



# EFFECTIVE PASTORAL CARE FOR ADULT SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR TRAUMA

## DON'T

Don't talk.  
Don't know.  
Don't defend.  
Don't minimize.  
Don't intellectualize.  
Don't launch a pep talk.  
Don't be impatient.  
Don't be directive.  
Don't be linear.  
Don't wing it.  
Don't be goal-oriented.  
Don't judge or shame.  
Don't talk to a diagnosis.  
Don't own.  
Don't fix.  
Don't assume this is past.  
Don't push.  
Don't expect efficiency.  
Don't expect reliability.  
Don't personalize.  
Don't take responsibility.  
Don't analyze.  
Don't shift into therapy.  
Don't be manipulated.  
Don't go it alone.  
Don't hesitate.

## DO

Listen.  
Learn.  
Acknowledge guilt of abusers and enablers.  
Recognize the burden.  
Permit strong feelings.  
If it were possible, we'd be over it already.  
Remember healing is on God's timing.  
Follow our lead and pace.  
Appreciate healing as circular, repetitive.  
Prepare and be knowledgeable.  
Be God-oriented.  
Offer radical respect for a humiliated person.  
Talk to us about the diagnosis.  
Respect boundaries on a person's burden.  
Accept healing as a process.  
Care for need here, now.  
Pace, go slowly.  
Simplify, repeat, confirm.  
Expect no-shows, late arrivals.  
Depersonalize errors and rough edges.  
Set firm boundaries, softly.  
Affirm mystery and grace in this life.  
Know how to refer for professional help.  
Live the boundaries you set.  
Let the Holy Spirit do the heavy lifting.  
Pastor.

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For More Free Resources:  
[SPIRITFIRE.ONLINE](https://spiritfire.online)

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## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
800-273-8255, or 988

National Domestic Violence Hotline  
800-799-7233

International Suicide Prevention  
702-743-4340

National Sexual Assault Hotline  
800-656-4673

National Human Trafficking Hotline  
888-373-7888

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children  
800-843-5678

**CONFIDENTIAL. FREE. 24/7. MULTI-LINGUAL.  
FOR CHAT, TEXT, TTY, CHECK ONLINE.**

SpiritFire.Online provides an extensive listing  
of national help- and hotlines for your pastoral care.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if every  
chancery had this Tip Sheet?  
Download this file for free  
to create a poster for your office.

Go to:

**SpiritFire.Online**