What is sexual assault?¹
Conduct of indecent or sexual nature towards another person, accompanied by actual or threatening physical force upon a person without consent. Or it is inflicted upon a person who is incapable of giving consent due to age, physical, or mental incapacity.

The reality of sexual assault¹
- 80% of victims know their perpetrator
- Every 2 minutes, another American is Sexually Assaulted.
- According to the U.S. Department of Justice’s National Crime Victimization Survey there is an average of 237,868 victims of rape and sexual assault each year.
- 1 in 33 American men have been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime.
- 1 out of every 6 American women have been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime.
- The experience is very traumatic.
- Rape is about power and control, not sexual gratification.
- The perpetrator is nearly always male regardless of the victim’s sexual orientation.
- There is never justification for anyone to be sexually assaulted.
- Victims are not alone and it is not their fault!

If you have been sexually assaulted…¹
You may be experiencing psychological trauma caused by sexual assault which may be affecting many areas in your life such as school, academic performance, relationships, physical health, and concentration. Sexual assault is NEVER your fault, no consent still means no, no matter what the situation may be (for example: intoxication).
Common reactions to trauma such as sexual assault

- **Shock and disbelief:** “I feel numb.” “I feel disconnected from other people and my life.” “I can’t believe this happened to me.”
  It is very common for sexual assault victims to react with shock and disbelief. They may feel numb and dazed and distant from other people. They may not want to go out with friends nor do certain activities that make them remember the assault.

- **Remembering what happened and what it felt like:** “I can’t stop thinking about it.” “I can’t wash their image or smell away.” “It comes back and I feel like it’s happening all over again.”
  Some victims experience certain times where they remember the assault and have flashbacks. These flashbacks may bring on the intense emotions felt during the time of the assault and might make them feel powerless or fearful.

- **Feelings of intense emotions:** “I feel really sad like they took a part of me that I will never get back.” “I feel a lot of hatred and anger that I have never felt before.”
  Many survivors experience intense emotions after the sexual assault. Common feelings are anger, sadness, anxiety, and depression.

- **Physical symptoms:** “I am having a hard time sleeping at night because I keep having nightmares about what happened.” “I haven’t been able to eat since it happened it just makes me feel sick to my stomach.”
  Some victims may also experience physical symptoms after the assault. You may have sleep disturbances, headaches, and stomachaches. Many victims have a hard time concentrating. They may also have changes in sexuality such as a loss of interest in sex.

- **Fearful feelings:** “I can’t go out at night, even when I am not alone.” “I am afraid that someone is watching me or following me.” “I am afraid to see that person again.”
  It is very common for victims to fear their own personal safety and to become frightened and feel vulnerable. Many become afraid in situations they have never been fearful in before.

- **Self-blame or shame:** “I feel like it is my fault because I trusted that person.” “I feel embarrassed this happened to me.”
  Feeling self-blame and shame are also very common feelings. Because of misconceptions about rape, many victims feel as if they did something wrong to cause the assault and that it may have been their fault. Victims may doubt their own self judgment. Others may put feelings of self-blame on victims or criticize their behavior because of prevalent myths about rape. **ALWAYS REMEMBER RAPE IS A CRIME AND IS NEVER YOUR FAULT!**
What to do after a sexual assault:

- **DO NOT SHOWER!**
- **It is best to seek medical attention immediately:** After an assault it is very important to receive a medical exam and to consult a nurse or doctor about related issues, even if there are no visible physical wounds. You do not have to report to the police till the evidence is collected. If you think you have been drugged, your urine should be collected immediately. Date rape drugs can disappear quickly from the body.
  - **On campus medical help:** UNK Health Care: 308-865-8218
  - **Off campus medical help:** Good Samaritan Hospital: 308-865-7100
  - **FAN (Family Advocacy Network):** 308-865-7492
- **Call the police:** If there is any chance that you will want to give the police information, help prevent further assaults, take the perpetrator to court, press charges or go on record with your assault, the sooner you talk to the police, the better. Evidence may be lost as time goes by. If you would like an advocate and/or friend to be with you simply talk to the police.
  - **On campus police:** UNK Police Department: 308-627-4811
  - **Off campus police:** Kearney Police Department: 308-237-2104
  - **Emergency line:** 911
- **Get support from other people:** Victims of sexual assault may not want to talk about their assault and may feel as if not talking about it will help it go away. Many survivors realize that they need to talk about their assault. Their unresolved feelings may be holding them back in many areas of their life. Find someone to talk about it with. Whether it is a counselor, friend, family member, pastor, etc. Talking with a counselor will give you a safe and confidential setting to openly express your feelings and concerns.
- **Talk with a Counselor:** Many victims find that therapy is a healing and empowering experience. A person trained to help sexual assault victims will understand the unique concerns you may have and know of ways to help you cope with the physical and emotional effects of sexual assault.
  - **On campus:** UNK Women’s Center 24/hr Crisis Line: 308-865-8248
  - **UNK Counseling Care 24/hr Crisis Line:** 308-865-8248
  - **Off campus:** S.A.F.E Center 24/hr Crisis Line: 308-237-2599
  - **National Resources:** RAINN (Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network): 1-800-656-HOPE
  - **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-TALK

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*Remember:*  
It is the healthy, competent, wise individual who seeks assistance!
What can I do for someone I know who has been sexually assaulted?1

- Let them know it is NOT their fault, they are not alone & they do have options.
- Encourage the victim to contact the UNK Women’s Center at 308-865-8248 for free confidential information and help.
- Show support.
- Try to minimize the number of times the survivor has to tell the story.
- Reinforce that cooperation or submission does not mean consent.

What do I do if I see someone in danger of being sexually assaulted?1

- Step in and offer assistance.
- Ask if the person needs help.
- If the risk of stepping in and helping is too large, call 911.

Getting help after being assaulted is a sign that a real and lasting healing process has begun.

References:

Rape, Abuse, Incest, National Network
http://www.rainn.org

Kansas State Women’s Center
http://www.k-state.edu/womenscenter

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