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Raliance Statement on Honoring Survivors When People We Know Commit Sexual Harassment, Misconduct and Assault

We are heartened so many survivors of sexual misconduct and assault are sharing their stories, supporting each other and fueling this long-overdue national conversation. We are encouraged that people are acknowledging a wide range of sexually inappropriate behaviors – not just criminal acts – are harmful. Silence and inaction enable people to abuse.

Many survivors don't disclose what was done to them out of fear of how others may react, particularly when the person who harmed them is someone known or loved. Sometimes survivors have conflicted feelings – it is hard to accept that someone you loved and trusted intentionally did hurtful things.

As the flood of reports of abusive behavior by public figures grows, many people are asking the question *"How do you reconcile caring for someone with the revelation that they committed sexually inappropriate or abusive acts?"*

There's no "right" way to respond when you learn someone you care about has been sexually inappropriate or abusive. In fact, it is normal to feel a wide range of emotions at once, and those emotions may change over time.

Anger, disappointment, shame, fear, grief, disgust, confusion and disbelief are often made even more painful when they are felt about someone we know or admire. With that in mind, here are some things you can consider saying if you are confronted with this situation:

- "I am disappointed and angry that you did these things."
- "I care about you, and I want you to get help."
- "I am glad they came forward."
- "I need some time to myself to process this news."
- "I may be out of touch for a while. I am hurt and confused by your actions."

And here are some actions you can take to ensure you, your friends and families, and your communities are helping to prevent sexual violence:

- **Pledge to examine your own actions** and consider whether you have ignored things that worried you or behaved in ways that contribute to a culture of disrespect that allows for sexual harassment or misconduct.
- **Speak up and step in** when you hear sexist comments, see inappropriate photos on social media, or a situation that you are concerned may be coercive or harassing
- **Donate to sexual violence prevention organizations** that are on the front lines fighting this widespread problem; if your local prevention organization or rape crisis center needs volunteers, sign up for a shift.
- **Teach your children or others whom you mentor about the importance of respect, caring and looking out for each other.**

Individuals will process this difficult information differently. Raliance supports survivors and those who have relationships with perpetrators – such as parents, siblings, co-workers, or friends -- and understand the complex emotions and reactions they may have.

Together, we can end sexual violence in one generation.

ABOUT RALIANCE

Raliance is a national collaborative committed to ending sexual violence in one generation. Comprised of the [National Alliance to End Sexual Violence \(NAESV\)](#), the [National Sexual Violence Resource Center \(NSVRC\)](#), and [California Coalition Against Sexual Assault \(CALCASA\)–PreventConnect](#), Raliance was founded in 2015 through a multimillion dollar seed investment by the National Football League. We are making prevention possible by awarding grants, advancing research, policymaking and more. Join the movement at [Raliance.org](#).