



# **Safety Planning for Deaf Survivors**

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# **WHAT IS THE GOAL OF SAFETY-PLANNING?**



**SAFETY**  
is as simple as ABC

**A**LWAYS  
**B**E  
**C**AREFUL

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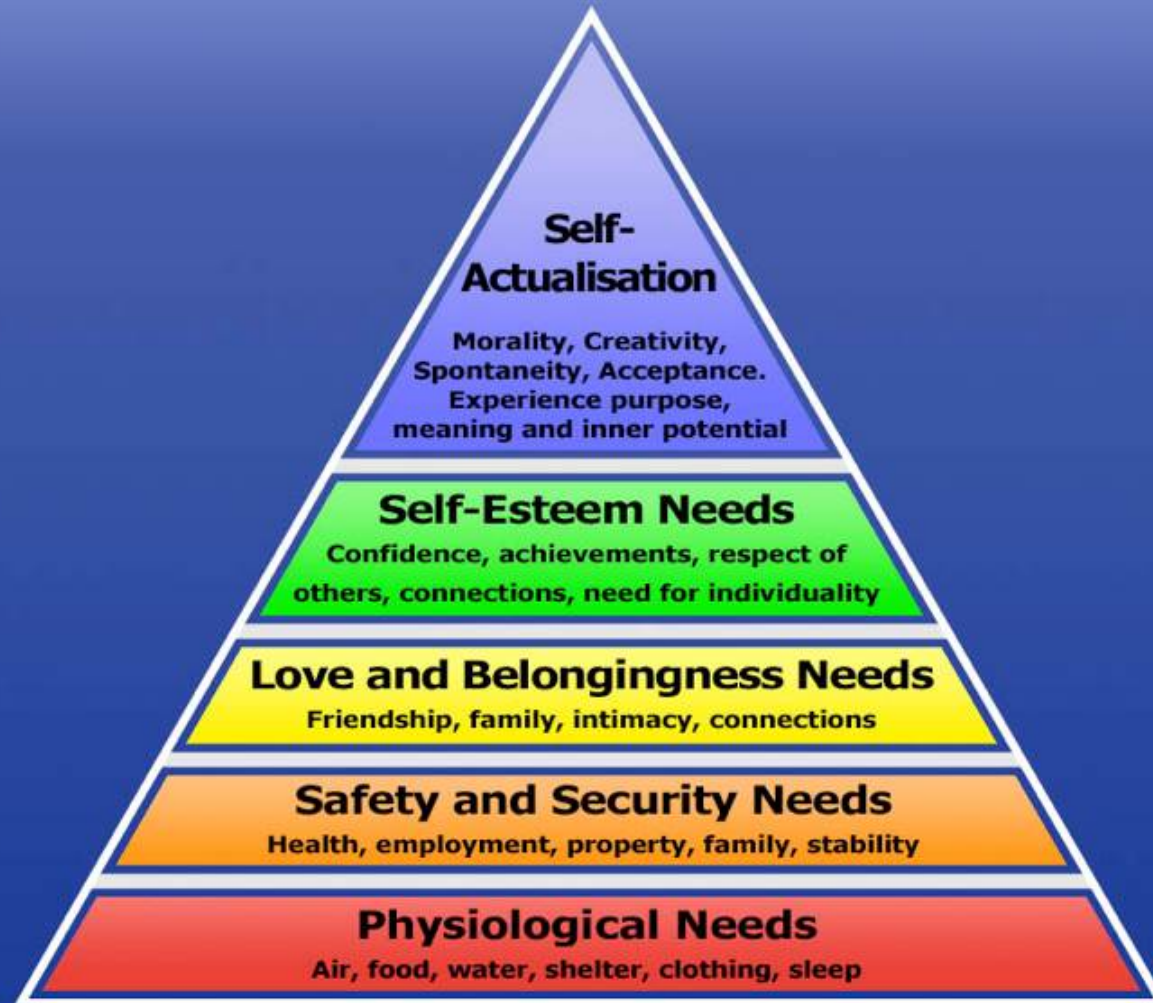


## **Safety-planning is more than...**

- Staying out of “dangerous” rooms
- Gathering necessary documents
- Packing a suitcase
- Having 911 on speed-dial
- Having a checklist



# WHAT CREATES SAFETY?



**Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**





# Accessibility Considerations

- Is your office accessible? Are you accessible?
- Discuss and create solutions for communication access
- Create plans for different possibilities
- Don't assume others will provide accommodations
- Seek out Deaf advocates



## Ask yourself...

- Do you have a budget for communication access? Can you use interpreters effectively?
- Are you aware of Deaf/Relay Interpreters? Video and Text Relay Services?
- Are you knowledgeable about other tools for communication access? CART, captioned phones, etc.
- What your assumptions and biases are about Deaf people





**SAFETY IS...**  
**COMMUNICATION ACCESS**




## What ISN'T Deaf Culture

- Aggressive, “in your face” signing
- Pushing/shoving to get attention
- Excessive “blunt” insults/put-downs
- Ramming the back of a car to get attention
- Waking partner up by shaking her violently
- Lack of confidential services




# What IS Deaf Culture?

- Reality of a small community
  - Information sharing
  - Importance of detailed background information when answering questions
  - Facial expressions a big part of ASL grammar
  - Fear/mistrust of “hearing” systems
- 




# Lost in Translation

- Reporting Domestic or Sexual Violence
  - Filling out legal paperwork
  - Abuser manipulating the system
  - Small community = possibility of no escape
  - DV shelter rules often not culturally sensitive
  - What is safe to you may not be safe to me
- 



# Understanding Barriers

- Institutionalized audism and ableism
  - Learned the “need to please”
  - Abuse in educational settings
  - Lack of accessible/culturally competent services
  - Fears that exposure will lead to the closing of Deaf schools – loss of Deaf culture
  - Tradition of secrecy - protection of perpetrators who are members of the community
- 



**SAFETY IS...**  
**CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING**




Don't treat me the way  
you want to be treated.

Treat me the way  
I want to be treated.

-Stephanie Johnson



# Safety Plans must be...

- Individualized
  - About the fears/concerns she has
  - Realistic for her situation
  - Always open to revisions
  - Revisited frequently
- 





## Consider and Include

- Batterers
- Family and Friends
- Workplace
- Community Organizations and Events
- DV/SA agencies
- Other Service Providers
- Legal System



**SAFETY IS...**  
**HAVING CHOICES**



**Thank You!**

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