



PREPARING TO PUBLICLY COME OUT AS A CSA SURVIVOR

Please read this document carefully before submitting a video. Before deciding to come out publicly as a Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) survivor, consider that *you are not obligated to share your story*. However, you may decide to do so, perhaps, because:

- You can no longer be silent.
- Sharing your story may advance something for you or something you care about.
- You feel that your lived experience is important for the field or the movement.

Potential Risks

- Think about personal and professional consequences of publicly coming out as a survivor.
 - How would family members, friends, colleagues, etc. react?
- Publicly identifying yourself as a survivor may invite a lot of unwanted attention.
 - How do you think you will emotionally respond to being center of attention as a CSA survivor?
- People may say things or ask questions that are hurtful, inappropriate, or triggering.
 - What are the worst things you could hear or be asked? Is there something you can do now to prepare yourself for these responses?

Preparation and Self-Care

- Who is a trusted friend with your best interests in mind with whom you could discuss the consequences of coming out? This is, ideally, someone who already knows you are a CSA survivor.
- What do you need to take care of yourself on the day you make the video? How about when video is published?
 - For example, a celebration, a gathering of supportive friends, calling a trusted friend.
 - How can you be extra kind to yourself during these times?
 - Consider at least three self-care acts to practice as needed.
- Who are the people who you don't want to hear your story?
 - Take steps to prevent them from hearing your story. For example, adjust your social media settings, change privacy settings on FB, etc.
- Who are the people who you want them to hear your story from you?
 - You may want to share your story with them before they hear it from another source second-hand.
- What are the three worst things people may say or ask you?
 - Practice your responses with a trusted friend. Silence is a good option.
 - If you don't want to answer a question, say that you do not share those details.