

Aims:

To enable spiritual directors/ accompaniers to contribute to, and implement, good safeguarding practice within church and community contexts.

Outcomes

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Explore safeguarding within your role, in relation to directees, informed by the voice of victims and survivors.
- Recognise issues of power and vulnerability arising from the age or circumstances of those affected, and how these issues inform appropriate action.
- Apply some principles for safer practice to a variety of case study scenarios.
- Identify wider support, accountability and supervision arrangements relevant for safeguarding in your context.

1

**Learning from
experience**

2

**Understanding
power and
vulnerability**

3

**Children and
Young people**

4

**Focusing on
vulnerable
adults**

Some starting points...

- 2 hour session
- Other devices off/away please
- Participate and allow others to do so
- Zoom
- Health warning
- Opening prayer

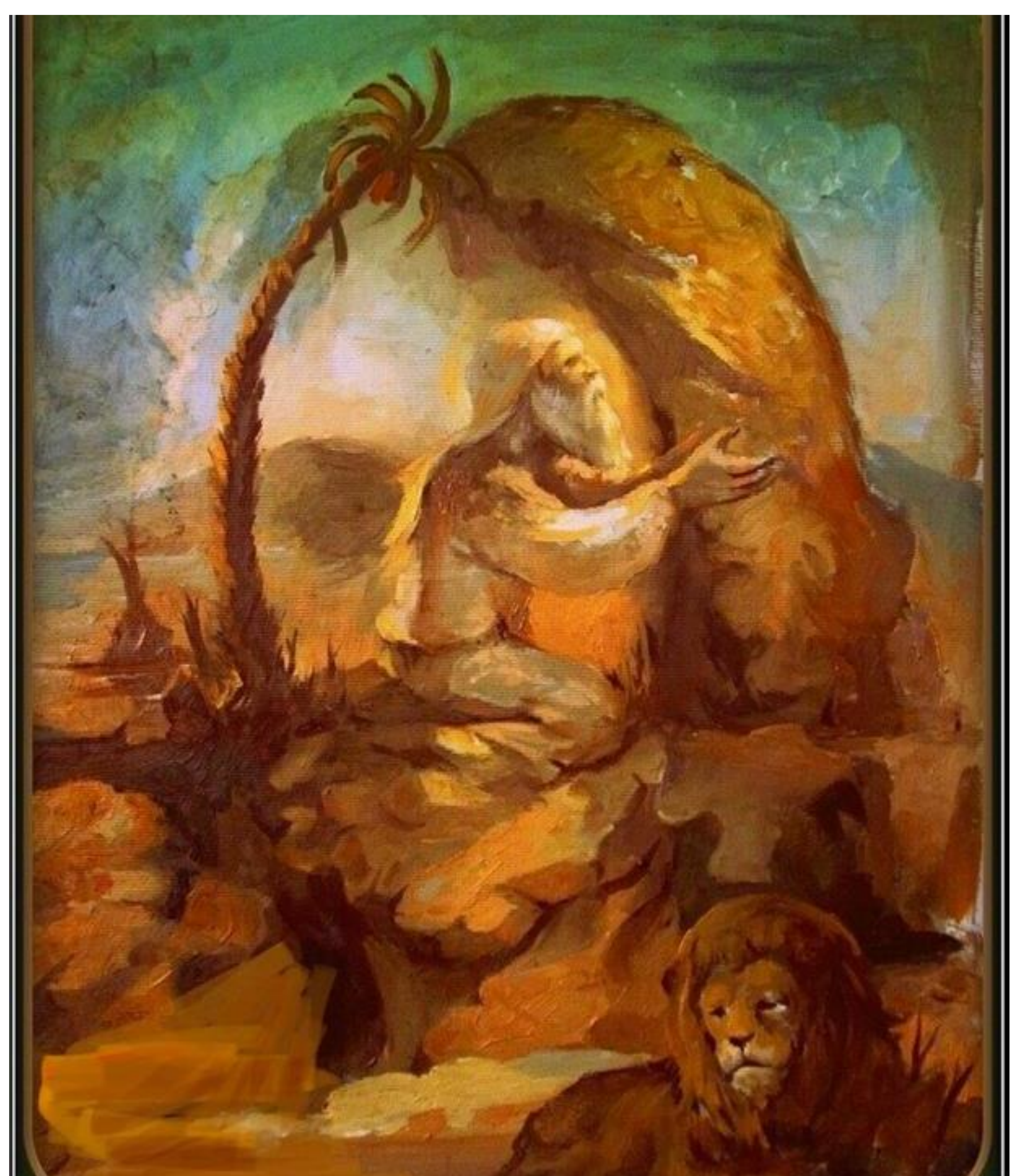


It's natural that we bring our own *interpretation* to the picture..

Sometimes, what we see is what we *prefer* to see....

Sometimes what we see develops over time...

These factors often play a role in safeguarding situations.



Recognise —> Respond —> Record —> Refer

Recognise

- ✓ Accept and take seriously what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- ✓ Let the person tell their story and don't push for information or ask leading questions.
- ✗ Do not interrogate or decide if they are telling the truth.
- ✓ Be alert to signs and symptoms of abuse.

Respond

- ✓ Reassure the individual they have taken the right step in sharing this information and they are not to blame.
- ✓ Be honest; never make promises to keep what you are being told confidential. If abuse is involved, you will need to tell someone.
- ✓ Tell them what you will do with the information they have shared and that they will be kept informed.
- ✗ Do not introduce personal information or from either your own experience or that of others.
- ✗ Do not investigate the matter any further for yourself, or approach the person about whom allegations may have been made.

Record

- ✓ Write down, concisely, exactly what is seen, said or heard and make clear where you have added your views or interpretation.
You may find it helpful to use the 4 W's, as follows:
WHO was involved? Name the key people
WHAT happened? Facts not opinions
WHEN did it happen? Date and time
WHO have you referred the issue on to?

Refer

- ✓ Pass the information to the **Safeguarding Lead or Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor** in your setting within 24 hours
- ✓ In case of an emergency call the Police or dial 999.

Support

It is essential to support all parties.

“ 'Adult with safeguarding needs' is a term that covers a wide range of people, from those with a learning disability to those experiencing dementia - and may also include adults whose mental capacity fluctuates, such as those with mental health or substance misuse difficulties. Some adults with safeguarding needs may be living in special accommodation and others will be living in the community on their own or with family members.”

Social Care Institute of Excellence SCIE, (2017)

1. The extent to which they are able to make - and carry out - their own informed choices.
2. How able they are to protect themselves from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Statutory framework, allows for decision making on behalf of people over 16 who have a mental incapacity.

It must be assumed that a person has capacity unless proved otherwise.

All practicable steps must be taken to help a person make a decision before they are deemed unable.

People are able to make unwise decisions without being deemed incapable of making a decision.

Any decision or action taken on behalf of another must be done in their best interest.

Before decisions are made or actions taken on behalf of another, consideration must be given to alternative and less restrictive ways of proceeding.



Empowerment

We will encourage people to make their own decisions.

Prevention

We think it is better to take action before harm occurs.

Proportionality

We will seek the least intrusive response to the risk presented.

We will seek to be accountable and transparent in all matters relating to safeguarding.

Partnership

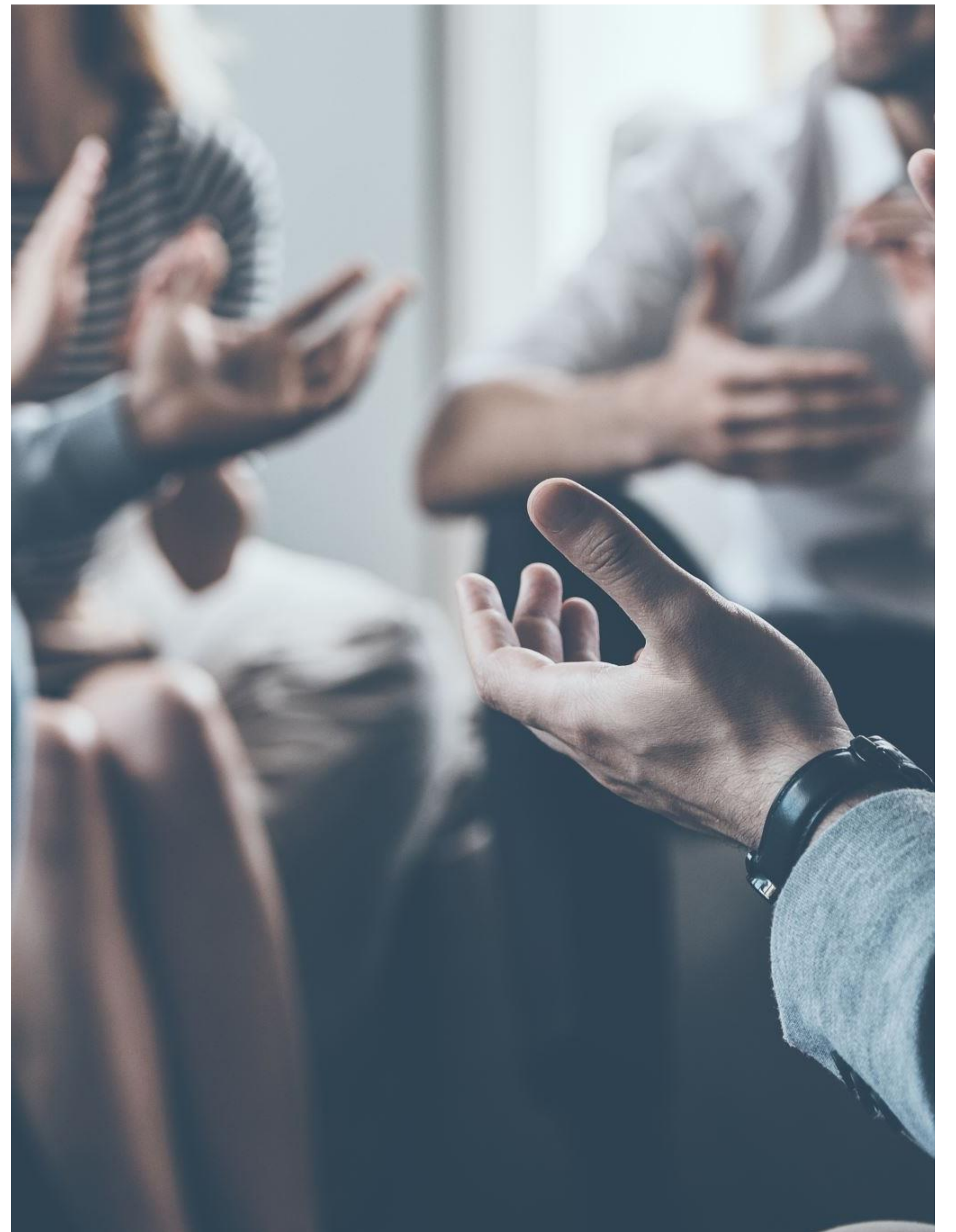
We will work with others in our local community to detect and report concerns.

Protection

We will support and represent those with the greatest need

Discussion

- Why are we talking about children when as a spiritual director you meet with adults?



Abuse

Neglect



Physical abuse



Sexual abuse



Verbal abuse



Emotional neglect



Physical neglect

Growing up in a household where:



There are adults with alcohol and drug problems



There are adults with mental health problems



There is domestic violence



There are adults who have spent time in prison



Parents have separated

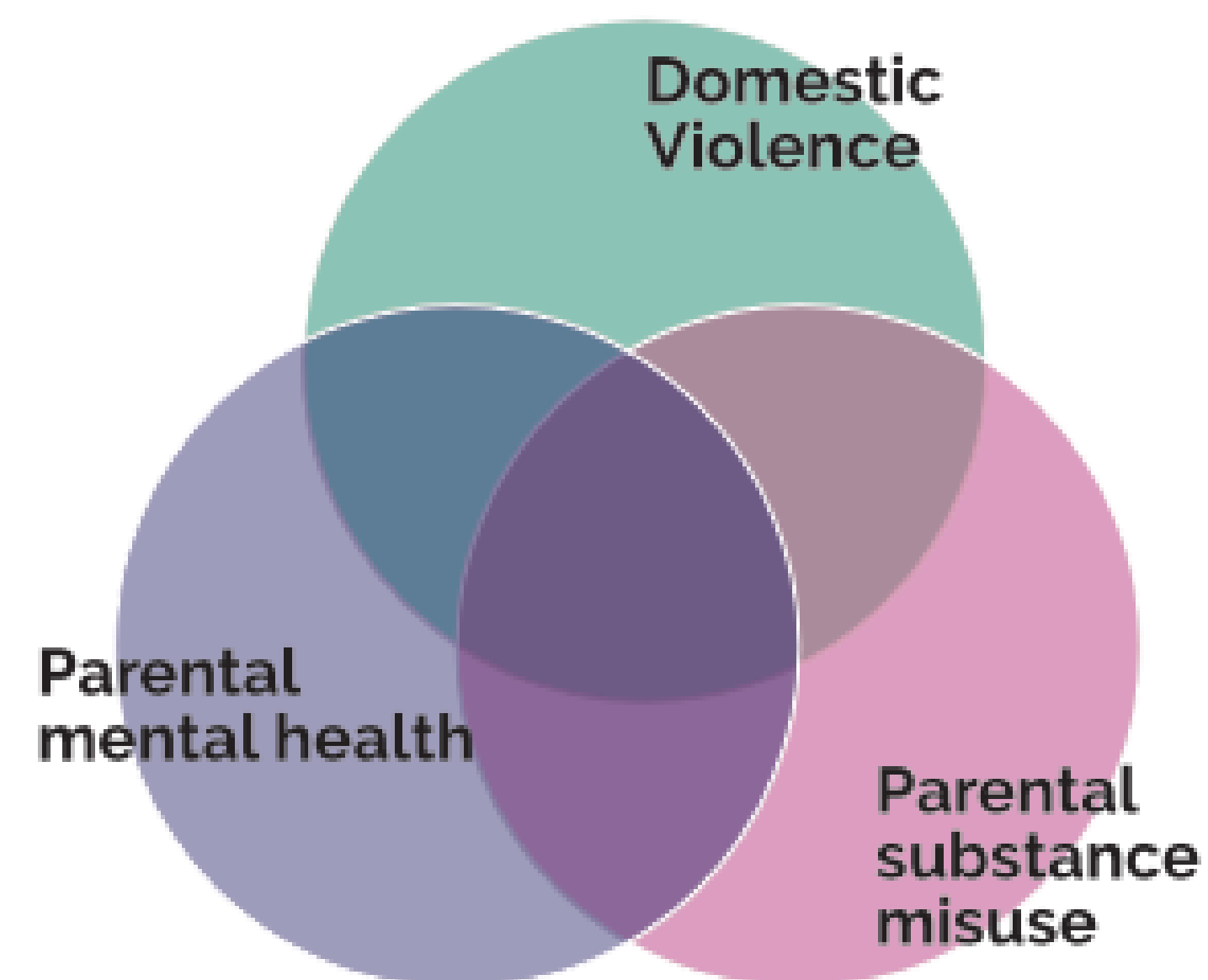
Focus on children and the trio of vulnerabilities

Children are vulnerable because:

They are unable to completely provide for their own welfare, security, food and clothing.

Instinctively, they will look toward and trust adults to protect, support and nurture them.

Therefore, children within families experiencing high levels of stress (as indicated on the previous slide) are likely to be at higher risk of abuse or neglect.

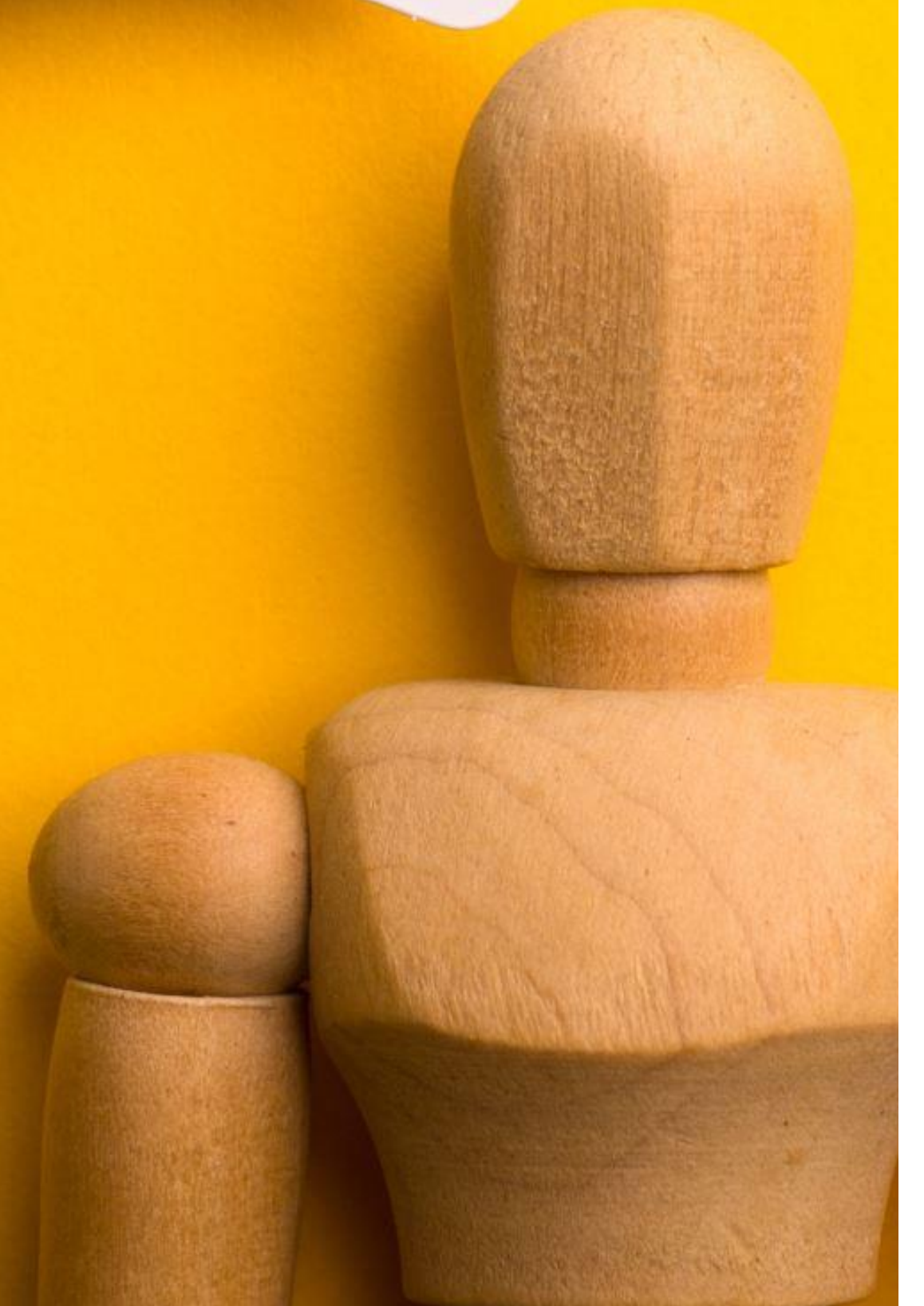


Children with additional needs

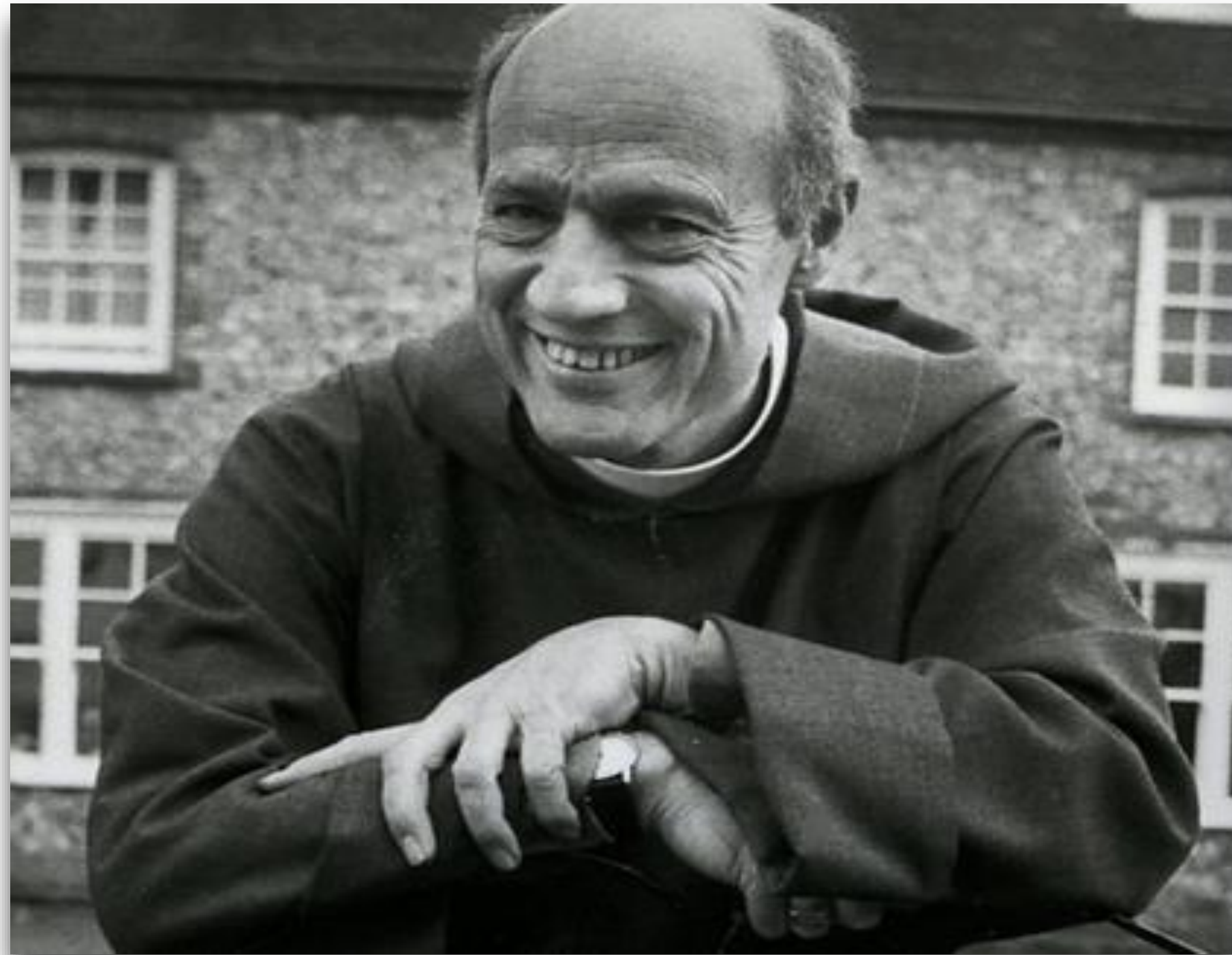
- Dependence on a wide network of carers
- More difficult to maintain boundaries in caring relationships
- Communication barriers
- Many of the usual channels to report abuse are inaccessible

To ponder during the session.

- What might make a directee/ director vulnerable?
- What actions can you take to reduce/ support these vulnerabilities?



The case of Peter Ball and Neil Todd



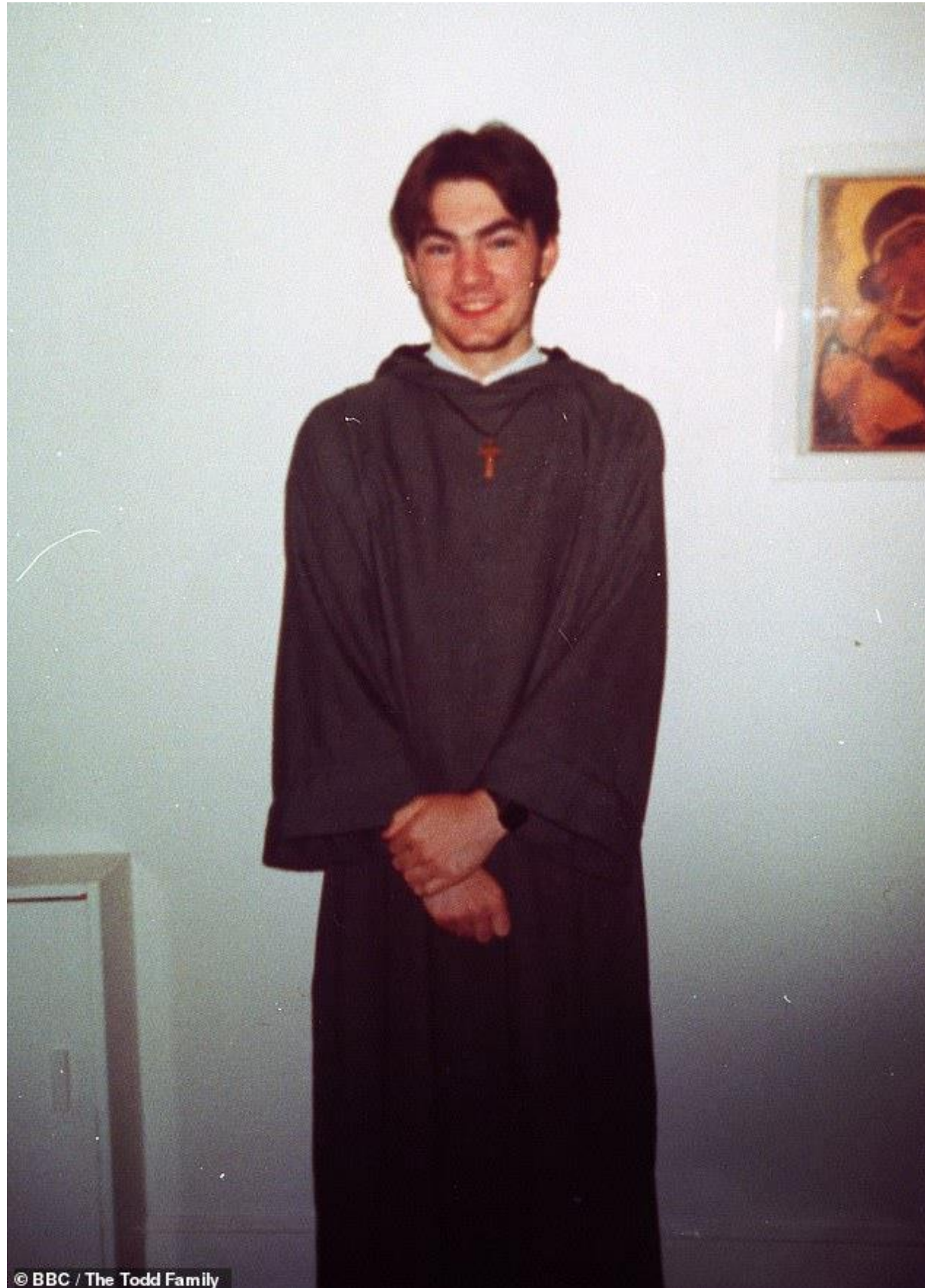
Peter Ball was British bishop in the Church of England and a convicted sex offender.

1980 - Started a 'Give a Year to God' scheme in his own home and involved members in religious rituals that involved acts of nudity.

Sentenced in 2015, Ball admits the abuse of 18 young men over a period of 15 years from 1977 to 1992

Suffragan Bishop of Lewes 1977 - 1992
Diocesan Bishop of Gloucester 1992 - 1993

Neil Todd



Wrote to Peter Ball in 1991 expressing his desire to join a religious community.

Peter Ball subjected him to abuse from the first night in his house.

Neil reported his abuse to senior figures in the Church of England, but Peter Ball was not barred from ministry and was merely cautioned by police in 1993.

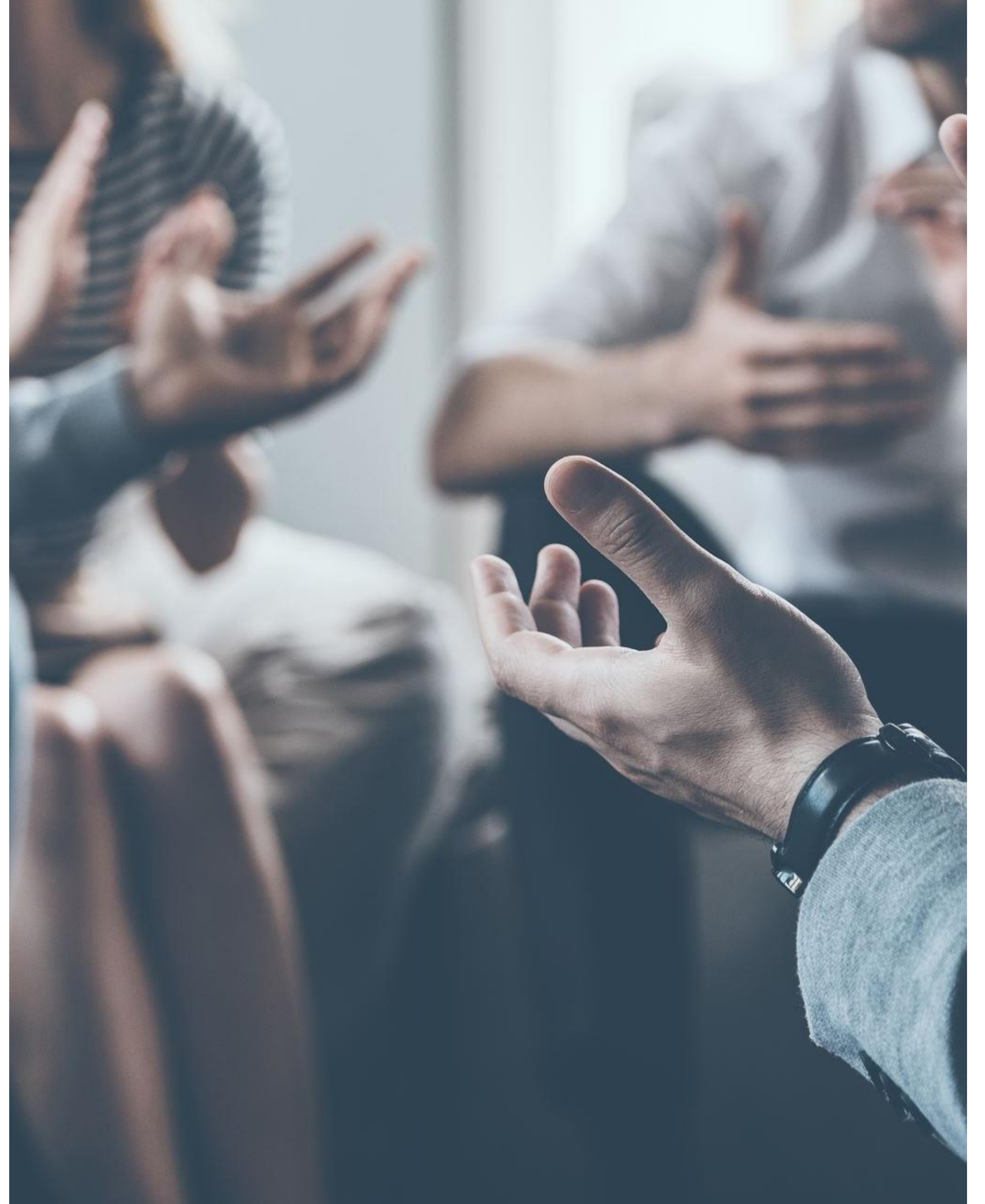
After a formal investigation is set up by Sussex police in July 2012, Neil dies in hospital following a third suicide attempt in August of the same year.

Discussion

- **Peter Ball and others who have used power to abuse have done this using a variety of different ways.**
- **What might these be and how would you recognise them?**
- Personality
- Institutional
- Social
- Generational
- Spiritual

Discussion

- What values, beliefs and behaviours are important for a spiritual director to have in relation to safeguarding?



Supervision, support, self care

- Enabling and empowering
- Self care
- Regular
- Right not an imposition
- Developing and supporting effective staff supervision- Jane Wonnacott
- How it relates to safeguarding

Understanding power and vulnerability

- **Power can be understood** as an ability to potentially impose your own will on a given situation, for good or for ill.
- **Power can be rooted** in an individual's attributes eg. physical strength, knowledge, or social factors eg. age, gender, wealth, position.
- **Therefore in any situation** an individual or group may be more powerful, or more vulnerable than another.
- **Those who are less powerful** are less able to determine their own lives, to protect themselves and to thrive without being significantly dependent on others.

The vulnerable in our communities

- **In society** there is a moral duty to protect and support the vulnerable and prevent them from harm.
- **The church** is a community where the relatively powerful are brought together with the relatively weak.
- **The work of the Holy Spirit** increases our love for our neighbour and our compassionate awareness of those weaker than ourselves.
- **Healthy churches** are inclusive places where individuals are deeply committed to the care and protection of one another.

Power and relationships

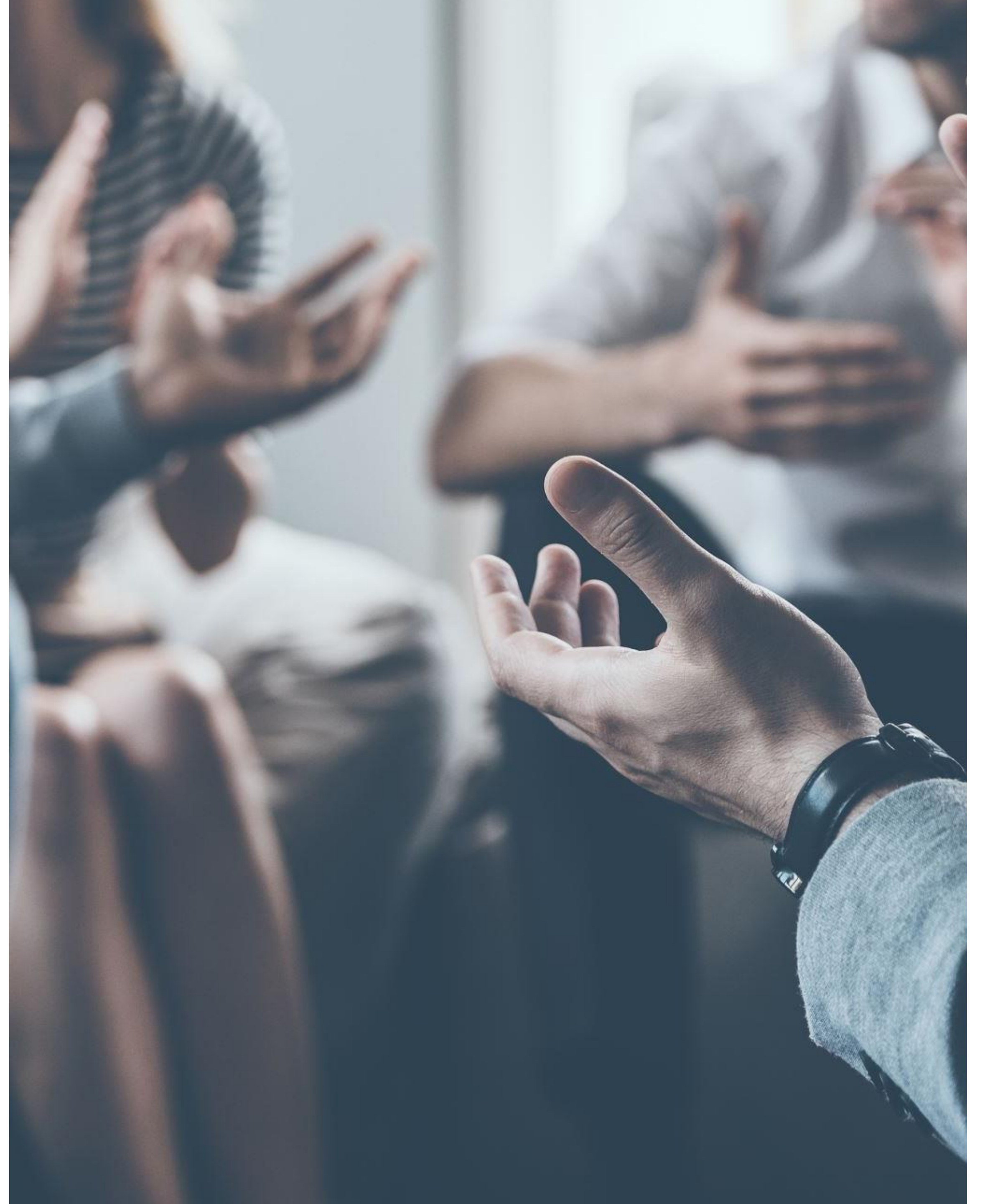
- Safer activities
- Lisa Oakley presentation- need to ask Lisa Clarke which slides we need, and she will go to Lisa Oakley
- Relating that to your role

Discussion

What safer working practices do you have in place already?

1. Social media
2. Dependency
3. Boundaries

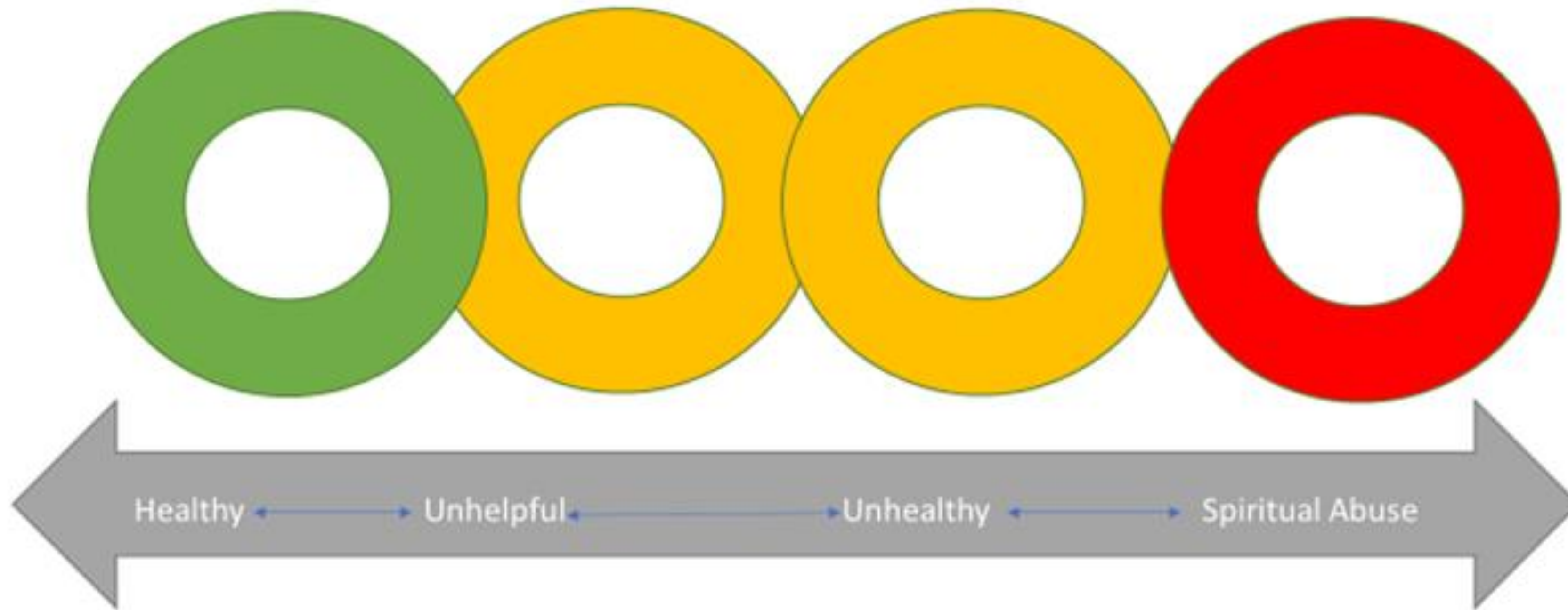
Where are the gaps?



Defining spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it and can be experienced in a variety of different relationships.

A spectrum of behaviour



Oakley (2021)

Key characteristics of spiritual abuse

Misusing scripture to coerce behaviour -

Coercing through censorship –

Requiring unquestioning obedience –

Using a sense of divine position to exert pressure to conform and suggesting this position is unchallengeable.

Enforced accountability –

Exclusion or isolation of individuals as a punishment for non-compliance –

Coercing behaviour through exploitation and manipulation

Publicly shaming and humiliating individuals in order to control their behaviour -

Threats of spiritual consequences –

Inappropriate mentoring relationships.

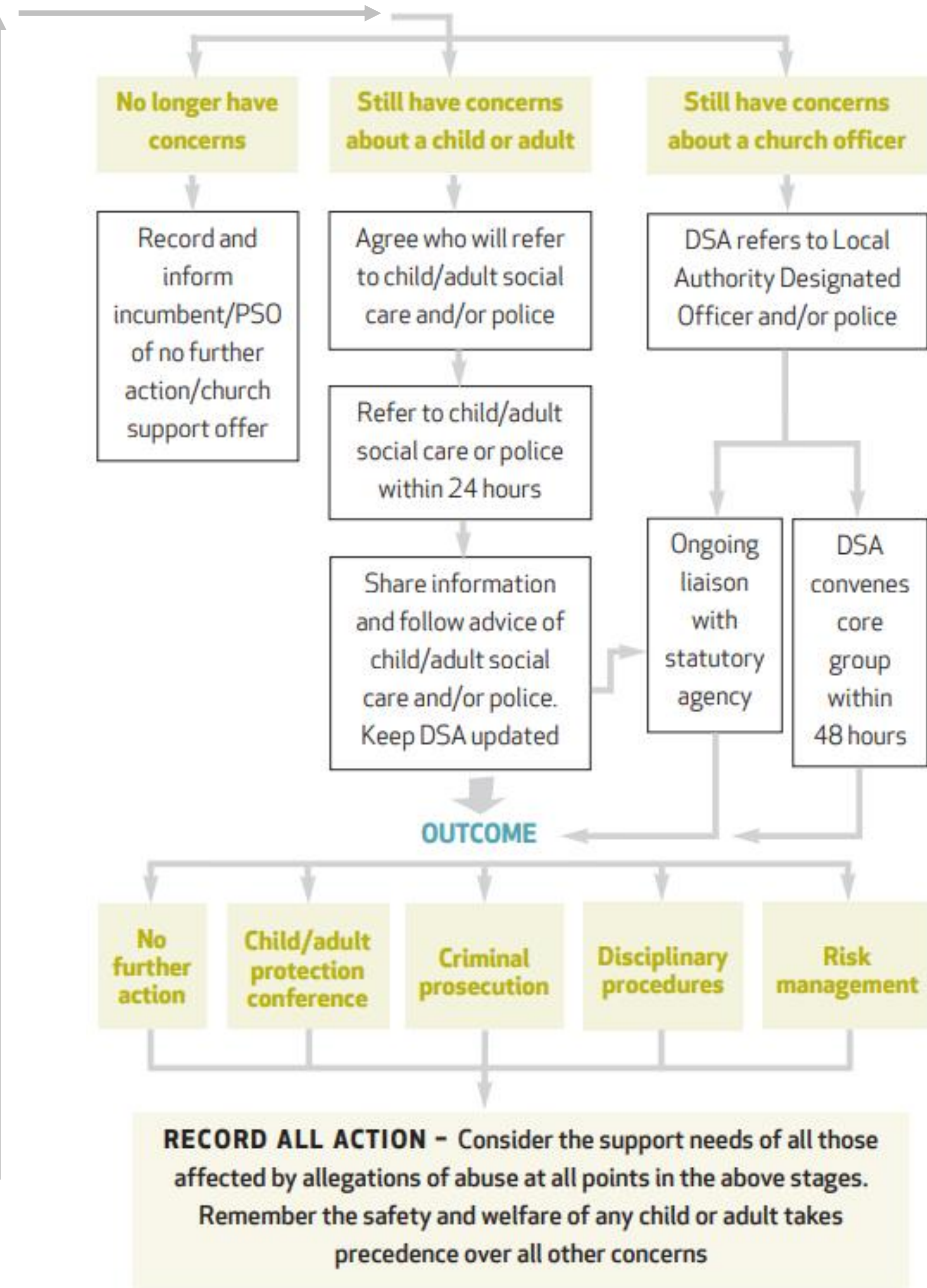
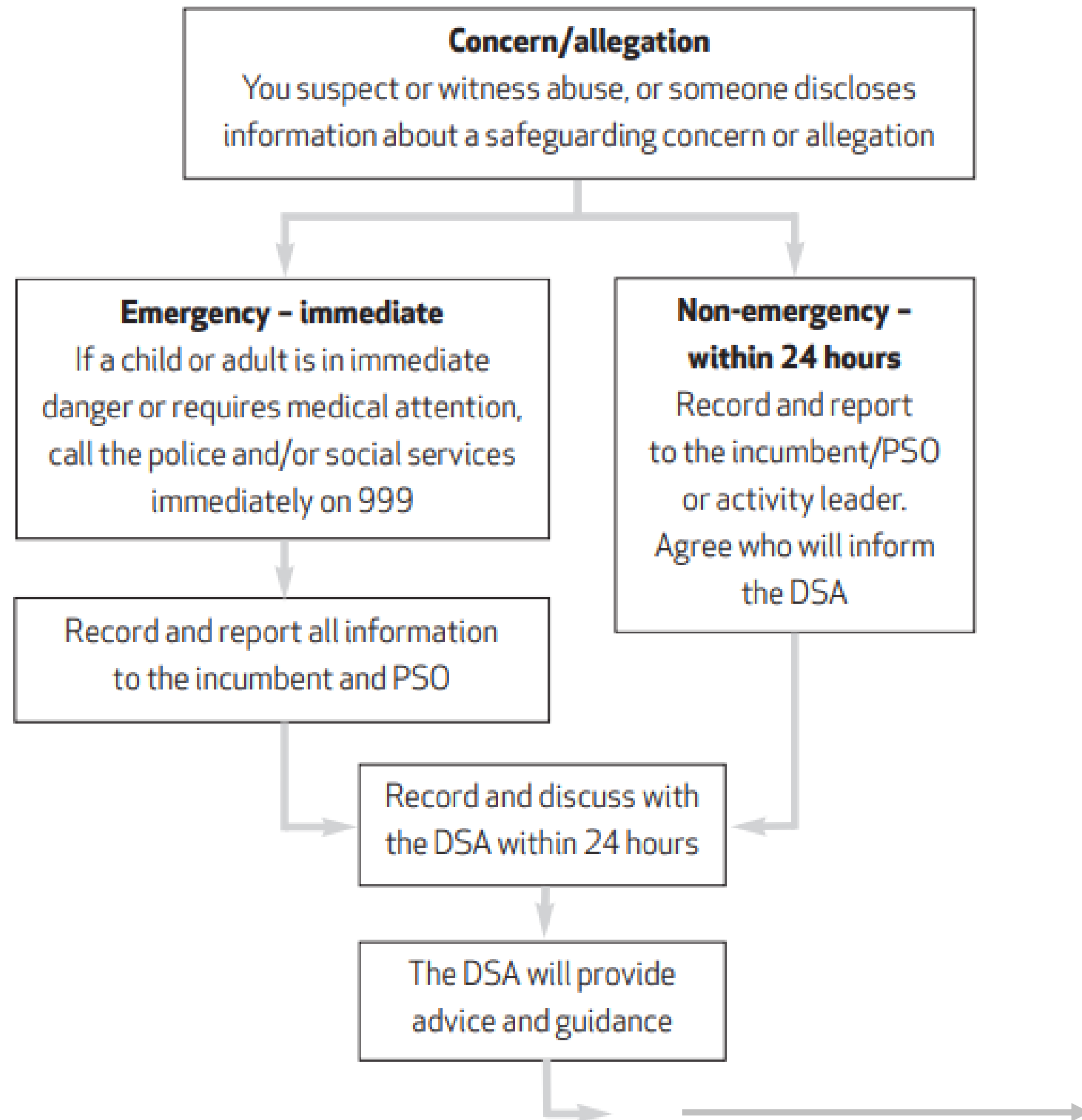
Take the opportunity to have a short break

- What has been the most significant aspect the course so far?
- How have the issues raised challenged your faith?
- Have they highlighted anything in particular in your own community?
- Is there any action you need to take?

Respond and refer

- Who is the Designated safeguarding lead/ supervisor/ head of – who do you go to and when?
- What if concerns about supervisor, unavailable or don't want to go to them
- Where do and where can you signpost people who need more support

Responding to safeguarding concerns and allegations



Summary and conclusions

Explored safeguarding within the Christian community with particular attention to the voice of victims and survivors.

Recognised issues of power and vulnerability arising from the age or circumstances of those affected, and how these issues inform appropriate action.

Applied some principles for safer ministry to a variety of case study scenarios.
Identified wider support, accountability and governance arrangements relevant for safeguarding in your context.

Further training and support

- E learning- domestic abuse, safer recruitment, modern slavery available through the Church of England National Safeguarding Team's online portal.
- Leadership- available through your Diocesan Safeguarding team
- Mental Health First Aid- this may be available through your Diocesan safeguarding team.
- Spiritual abuse course with Lisa Oakley- speak to your Diocesan safeguarding team to access this.