

# Building a Strong Support Team When You Have Been Sexually Harassed

Studies suggest that thousands of people deal with workplace sexual harassment each day, yet an estimated 94% will not file a formal complaint. Because victims are often reluctant to talk about it, even after quitting a job because of being sexually harassed, the mental and emotional stress can be extremely isolating. It is common to react with confusion, anger, shame, and feelings of betrayal and self-blame. The emotions make people feel like their recovery must be an intensely private matter. Through professional therapy and self-help, victims *can* overcome the overwhelming urge to withdraw from friends or become distrustful of others. Along with individual and group therapy, connecting with people socially is a critical step in recovery.

## Defining Your “Support Team”

*You do not have to talk about what happened.* Just connecting with friends, family and others is proven to be helpful and healing. The goal is to get together with other people in order to challenge the destructive urge for isolation, to do “normal” things, and to remind yourself that you are not defined by the trauma that you experienced.

## Creating Your Support Team

Using the questions below, identify trusted friends, family members, coworkers, and anyone else that you can turn to for support during recovery. You can write a person’s name, or just the person’s relationship to you (sister, mentor, clergy).

Someone who is a good listener:

---

Someone who has had similar experience:

---

Someone who has a knack for brightening your mood:

---

Someone you’ve been meaning to reconnect with:

---

Someone active you can join for bike rides, walks, or other physical activities:

---

Someone who has known you for a long time:

---

Someone who is a good problem-solver:

---

Someone you consider to be wise:

---

Someone who is known for kindness and compassion:

---

Other people who can give you support:

---

---

---

---