

Ways to help:

1. Reassure the survivor that you care.
2. Offer to take the dog for a walk or the kids to the park.
3. If the victim lives alone, offer to stay the night or see that there are groceries.
4. Get information from a rape crisis center or online sources for both you and the victim.
5. There is a lot to process. This is especially true if there is a prosecution involved. Give the victim space when it's needed.
6. Reach out and hold hands.
7. It's ok to send flowers or a small gift.
8. Many survivors of sexual and domestic crime develop post traumatic stress disorder. Reading all you can on this will help you better understand.
9. Send a card.
10. Offer to contact friends or family but **never** do so without first talking with the survivor.
11. Pray for the survivor.
12. Try to keep a positive outlook.

Survivors often need lots of space to talk. Others need space to think. The emotional upheaval during this time is tremendous for both the survivor as well as for those trying to help.

Many spouses are left wondering where they in?

If you feel this way know that you are not alone. Support resources are available for you too! Go to <http://www.hopeforhealing.org/friend> for online support resources or contact your local rape crisis center for information on spouse support groups in your area.

Hope For Healing.Org

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Physical Address:

Inside

Strawberry Plains United Methodist Church

Phone: (865) 933.8769

Clergy Toll-Free Hotline: 866.401.HEAL

Online: <http://www.hopeforhealing.org>

We are a non-profit ministry fully dependant on your gifts and donations for financial support. At this time, we have no paid staff. Donations go to provide services, an office, publications and victim support. We will gladly share our financial information with you upon request. Contact our office for more details or to help today.

Hope For Healing.Org

Please

don't

say...

Things not to say to survivors.

Our mission is to educate, inform & offer Christian support to survivors of sexual & domestic violence & hope to the people who love them.

Things Not To Say:

These are actual statements made to victims and compiled by survivors all over the world. Often, the person making the statement intended to be helpful but the result had the opposite effect.

While no one can tell you exactly what to say, we do hope this will be a guide in what not to say.

Please don't:

1. Tell me it's "*just sex*"...

Rape is a crime of power and control where sex is used as a weapon against the victim. It is degrading and humiliating. It is not the same as making love or having relations with someone you care about.

2. Don't say

"*Are you over it yet?*"



It's like someone died. It takes a long time to heal, some people report that they never "get over it" many go on to develop rape-related post traumatic stress disorder.

3. Don't ask, "*Did you like it?*" or tell me "*If it happens again, and enjoy it.*"

No one likes being overpowered and humiliated.

4. Don't say, "*It's your fault. You shouldn't have been _____ (in that neighborhood, drinking, out, at the party, etc.)*"

Not only is rape never the victims fault, this only compounds my feelings of worthlessness. Tell me you love me instead.



5. Don't tell me "*you could have avoided it.*"

If I could have kept it from happening, I would have done so.

6. Don't say: "*You should have known.*"

I can't predict the future.

7. Don't say: "*It was God's will.*"

It's not. God doesn't wish for evil to happen to anyone. You can tell me it was God's will that I survived!

8. Don't tell me "*Don't talk about it.*"

I need to process what happened. If it makes you uncomfortable, maybe you can help me find a support group or someone else to speak with.

9. Don't tell me "*Rape victims always make up those tales for attention.*"

We don't.

According to the F.B.I., false rape claims account for only 2% of the claims filed. When someone makes a claim, there is a 98% probability they are telling the truth.

10. Don't tell me why it would "*never happen to you*".

I hope it doesn't, but statistics from the *Ricki Lake Show* say that one in three women in the United States will be a victim of sexual assault in their lifetime.

11. Don't say "*others are worse off than you.*"

I'm not other people. I'm me.

12. Don't tell me "*Just pray about it and you'll be fine.*"

Unless you are sincere, it sounds like you are putting me off. Instead, why not offer to pray with me or for me?

13. Don't say "*there's nothing you can do to help a victim.*"

You can love me and be a friend.

Your support and love will go a long way towards helping a survivor heal. On the back of this booklet are helpful some ideas you may want to use.