



Sugati Publications Product 5--Booklet
Coping with Sexual Assault, For College Students (44 pgs)

A Guide for College Students

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Common concerns/questions from college students

What if I see him on campus or if we end up in a class together? Chances are, if you are both on the same campus, you will see him again. Remember, you did nothing wrong and you have every right to be there. You should walk with your head held high--without any shame or embarrassment. If you see him, go on with your business. Only you can decide if it's safe for you to talk to him, but be prepared that he may not give you the response you need or want from him. If you are in the same class and it feels too uncomfortable for you, try to have your schedule rearranged to fit your needs or speak with your professor about other options available to you.

We have mutual friends and belong to the same groups. Some people believe him and some believe me. Others try to be in the middle. This is common because acquaintance rape usually involves two people who have come to know each other--often through friends or social groups. People will take sides. Usually, those who were closer to him before the assault will stand behind him. Likewise, your true friends will support you. For those who try to remain 'neutral', it can cause greater conflict because you may wonder if they don't believe you. Surround yourself with people who support, respect and believe you. Trust your instincts about whether or not to remain in the same social groups with the person who raped you. It is your choice.

I'm not sure I'm ready to start dating again. I don't know if I can trust other guys not to move too fast or try to hurt me in the same way. Many rape survivors have this concern. They trusted their instincts and they trusted the person who hurt them. They never expected this to happen and now they wonder if it can happen again. Take your time with dating. Perhaps start in social situations with others and slowly move toward other situations that feel safe and comfortable. At first, you may want to avoid situations where you will feel isolated or with little control (e.g., alone in a guy's bedroom). Spend several times with someone before you move to more secluded, intimate settings. Then, when you're ready, be clear about your sexual limits before the date and reinforce those limits on the date.

Ever since the rape, it's been hard for me to go to classes. I'm worried I might fail or ruin my GPA. It will take some time to get back to your routine and to be able to focus on your studies again. Most schools offer assistance by contacting professors of students who are experiencing a crisis (without disclosing the reason for your absences or missed assignments). Usually this can be arranged through the student counseling services. You might want to notify your professors on your own. Again, it's up to you as to what you want to share with others. If you have missed several classes, you may want to consider a medical leave or withdraw for the term to avoid failing the classes. This is a big decision that will require more guidance from your school administrators regarding their policies and the potential impact on your standing with the school.

I'm not sure if I should tell my parents. I'll be going home soon for break and they will know I'm not the same. If you tell your parents, will it be more helpful for you? Many rape survivors find it hard to say the words, but they are grateful to have their parents love and support after they have told them. Others are concerned that it will hurt their parents, or they won't understand. Only you can decide if it will be better for you if they know. It may be helpful to talk with a counselor about your concerns to help you with this important decision.

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