

# Common Emotions & Reactions

**SHOCK:** I feel so numb. Why am I so calm?  
Why can't I cry?

**DISBELIEF:** Did it really happen? Why me?

**EMBARRASSMENT:** What will people think? No, I can't tell my family.

**SHAME:** I feel so dirty, like there is something wrong with me now. I want to wash my hands all day long.

**GUILT:** I feel as if I did something to make this happen to me. Why didn't I fight back more?

**DEPRESSION:** How am I going to go on? I feel so tired and hopeless.

**POWERLESS:** Will I ever feel in control again?

**DISORIENTATION:** I can't sit still. I am having trouble getting through the day. I'm just overwhelmed.

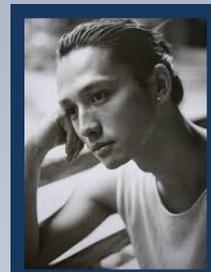
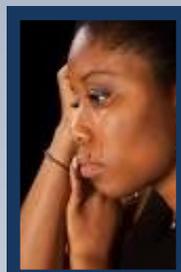
**RETRIGGERING:** I keep having flashbacks. I wish they would stop.

**DENIAL:** Wasn't it 'just' a rape? It happens to many people.

**FEAR:** I'm so afraid of so many things. Will I get pregnant or get a STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) or HIV? Can people tell what's happened to me? Will I ever want to be intimate again? Will I ever get over this? I'm afraid I'm going crazy. I have nightmares that terrify me.

**ANXIETY:** I'm a nervous wreck! I have trouble breathing. (Anxiety is often expressed in physical symptoms like difficulty breathing or muscle tension, sleep disturbances, and changes in eating habits, nausea, stomach problems, nightmares and bedwetting).

**ANGER:** I want to KILL him!



**In addition, you may experience:**

## **EMOTIONAL EFFECTS such as:**

- ◆ Fear of being alone
- ◆ Lack of trust in yourself and in others
- ◆ Loss of self-confidence
- ◆ Not feeling "real", feeling as if you are in a dream
- ◆ The sensation that you can see yourself from a distance
- ◆ Experiencing periods of rage and/or periods of depression
- ◆ Wanting to run away and start again
- ◆ Not wanting to be touched by anyone
- ◆ Not wanting to have sex

## **PHYSICAL EFFECTS such as:**

- ◆ Wanting to sleep all the time
- ◆ Not being able to sleep, nightmares
- ◆ Headaches
- ◆ Feeling sore
- ◆ Feeling tired
- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Overeating or not eating at all