

Trigger Warning: Topics such as abuse and assault will be discussed in this infographic.

# INTIMACY AFTER ASSAULT

MOVING  
FORWARD AFTER  
FORMS OF  
ASSAULT AND  
ABUSE.

Disclaimer: These are just a few basic tips,  
These tips do not take the place of  
professional therapeutic counseling.

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# Statistics

As with most hate-based violence, transgender individuals are the most likely to be affected in the LGBT community. A staggering 64% of transgender people have experienced sexual assault in their lifetime.

Approximately 1 in 8 lesbian women and nearly half of bisexual women experience rape in their lifetime, **and statistics** likely increase when a broader definition of sexual assault is used.

Almost everyone has been affected by sexual violence. Know that you are not alone.

# What is assault and abuse?

Assault and Abuse can be defined in many ways, here is one way that Merriam Webster defines these two terms:

**Assault:** A threat or attempt to inflict offensive physical contact or bodily harm on a person

**Abuse:** To use or treat to cause injury or damage.

## What types of abuse are there?

**Physical:** Intentional or unwanted contact with you or something close to your body. (ex: hitting, slapping, grabbing you)

**Emotional/Verbal/Psychological:** Non Physical harm by way of threats, manipulation, gaslighting and so much more.

**Sexual:** Unwanted sexual activity, refers to any action that pressures or coerces someone to do something sexually they don't want to do. it can also refer to controlling someone's sexuality, reproduction, and or sexual activity.

# What is Intimacy?

Merriam Webster defines intimacy as something of a personal or private nature. However, you define intimacy, intimacy can look very different for everyone.

## What types of intimacy are there?

**Experiential:** Bonding during leisure activities, going for walks, cleaning together and studying together.

**Sexual:** Engaging in sensual or sexual activities, sex, oral sex, penetrative sex, and massages.

**Emotional:** Feeling safe in vulnerability, dates, cuddling, playing games together, leaving your comfort zone, create a safe space together.

**Intellectual:** Sharing opinions and ideas. Read/listen to a book together, watch documentaries or educational movies and discuss them.



# 1. Start Rebuilding!

Intimacy after Assault is a difficult process of beginning to re-express yourself. It helps to start rebuilding and redefining what intimacy looks like for you and with your partner(s).

Some questions you can ask yourself are:

What makes me feel comfortable and safe?

What am I comfortable doing to myself and or with my partner(s)?

Am I ready? Am I moving forward for me or for someone else?

What actions do i feel comfortable doing?  
How do I define intimacy? What is more comfortable for me?

What type of intimacy am I okay with right now?

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# Understanding your level of intimacy

Here is a activity that can assist in finding your boundaries around intimacy. Create a list of acts and label them correspondingly with the color.

**RED:** Absolutely not, I do not feel comfortable with this act.

**YELLOW:** I may be comfortable with this, please just ask!

**GREEN:** Yes! Yes! Yes!



This can be really helpful in finding your limits, what makes you comfortable and uncomfortable, and redefine what your intimacy looks like.

## 2. Communicate

Communication is a vital piece in healing. It is helpful to communicate with both yourself and your partner(s). Checking in with yourself and your partner(s) frequently will assist in avoiding small hiccups down the road.

### Emotional Check-in Activity

Checking in with both yourself and your partner(s) emotional and physical wellbeing is so important. Actively asking questions may look like:

What am I feeling in my body right now? Is there any physical discomfort? Is it tension?

How am I feeling emotionally? Do I feel safe? Is this triggering for you?

What would you like for me to do?



## How do I Communicate with my Partner(s) about this?

Communication can look a little different with partner(s). It is helpful to check in with yourself before communicating with your partner(s). Here are just some ways communicating with your partner(s) can look:

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"I'm not really in the mood for intimacy time...can we try again some other time?"

"Would it be okay if i touched your leg?"



"How are you feeling? Are you feeling safe?"

"Is there anything I can do to assist in making you feel more comfortable?"

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### 3. Be Patient

Remember that healing is a long process. Becoming intimate again may be a little scary, and that is okay! So practice compassion with yourself throughout this process.

Intimacy after Assault is a difficult process to navigate alone, It is beneficial to seek out a counselor or a support group to discuss coping strategies to assist in your healing.

Another thing you can do on your own to assist in the healing process are mantras. When feeling an uncomfortable feeling, create and affirmation, or a mantra, you can repeat. Examples: I am Safe, I am capable and it was NOT my fault.

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