

Recovery from Sexual Assault and Trauma

What does recovery mean?

- Recovery looks different to everyone.
- There is no timeline for recovery and no “right way” to recover from your trauma.
- Recovery is not linear – ups and downs are normal
- The brain can adapt and change over time, even when it feels like things won’t change
- You **can** recover, even if things feel overwhelming right now

What can recovery look like?

- Making sense of what happened
- Feeling safer in your body and environment
- Reconnecting with daily life
- Managing distress
- Rebuilding trust with yourself and/or others
- Enjoying things you used to love again

Common experiences during recovery

Reactions to sexual assault and trauma change over time. Some days might feel easier than other days. Triggers may come and go. Sometimes it might feel that you haven’t made any progress at all, but remember, progress isn’t always obvious. You can read more about [common reactions after sexual assault](#).

What can help me recover?

- Talking to someone you trust
- Learning ways to manage distress
- Doing things that help you feel safe
- Taking things at your own pace
- Connecting with supports and services

Important Things to Remember:

- You have choices about what to do next
- You do not have to decide everything straight away
- You can seek support without having to report to police
- It can feel hard to talk about what happened – some people experience shame, confusion or fear. You choose what pace to go at.

When should I seek extra support?

You have the choice about when to access support and what that support looks like. Some people choose to access support when they feel overwhelmed, or like things are not improving. You can access counselling or talk to someone you trust if you feel that your distress is interfering with your everyday life or your relationships.

How can I get help?

If you are in immediate danger or need urgent medical assistance, **call 000**

During business hours: Call SECASA Intake on **8769 2200 – opt 1** or contact your local Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA). Find your nearest service at: <https://peak.sasvic.org.au/service-map> and enter your postcode or suburb

After hours, weekends and public holidays: Call the Sexual Assault Crisis Line (SACL) on 1800 577 011

If you are not in Victoria: Call 1800 RESPECT or 1800 737 732 or find a local support service at:

<https://www.nasasv.org.au/support-directory>