

THE
FIVE
Principles of
Empowerment
Self Defense





The five principles of Empowerment Self Defense encompass a variety of skills that connect us to our strength within and help protect our emotional and physical well-being.

In Empowerment Self Defense training, we learn that we can carry these skills with us everywhere we go and that we are free to use them when our boundaries are crossed.





THINK!

“Think” means looking inward and asking how you feel.

When assessing a situation, it’s important to ask:

- ▶ Does this feel right?
- ▶ What do we want to happen?
- ▶ What do we want to not happen?

When we don’t have clear answers, we can tune into our gut feelings and intuition. Sometimes, we may not like what we discover, or we may feel fear, but emotions and instincts are there to help us respond and protect ourselves.

It’s important to listen to our bodies. A pounding heart, sweaty hands and shaking limbs, suddenly feeling chilled or overheated, are messages that something isn’t right.



YELL!

Once we have identified what we want to happen and not happen, we use the power of our voices to make our needs and wants clear.

“Yell” doesn’t necessarily mean shouting. It can mean expressing your inner voice by setting clear, verbal boundaries.



RUN!

You have every right to walk away from places or conversations that make you uncomfortable, regardless of anyone else's feelings.

However, turning your back and running away may not be the safest option. Sometimes, running away is impossible or might increase your risk of danger.

In those cases, we can and must draw on other self defense tools.



FIGHT!

When running away isn't an option, you can use the strongest parts of your body against the weak parts of an assailant's body to neutralize threatening forces.

When attacked, you have every right to defend yourself.

The "fighting" aspect of self defense is not assault. It is defensive fighting that is meant to protect you and neutralize any assailant who is trying to hurt you.

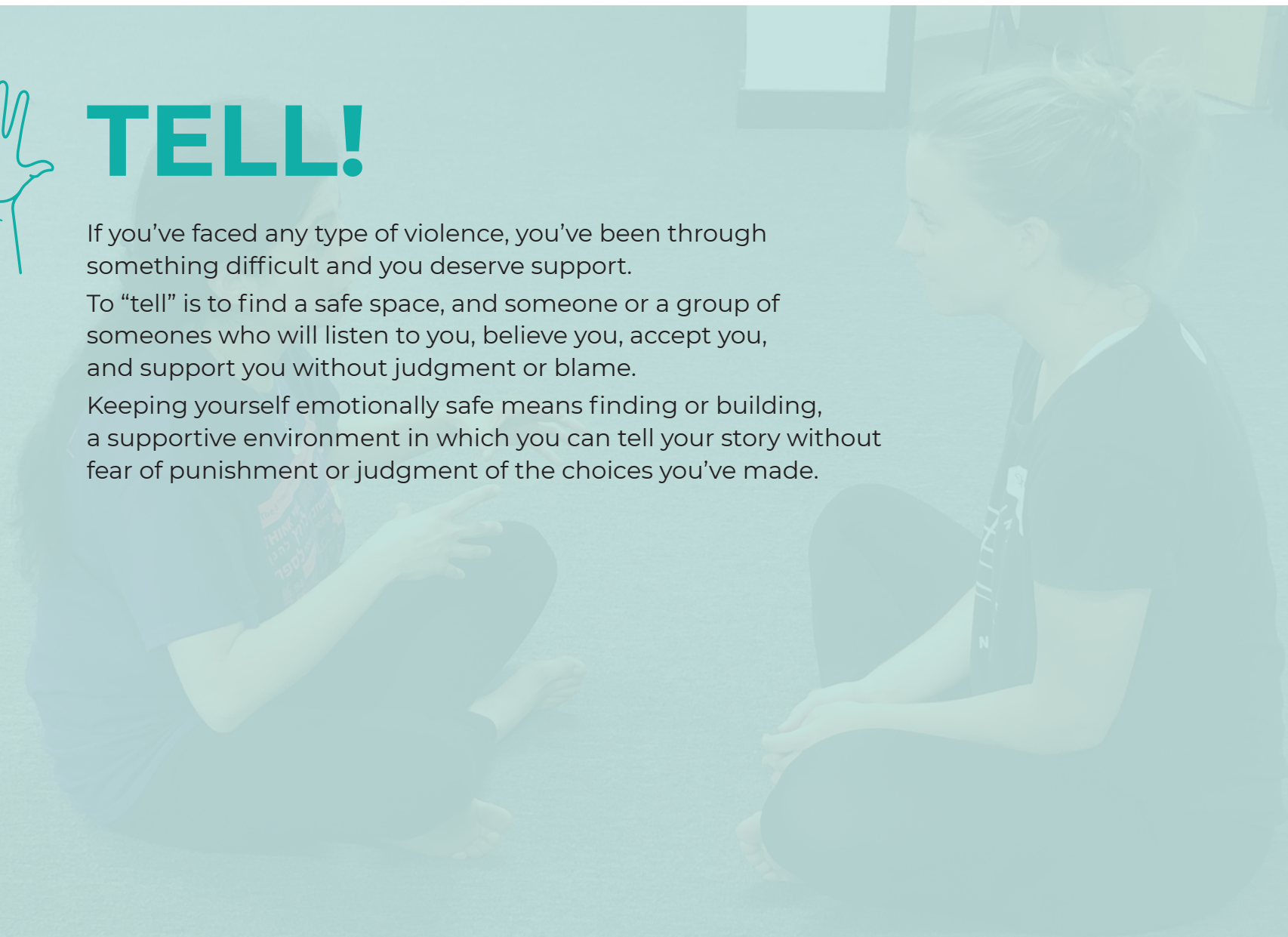


TELL!

If you've faced any type of violence, you've been through something difficult and you deserve support.

To "tell" is to find a safe space, and someone or a group of someones who will listen to you, believe you, accept you, and support you without judgment or blame.

Keeping yourself emotionally safe means finding or building, a supportive environment in which you can tell your story without fear of punishment or judgment of the choices you've made.



The Five Principles of Empowerment Self Defense

YELL

Use your voice to speak up for yourself and others. Be calm or loud. Express your boundaries clearly.

RUN

Get away. You decide when to leave an uncomfortable situation.

FIGHT

Physical resistance. Use the hard parts of your body against vulnerable targets.

THINK

Use your head. Be present. Listen to your intuition. Notice what is going on and what you want to do.

TELL

Heal and share in a safe space with someone you trust to support you.



GLOSSARY

Aggression

Typical Definition

A form of non-physical violence that can include yelling, sharp movements, threats, etc.

At ESD Global, we mean...

A form of violence, including more subtle, harder-to-spot forms of emotional, spiritual, or verbal aggression.

In empowerment self defense classes, students learn to identify all forms of aggression and neutralize them by setting clear, assertive boundaries.

Assertiveness

Typical Definition

A trait, often portrayed as masculine, loud, shrill, and aggressive.

At ESD Global, we mean...

The ability to clearly express what we want and what we don't want in a manner that is calm, generous, stable, and respectful, while staying conscious of our rights and sense of self-worth.

By expressing ourselves assertively, we communicate clearly, make our voices heard and respected, and create safe spaces.

Awareness

Typical Definition

A tool that cultivates personal and spiritual development.

At ESD Global, we mean...

A skill that helps us identify risky situations and warning signs in the behavior of others.

Awareness includes paying attention to our bodies' danger signals, using intuition, and clarifying what we want and where our boundaries lie.

We use all these to prevent problematic situations from escalating to more serious violence.

Boundary Setting

Typical Definition

A term referring to child discipline and behavior management.

At ESD Global, we mean...

A form of self-expression achieved by using one's voice and body

language to assertively express one's needs, desires, consent, or lack thereof.

Statistics show us that in many cases, setting clear, firm, boundaries can prevent threatening situations from escalating.

Empowerment

Typical Definition

Experiences that cause a person to feel stronger and more positive about themselves.

At ESD Global, we mean...

An experience that offers practical self defense skills most women never learn.

These self defense skills help women feel differently about themselves, and have an increased sense of self-efficacy, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

In ESD classes, ESD instructors never tell students what to do. Instead, they suggest options, and give every student the freedom to choose what is right for her, which is empowering in and of itself.

Physical Techniques

Typical Definition

Movements drawn from the traditional martial arts, many of which take years to master, which were originally developed by men to use against other men, for the way men fight.

At ESD Global, we mean...

Movements drawn from the martial arts and adapted to highlight the strengths of a woman's body.

These techniques are simple to learn and do not require extensive training or practice.

Victim-Blaming

Typical Definition

The act of placing responsibility on victims for violence they endured.

(continued)

GLOSSARY

At ESD Global, we mean...

A social phenomenon to which we are completely opposed.

We believe that a victim is never responsible for the choices of the person who initiated violence.

We also believe that ESD training provides tools for stopping violence in its tracks.

Violence

Typical Definition

An act of physical or verbal conflict, usually between strangers, including fights between men, rape, fighting with weapons, and shouting.

At ESD Global, we mean...

An act meant to harm or intimidate a person or group that is perceived as weaker or inferior to the aggressor. Often this is men against women in which it is called Gender-Based Violence.

More often than not, gender-based violence happens at the hands of somebody known to the victim.

This includes harassment in public spaces, at home, or in the workplace.

Unwanted touch, abuse of authority, unwanted courtship, emotional abuse, physical violence, and sexual coercion are all included in gender-based violence.

Violence Prevention

Typical Definition

A tired concept that focuses on teaching men and boys to not engage in gender-based violence. This notion also includes teacher women and girls to isolate themselves or stay away from men.

At ESD Global, we mean...

A noble goal, which can be achieved through a systemic set of actions across individuals, social groups, education and policies that stops violence through education, laws, self defense training and changed social mores.

We're in agreement that men must be educated from a very young age not to engage in gender-based violence, and that there's a need for increased legislation and stronger deterrence for sex offenders.

At the same time, we feel strongly that women should be given the tools to identify violence, stop it if they can, and cope with it if it happens.

These tools empower women to live their lives without limiting their freedoms.

Women's Self Defense

Typical Definition

Classes for women, usually taught by men, where students learn physical techniques against men who might try to attack them.

At ESD Global, we mean...

Empowerment Self Defense (ESD) classes taught by women, which provide students with a toolbox to cope with unwanted situations.

In ESD classes students learn physical, verbal and mental techniques to: de-escalate or avoid violence; increase risk awareness; set boundaries; be assertive; and defend oneself physically.



EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SELF-DEFENSE

www.esdglobalselfdefense.org

