

31 How to feel safe in your sexual relationship

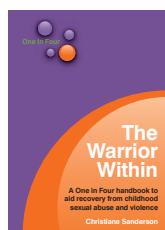


If you are working through *The Warrior Within*, this exercise and further useful information to help you in your recovery can be found on page 122. This exercise assumes you have completed exercise sheet 1 **Starting an activity journal**.

Take some time to think about your needs to feel safe in your sexual relationship and make a list of them in your journal. If this is difficult it may be easier to think of what needs were not met during the CSA as this can highlight what you do need.

The most common needs include the need to feel loved, to feel equally in control, to feel able to say 'no' or stop having sex if uncomfortable, and the need to feel fine with not always wanting penetrative sex. Male survivors need to feel accepted and valued despite occasional erectile difficulties, premature ejaculation or inability to perform. Most importantly, you need to feel that you are valued for who you are and not just as sexual objects. Remember to add any other specific needs to this list.

Once you have compiled your list of needs you can express and discuss them with your partner, to establish mutually agreed ground rules.



The content of this exercise sheet is based on *The Warrior Within: A One in Four handbook to aid recovery from childhood sexual abuse and violence* by Christiane Sanderson

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One in Four
219 Bromley Rd, Catford SE6 2PG
Telephone 020 8697 2112
Email admin@oneinfour.org.uk
www.oneinfour.org.uk

Registered charity number 1081726