



Sexual Assault Response Services *of Southern Maine*

P.O. Box 1371
Portland, ME 04104

P.O. Box 1605
Sanford, ME 04073

24-Hour Hotline: 1-800-313-9900

infosars@sarsonline.org
www.sarsonline.org

To A Man Who Has Been Sexually Assaulted:

It happened to me, too. You are not alone.

I couldn't believe such a thing could happen. I thought it was a nightmare. I was sure I'd wake up and it wouldn't be real. I didn't want it to be real.

Why was I picked to be a victim? Was there something I could have done? Could I have fought or stopped it somehow? I thought I was going to die. I didn't want to die.

I thought about it all the time. In the middle of work, dinner, talking I would blank out and remember. I tried to push it out. I worked extra hours, filled every minute, but it always came back. I was afraid I'd go crazy.

I was sure people knew or would find out. I was different. They could look at me and somehow see it on my face. I tried to hide all my feelings all the time so they wouldn't find out. I was so ashamed and completely alone.

I hated being afraid all the time. I didn't feel safe anywhere. I was always bracing for an attack, feeling like a target. I wondered how women live with such fear. How could they stand it? I knew I was losing my mind.

- It doesn't have to be that way. You don't have to suffer alone. There are people who can help. People who do understand. Others like me who've been there.
- This has nothing to do with your masculinity or sexuality. Rapists are sick people who strike at random. It's not your fault.
- You'll make it. You're not going crazy. You've been badly hurt. Reach out for help and encourage those around you to do the same. You deserve to be surrounded by people who care about and support you.
- You're stronger than you think you are. It takes a lot of strength to face this. You'll make it
- I know...because I did.

Please call the 24-Hour Hotline at 1-800-313-9900 and begin to reach out for support. You can remain completely anonymous. There are people who care.

Adapted from a conversation with a man who had been sexually assaulted and counseled at The Rape Crisis Program, St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center of New York.

Help, Hope, and Healing