



LISTEN  
SUPPORT  
VALIDATE

## IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAD AN ABORTION

Connect with Exhale. Speak freely.  
We're here to listen.

All Hours, U.S. Pacific Time

**Text: 617.749.2948**

Weekdays 3 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Saturday 1 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Sunday 3 p.m. - 7 p.m.



### OUR MISSION

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.

### YOUR FEELINGS ARE NORMAL

You may have feelings after your loved one's abortion, and your feelings may differ from theirs. Significant others may feel love, care, pride, relief, and hope for the future. Some may 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 or change over time. That's normal.

### FRIENDS, PARTNERS, PARENTS, BOYFRIENDS, GIRLFRIENDS, SIBLINGS...

Whether your loved one's abortion occurred yesterday or many years ago, and whether or not you were involved in the decision-making process, it is possible to give and get support.

Supporting a loved one through an abortion experience can feel isolating.

#### **You are not alone in your experience.**

Abortion is one of the most commonly performed procedures in the United States. People have abortions for a number of different reasons, and each person's experience is unique.

### TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

It's important to remember to take care of yourself physically and mentally. Make sure to get enough sleep, drink tons of water, eat complete meals, and do things you enjoy. Try not to depend on your loved one for support immediately after the abortion. Give yourself permission to take as much time as you need to work through your own feelings. Talking to a trusted friend or family member can help relieve feelings of isolation and give you some perspective. Connecting with the Exhale textline, writing, reading a book, listening to music, taking a walk, or exercising can also be helpful. What's important is that you find something that works for you and that fits your life, beliefs, and needs.

### WHAT CAN I DO FOR MY LOVED ONE?

**Ask them.** If they want to talk, listen. If they want to pray, give them room to pray. If they want to be alone, it's OK to leave. Try to avoid statements and phrases like "You should", "Why don't you...?", or "What you really need is...". Remember that 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 best support your loved one, Exhale textline counselors can help.

[WWW.EXHALEPROVOICE.ORG](http://WWW.EXHALEPROVOICE.ORG)