Call Exhale to talk freely about your experience with abortion. We’re here to listen.

Mission Statement
Exhale creates a social climate where each person’s unique experience with abortion is supported, respected and free from stigma. Exhale provides services, training and education to empower individuals, families and communities to achieve post-abortion health and well-being.

TALKLINE

toll-free: 1-866-4-EXHALE

1-866-4 EXHALE (1-866-4 394253)
Sunday: 2 p.m. - 8 p.m. Pacific
Monday: 4 p.m. - 10 p.m. Pacific
Wednesday: 4 p.m. - 10 p.m. Pacific

Contact Exhale’s Office
phone: 857-728-1318
email: info@exhaleprovoice.org
website: www.exhaleprovoice.org
facebook.com/exhaleprovoice
twitter.com/exhaleprovoice

If you’ve had an abortion... support and respect are just a phone call away
Your feelings are normal.
You will have feelings after the abortion and your feelings may be different from hers. Significant others can feel love, care, pride, relief and hope for the future. Some also feel anxiety, a sense of failure, loss of control, guilt, fear or anger. You may experience several of these feelings and they might differ from what you’d expected. That’s normal. Your feelings may also change over time.

Take care of yourself.
It’s important to take care of yourself physically and mentally. Make sure to get enough sleep, eat complete meals and do the things you enjoy. Try not to depend on your loved one for support immediately after the abortion. It may take some time before she’s able to take care of anyone but herself.

Give yourself permission to take as much time as you need to work through your own feelings about the abortion. There are many ways to do this. Talking to a trusted friend or family member can help relieve feelings of isolation and give you some perspective. Calling the Exhale talkline, writing, reading a book, listening to music, taking a walk or going to the gym can also be very helpful. What’s important is that you find something that works for you, and that fits your life, beliefs and needs.

What is she feeling?
It’s normal for women and girls to experience a range of feelings after an abortion. Sadness, happiness, empowerment, anxiety, guilt, relief and grief are some of the emotions you loved one might feel. She may experience several feelings all at once – and her feelings may change over time. She may worry about how you are doing, wonder about her future or have religious concerns. She might feel confused about what she “should” be feeling. It’s important for you both to know that there is no “right” way to feel after an abortion.

Reactions to an abortion often depend on one’s personality, cultural traditions, religious practice or economic situation. Some women will be glad it’s over and want to move on without ever mentioning it again. Others may withdraw and not be as emotionally available to consider your needs as usual. She may want to talk about it all the time, cry, watch TV, read or enjoy a good meal. Your relationship may not “get back to normal” right away; try to be patient with each other and yourself.

What can I do for her?
Ask her. If she wants to talk, listen. If she wants to pray, give her room to pray. If she wants to be alone, it’s OK to leave. Try to avoid judging statements and phrases like “you should,” “why don’t you?” or “what you really need is...” You don’t need to have all the answers. Sometimes just being there – and being a loving presence – is enough. If you want more ideas about how to support her, feel free to call Exhale.

If you have any medical concerns, or questions about medical care, be sure to read and follow all the after-care guidelines from the abortion provider. And always feel free to contact the provider.

Last but not least, breathe! You’re doing a great job. Your support during this time is the best gift you can give yourself and her.

1-866-4-EXHALE

DID YOU KNOW?

• Nearly 1 in 3 women in the U.S. will have an abortion by age 45.
• Women of all ages, races, economic backgrounds, and religious beliefs have abortions.
• Over 1.2 million abortions occur in the United States every year.

Source: The Guttmacher Institute, 2013