



RASASC
rape and sexual abuse
support centre
RAPE CRISIS
SOUTH LONDON

THE IMPACTS OF RAPE

Information for young survivors

Telephone: 0208 683 3311
Email: info@rasasc.org.uk

What is rape?

Rape is sex that you don't agree to. Sex when someone says 'no' or doesn't agree to it, is rape. Rape is illegal. If a man or boy forces their penis into your vagina, anus or mouth, this is classed as rape. If you have been raped it's not your fault and you're not alone.

Power and control

The rapist may have used physical violence or spoken to you aggressively. Or he could have been quite calm because he wanted to be in control of you and the situation. That can be really confusing.

He may have been someone you know - a boyfriend, a friend, neighbour, or relative. He may have been someone you just met but he will likely have been someone you thought you could trust.

Fighting for survival

People react in lots of different ways during rape. Maybe you screamed, fought back and tried to get away but it is more likely that you froze. Freezing is your body taking over and doing what it needs to do to survive.

No matter how you reacted at the time, remember it was the right response for you to help you survive.

Common feelings

Experiencing rape can leave you feeling all sorts of emotions. However you feel is a natural response and is a reaction to being traumatised.

- Angry:** You might want to lash out and hurt the person responsible. You may also feel like this towards yourself - even though it wasn't your fault.
- Shock:** You might feel 'numb' or calm. You might feel shocked and like you can't understand what happened.
- Guilt:** You might be blaming yourself for what happened or be angry with yourself for not stopping it.
- Fear:** You might have flashbacks or nightmares and feel frightened about being alone.
- Depressed:** You could feel hopeless or sad - like you don't have anything to look forward to anymore.

It is important to understand that however you have been affected, and whatever your feelings, it is OK to feel whatever you do - your feelings are individual and normal.

Talking about feelings

If you have people around you who you trust to be non-judgemental and accepting, try to talk to them.

You can call our helpline on 0808 802 9999 to talk through what happened and how you are feeling. A support worker can talk and listen to you without ever judging you. You have a right to be heard.

Rape is not something that can be easily forgotten, but if it feels right for you, you can work through your feelings and learn to put it behind you and recover.