

Addressing "Real Rape" Stereotypes

MYTH

VS

REALITY

True victims/survivors physically resist assault.



Many victims/survivors do not resist, for various reasons:

- Victims/survivors often feel shocked, confused, disoriented, ashamed and betrayed during and after the assault.
- Victims/survivors may **FREEZE** or dissociate to survive the assault.
- Victims/survivors fear they may experience further injury or death if they resist.

True victims/survivors report incidences of sexualized violence immediately.



Delayed reporting is common in cases of sexualized violence:

- Many victims/survivors need time to process the events that just transpired before disclosing the assault.
- It may take some time for the victim/survivor to regain a sense of control and safety after the assault.
- Victims/survivors may be reluctant to report out of fear of disbelief and judgement from authorities.

Perpetrators of sexualized violence are most often strangers to the victim/survivor.



More often than not, the perpetrator is someone known to the victim/survivor:

- In cases where victims/survivors are in a relationship with the perpetrator, the relationship often continues out of shock, fear, shame and guilt.

When a "no" was not verbalized, this means the victim/survivor secretly wanted it.



A verbal "no" is not required to withhold consent. The absence of a "no" does not equal a "yes":

- Many factors may prevent someone from verbalizing "no", such as fear, shock, confusion, ect.
- Societal expectations that women and girls are supposed to be polite and submissive often prevents the victim/survivor from verbalizing "no" out of fear of offending the perpetrator.
- Consent must **ALWAYS** be voluntary and freely given.

Avoiding "dangerous" areas, "risky" situations, dressing modestly, and drinking responsibly ensures you will not be subjected to sexualized violence.



The responsibility is on the perpetrator to not subject anyone to sexualized violence:

- By advising individuals in this way, it implies that victims/survivor have power and control over being subjected to sexualized violence.
- The perpetrator is the the individual who will choose to assault whoever, whenever, and under whichever circumstances they wish.

True victims/survivors of sexualized violence recount their experience in hysterics and will appear visibly upset.



There is no right way to respond to sexualized violence:

- The trauma response is complex and the types of responses a victim/survivor exhibits lie on a constantly shifting spectrum.
- Responses include, but are not limited to: **anger, guilt, shame, minimizing the experience, dissociation, neutral affect, crying, isolation, irritability, confusion/disorientation, panic, shock, and emotional swings.**