

# Call Exhale

to talk freely about your  
experience with abortion.

## 1-866-4-exhale

1-866-4 394253

Monday – Friday  
5 p.m. – 10 p.m. PST

Saturday – Sunday  
12 p.m. – 10 p.m. PST

Additional languages are available.

Nuestro servicio está disponible en español.

## 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.



an after-abortion counseling talkline

484 Lake Park Avenue #63  
Oakland, CA 94610

- 📞 510-446-7900
- 📞 309-410-1127
- ✉ info@4exhale.org
- 🌐 www.4exhale.org

### TALKLINE

Toll-free: 1-866-4 EXHALE  
Toll-calls: 1-510-446-7977

## If you've had an abortion

... support and respect are  
just a phone call away



# How are You?

If you're reading this pamphlet, chances are you've had an abortion. Whether your abortion occurred yesterday or many years ago, and whether your decision was easy or difficult, it is possible to find support. We hope this brochure will be useful in helping you find what you need.

**Abortion is a common experience** for women and girls, worldwide.

You are not alone in your experience. Lots of women have abortions: women of all races, religions, and sexual orientations and a wide range of ages, education and income. Abortion is one of the most commonly performed gynecological procedures in the United States, where about 1.3 million abortions are performed annually. Women have abortions for a number of different reasons and, while many women's reasons are similar, each person's experience is unique.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Over 1/3 of 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 one million abortions occur in the United States every year.
- The lifetime average is about 1 abortion per woman, worldwide.\*

\*Source: The Alan Guttmacher Institute, 2003.

## YOUR FEELINGS ARE NORMAL.

You may experience a range of feelings after an abortion; this is entirely normal. Women often experience feelings such as sadness, happiness, empowerment, anxiety, grief, relief and/or guilt. There is no "right" way to feel. Feelings are different for everyone and they often change over time.

We know your abortion can be hard to talk about and that finding the right person to talk with can be even harder.

## Take care of yourself.

If you've just had an abortion, it's important to remember to take care of yourself, physically and emotionally, after the procedure is over. Make sure to get enough sleep, eat complete meals and do things you enjoy like going to the movies, spending time with friends or taking a walk. Calling Exhale can be a part of how you take care of yourself. Be sure to read and follow all the after-care guidelines from your abortion provider.

If some time has passed since your abortion, it's never too late to find a way to express your feelings or talk with someone who listens. Many women have found writing about their experience, whether in a journal or as a letter, a helpful tool for working through their emotions. Calling the Exhale talkline, praying, cooking, making art, adopting a pet or climbing a mountain have been known to work as well. What's important is that you find something that works for you, and that fits your life, beliefs and needs.

## WHY IS ABORTION SO HARD TO TALK ABOUT?

Although abortion is a simple medical procedure, the political, religious and cultural beliefs that surround it can seem complex. This can make it difficult for many people to talk about their personal experiences with friends and family. Talking to someone you trust can help you feel less isolated.

## Exhale is here to listen.

Exhale offers a free, national talkline that provides emotional support, resources and information. All calls are completely confidential and counselors are non-judgmental. The service is available in additional languages, including Spanish.

The Exhale talkline is available to women and girls who have had abortions, and to their partners, friends, allies and family members.

## WHO CALLS EXHALE?

Women and men of all backgrounds call Exhale, and everyone's experience is unique. Some people feel relief that the abortion is finally over and just want to tell someone. Others feel a sense of loss and are looking for ways to work through their grief. Parents, friends and partners want to learn how they can best provide support. Women may call the day after their abortion, a month after or years later.

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