

every survivor REACTS DIFFERENTLY



Every survivor reacts to sexual violence in a different way—and that's okay.

Some survivors might talk openly about what happened to them. Others might not want to talk about it at all, keeping their emotions inside.

Some survivors want to wait weeks, months, or even years before discussing their sexual assault. Others might want to talk about it with someone right away.

It's important to respect each survivor's personal choices as they cope with sexual violence in their own way.

how can you HELP A SURVIVOR?

If someone you know has been sexually assaulted, *start by believing them* unconditionally. Nearly all survivors fear no one will believe them after they're assaulted.

Remind the survivor that it wasn't their fault. No matter what decisions they might have made before or after the assault, *it is not their fault* that this happened.

When a survivor shares their story with you, *listen to them*. Be patient and let them make their own decisions about what steps to take following the assault.



Respect the survivor's personal boundaries. Survivors of sexual violence feel like they've lost control over their bodies. They may not want to be touched or physically consoled.

Provide information, not advice. Help the survivor get the help they want and need,

but let them make their own decisions.

And remember: *you might also need support.*



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"...to promote a society free from sexual violence"