- Re-igniting lost dreams

- Sharing our gifts

Suggested Reading

General Recovery

1. She Recovers Every Day: Daily Meditations for Women in Recovery, Dawn Nickel (Coming February 2023)
2. Calling My Spirit Back, Elaine Alec
3. How to be an Adult, David Richo
4. Set Boundaries, Find Peace: A Guide to Reclaiming Yourself, Tawwab, Nedra Glover
5. Helping Women Recovery: A Program for Treating Addiction, Dr. Stephanie Covnigton
6. Pause, Rest, Be: Stillness Practices for Courage in Times of Change, Raheem, Octavia F.

Healing Trauma & Regulation

7. Trauma & The 12 Steps, Dr. Jamie March
8. Trauma & Recovery, Judith Herman, M.D.
9. The Body Remembers, The Psychophysiology of Trauma & Trauma Treatment, Babette Rothschild
10. Secrets, Lies, Betrayals, Maggie Scarf
11. In an Unspoken Voice, Dr. Peter Levine
12. My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies, Resmaa Menakem
13. When the Body Says No: The Cost of Hidden Stress, Gabor Maté MD
14. Healing Trauma, A Brief Intervention for Women, Dr. Stephanie Covington

Group Facilitation & Leadership

15. The Art of Holding Space: A Practice of Love, Liberation, and Leadership, Heather Plett
16. The Empowerment Manual: A Guide For Collaborative Groups, Starhawk

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

17. Becoming an Ally, Breaking the Cycle of Oppression in People, Anne Bishop
18. Who Is Wellness For?: An Examination of Wellness Culture and Who It Leaves Behind, Roisin, Fariha
19. See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love, Valarie Kaur
1.

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SR Sharing Circle Facilitator Script

Opening Remarks

Welcome everyone. Thank you for joining us for this SHE RECOVERS Sharing Circle. I am a SHE RECOVERS Coach which means that I have been trained in and my work aligns with the SHE RECOVERS® Intentions & Guiding Principles. My pronouns are _____. I am in recovery from _____.

I would like to acknowledge that we are gathering on the traditional territories and lands of _____. May the work we do in recovery include conscious action of honoring Indigenous teachings and stewards that ask us to care deeply for the lands we currently occupy.

Sharing Circles are voluntarily facilitated by SHE RECOVERS Certified Professionals. They do not constitute a therapeutic or coaching relationship and are not a replacement for trauma therapy, addiction treatment, psychiatric, or medical care.

SHE RECOVERS® Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public charity and a global grassroots movement serving more than 325,000 women and non-binary individuals in or seeking recovery. Its mission is to redefine recovery, inspire hope, end stigma and empower women in or seeking recovery. We are all recovering from something—no one should have to recover alone.

We may be recovering from a myriad of life experiences including but not limited to:

● Substance use disorders ● Trauma ● Codependency

● Anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues

● Disordered eating and other food-related issues ● Body dysmorphia and shame

● Gaming, gambling, or shopping addiction ● Grief and loss

● Burnout or moral injury ● Workaholism

● Love or sex addiction ● Abuse ● Illness

● Oppression and/or ● Any other life issue from which we hope to heal.

By participating in this Sharing Circle we agree to the following: *(read the Sharing Circle agreements or invite a volunteer participant read them).*

If you wish to share, please identify yourself by first name or preferred nickname, and if you like, tell us your pronouns and what you are in recovery from.

Closing Remarks

Our Foundation depends upon volunteer and financial support from our community. If you are finding these Sharing Circles helpful, please consider making a donation, subscribing to our newsletter or getting involved by visiting www.sherecovers.org.

We encourage you to complete a Sharing Circle participant survey by visiting sherecovers.org/sharing-circles/. Your voice will help us to continue improving these sharing circles for all who seek to join a movement like ours.

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Sharing Circle Agreements

Group agreements are essential to holding trauma-informed space. These agreements set a collective intention for how we all engage within the space.

1. We believe that we are all recovering from something.

2. We acknowledge that participating in this space is a radical act of self-care that focuses on nurturing our bodies, minds, and spirits.

3. *We strive to co-create a welcoming and supportive environment built on mutual respect for all participants, volunteers, and facilitators.*

4. We celebrate diversity by embracing all individual recovery pathways and patchworks of recovery, all races, sexual orientations, and all those differences of life situations, backgrounds, and abilities. All women and non-binary individuals who identify with women's communities - who are in or seeking recovery - are welcome in this space.

5. We agree to reach out to a higher level of care such as a crisis support line, therapeutic provider, or SHE RECOVERS Trusted Resource if we are experiencing crisis or distress. Trusted Resources can be found under the Resources tab @ sherecovers.org

6. We align ourselves with the SHE RECOVERS Intentions & Guiding Principles

7. We agree to respect each other's privacy by not discussing other participants' presence or stories outside of the Circle.

8. We intend to be mindful of our language by avoiding sharing explicit details on topics that may be triggering.

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9. We practice using inclusive greetings whenever possible and are committed to smashing the stigma often associated with mental health through our mindful choice of words.

10. We intend to remain present, deeply listen, and hold space while others share. We don't speak over each other or offer unsolicited feedback and/or criticism.

11. We are invited to tend to our energy and practice personal agency by sharing and listening to only that which we are comfortable with. We aren't required to share.

12. We agree to share from a place of personal experience and acknowledge our strengths whenever possible.

13. We agree to honor individual needs and comfort zones and are supported to momentarily leave the space or engage in non-disruptive movement if ever we feel a sense of discomfort.

14. We agree to check in with a Sharing Circle participant or facilitator outside of the Circle if we depart early.

15. We recognize that when participating in community our impact may not always match our intentions. We agree to practice communication recovery by adopting a spirit of "rupture and repair" and "ouch and oops" when navigating hurts, disagreements, or conflicts.

16. We strive to suspend judgment towards ourselves and others and choose to be curious with ourselves if and when judgment may arise.