

SIRA

SELF-INJURY RECOVERY & AWARENESS

Meeting Format

1) Opening

Host & volunteers begin the meeting by reading selections from our literature, specifically the ABCs, preamble, opening statement, “layers to discovery” (subject line only), and list of tools of recovery.

2) Meditation

Host leads us in a short guided meditation and three deep breaths (duration and time-keeping at host’s discretion.)

3) Open Sharing

Members who wish to speak may do so. If you share, please be as honest as you can about whatever you are struggling with or making progress in and the moment. Remarks should be limited to topics directly relevant to your experience with self-injury (without graphic context) but might include, for example, how the preceding week has been for you, what progress you have made or set-backs you may have not anticipated, what “layer” of discovery you are working on, what in the literature speaks to you or strikes you as relevant to your journey. There is no strictly imposed time limit on shares, but we ask that members limit themselves to a few minutes apiece, being mindful of the size of the meeting and how much time may be left for others to share.

5) Open Discussion

This portion of the meeting is for members to have a discourse with each other relating to topics surrounding Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI).

6) Donations

Host asks for voluntary donations to cover overhead fees and other costs of running the organization. There is no requirement to contribute and no minimum amount. Anything you choose to give, if you are so moved, is gratefully accepted. All donations are tax deductible.

7) Affirmations

Members who wish to participate make a short, positive statement of intent or read one to three of the affirmations from the list provided in our literature, or you can make up your own.

8) Closing

Host reads the closing statement and leads us in closing statement.

ABC'S of SIRA



Those who have been long-term active members of SIRA find that the following actions lead to positive changes, and we invite new members to join in doing the following:

Attend meeting and prioritize attending meetings:

As we say at every meeting, “Keep coming back, it works if you work it, so work it - you’re worth it!” While you’re here, we invite you to give yourself the gift of one hour of presence without other activities. Try to be fully present! The more you participate, the more you will get out of the experience.

Be an active listener and participant. Connection is crucial in recovery. We encourage members to turn their cameras on during virtual meetings and to introduce themselves and share. Turning on your camera and sharing are the first steps in getting to know other members. We also welcome active listeners looking to recover who are not yet ready to share.

Come for yourself. Recovery starts and ends from the inside. Only you have the answers—no one else can find them for you. Your progress and recovery don’t need to look like anyone else’s. We encourage members to focus on the inner work they are doing and their achievements in self-care..

Delve into the literature. Try reading the layers every day and writing down the thoughts that come to you as you read it. Ask yourself what does doing the layers look like for me?

PREAMBLE

Self-Injury Recovery & Awareness is a non-profit dedicated to creating community and safe harbor for individuals navigating their path to self-injury recovery. SIRA focuses on filling the massive gap of resources and support for the self-injury community through a peer-to-peer support group model. Our primary purpose is to stop engaging in self injury and to help others to recover from self-injury. The only requirement for membership is lived experience and a desire to heal from the inside-out.

Opening Statement

There is no cross-talk, and no advice is given during shares. However, cross-talk is encouraged for our open discussion segment of the meeting. We encourage members to identify what they do to self-injure, but we ask that you do not elaborate on specific episodes of self-injury or call specific attention to scars or wounds. The host may intervene if a share becomes graphic or continues too long. Please know, if you are asked to wrap up a share, that there is no judgment in this and no criticism; the host is simply trying to ensure that we do not inadvertently trigger self-injury in each other, or come to the end of the meeting without everyone who wishes to speak having had a chance to do so. All of us have struggled at times with feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem, and despair over our behaviors, and we know that sometimes these feelings can become truly unmanageable. You alone can judge if you need help of a kind that goes beyond what a peer support group can give. SIRA is not a professional health care service and cannot intervene in emergencies or provide medical care. If you are feeling suicidal at any time, or if your self-injury behaviors become life-threatening, please reach out to a professional and/or call a suicide prevention hotline (see Crisis Resources).

Introduction to the Layers of Discovery

Self-injury is complex, dynamic, and multi-layered. Self-injury has much to do with inner-child work, which is why we believe that the layers listed below help us understand the “why” of our self-injury and discover ways to regain healthy coping mechanisms, control, and freedom. There is no quick fix or perfectionism in layer work. Recovery is ever-changing and evolving. Layer work begins with walking into your freedom and becoming the person you are meant to be. Recovery isn't linear and neither are the Layers to Discovery. These layers coexist and can be done in any order and repeated.

They are meant to help you awaken and realize where you are in your personal process. Think about the present moment in your journey. Your goal is not to get out but to get clarity. We believe that we are always beginners in layer work. We never “graduate” or finish; it is always a learning process. The recovery process includes returning as often as necessary to behaviors and thought patterns that lead to your mental freedom. In each layer, you will find guiding questions. It may help to write down your answers to these questions in a journal to track your layer work and see the changes in your thinking over time.

Layer One: Realizing What Keeps Us From Knowing Ourselves

Identify your self-hatred Where do feelings of worthlessness come from?

Layer Two: Breaking Up With Guilt

Start an open dialogue with self. (“The Breakup/Renegotiation) What does it mean for you to be without the behavior.

Layer Three: Becoming Our Authentic Selves

Become your own loving authority figure.

Layer Four: Forging a Connection with Self and Others

Write an apology letter to yourself. How have you harmed yourself by self injury?

Tools of Recovery

- Make attendance at meetings your first priority.
- Disclose what you do to self-injure (I engage in____) without any graphic context.
- Read SIRA literature.
- Be aware of your triggers.
- Exercise regularly to relieve stress.
- Talk to another SIRA member to short-circuit the behavior.
- Draw or write down your feelings; don't take them out on yourself.
- Break out of your routine.
- Find a constructive outlet for your anger.
- Find a creative use for your free time.
- Write your own recovery plan.
- Write a gratitude list.
- Use these tools to abstain from secondary self-injury behaviors too.



The host leads the group in three deep breaths. After, the host leads a two-minute guided relaxation meditation.

Once this is complete the floor is open.

Members can share about anything else in the literature that speaks to them and/or anything else going on in their lives that relates to self-injury.

The floor is open and shares begin. Once shares are completed, the host starts the second portion of the meeting- an open discussion on relevant NSSI topics.

Affirmations

*Choose 1-3 affirmations

- I let my body heal.
- I am not a burden.
- I stay conscious of my feelings and write them down.
- I have the right to be abstinent, no matter what.
- I applaud my willingness.
- I'm free to spend my time as I choose.
- My body is beautiful; I want to take care of it.
- I deserve to come into the inheritance of my own beauty.
- Life is safe.
- I accept myself exactly how and who I am today.
- I am willing to become increasingly more gentle and loving to myself.
- I joyfully say, "No."
- I have survived my childhood.
- I deserve to be the person I am.
- I will turn my pain into power.
- The fight is worthwhile.
- My humor is a sign of my recovery.
- If at first I don't succeed, I lower my expectations.
- I have nothing to apologize for.
- As the days go on I will learn to hate myself less and less. I got this. I can do this.
- My story is important
- My name is _____ and I wear my name proudly today.
- I am smart, talented, and good enough.
- Just for today, I will protect my body from all forms of self-injury.
- My soul is changed. My spirit is lifted.
- I have discovered the beauty of the present moment.
- Today I am grateful for the freedom from bondage of self-injury tendencies.
- By working through the layers, I have peace within myself today.
- I am strong.
- The fight is worthwhile.

Closing Statement

The opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you liked and leave the rest. Whatever your problems, there are those among us who have had them too. If you try to keep an open mind, you will find help. You will come to realize that there is no situation too difficult to be bettered and no unhappiness too great to be lessened. The things you heard here were spoken in confidence and should be treated as confidential. Talk to each other, reason things out with someone else, but let there be no gossip or criticism of one another. Instead, let the understanding, love, and peace of the program grow in you one day at a time.

Closing

Thank you for coming!

Donate: <https://www.thesira.org/donate>

Venmo: @siranonprofit

Text "SIRA" to 443-21

*All donations are tax-deductible