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Statement of Philosophy

Volunteer Reader One-

We are here today to face our past and reclaim our lives as survivors of childhood abuse. We know intuitively or objectively that we were physically, sexually, or emotionally abused as children. We believe that our abuse has affected who we are as adults today. We are determined to remake our lives by taking back what was once taken from us—our innocence, our power, our right to determine who we are and how we will live in the world.

Volunteer Reader Two-

We hold our abusers responsible for the abuse, whomever they may be, for we as children wanted only their love. We hold that only we are responsible for our lives as adults. We accept that recovery involves discussing the memories of our abuse. We believe that there is power in remembering despite the pain that it will bring. We accept that we cannot do this alone. We need the help of others to transform the shame into self-compassion, self-empowerment, and self-acceptance.

Volunteer Reader Three-

We believe that everyone has their own unique story to tell. We pledge to listen to every member's efforts to remember, grieve, and heal. We will offer respect, support, and hope to help challenge the self-judgments, self-criticism, and self-blaming that holds us hostage to our past. We will hold in confidence what we hear of others' most vulnerable secrets. We will allow everyone to take the lead in deciding what the past means for them.

Volunteer Reader Four-

We are prepared to commit our hearts, our minds, and our spirit to change our lives. We understand that we as children were victims. We believe that today as adults we are survivors. We trust that tomorrow with recovery we will live as thrivers. We pledge today to stand together united in our best efforts to heal from the past. We make this pledge to ourselves in the company of our peers on this day forward.

Stages and Steps

Volunteer Reader Five-

STAGE ONE: REMEMBERING

1. I am in a breakthrough crisis, having gained some sense of my abuse.
2. I have determined that I was physically, sexually or emotionally abused as a child.
3. I have made a commitment to recovery from my childhood abuse.
4. I shall re-experience each set of memories as they surface in my mind.
5. I accept that I was powerless over my abusers' actions which holds THEM responsible.
6. I can respect my shame and anger as a consequence of my abuse, but shall try not to turn it against myself or others.
7. I can sense my inner child whose efforts to survive now can be appreciated.

Volunteer Reader Six-

STAGE TWO: MOURNING

8. I have made an inventory of the problem areas in my adult life.
9. I have identified the parts of myself connected to self-sabotage.
10. I can control my anger and find healthy outlets for my aggression.
11. I can identify faulty beliefs and distorted perceptions in myself and others.
12. I am facing my shame and developing self-compassion.
13. I accept that I have the right to be who I want to be and live the way I want to live.
14. I am able to grieve my childhood and mourn the loss of those who failed me.

Volunteer Reader Seven-

STAGE THREE: HEALING

15. I am entitled to take the initiative to share in life's riches.
16. I am strengthening the healthy parts of myself, adding to my self-esteem.
17. I can make necessary changes in my behavior and relationships at home and work.
18. I have resolved the abuse with my offenders to the extent acceptable to me.
19. I hold my own meaning about the abuse that releases me from the legacy of the past.
20. I see myself as a thriver in all aspects of life - love, work, parenting, and play.
21. I am resolved in the reunion of my new self and eternal soul.