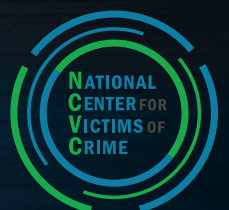




8 Simple Rules

for Being an ETHICAL True Crime Fanatic





1


There is NO victimless true crime

- By and large, the stories that we are intrigued with are based on violent crime. If you are watching a story about true crime, someone was hurt, and that someone also has a family.
- Recognize that these are about real people and real stories.



2

There is no timeline for trauma

- Stories on serial killers from the '70s have become en vogue. Family members of many of those killers' victims are still alive.
 - Even 30 years later, the death of a loved one hurts. Having their stories told in a very public and romanticized way is both dangerous and traumatic.
 - Often, stories told later in time aren't accurate and are based on speculation. This can be just as damaging, if not more so.
- 

3

Investigate Investigate Investigate

- Find reputable, legitimate, sources. Ask yourself what credentials the hosts have - are they actual journalists? Attorneys? Investigators?
- Be intentional with what media you consume. Do research into whether the victims have been consulted in the creation of the content.
- And even with all of this, maintain a discerning eye/ear. Ask yourself questions: What is the purpose of this program? Who is benefiting? Why is this being discussed? How is it being discussed?



4

Require the presence of victims' voices

- Are victims involved in a meaningful way in the making of the show?
- Is the victim's story presented respectfully and with care (compensation, trauma-informed interviewing, notification, etc.)



5

Do No Harm

- Understand that just because a family has elected to share their story, it does not mean they are “public figures.” That means you should treat them with kindness and compassion in interactions.
- Acknowledge that everything you say on social media is viewable, especially by victims’ families.
- Consider why you are sharing, liking, or commenting. Are you “adding” to the conversation or just exploiting? What is your intention behind participating in a discussion around someone else’s trauma? Be sure to take a beat before responding to consider the WHY of your response.

6

Respect boundaries

- Remember that you are a spectator, not an investigator. “Armchair detective” work may make you feel accomplished, but in some cases it can actually harm the real investigation.




7

Don't fall victim to true crime

- Victim professionals, law enforcement professionals, and journalists who specialize in "crime beats" experience vicarious trauma. If you delve into true crime you may feel the impacts, too.
- If you don't feel anything when you're consuming, consider whether you have been desensitized OR if you are viewing these as just story.



The logo consists of three concentric, broken circular lines in shades of blue and green. The text 'NATIONAL CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME' is centered within these lines.

NATIONAL
CENTER FOR
VICTIMS OF
CRIME



8

Turn your interest into impact

- Find ways to volunteer to directly assist victims and victim-serving organizations.
- Donate to victim-serving organizations.
- Learn how to make an impact at [victimsofcrime.org](https://www.victimsofcrime.org) today.