

LIFERING ONLINE CHAT GUIDELINES AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Final Revision 10/15/2011

ABOUT LIFERING'S ONLINE CHAT GUIDELINES

AT A GLANCE

Be kind and respectful. Use language and content that would be appropriate at a family dinner.

When a person is in need of support, change the topic to sobriety issues and attempt to provide the support that person needs.

If a chatter's behaviour is bothering you, set the chatter to ignore so that you do not see their typing, and send an email describing the incident including the date and time (Pacific) to LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com.

NOTICE

Please give careful consideration to the messages you post in the LifeRing chat room, even in private message. LifeRing has the right to suspend or terminate your access to the chat room without reason or notification and without liability. LifeRing is not responsible for removing chat names, profiles, or other records of any person's participation in the chat room. The chat service is a privilege granted by LifeRing to some of its members under some circumstances, not a right, and LifeRing and all staff and volunteer moderators (and convenors during the period of their meetings) have the right to remove that privilege at any time.

PRINCIPLES

In the LifeRing chat room, we ask that chatters be committed to:

- Providing a supportive and respectful shared environment.
- Protecting the rights of individuals to participate and remain anonymous.
- Preserving individual rights of self-expression.

Whenever individual expression is disruptive to a supportive, secular and sober common chat space, we will act to protect the shared environment. Although we also recognize that LifeRing represents the diversity of its members, respect for others is the basis for all our sober conversations.

It's very important that everyone enjoys the LifeRing chat rooms, and that the chat rooms support each chatter's effort for sobriety. Those needing help for alcohol and addiction may include people from all walks of life and people of all ages, including young people and the elderly. Our guidelines are designed to support a chat room which is safe, welcoming and supportive to everyone at all times.

These guidelines are not exhaustive and are enforced with a light hand and with common sense. Our moderators will often send you a warning if your behavior appears to be violating the guidelines, but warnings are not required. A moderator can remove you from LifeRing chat immediately, at any time, and for any reason, if they feel that it is to the benefit of the chat room, other chatters, or LifeRing as an organization.

Moderation is an art, not a science, and moderators walk a fine line and often are faced with no choice but to upset one chatter or another. Moderator decisions are made with the best interests of everyone in LifeRing in mind.

Moderators manage the chat room during the times between meetings. They are anonymous and are not allowed to discuss chat problems or issues with chatters. Those discussions should be directed by email to LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com.

During scheduled meeting times, convenors manage the chat room. Outside of their own scheduled meetings, convenors have no special power, responsibility, or authority in the chat room.

Remember that our moderators and convenors are volunteers who are doing the best they can under difficult circumstances. Please treat them with respect, even when you disagree.

WHO BENEFITS FROM THESE GUIDELINES?

Organizations which run chat rooms for their memberships select the level of guidelines and moderation that are appropriate to the organization's needs.

Guidelines may be brief and imprecise, which benefits the moderators by giving them a great deal more leeway in enforcing the organization's perspective - or - guidelines may be detailed and explicit, which primarily benefits the chat community, by making it very clear what is expected in terms of behavior, by demanding consistency and fairness from the moderators, and by providing transparency regarding policies and procedures.

LifeRing has selected this latter course, and although the length of the guidelines may be daunting, it is good to keep in mind that by being specific about what is acceptable, chatters can enjoy a more predictable, consistent, fair and safe chat environment.

COMMUNICATION

Anyone may respond effectively to chat room problems by setting a chatter to ignore, leaving the room, or by emailing LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com to describe the incident. It doesn't need to have happened to you for you to report it, you need only have witnessed or heard about a problem which may negatively affect others.

If you report a problem which does not involve you, you will receive a reply from the Chat Coordinator, but you will not be informed about the progress or result of your complaint. This is to protect the privacy of the people you have mentioned.

To report a problem or to appeal the decision of a moderator, be specific about the circumstances and proposed solutions. Send your report to: LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com.

Always ensure that you include the following information:

- The chatters' names involved.
- The name of the chat room where the incident occurred.
- The text content of the incident.
- The date and exact time of the incident in Pacific Time.
- Your time zone.

RECORDS

LifeRing operates a strict logging policy in which all chat room activity is logged 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for security reasons. This is entirely for your own safety and our reference in order to effectively moderate the chat rooms.

Private messages are also logged and may be viewed by a board approved administrator if required while investigating reports. Private messages are read only to verify when a complaint is made via email to LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com that someone is accused of violating guidelines in private message that would require immediate banning. Then messages are verified and action taken if required. Messages need not be verified if both parties agree fully as to the content of the interaction and provide matching chat transcripts from their own records.

By connecting to the chat rooms you agree that any chat – public or private -- may be recorded and quoted to the Chat Coordinator via email by any participant, and any chat may be recorded and quoted by LifeRing staff and moderators in context and without restriction for the purpose of improving chat and resolving disputes.

THE GUIDELINES

Remember, our chat rooms are here to offer people support for sobriety.

The purpose of the chat rooms is the same as for face-to-face LifeRing meetings: to help one another remain abstinent from alcohol and drugs. The atmosphere is secular; your religion or spirituality or lack thereof remains private and rarely comes up. We help one another build a tailor-made recovery program that works for the individual. The atmosphere is positive, supportive, and non-confrontational.

Between scheduled meetings, chat may be about any topic. Sometimes people are just sharing friendly conversation, or having fun. If you want to talk about sobriety, say so! People will generally respond to your need right away.

Chat rooms are a great place for people to meet and talk with others who share similar interests and concerns, while at the same time providing support for each chatter's effort for sobriety. Topics other than sobriety, joking around and having fun are permitted provided that they do not interfere with the ability of other members to seek and give support.

If even one person is in need or seems to want to return the topic to issues related to sobriety, chatters are required to seriously attend to the need until that person has been satisfied.

CRISIS

When you feel that a chatter may be in crisis, please suggest that:

Our chat is a support group only. We are not trained or equipped to be a crisis hotline.

Please contact a crisis hotline, your personal physician, a hospital emergency room, your local 911 or emergency contact number for professional assistance.

Crisis resources and phone numbers are available at <http://lifering.org/chat-room/resources/>

COMPASSION

Other conversation in the chat room should cease in order to be of assistance to those in need.

Newcomers to the LifeRing chat room deserve special consideration, as they may feel lost, or be struggling to admit their problems in achieving sobriety.

Please stop to welcome and assist people who are new to the chat room or are returning to the chat room after a long absence, regardless of whether or not they have returned to drinking or using.

Any chatter who indicates that they are in a personal crisis or are considering drinking or using should be treated with great care and respect.

When someone arrives in the room who you do not know, please greet them and respond as though they are new to LifeRing and to the chat rooms until you know otherwise, assisting in whatever way you can.

Other conversation should cease to help a person in need feel welcome. This does not reflect on the quality of the former conversation, but makes sobriety or an introduction to LifeRing a priority for all.

RESPECT

Please remember that anyone can enter the chat room at any time, and will see the last five messages posted in the chat.

Regardless of whether someone in the room might be offended, all people and the groups to which they might potentially belong should be treated with respect at all times in LifeRing chat.

Please do not speak negatively to, insult, verbally abuse, attack, embarrass or threaten others, either in public or in private, whether or not the person is in the room at the time.

Refrain from representing or misrepresenting the views of others. Let them speak for themselves.

Please do not be rude to others, for example saying "shut up" or "get out", even in jest or to your friends.

Chat, stories, jokes or posting links which are off-color, sexist, racist, agist, homophobic, insulting to a particular culture, religion or philosophy, are not permitted.

Please always be respectful of the gender, racial origins, age, sexual preferences, cultural backgrounds, philosophical beliefs and sobriety plans of others.

SOBRIETY

LifeRing chat is an abstinence-based place, which means that our aim is zero consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs.

"Don't Drink Or Use No Matter What" is a LifeRing slogan.

A person who drinks or uses once a week, or just a few now and then, or just socially, is still drinking or using, and this is not something to celebrate. If the person genuinely feels that they want to maintain their current pattern of use, then they should be advised to go to a different kind of support group, or to return when they are truly ready to quit for good.

Chatters who make it known that they are using alcohol or drugs - either through their behavior or a statement to that effect- MAY be asked to leave until they are sober, if their behavior is disruptive to the chat room.

Chat, stories, jokes or posting links which glorify, praise, approve or recommend the use or abuse of alcohol or drugs is not allowed, even in jest.

The length of an individual's sobriety is his or her own determination, and like any private information may be shared or not at their discretion.

What constitutes sobriety or is advisable with respect to prescription drugs, supplements, and other legal substances not intended to intoxicate is in the province of individual and medical discretion, and ought not to be questioned by others or discussed at length, even as a general topic.

SECULARITY

No one is required to reveal their religious or spiritual belief or disbelief in a LifeRing chat room. Please don't ask.

Religious or philosophical proselytizing or "witnessing," is not tolerated in the chat room or via private message, nor is advocacy of atheism or agnosticism.

Please do not post chat, stories, jokes, lyrics, or links which might be construed as insulting to religion, philosophy, spiritual belief or any lack of faith.

We acknowledge that it can be helpful for people to talk about experiences which may have resulted from exposure to a particular philosophy or religion, but ask that people confine their comments to their own experiences, in a context relevant to discussion of their personal sobriety, and to refrain from generalizing.

For example: In the context of talking about issues related to personal sobriety, it is appropriate to say that "I find it difficult to deal with my family who condemn me because I am not of their religion," but not to call the religion a "cult" or to insult adherents of that religion in general.

SELF-HELP

In LifeRing, each person creates his or her own personal plan for staying sober, and the elements of any personal sobriety plan ought to be respected within the chat room.

Please do not advocate particular methods for achieving sobriety at the expense of other possible methods.

Please do not denigrate any particular sobriety plan in the chat room or via private message.

Do not post chat, stories, jokes, lyrics, or links which might be construed as insulting to a particular sobriety program, group, or self-help method.

We acknowledge that it can be very helpful for people to talk about experiences which may have resulted from exposure to a particular sobriety program or self-help method, but ask that people confine their comments to their own experiences, in a context relevant to discussion of their personal sobriety, and to refrain from generalizing.

For example: In the context of talking about issues related to personal sobriety, it is appropriate to say that "I found it difficult to deal with AA because I could not relate to the steps or the people," but not to call Alcoholics Anonymous a "cult" or to insult participants in that program by calling them "nazis" or "trolls".

ADVICE

We are not physicians: Chatters should not give advice or engage in advocacy to others about prescription medications, supplements, or over the counter drugs, although they may briefly relate their own specific personal experiences with these substances.

Detoxing from drugs or alcohol can be dangerous. Chatters should take great care to suggest that people consult with a physician when concerned about the effects of withdrawal.

CONTROVERSY

It is not the purpose of LifeRing chat rooms to determine who is right or wrong with regard to any issue.

You may be asked to change topics or refrain from discussing a topic in the future if the topic is controversial and is creating extensive disagreement or polarization in the chat room.

If someone in the chat room states that they are uncomfortable with a highly controversial or polarizing topic or behavior, please cease discussing it immediately.

Participants should take controversial discussions to private chat, an empty chat room, or to a more appropriate forum.

RESPONSIBILITY

If a chat topic is a "trigger" for you, it is your responsibility to learn coping strategies to use when this topic comes up. Some suggested strategies are: put those people discussing it on ignore until the topic changes, take a friend into private message with you for support, or temporarily remove yourself from the room.

Many LifeRing members have been exposed to suicide, self-harm, sexual abuse, and violence. These are not laughing matters, and casual mention may be damaging to sobriety if a person believes that their experience is not being taken seriously within the support group.

Please do not post chat, stories, jokes, lyrics, or links which take suicide, self-harm, sexual abuse, or violence lightly.

Do not request inappropriate types of internet or phone interaction. LifeRing is not a sex or dating site. If you are found to be asking for inappropriate types of internet or phone interaction in rooms of any age group, you may face a warning, kick or ban from the room in question.

LANGUAGE

Please use common sense and courtesy. If you wouldn't say it in polite company you shouldn't say it in the LifeRing chat room.

Please use a similar standard of language in the chat room to what you might hear on major network television, on the radio, in a family café, a face to face LifeRing meeting with a teenager and grandmother present, and in other public forums.

Do not use vulgar, obscene, offensive, or sexually explicit language. Such language is unnecessary and offends many people.

Using asterisks or other symbols in place of letters does not make a word appropriate to use.

It is understood that questionable language may sometimes slip in when sharing personal experiences related to sobriety, or expressing strong emotions related to a personal crisis or problem.

People will not be removed from the chat room for using questionable language unless that language is repeated after a warning or request is made by a chatter or a moderator, or unless the language is clearly stated solely in defiance of these guidelines.

Please do not use account names that are offensive in nature. Names that you may be asked to change are those that refer to: death, suicide, self-harm, harm to others, sex, bodily functions, insults, drug or alcohol abuse, religion, atheism, hatred or prejudice.

GRAPHIC ELEMENTS

Please use font sizes, colors and capital letters with discretion.

Should a person with sight-related disabilities (or cognitive difficulties related to being able to easily follow text chat) request that you change your font color or size, please do so.

Don't monopolize the screen by excessively posting obtrusive nonsense characters, excessively repetitive messages or links, or other forms of spam.

Do not post links to vulgar, obscene, offensive, stereotypical or sexually explicit images or video, including nude images or images which objectify people of either gender by focusing on sexual attributes. Such images are unnecessary and offends many people.

PERSONAL GAIN

This is a private, non-profit chat room which does not tolerate advertisements of any type.

PRIVACY

Chatters have the right to refuse to give out any and all personal details.

Once a chatter has indicated that they are disinterested in providing information such as gender, location, time-zone, etc. chatters should not ask again.

Never give out the full names, email addresses, telephone numbers, addresses or other identifying information belonging to others in the chat. Doing so will result in an immediate and permanent ban.

Please politely request permission before emailing or telephoning other members of the LifeRing Chat Room if you have received their email or telephone within chat.

MISREPRESENTATION

Always use the same account name to log into the chat room. If you wish to change names, you may do so, but you must drop the former name completely and use only the new name from then on.

We understand that you may want to use more than one account name for perfectly valid reasons, but the nature of this forum requires that people be able to trust who they are speaking with.

Do not misrepresent yourself by lying about who you are, your age, gender, location, employment, medical history, length of sobriety or other personal details. Misrepresentation causes problems related to trust in the chat room.

If you do not wish to share personal information, simply withhold it and say so.

MULTIPLE ACCOUNTS

You are not permitted to run more than one connection to our chat servers, whether this is on one or more devices, unless you obtain prior permission.

Should you have more than one LifeRing member connected to a single LAN, please contact LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com for special permission.

DISCUSSION OF THESE GUIDELINES IN CHAT

Excessive discussion about these guidelines in chat can divert attention from the primary purpose of the chat room, which is sobriety support.

People who have been banned from the chat room and then reinstated are required to agree that they will not discuss their ban or their reinstatement in the chat room.

People who have been warned, kicked, or temporarily banned from the chat room will be warned additionally should they discuss the moderator action with other chatters in the open chat room or in private messages.

Please help us keep controversy about the management of the chat room to a minimum.

ADDITIONAL TERMS OF USE

LifeRing reserves the right, in our sole discretion, to terminate your access to all or part of the chat rooms, for any reason, with or without notice.

By using the LifeRing chat rooms you acknowledge, consent and agree that LifeRing may access, preserve and disclose your account information and content if required to do so by law or in a good faith belief that such access preservation or disclosure is reasonably necessary to: (a) comply with legal process; (b) enforce the Terms

of Use ; (c) respond to claims that any content violates these guidelines or the rights of third parties; (d) respond to your requests for customer service; or (e) protect the rights, property or personal safety of LifeRing, its users and the public.

You understand that the technical processing and transmission of the chat service, including your content, may involve (a) transmissions over various networks; and (b) changes to conform and adapt to technical requirements of connecting networks or devices.

You understand that all information, data, text, software, music, sound, photographs, graphics, video, messages, tags, or other materials (content) , whether publicly posted or privately transmitted, are the sole responsibility of the person from whom such content originated. This means that you, and not the LifeRing chat rooms, are entirely responsible for all content that you upload, post, transmit or otherwise make available in the chat rooms. LifeRing does not control the content posted via the chat room service and, as such, does not guarantee the accuracy, integrity or quality of such content. You understand that by using the chat rooms, you may be exposed to content that is offensive, indecent or objectionable. Under no circumstances will LifeRing be liable in any way for any content, including, but not limited to, any errors or omissions in any content, or any loss or damage of any kind incurred as a result of the use of any content posted, transmitted or otherwise made available via the chat rooms.

You agree that with respect to Content you submit or make available for inclusion on publicly accessible areas of the Service, you grant LifeRing worldwide, royalty-free and non-exclusive licenses to use, distribute, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate, publicly perform and publicly display such content (in whole or in part) and to incorporate such content into other works in any format or medium now known or later developed.

By using the LifeRing chat rooms, you agree not to use the chat rooms to:

1. upload, post, email, transmit or otherwise make available any content that is unlawful, harmful, threatening, abusive, harassing, tortuous, defamatory, vulgar, obscene, libelous, invasive of another's privacy, hateful, or racially, ethnically or otherwise objectionable;
2. harm or threaten any other person in any way;
3. impersonate any person, business or entity, including LifeRing chat room moderators, convenors, volunteers, employees and agents;
4. forge headers or otherwise manipulate identifiers in order to disguise the origin of any content transmitted through the Service;
5. upload, post, transmit or otherwise make available any content that you do not have a right to make available under any law or under contractual or fiduciary relationships (such as inside information, proprietary and confidential information learned or disclosed as part of employment relationships or under nondisclosure agreements);
6. violate or infringe the rights of others including, without limitation, patent, trademark, trade secret, copyright, publicity or other proprietary rights;
7. disrupt the normal flow of dialogue, use fonts or other content to make the chat content less legible, cause a screen to "scroll" faster than other users of the chat rooms are able to type, or otherwise act in a manner that negatively affects other users' ability to engage in real time exchanges;
8. intentionally or unintentionally violate any applicable local, state, national or international law;
9. victimize, harass, degrade, or intimidate an individual or group of individuals on the basis of religion, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, or disability;
10. collect or store personal data about other users.
11. encourage conduct that would constitute a criminal offense, or that gives rise to civil liability;
12. interfere with the use of the LifeRing chat rooms by others.

HOW WE ADMINISTER THE GUIDELINES

REMOVAL OR BANNING FROM THE CHAT ROOM

LifeRing reserves the right to remove anyone from the chat room for any period of time without notification or reason. No warnings or explanation are required.

This service is a privilege granted by LifeRing to some members under some circumstances, not a right, and LifeRing and all staff and volunteer moderators (and convenors during the period of their meetings) have the right to remove that privilege.

Bans may be lifted following an email request directly to LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com and signing of the reinstatement agreement OR moderators may impose a ban for an indefinite period with no appeal possible for six months.

REPORTING TO OUTSIDE AUTHORITIES

LifeRing reserves the right to report to civil and criminal authorities any activities which appear to threaten the well-being of our members and to make available public and private chat records related to the appearance of threat.

Those promoting, proposing or declaring intentions to break any law may be reported to and face investigation and prosecution by appropriate authorities.

ABOUT OUR MODERATORS

Moderators are anonymous volunteers and will remain so throughout the duration of any enforcement action and appeal to LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com. Actions of moderators will never be treated by LifeRing as adversarial situations. The action of any moderator is considered to be the action of the Chat Coordination Team as a whole. Moderators do make mistakes, and mistakes can be corrected, but the decisions and identity of any specific moderator are not open for discussion.

Moderators are not allowed to discuss enforcement in either public or private chat, other than to text the words ADVISEMENT, WARNING, KICK OR BAN, to quote a guideline, to quote the specific text that was the basis of the enforcement action, to refer chatters to the guidelines, or to provide the email address of the Chat Coordinator.

Continued demands that moderators discuss a decision -- or disrespectful statements about the moderator or the Chat Coordinator -- may be considered a new and separate violation of these guidelines.

WARNING PROCEDURE

Moderators generally try to warn people before they are kicked or banned from the chat room, but warnings are not required. Warnings may be accompanied by the quoted text of the guideline which was violated.

Generally, for the first violation of any guideline, a warning is posted to the person in private chat or sent after the fact via email, indicating the guideline(s) violated,.

Generally, for the second violation, a warning is posted to public or private chat or email indicating the chatter's name and the text of the guideline(s) violated.

Generally, for the third violation of any guideline, a notice of imminent ban is posted to public or private chat or email indicating the guideline(s) violated, followed immediately by a ban from chat for one day to an indefinite period. When multiple guidelines are violated in succession, the escalation of the warnings and bans will apply across guidelines. In other words, if you use profanity, then insult another chatter, then post an obscene link, then make a racial slur, you may be banned, even though no single guideline was repeatedly violated.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

These guidelines may not be as strictly enforced for a newcomer or for a person in crisis as they are for experienced chatters. In such cases, moderators will not issue a warning, but will send a message with the following language: "PLEASE READ OUR GUIDELINES: This chat room is moderated . In future, you may receive a warning if you do not follow this guideline: (Text of Specific Guideline).

ACTIONS

Kicked - Removed temporarily (15 minutes) from the room in which a guideline has been violated.

Banned - Banned from the entire chat site for a specific period or indefinitely. Reinstatement is possible by completing a Reinstatement Agreement, which may be requested via email from LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com.

–please note that by being banned on the basis of an IP address, all users from the offender's local network may be banned indefinitely, with no appeal possible for six months.

Contact ISP - The offenders IP address and IRC logs are reported directly to the offender's internet service provider.

Contact ISP, CEOP, VTG - This is the result of pedophiles or stalkers on the chat. They are reported to their ISP, CEOP.gov.uk and Virtual Global Taskforce as well as any relevant law enforcement agency.

REPORTING AND RESPONSE

Should you feel the need to report abuse or threatening behavior to LifeRing, or if you wish to appeal the actions of a moderator, please contact us providing as much information as possible.

Send your report to: LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com

Always ensure you include the following information:

- The user names involved.
- The chat room location where the incident occurred.
- The text content of the incident.
- The date and time of the incident in Pacific Time.
- Your time zone.

When we receive your email, we will look into the incident, check the accuracy of the report against our chat logs, and perhaps contact others involved. We will not indicate the name of the reporting person or any identifying information should we contact other chatters.

We will always respond to your issue within seven days from receiving your email. If you have not received a response by that time, please resend your report or contact us via phone or email the LifeRing Service Center.

We cannot respond right away in many cases because chat logs may not be immediately available. Please be patient.

Note that we will not respond to requests, appeals, or complaints received via channels other than direct email to LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com since to do so would be burdensome on our volunteer staff and because we need to diligently and responsibly track your messages.

ACTING ON BEHALF OF ANOTHER PERSON

Should you feel uncomfortable sending an email to LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com, please work with someone who is willing to do so, and have that person email transcripts of the violation of these guidelines directly to LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com, with the complaint made in their name, not yours.

Such complaints will be considered to be filed by the person from whom the email was received. Complaints will not be discussed with any chatter other than the person complaining directly via email and the chatter who is the target of the complaint, even if other chatters were involved.

If you report a problem which does not involve you, you will receive a reply from the Chat Coordinator, but you will not be informed about the progress or result of your complaint. This is to protect the privacy of the people you have mentioned.

In such cases, moderator decisions will be made solely on the basis of whether a guideline was violated based on the content of the text transcript. No other factors will be taken into consideration.

Repetitive complaints to the Chat Coordinator about an incident or a moderator action related to another chatter, or repetitive requests for information regarding an incident or a moderator action related to another chatter, will be considered to be a violation of these guidelines.

Convenors do not have any particular access or standing in the chat room outside their meetings, and filing a complaint through a convenor is no more effective than filing a complaint yourself.

In the case of minors or persons of diminished capacity, guardians may be treated as acting on behalf of the chatter.

REINSTATEMENT

Bans are subject to reinstatement.

Reinstatement will ONLY be considered once a Reinstatement Request has been requested directly from LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com and has been returned with the required agreement to follow the guidelines and with the requested contact information. We need to know who we are communicating with in order to protect the privacy of each individual.

Reinstatement requests may only be made by the chatter directly affected by the moderator action, and not by any other person.

APPEALS OF CHAT DECISIONS

Warnings are not subject to appeal. They are simply warnings and have no particular consequences. Warnings will not be discussed, rescinded or removed.

Bans are subject to appeal only when a reinstatement request has been fully submitted and then denied. If a reinstatement request has not been fully submitted, bans will remain in place until such time as the request is received. Prior to receipt of a fully completed reinstatement request, bans will not be discussed, rescinded or removed.

Appeals of bans will ONLY be considered once a Reinstatement Request has:

- been returned to LifeRingChatCoordinator@yahoo.com
- with the required signed agreement to follow the guidelines, and
- with the requested contact information, and
- has been denied.

Appeals may only be made by the chatter directly affected by the moderator action, and not by any other person.

It is NOT appropriate to bypass the Chat Coordinator by communicating directly to the Online Regional Representative or the Board of Directors. Follow the suggested reinstatement procedures first. If you aren't reinstated, then appeal. We do require that people respect the procedures that have been established.

If your request for reinstatement has been denied, you may appeal by sending an email to OnlineRepresentative@LifeRing.org with the words "Chat Appeal" in the subject line. It will be forwarded to the appropriate party.

THANK YOU

Finally, we ask that you treat other chatters and all moderators and convenors with respect - it's not asking much! We would like everyone to enjoy their experience in the chat room, and you, as an individual, can help achieve that by simply following the guidelines for these rooms.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS DETAILED INFORMATION, AND ENJOY YOUR LIFERING CHATTING!