

## CONTENTS

INFORMATION FOR  
SURVIVORS OF RAPE  
AND SEXUAL ASSAULT .....2\3

SERVICES OFFERED  
BY RAPE CRISIS .....3

DEFINING RAPE  
& SEXUAL ASSAULT .....4\5

NAMING INTIMATE  
PARTNER SEXUAL VIOLENCE .....6\7

IF YOU HAVE  
JUST BEEN RAPED .....8\9

COMMON FEELINGS  
EXPERIENCED BY SURVIVORS  
OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE .....10\19

SHOCK .....10  
PHYSICAL REACTIONS .....11  
EMOTIONAL REACTIONS .....12  
BLAME .....12  
ANGER .....13  
NIGHTMARES .....14  
FLASHBACKS .....14\15  
PANIC ATTACKS .....16  
SELF INJURY & SELF HARMING .....17  
DRUGS & ALCOHOL .....18  
EATING DISORDERS .....19

CONTACT US .....20



2

WOMEN AND GIRLS OF ALL AGES AND BACKGROUNDS EXPERIENCE RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT, AND IT CAN HAPPEN AT ANY TIME IN THEIR LIVES.

**BECAUSE THIS IS OFTEN PERPETRATED BY MEN THAT THEY KNOW, MANY WOMEN CHOOSE NOT TO SPEAK OUT ABOUT THE ABUSE BECAUSE OF FEAR, SHAME OR THE BELIEF THAT THEY WILL BE BLAMED OR NOT BELIEVED.**

Studies have shown that half of all women will experience some kind of unwanted sexual contact by the time they reach the age of eighteen. This can range from flashing to inappropriate touching to sexual assault and rape – and all of these experiences can have a lasting effect on the woman.

As women feel more able to speak out about their experiences, the demand for justice for women has increased and over the past twenty years there have been a number of changes in legislation that reflect the seriousness of these crimes. Women of all ages experience sexual violence but our figures at rape crisis show that less than one third of the women we see will have made a report to the police.

SINCE 1976, THE RAPE CRISIS CENTRE IN GLASGOW HAS BEEN OFFERING SUPPORT TO WOMEN AND GIRLS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL VIOLENCE, NO MATTER WHEN OR WHERE THIS HAS TAKEN PLACE.

We are based in Glasgow but also offer support to women and girls in  
\\ Renfrewshire,  
\\ East Renfrewshire,  
\\ East Dunbartonshire,  
\\ West Dunbartonshire and Inverclyde.

## SERVICES OFFERED BY RAPE CRISIS

**THE RAPE CRISIS CENTRE OFFERS A RANGE OF SERVICES TO SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE, THEIR NON-ABUSING PARTNERS AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS.**

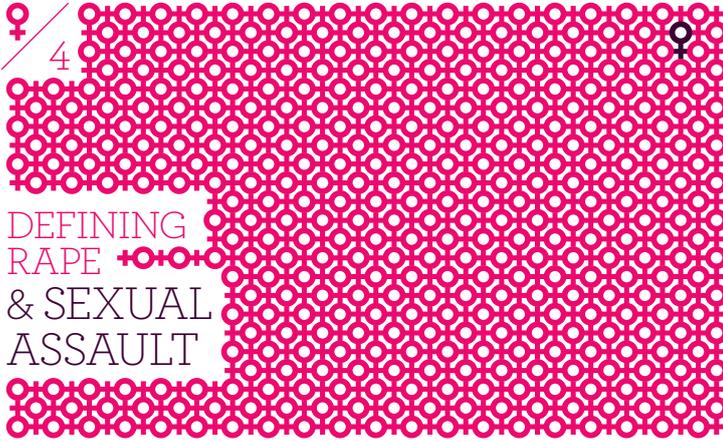
3

**Telephone Support** \\ our helpline is open seven days a week on 0141 552 3200. Opening times vary each day and can be found on our publications, our website or from the helpline answering machine.

**Face to Face Support** \\ for one to one support with an experienced support worker, you can call for an appointment or can drop in to the rape crisis centre at 30 Bell Street, Glasgow, G1 1LG, any Wednesday between 10.30am and 3.00pm.

**Letter or Email Support** \\ if you prefer, you can access support in writing by contacting us at Rape Crisis Centre, 5th Floor, 30 Bell Street, Glasgow, G1 1LG or you can email our office on [support@rapecrisiscentre-glasgow.co.uk](mailto:support@rapecrisiscentre-glasgow.co.uk)

**Publications** \\ we have a range of written support materials that can be accessed from our office or by downloading from our website at [www.rapecrisiscentre-glasgow.co.uk](http://www.rapecrisiscentre-glasgow.co.uk)



## DEFINING RAPE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

UNDER THE SEXUAL OFFENCES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2009,  
MANY OF THE EXISTING COMMON LAWS AROUND RAPE  
AND SEXUAL ASSAULT CHANGED.

The crime of rape now includes penetration of the vagina, mouth or anus and there is also an additional offence of 'Sexual Assault by Penetration' which covers penetration of the vagina or anus by objects other than the penis.

There are other offences which include sexual coercion, coercing a person to be present during sexual activity, coercing a person to look at an image of sexual activity, communicating indecently, sexual exposure, voyeurism and administering a substance for sexual purposes.



IT IS AN OFFENCE  
WHEN THESE ACTS ARE  
COMMITTED WITHOUT  
A PERSON'S CONSENT  
OR WITHOUT ANY  
REASONABLE BELIEF  
THAT THE OTHER  
PERSON CONSENTED.

In the new legislation 'consent' is defined as 'free agreement' and also that free agreement cannot be given if the person is incapable because they are under the influence of alcohol or other substances, or because violence has been used against them or they are in fear of violence being used.

Other instances may be that there has been deception, they have been unlawfully detained or another person has indicated consent.

Any person who is unable, through mental illness or learning difficulties, to consent, then it will be deemed that consent was not given.

The new legislation also states that consent can be withdrawn at any time before a sexual act.



## NAMING INTIMATE PARTNER SEXUAL VIOLENCE

IN 1989 RAPE IN MARRIAGE BECAME A CRIME IN SCOTLAND (IT BECAME A CRIME IN ENGLAND AND WALES IN 1991).

Before then, a woman had no legal protection if she was raped by her husband, no matter how many times this may have been perpetrated against her.

Often, women find it difficult to name sexual violence that they experience at the hands of their husband or partner and women frequently minimise this, question themselves and excuse the abuser.

### FORCED SEXUAL ACTS

It may be easier to name a rape or sexual assault where the woman has been hurt, restrained or tied, beaten or forced to participate in sexual acts with other, or acts that are against her beliefs or religion. A woman's partner may say he wants her to behave in a certain way, copy acts that he has watch in pornography or perform acts that hurt or injure her. Any sexual relationship should be built on trust and should be loving and mutually pleasurable, not feared.

“IT (RAPE WITHIN MARRIAGE) TOTALLY CONTAMINATES YOUR BODY...WHEN YOU'RE RAPED YOU WANT TO TURN YOURSELF INSIDE OUT AND SCRUB WITH DISINFECTANT: YOU FEEL LIKE AN ANIMAL. IN SOME WAYS IT'S LESS OF AN INVASION TO BE RAPED BY A STRANGER WHY ISN'T IT LESS OF AN INVASION TO BE RAPED BY SOMEONE YOU'VE PREVIOUSLY MADE LOVE TO? THIS IS THE PERSON YOU SHOULD TRUST AND IS SUPPOSED TO LOVE YOU. YOU DON'T FORGET BEING RAPED BY A STRANGER, BUT YOU'RE NOT FORCED TO SIT ACROSS THE BREAKFAST TABLE FROM HIM.”

Marie Walsh : The Guardian 1989

### COERCIVE SEXUAL ACTS

Women often tell us that they feel unable to say 'no' to their partner's sexual demands because they fear further violence or abuse towards them or their children. Threats can be obvious or they can be implied, or he may say that he will seek out other women for sex. This is coercion.

### UNWANTED SEX

Women sometimes tell us it's difficult to identify sexual violence because they are agreeing to do what their partner wishes.

This can be to avoid outbursts of temper, sulks, refusal to speak, refusal to give housekeeping money or other similar behaviour. This behaviour also comes under the heading of 'coercive control'. We now recognise that sexual violence is a common part of domestic abuse and we also know that in around 40%–60% of child sexual abuse cases, there has been a history of domestic abuse within the home.



## IF YOU HAVE JUST BEEN RAPED

**IF YOU HAVE BEEN RAPED OR SEXUALLY ASSAULTED WITHIN THE PAST 7 DAYS, YOU CAN CONTACT THE ARCHWAY SEXUAL ASSAULT REFERRAL CENTRE.**

**ARCHWAY IS STAFFED BY WOMEN DOCTORS, NURSES AND SUPPORT STAFF AND THEY WILL SUPPORT YOU THROUGH YOUR FORENSIC EXAMINATION, TESTS FOR SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS AND GIVE YOU SPACE TO TALK ABOUT HOW YOU FEEL FOLLOWING THE ATTACK.**

**T**he Archway is a specialised service for women, men and adolescents 13, 14 and 15 years old, and is based at the Sandyford Initiative at Charing Cross in Glasgow. It's a 24 hour service but before attending you will need to speak to one of the doctors on duty – you can call them on 0141 211 8175.

You do not have to contact the police to use the Archway service but if you do report the attack to the police, your forensic examination will be done by the doctors at Archway. You can get more information by calling the above number or by visiting [www.archwayglasgow.com](http://www.archwayglasgow.com).

## **SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT IF YOU HAVE JUST BEEN RAPED, OR IF YOU ARE SUPPORTING SOMEONE WHO HAS JUST BEEN RAPED.**

- \ Are you safe? If you don't feel safe you may want to contact someone you can trust and ask them to stay with you for a while.
- \ Are you injured? If you have been injured or are bleeding you should have this checked by a doctor immediately.
- \ If you decide that you want to report the rape or sexual assault, you can telephone the police or go directly to the Archway where the police can be contacted.
- \ If you are reporting to the police you should try to preserve as much forensic evidence as possible; don't eat or drink anything, don't wash or throw away your clothing. If you do change your clothes, place the clothes you were wearing at the time of the attack into a plastic bag and take this with you to the police station or to the Archway.
- \ If you do not want to report to the police or go to the Archway you may want to think about emergency contraception or being tested for sexually transmitted infections.
- \ You can get emergency contraception from the Sandyford Initiative, from your local GU clinic or sexual health services or from your GP. You can also get emergency contraception from a chemist but you will have to pay for it.
- \ You can get tested for sexually transmitted infections at Sandyford or at your local GU clinic. This is completely confidential.



## COMMON FEELINGS EXPERIENCED BY SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**IT'S A COMMON MYTH THAT AFTER A RAPE OR SEXUAL ASSAULT, ALL WOMEN WILL REACT HYSTERICALLY OR TEARFULLY. THE FACT IS THAT WOMEN WILL REACT IN A RANGE OF DIFFERENT WAYS AND DESCRIBE A WIDE RANGE OF EMOTIONS IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF THE ATTACK OR IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS THAT FOLLOW (SEE FACTSHEET 'RAPE TRAUMA SYNDROME' FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS)**

### SHOCK

**A**fter a rape or sexual assault, many women are in shock. This feeling may be so strong that a woman experiences disbelief or denial that any attack happened; she may shut it out and have no immediate reaction at all.

Conversely, the shock may be displayed by uncontrollable crying, laughing, talking continuously or with displays of anger.

*There is no 'correct' response.*

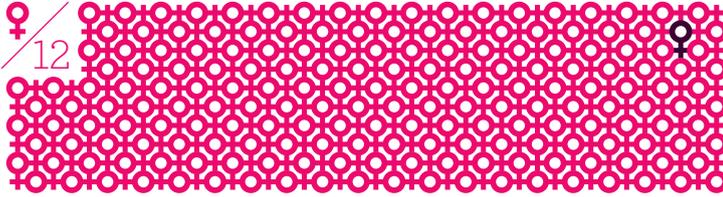
### PHYSICAL REACTIONS

**A**part from the physical injuries that might have received during the rape, women may also have other physical reactions in the days following the assault. Sleeplessness is common, with women being fearful of sleep; nightmares and flashbacks are also common, sometimes revisiting the assault over and over again.

**WOMEN MAY ALSO SUFFER LOSS OF APPETITE, STOMACH PAINS OR SICKNESS AND MAY EXPERIENCE NAUSEA ANY TIME THEY THINK OF THE ASSAULT.**

A common response is that women feel the need to wash over and over again, to 'wash away' the feeling or smell of the rapist. For some women this can be harmful and it is important to ensure that only safe products are used.

*Household cleaning products should never be used for personal washing.*



## EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

**M**any women who have been supported by rape crisis have told us that they believed they would be severely injured or murdered during the assault and often rapists use the threat of violence to control and silence the woman during the attack.

**EXTREME TRAUMA THAT IS ASSOCIATED WITH RAPE/FEAR OF DEATH CAN RESULT IN SYMPTOMS OF POST TRAUMATIC STRESS.**

## BLAME

**T**his is the most common reaction that women have after a rape or sexual assault as they try to make sense of the event. Many attitudes that prevail in our culture blame women for their behaviour and absolve perpetrators of their actions. Some of the most common statements we hear from women are:

**“I SHOULD NEVER HAVE ASKED HIM IN...”**

An invitation to visit your home is not an automatic invitation for sex. We have the right to invite whom we choose into our home and be confident of our personal safety without taking on the responsibility of that person’s behaviour. No man has the right to presume he can force a woman to have sex without her consent, under any circumstances.

**“I WAS REALLY DRUNK...”**

If a person is too drunk to give consent and free agreement to sex, then it should be presumed that no consent is given. Being drunk does not give anyone the right to presume that they can take control of your body. It is not a crime to be drunk; it is a crime to have sex with a woman without her consent.

**“I DON’T ALWAYS WANT TO, BUT HE SAYS HE NEEDS SEX MORE OFTEN THAN I DO”**

Many women don’t speak about unwanted or coercive sex in their relationships as it can be very painful to admit that the person you love is hurting you.

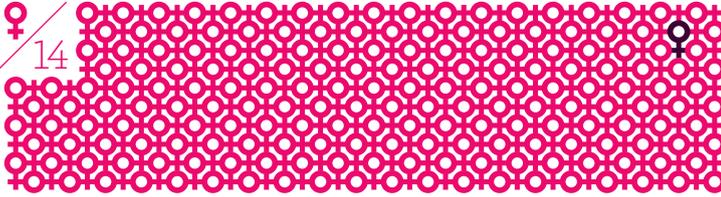
**SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS SHOULD ALWAYS BE LOVING, CONSENSUAL AND ENJOYABLE AND SHOULD NEVER CAUSE YOU PAIN.**

## ANGER

**A**nger can be very frightening but it’s a normal reaction to hurt and pain. It’s OK to be angry with this person, or these people, who have hurt you. As women we are often raised to believe that anger is a bad thing and that we should suppress it. Anger and aggression can be used against women, as an excuse not to deal with the abuse. The anger is all people see, not the pain behind it.

People are scared of anger and we may be afraid when we feel it strongly ourselves. We may feel that if we let it out it will overwhelm us and we will not be able to control it. But it can be expressed positively and channelled appropriately. See ‘The Courage to Heal’ by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis for exercises on dealing with anger positively. This book can be borrowed from the rape crisis centre.





## NIGHTMARES

**IT IS COMMON FOR SURVIVORS TO HAVE NIGHTMARES OR SLEEP DISTURBANCES IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE ASSAULT.**

**T**hese might be an exact replay of the assault or an abstract series of events that are difficult to understand or remember, but still very upsetting.

**NIGHTMARES MAY BE TRIGGERED BY A DATE, A SMELL, A FAMILIAR PLACE OR PERSON AND CAN MAKE YOU AFRAID TO GO TO SLEEP.**

Talking to someone about the nightmares and the feelings they bring up may help. It may also help to have someone with you or have a friend you can wake up for support if the nightmares won't go away. Alternatively a 24 hour helpline may help if you wake up fearful in the night.

## FLASHBACKS

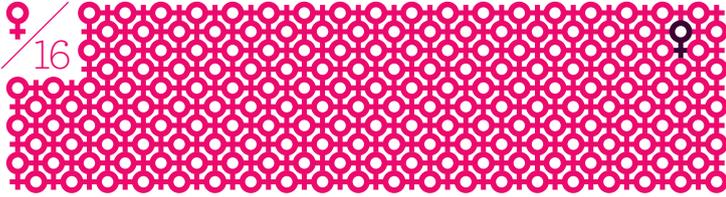
**FLASHBACKS ARE A NORMAL REACTION TO THE TRAUMA OF RAPE OR SEXUAL ASSAULT. THEY CAN BE VERY FRIGHTENING AND WOMEN OFTEN DESCRIBE FEELINGS OF FEAR, CONFUSION, PANIC, BEING OUT OF CONTROL, TERROR.**

**T**his is because they can happen when you least expect them and can be triggered by a noise, a smell or by seeing something that reminds you of the assault. Sometimes women tell us that they try to avoid doing anything that may trigger a flashback but while this may work, it can have a very limiting effect on your life.



**THERE ARE OTHER WAYS YOU CAN HELP ALLEVIATE THE FEAR AND PANIC THAT FLASHBACKS CAUSE:**

- \ Tell yourself that it's a flashback and, scary as it is, you are now safe. Remember, it's only a memory
- \ Breathe steadily. When you are having a flashback you stop breathing normally and this can cause a pounding in your head, dizziness, shaking, sweating, feeling faint. If you can start breathing normally, the feeling of panic will lessen.
- \ Take time to recover. It will take a while for you to feel yourself again so give yourself permission to take some time to get back to your normal activities.
- \ Get some support. You might want to be on your own when the flashbacks happen but if you have someone who knows about them you can choose to talk about your feelings any time you want to.
- \ Remind yourself you're in the real world. Stamp your feet or clap your hands loudly.
- \ Remember that this is part of your healing process and that you are a survivor.



## PANIC ATTACKS

**P**anic attacks are sudden, unexpected anxiety attacks that can include sweating, tightening of the chest, shortness of breath, numbness, tingling of the hands and feet or needing to go to the toilet. Your mouth may dry up and you might jump at the slightest noise.

**WHEN YOU FIRST EXPERIENCE A PANIC ATTACK YOU MAY FEEL CONFUSED, NOT SURE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING TO YOUR BODY AND FRIGHTENED THAT YOU CAN'T CONTROL IT. BUT PANIC ATTACKS ARE ANOTHER WAY YOUR BODY HAS OF COPING WITH THE ABUSE YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED.**

If your body feels threatened, it responds with a 'fight or flight' response and a panic attack is an exaggerated form of this reaction.

**ALTHOUGH PANIC ATTACKS ARE YOUR BODY'S WAY OF COPING WITH THE MEMORIES OF THE ASSAULT, THERE ARE SOME SUBSTANCES THAT CAN MAKE YOU FEEL WORSE. THESE ARE:**

- \ Alcohol, nicotine and caffeine, and some drugs can make panic attacks worse. Also some prescription drugs can bring the attack on more severely. Withdrawal from some sedatives can have the same effect. It may be useful to discuss this with your GP.
- \ Your blood sugar levels being too high. This can be caused by junk food, overeating or fasting too much.
- \ Hyperventilating, brought on by stress, can make panic attacks worse.

## SELF INJURY & SELF HARMING

**T**here are many myths around self injury, the most common being that it's attention seeking behaviour. This is not the case. Self injury is a way of coping with emotional pain, a release when the pain becomes too much to bear.

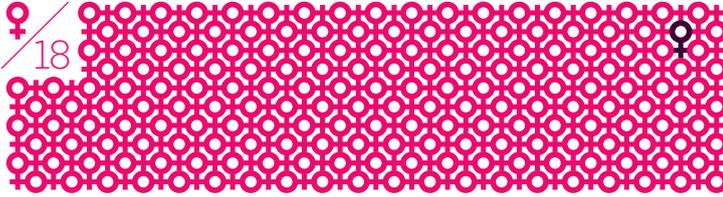
Survivors who self injure are trying to cope with the pain in their lives without hurting anyone else.

**WOMEN WHO SELF INJURE MAY NEED A SPACE TO SPEAK OUT ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES, NEED TO BE BELIEVED AND NEED TO BE FREE FROM JUDGEMENT.**

There is an excellent website for survivors who self harm and there are information sheets and publications to download. They can be reached on [www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk](http://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk)

**THERE ARE ALSO A NUMBER OF WAYS YOU CAN KEEP YOURSELF AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE IF YOU ARE SELF INJURING:**

- \ Use clean blades if you are cutting and never share with anyone else
- \ Have a well stocked first aid box and keep it where you can reach it easily
- \ If your wounds become infected, get to a doctor as soon as you can
- \ If you cut too deeply or cut a vein or artery by mistake, get help as soon as possible
- \ If you have burned yourself, dress the burn as quickly as possible. If it's a large burn, get the burn into cold water immediately and get medical help as soon as possible.



## DRUGS & ALCOHOL

**ALCOHOL OR PRESCRIPTION OR NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUGS ARE OFTEN USED BY SURVIVORS AS A WAY OF COPING WITH THE MEMORIES OF SEXUAL ABUSE.**

**O**ften drugs are prescribed and while this can be an effective short term support it is easy to become dependent and reliant on medication that numbs the pain. Sometimes illicit drug use and/or excessive drinking is a problem for women survivors as they often mask the pain and stop women from remembering and experiencing their feelings.

**IF HEAVY DRINKING OR DRUG USE IS A FACTOR, IT MAY BE BETTER THAT THIS IS ADDRESSED BEFORE ENTERING INTO ANY KIND OF COUNSELLING OR THERAPEUTIC WORK.**



## EATING DISORDERS

**STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT IT'S COMMON FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE A HISTORY OF TRAUMA AND ABUSE TO DEVELOP EATING DISORDERS AS A WAY OF COPING WITH AND EXPRESSING THEIR EMOTIONS. WOMEN SOMETIMES SAY THAT:**

- \ Overeating is a way of 'stuffing down' their emotions
- \ They are gaining control
- \ Purging is a way of releasing emotions and pain and often women feel very calm after purging
- \ If they don't eat they can 'fade away' and become invisible
- \ The binge/purge cycle often provides an outlet for anger, stress and tension
- \ If they overeat they will become obese and unattractive and that will make them safe
- \ Purging is 'cleansing'



## CONTACTING US

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK TO A SUPPORT WORKER ABOUT ANY OF THE ISSUES IN THESE PAGES YOU CAN RING OUR HELPLINE ON 0141 552 3200. IF YOU FIND IT DIFFICULT TO SPEAK YOU CAN WRITE TO US OR EMAIL AND A WORKER WILL CONTACT YOU AND FIND OUT THE WAY YOU'D PREFER TO COMMUNICATE WITH US. OUR CONTACT DETAILS ARE:**

### **RAPE CRISIS CENTRE**

5th Floor  
30 Bell Street  
Glasgow  
G1 1GL

[support@rapecrisiscentre-glasgow.co.uk](mailto:support@rapecrisiscentre-glasgow.co.uk)  
[www.rapecrisiscentre-glasgow.co.uk](http://www.rapecrisiscentre-glasgow.co.uk)

**I**f you are leaving contact details with us on our answering machine, please let us know if the number you give us is a safe number to call you on, and if we can identify ourselves when we call. If you ask for a ring back we will call you as soon as possible but certainly within 24 hours. If we can't reach you on that number we will call you back up to a maximum of six times but if we have been unable to reach you, we will wait for you to make contact with us if you wish to do so – women have sometimes told us that they have made that first call to rape crisis then have felt that they'd like a bit more time to think about whether they are ready to talk or not. We know how difficult it is to speak about many of these issues so please get in touch again when, and if you feel ready to do so.