
TIPS TO START YOUR PROCESSING

Created by trans people, for trans people.

WHAT ARE YOUR DREAM SUPPORT SYSTEMS?

Naming the support you want can help you find that support. Unsure what you need? Do research to discover the countless ways to start healing.

LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATION-APPROVED RESOURCES

LGBTQ+ and trans rights organizations often have survivor resources. These lists are the perfect place to start looking for support.

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

There is no such thing as sexual assault not being "bad enough" or any "wrong" ways to process or act after violence.

LOVE SHOULDN'T CAUSE PAIN

You deserve love and friendship that doesn't cause stress, trauma, or gaslighting (making you believe your assault didn't happen or wasn't that bad).

YOU ARE IN CONTROL OF YOUR JOURNEY

No one-- not friends, family, survivor advocates, doctors -- gets to decide your process. Only YOU lead your journey. Take tips that help and leave suggestions that don't!



RESOURCES FOR TRANSGENDER AND GENDER-EXPANSIVE SURVIVORS

RCC Sexual Violence Resource Center

SURVIVOR ADVOCACY SUPPORT

Common resources from survivor advocacy groups

01. Helplines

Helplines can be an excellent resource for survivors. Most survivor hotlines have the option of anonymity and allows trans survivors to find gender-affirming organizations.

02. Counseling

Many survivor advocacy organizations can connect clients with therapists or offer free / reduced-cost counseling sessions themselves.

03. Survivor Groups

There are countless survivor groups both online and in-person which help survivors connect, share resources, and create communal healing. There are community-specific groups too: BIPOC, trans, etc.

04. Direct Advocacy

Local survivor advocacy groups will often provide the option of having a professional accompany you to legal or medical visits. They can help navigate systems that are violent to survivors.

RESOURCE LIST

Lifelines, Hotlines, and Chats

- **Trans Lifeline:** translifeline.org, (877)-565-8860
- **TREVOR Project:** for youth 0-25ish y/o, thetrevorproject.org, 1-866-488-7386
- **Anti-Violence Project:** avp.org, 212-714-1141
- **Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network:** rain.org, 800-656-4673
- **Black Trans Advocacy Coalition:** blacktrans.org, 855-624-7715

Organizations

- Anti-Violence Project
- TREVOR Project
- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network
- FORGE
- Black Trans Advocacy Organization
- Trans Women of Color Collective
- Trans Latin@ Coalition
- Familia TQLM
- Okra Project
- Brown Boi Project
- National Center for Transgender Equality
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project

Resources & Lists

- trans-survivors.com
- forge-forward.com/collections/
- nsvrc.org/blogs/resources-and-support-transgender-survivors
- <https://vawnet.org/sc/serving-trans-and-non-binary-survivors-domestic-and-sexual-violence/resources-survivors>

There is nothing you can do to "ask for it," "be unworthy of healing," or "not be enough of a survivor." You deserve support, love, healing, and community.

These resources were compiled by trans activists and survivors to create a broader support net.

As with any list of resources, you should only use suggestions that help you. You are the leader of your path to healing.

TYPES OF HEALING & JUSTICE

Transformative Justice

Transformative justice is built on the belief that ending the cycle of violence is more important than punishment. Each process is individual to the survivor and based on addressing the root of harm, giving survivors justice they request, and providing everyone chances for growth.

Legal Justice

Legal justice uses the criminal justice system to make abusers face the consequences of their actions. While this can bring closure, other survivors can find the process retraumatizing and more harmful than helpful. A local survivor advocacy organization can help walk you through the process and / or accompany you.

Community Support

Many survivors use the support of loved ones and the trans community through their healing. From giving guidance to being a shoulder to cry on to being an advocate during doctor visits, having trusted individuals by your side can make each step a little easier.

Individual Processing

While community support can be beautiful, many survivors choose to heal-- at least partly --by themselves. This can be a one-on-one therapy session, or visiting the STD clinic alone, or taking a moment to practice spirituality.



WEBSITE:
thercc.org

HELPLINES:
English

(608)-251-7273

Español

(608)-258-2567

RCC Sexual Violence Resource Center is a local, grassroots organization working to end rape culture in the Madison, Wisconsin area and provide direct support to survivors of sexual violence.

Safety Affirmations for the Trans Community

Knowledge from Activists & Elders

Few transgender and gender-expansive people are taught sexual assault prevention until after they face violence. NO ONE DESERVES SEXUAL ASSAULT.

This is a brief guide for trans and gender-expansive people-- and those who love them --on how to end the cycle of violence and equip ourselves with knowledge & tools to help keep us all safe. These tips were compiled from Black and Brown trans survivors and survivor advocates.

It is important to note that you cannot stop sexual violence, nor is it your job to ensure your safety. We hope these tips can help you feel safer and help you trust your instincts.



Dates

- Tell a trusted friend / family member who you are with and where you are going, if possible by sharing your location on your phone.
- Consider meeting in a public place.
- You do not owe your date anything, even coming out to them
- Your boundaries are important: "I don't want to be alone with them yet," "I am not coming out until I know how they will react," etc.

Online Dating

- Use a platform where you can block stalkers or harassers.
- Want to meet them in-person? Think about precautions that will make you feel more confident and safe.
- If you experience cyberstalking, make a plan with your support people that addresses multiple scenarios.

Drugs & Alcohol

- You can consent to sex or sexual acts after taking drugs or alcohol if the substances have not impacted your ability to reason.
- If you are incapacitated, you cannot consent. You are NOT responsible for anything anyone does after you are incapacitated.
- You may be unsure if something was consensual. If you want to avoid ambiguity, create clear boundaries beforehand!

Family & Friends

- Family and "friends" can be abusive. You don't need be hurt by a stranger for it to be "real" trauma.
- Notice red flags? Trust your gut.
- You do not owe them your friendship or kinship
- It may be impossible to completely cut out a family member or friend. Decide how you will set & exert your boundaries with this person.

Sex Work

- Just because you are a sex worker does not mean you can't be sexually assaulted! You deserve to be believed and supported.
- Ask other sex workers for information on which clients have been abusive so you can try to avoid them.
- Set boundaries: you do not owe clients intrusive information, you have the right to refuse service, you have the right to choose the details of your meeting
- Ask for suggestions or help from more experienced sex workers!

Partner(s)

- Partner(s) can sexually assault you. Being in a relationship doesn't mean you lose your right to consent.
- Consider telling a trusted friend, someone you know will believe and support you.
- If you are experiencing domestic violence, consider keeping a bag of necessities in case you need to leave quickly and keep it in a place only you will find it.
- If you are worried about losing your support system if you leave your partner, ask a loved one to help you put together an exit plan .

TRANS SELF-WORTH IS VIOLENCE PREVENTION



THERE IS NOTHING...

...you can do to deserve sexual assault, domestic violence, or sexual harassment. You are a beautiful, strong, powerful, graceful, quirky, and flawed human. Your consent is your birthright. Your boundaries are a blessing. Your existence is a gift to the world but you are always your own.

...you can do to be undeserving of love. You may not hear many affirmations from loved ones or perhaps they have yet to sink in. But know you are deserving of better than violence and assault. Don't trust us yet? No worries. We will continue to love and hold you until you can claim this truth.

...you can do to be undeserving of the right to exist. Take up all the space you deserve. It is rightfully yours. Your body and soul and self have places in this world and you deserve to protect that space.

SELF-LOVE TIPS

- Make time to breathe
- Say self-love slogans out loud until you know they are true
- Honor your ancestors / transcestors
- Practice your religion / spirituality
- Save your spoons for the important things
- Take a break, even for 2 minutes
- Cut out that toxic friend
- Set boundaries
- Get that STD test
- Tell your cousin you can't help this weekend
- Find friends who will understand when you have to work extra this month
- Let yourself cry when past trauma is triggered
- Have sex for fun
- Give yourself all the grace you need
- Know this process is long and messy and will not be linear

BLACK TRANS LIVES MATTER.

TRANS YOUTH BELONG.

BLACK & BROWN & DISABLED & FAT & NEURODIVERGENT & SEX WORKING & UNDOCUMENTED & POOR & HOUSELESS TRANS PEOPLE ARE THE BACKBONE AND LEADERS OF OUR REVOLUTION.

CONSENT IS SACRED.

TRANS, NONBINARY, TWO-SPIRIT & GENDER-EXPANSIVE PEOPLE ARE DIVINE.



TRANS BODIES ARE NOT FOR CIS ENJOYMENT.

TRANS LOVE IS PURE.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF TRANS ELDERS CAN BE OUR RELIGION.

EVEN THOUGH WE MAY BE BROKEN AND BITTER AND FULL OF TRAUMA AND ANGER, WE REFUSE TO BE TRAMPLED BY THEIR BINARIES AND VIOLENCE. WE WILL BE TRIUMPHANT, NO MATTER HOW HARD TODAY MAY BE.



AMBIGUITY & SEXUAL ASSAULT

A RESOURCE FOR THE TRANS COMMUNITY

SURVIVORSHIP CAN BE AMBIGUOUS

You do not need to know if you were sexually assaulted. Alcohol, drugs, memory issues, gaslighting, and any number of circumstances can make survivorship complicated.

You deserve support even if you do not know what happened or if it counts as sexual assault. Community organizations dedicated to supporting survivors of sexual assault will affirm your experience and help you through your journey.

Here are some reminders.

GETTING SUPPORT:

- You deserve support even if you are unsure if the traumatic event counts sexual assault. You still experienced trauma and no one should suffer alone.
- Sexual violence resource centers, survivor support networks, and other resources are designed to affirm your experience and give support as you process.
- Sexual assault can happen without rape. There is nothing "too little" or "not traumatic enough" for you to suffer alone.
- Transgender people are taught we cannot be assaulted, deserve assault, or will only experience more trauma if we demand justice. Despite a culture of transphobia, there are many trans-friendly and trans-centered resources available.
- Be kind to yourself. Survivors are taught to spiral into self-doubt and self-blame even in the least ambiguous of circumstances. Be kind to yourself and know that there is nothing you can do to "ask for it."



REMINDERS:

- After traumatic events, some people may block out those memories, making it difficult for a survivor to put together what happened. This is a normal self-defense mechanism so be patient with yourself.
- Think about and create a list of your boundaries when it comes to different types of relationships. Referring back to these later can be helpful.
- Some interactions can start out as consensual and turn into assault if verbal and non-verbal cues are not being respected.
- Many assaulters will attempt to pressure victims to ignore red flags or break their boundaries.
- Survivors are constantly told their assaults are their fault. Gaslighting can impact how survivors remember their assault. Learning about these myths and their impacts can help you trust your instincts.
- If you are worried about sexual violence while you are drunk, consider going to bars that train their staff to keep an eye out for red flags. Stopping sexual assault is not your responsibility!

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TRANSGENDER VOCABULARY

RCC SEXUAL
VIOLENCE RESOURCE
CENTER

Transgender and gender-expansive people face daily dehumanization, beginning with misgendering. Using respectful language is the first step to affirming survivors.

As an advocate, you will also need to know the language used in the trans community to talk with the survivor, other advocates, and hospital staff.

This is an incomplete list and language will change over time. Continue to do research, learn, and grow!



VOCAB

Abbreviations MTF is male-to-female, MTN is male-to-nonbinary, FTM is female-to-male, and FTN is female-to-nonbinary.

Agender A person who does not identify with any gender identity.

Ally Person who does not identify as LGBTQ+, but advocates for the LGBTQ+ community.

Androgynous Someone who neither identifies nor presents themselves in a masculine or feminine way.

Cisgender A person who identifies with the gender assigned to them at birth.

Gender A set of social, physical, psychological and emotional traits, often influenced by societal expectations, that classify individuals.

Gender Binary The belief there are two biological sexes with corresponding and unequal genders; violent to trans people.

Gender Dysphoria Clinically significant distress people whose gender identity differs from their assigned sex at birth may experience.

Gender Expression Appearance of a person's gender identity through clothing, behavior, or voice.

Genderfluid A person who does not identify as a single fixed gender, and whose gender identity may shift. For some, gender fluid may be their gender identity.

Gender Nonconforming A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to or identifies with the traditional expectations of their gender.

Genderqueer Describes a person whose gender expression or identity falls outside of the dominant social norms of their assigned sex.

Heteronormativity A concept that promotes heterosexuality as the only "normal" or valid sexual orientation.

Nonbinary An umbrella term that refers to individuals who identify as neither man or woman, or as a combination of man or woman. Instead, nonbinary people exhibit a boundless range of identities that can exist beyond a spectrum between man and woman.

Transgender A person whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned to at birth. Not all trans people undergo transition.

Transphobia Fear or hatred of transgender people, which can present itself within violence, discrimination, or misrepresentation.

Transitioning A process during which some people strive to more closely align their gender identity with their gender expression. Depending on the individual, this may include socially transitioning (changing pronouns, name, social appearance), legal transitioning (official name change, modified IDs and birth certificates), and physically transitioning (medical interventions to more closely align their body to their gender identity).

Two Spirit A Native American term that describes people who have both male and female spirit within them, it should only be used in the context of Indigenous culture.

Community-Based & Current Trauma in the Trans Community

RCC Sexual Violence Resource Center

To support survivors you need to understand generational trauma.

Sexual assault in the transgender community is part of a legacy of violence and colonialism. Trans & gender-expansive people have been erased from history, leading to the myth that trans people and trauma are new.

The trauma trans people-- especially survivors --carry in their bodies is a culmination of their lived experiences and the pain of their ancestors. For many, the two are inseparable.

This resource gives an intro to trans history and trauma in America so you can support trans survivors as they work through both their past and present trauma.



Healthcare

Transgender & gender-expansive people are at disproportionate risk for the majority of health issues. The healthcare system is incredibly violent (denial of care, misgendering, abuse, etc). Even with the best of intentions, few healthcare workers are trained in trans competent care. A 2017 survey of staff of Ontario's sexual assault & domestic violence treatment centers, only 39% of frontline nurses indicated that they had such training.

Supporting Survivors at the Hospital

- Work with the survivor to plan coming out to hospital staff. Specifically offer to tell staff the survivor's pronouns, name, gender, preferred terms for their genitalia, etc.
- Before the visit, tell survivors what will happen, especially noting if they will need to come out to staff or show parts of their body that give them dysphoria
- If survivors are worried about dysphoria, make a plan with them to bring items that give them gender euphoria (bracelet, wear boxers, etc.)

Incarceration

16% of transgender people and 47% of Black trans people have experienced incarceration. Surveys have shown that transgender people are far more likely to be sexually assaulted in prison by both prisoners and staff members, forced to stay in solitary confinement, denied medical care, and humiliated.

Colonialism & the Gender Binary

- European colonies strove to instill violent Eurocentric ideologies in their new society, one of which was a rigid gender binary.
- 3 types of violence:
 - The system: forces people into categories (gender, gender expression, etc.)
 - Violence to enforce system: kill gender-expansive and gender-nonconforming people, rape, etc.
 - Colonists used indigenous gender systems as evidence of inferiority, thus excusing violence against them
- Erasure of genders & sexes honored in numerous cultures and religions

Trans Leaders



A leader in the trans community, Miss Major Griffin-Gracy is the director of the TGIJ Project, founder of the House of GG, and a veteran activist.

The leaders of the Stonewall Riots, Marsha P. Johnson (left) and Sylvia Rivera (right) were the founders of S.T.A.R. House (a shelter for trans youth and sex workers), worked for trans / drag queen and POC inclusion within queer movements, and the mothers of the trans rights movement.



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A SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FROM

USTS '15

United States Transgender Survey

RCC SEXUAL VIOLENCE
RESOURCE CENTER

TO SERVE TRANS COMMUNITIES, YOU MUST UNDERSTAND OUR CULTURE OF TRANSPHOBIA.

WHAT IS THE USTS?

- The US Transgender Survey is the largest survey of trans people in the United States. It documents lives and experiences of trans people

NOTE:

These statistics underrepresent violence against trans people by a significant amount. Please consider these numbers conservative estimates at best.

WHY IS THE USTS IMPORTANT?

It is the main source of data about trans people for the media, educators, policymakers, and the general public. USTS offers vital resources, including the reports on the experiences of people of color and reports on trans lived experiences for each state.

VIOLENCE & DISCRIMINATION IN THE TRANS COMMUNITY

54%

HAVE EXPERIENCED
INTIMATE PARTNER
VIOLENCE

47%

HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY
ASSAULTED

70%

OF SURVIVORS WERE
ASSAULTED BY
FAMILY, FRIENDS, OR
ACQUAINTANCES

15%

HAVE BEEN PHYSICALLY,
VERBALLY, OR SEXUALLY
HARASSED AT WORK

61%

OF DISABLED
RESPONDENTS HAVE
BEEN SEXUALLY
ASSAULTED

72%

OF SEX WORKING
RESPONDENTS HAVE
BEEN SEXUALLY
ASSAULTED

10%

WERE SEXUALLY
ASSAULTED IN THE
PAST YEAR

9%

WERE PHYSICALLY
ASSAULTED IN THE PAST
YEAR FOR BEING
TRANSGENDER / GENDER-
EXPANSIVE

77%

HID THEIR GENDER
IDENTITY TO AVOID
MISTREATMENT

27%

HAVE BEEN FIRED OR
NOT HIRED FOR GENDER
IDENTITY

33%

HAVE BEEN HARASSED
OR ASSAULTED BY
MEDICAL
PROFESSIONALS

42%

OF THOSE HELD BY ICE
WERE PUT IN SOLITARY
CONFINEMENT

30%

OF INCARCERATED
RESPONDENTS WERE
PHYSICALLY OR SEXUALLY
ASSAULTED IN THE PAST
YEAR

58%

OF THOSE WHO
INTERACTED WITH POLICE
IN THE PAST YEAR WERE
HARASSED OR ASSAULTED
BY OFFICERS

77%

EXPERIENCED
DISCRIMINATION IN K-12
SCHOOLS FOR BEING OR
BEING PERCEIVED AS TRANS

40%

HAVE ATTEMPTED
SUICIDE

45%

OF YOUTH WITH
UNSUPPORTIVE FAMILIES
HAVE EXPERIENCED
HOMELESSNESS



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