

Meeting Guidelines

so that everyone can feel safe and comfortable

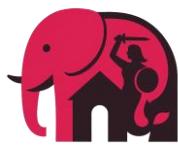
Basic guidelines:

- 1. Confidentiality:** What is said in the group stays in the group. We can talk about the meeting and how we felt, but we do not share other people's personal stories.
- 2. Presence:** During the meeting, we silence our phones. Other topics can wait until the tea break.

Speaking:

- 1. We give ourselves time:** Death is a difficult topic. Everyone needs a different amount of time to find the right words – especially if they rarely talk about it. That's why we don't rush or interrupt, even if we want to say "I feel the same."
- 2. "I feel the same" signal:** If you want to show the speaker that you share a similar experience, you can wave your hand at heart level.
- 3. Voluntary participation:** Sometimes something feels too difficult to talk about, or it's just not the right moment. That's okay. Each person chooses whether and how much they want to say.
- 4. Speaking from the "I" perspective:** We share our own feelings and experiences. We **avoid general statements** like "everyone" or "all people" ("For me it was difficult," "I felt that way...").





Listening:

- 1. No advice:** We don't give advice unless someone clearly asks for it.
- 2. No judgment or comparison:** We don't judge ourselves or others. We don't compare. Each loss and each relationship is unique. There is no hierarchy of suffering — your own loss is the hardest for you.
- 3. No generalizations or minimization:** We avoid saying things like "It's normal that many people died during the pandemic" or "You're not the only one who lost someone," "She was old anyway." Such comments don't help anyone.
- 4. Respecting differences:** We accept that we may see things differently. We don't try to persuade others or impose our worldview. We respect different experiences, beliefs, and values — including religious ones. You can't "convince" someone to feel differently.

Other:

- 1. Staying open:** We understand that our own opinions — and those of others — may change during the conversation.
- 2. Silence is natural:** Silence is a normal part of the meeting. If it feels uncomfortable for you today, let the facilitator know.
- 3. Acceptance of emotions:** All emotions are valid. In grief, there are no "bad" or "shameful" feelings.
- 4. We use first names:** We address each other by our first names.