



THE HEALING PROCESS

People are different and each survivor will have a different experience with the recovery process. As you go through this process, remember:

- Be honest with yourself about feelings and thoughts.
- You can't control another person's behavior and you are not responsible for their actions.
- You don't have to go through this alone:
 - Consider talking to a trusted friend or professional acquaintance.
 - Contact your local sexual assault center about their survivor services.
 - Call LaFASA's statewide helpline anytime, day or night, whenever you want to talk. It is free, confidential, and you don't have to give your name.
- Sometimes coping strategies are unhealthy. Seek help if you are using drugs, alcohol (excessively), harming yourself or using other measures.
- Be patient with yourself. Healing and processing trauma can take a long time.

This brochure can provide resources and options for sorting out what makes sense to you and how you want to deal with your unique experiences.

LaFASA

*Louisiana Foundation
Against Sexual Assault*

Sexual Assault Crisis Centers provide a 24-hour crisis hotline, information and referral, free counseling, and more!

www.lafasa.org

MAIN 225.372.8995
HELPLINE 888.995.7273

2133 Silverside Drive, Ste. A
Baton Rouge, LA 70808



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LaFASA

Sexual Assault & Healing for
MALE SURVIVORS

WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Sometimes, survivors question if what they experienced is sexual assault. Any unwanted sexual contact or behavior is sexual assault. It includes rape, groping, forced kissing, and other sexual acts. A person can be forced or coerced, unconscious, or too intoxicated to consent. Anyone regardless of gender, age, race, income level, sexual orientation, and/or ability can be a victim.

Like survivors, perpetrators can be anyone. When you have to regularly interact with your perpetrator(s), this can affect the healing process.

If you have been raped or sexually assaulted, you have experienced a frightening, life threatening trauma. Research shows that trauma can change a person's entire body, including the brain; it impacts how a person acts during and after the traumatic event. With help, survivors can heal from trauma.

Sex or sexual acts without your consent is sexual assault. It is illegal. It is wrong.

***You are not alone.
It was not your fault.
It is possible to heal.***

Sexual violence doesn't define:

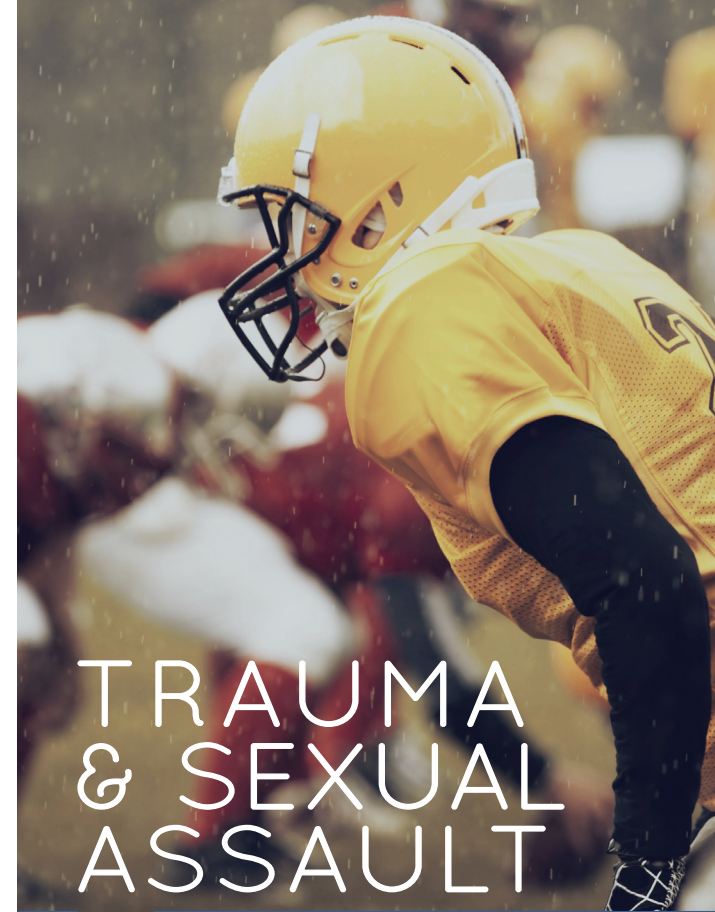
- **Your masculinity**
Male survivors often feel shame about their assault. Non-consensual sexual experiences conflict with many cultural expectations placed on men. Working through these feelings can help you become more comfortable with your manhood.
- **Your strength**
Being a survivor does not make you weak. There are many reasons why people can't or don't fight back when they are assaulted. We might freeze, laugh, go along with it, or mentally "shut down." Whatever you did to cope with the situation was okay.
- **Your sexual orientation**
Being raped says nothing about a man's sexual orientation before or after the assault. Rapists are motivated by a desire to intimidate and control another person, not by sexual attraction. Confusion or concern about your sexuality is normal and is possible to sort out.
- **Your future**
While there are no quick fixes to the reactions you may experience related to trauma, there are many resources available to help you. Remember, healing is a process and you are not alone.

Recognize the unique challenges you face and cut yourself some slack.

It is important to remember:

- You are not to blame. The rapist is solely responsible.
- Rape is a violent crime involving power and control.
- No one asks or deserves to be raped.
- You have the right to experience any and all feelings you have.

***Call the LaFASA helpline for 24/7, free and confidential support and information services.
888-995-7273***



TRAUMA & SEXUAL ASSAULT

Trauma caused by sexual violence can affect each person differently, and potential reactions may include:

- men may show more aggression and hostility rather than tearfulness and fear, immediately after an assault.
- emotional reactions such as depression, guilt, shame, fear, anger, grief, and mood swings.
- behavioral reactions such as an inability to concentrate or relax, loss of interest, avoiding places, people, and thoughts or feelings.
- physical reactions such as nausea, headaches, and changes in eating or sleeping patterns.

There is no right or wrong way to feel after being sexually assaulted. These reactions may be more difficult to manage at certain times. Remember this is normal and these reactions can diminish with time.