For Survivors by Survivors: A Healing Resource

Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center
In March 2018, SAPAC created and shared a survey as a part of a project entitled For Survivors by Survivors: A Healing Resource Co-Creation.

The anonymous survey was an opportunity for survivors to share what materials have been helpful in their healing process; these are the results. In here, you will find books, poetry, songs, movies and shows that survivors have found helpful as a part of their healing process.

If you are a survivor, this resource is for you. Not all of these answers will speak to you, but some may. If you are a friend or supporter of a survivor, feel free to share this resource with them. Our hope is simply to share out resources that have been helpful in survivors’ healing processes.
Guide

Books: Page 5
Poetry: Page 8
Songs: Page 9
Movies: Page 11
Shows: Page 13
Final Words: Page 15
Some Important Notes

All of the materials listed in this resource are answers received anonymously from “For Survivors by Survivors: A Healing Resource Co-Creation Survey.” Their inclusion does not represent SAPAC endorsement.

We were not able to use all of the answers we received in the survey, for various reasons. Still, we are so grateful for all the responses, received from so many survivors, and want to honor and validate all of the information that was so graciously shared with us.

Some of the materials included have content notifications (written CN) beside them; however, if you see a material listed that doesn’t have a content notification that you feel should, please contact Aysha Abiade, ajabiade@umich.edu.
Books

**We Believe You**, Annie Clark & Andrea Pino
University/college students from incredibly diverse backgrounds and identities "share experiences of trauma, healing, and everyday activism."

**The Happiness Project**, Gretchen Rubin
One person’s year-long attempt to discover what leads to true contentment.

**How to Eat**, Thich Nhat Hanh
Short meditations that cover everything from eating with others and enjoying our food to connecting with the earth.

**The Courage to Heal**, Ellen Bass & Laura Davis
Includes activities for processing, gaining a greater understanding, normalizing, advice, and more.

**CN: Some portions of the book may be difficult to read, and potentially triggering.**

**When Things Fall Apart**, Pema Chödrön
Discusses using painful emotions to cultivate wisdom, compassion, and courage, and ways for creating effective social action.

**Being Peace**, Thich Nhat Hanh
Highlights the connection between our own personal happiness and the state of the world around us.
Books

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou
First volume in a set of five autobiographies by Maya Angelou, recounting her childhood.
CN: The book details her childhood sexual assault.

The Mindfulness Coloring Book, Emma Ferrarons
A pocket-sized coloring book that offers a practical exercise in mindfulness that draws on your creativity and hones your focus.

The Color Purple, Alice Walker
Life story of Celie, a poor black woman abused and assaulted by her father and then later her husband; she attempts to spare her sister from having the same life. A friend helps push her finally toward an awakening of her creative and loving self.
CN: An incredibly difficult read, with depictions of brutal violence.

Yes Means Yes, Jaclyn Friedman & Jessica Valenti
Brings a variety of perspectives and experiences focused on the theory that educating all people to value female sexuality and pleasure leads to viewing women differently, and ending rape.

Sex Matters for Women, Sallie Foley
This guide helps women understand how their bodies work and take charge of their sexuality. Sexuality is a lifelong journey; this book gives a roadmap for self-discovery and growth.

Why Does He Do That?, Lundy Bancroft
A counselor who works with abusive men uses his knowledge to help women recognize when they are being controlled or devalued in a relationship, and to find ways to get free of abuse.
CN: Highlights patterns of abusers, which can be triggering.

Self-Compassion, Kristin Neff
Exercises and action plans for dealing with every emotionally debilitating struggle.
Oranges are Not the Only Fruit, Jeanette Winterson
Describes the adolescence of a bright and rebellious orphan adopted into a Pentecostal household and her coming to terms with her unorthodox sexuality.

Waking the Tiger, Peter Levine
By understanding the dynamics that make wild animals virtually immune to traumatic symptoms, the mystery of human trauma is explored.

Shrill, Lindy West
A book on how to survive in a world where not all stories are created equal and not all bodies are treated with equal respect, and how to weather hatred, loneliness, harassment, and loss.

Working With Available Light, Jamie Kalvin
Account of sexual and physical assault by a stranger and how the family, and the survivor, survive and heal for the next five years.

CN: Some content may be particularly difficult/triggering.

Wild, Cheryl Strayed
With no experience, Strayed hiked over a thousand miles of the Pacific Crest Trail, one young woman forging ahead on a journey that maddened, strengthened, and ultimately healed her.

Essentialism, Greg McKeown
Empowers people to reclaim control of their own choices about where to spend their precious time and energy.
Poetry

**A War to Be Won**, Halsey

**Forgiveness**, Beau Taplin

**Healing Comes in Waves**, Ijeoma Umebinyuo

**I Felt a Funeral in my Brain**, Emily Dickinson

**Still I Rise**, Maya Angelou

**The Truth About Monsters**, Nikita Gill

**Loose Woman**, Sandra Cisneros
A candid, sexy and wonderfully mood-strewn collection of poetry that celebrates the female aspects of love, from the reflective to the overtly erotic. "Poignant, sexy... lyrical, passionate... cool and delicate... hot as a chili pepper."

**Milk and Honey**, Rupi Kaur
"Milk and Honey takes listeners through a journey of the most bitter moments in life and finds sweetness in them—because there is sweetness everywhere if you are just willing to look."

**The Sun and Her Flowers**, Rupi Kaur
"A journey of wilting, falling, rooting, rising, and blooming. A celebration of love in all its forms."

CN: Some graphic scenes/mention of assault

**Recommended Authors**

Gloria Anzaldúa
Lucille Clifton
Carol Ann Duffy
Rudy Francisco
Robert Frost
Olivia Gatwood
Ross Gay
Marge Piercy
Claudia Rankine
Adrienne Rich
r.h.sin
Bianca Stone
Nayyirah Waheed
Alice Walker
Walt Whitman
Songs

Find the Spotify playlist here

Albums
Banks - Goddess
Beyoncé – Lemonade
Kesha - Rainbow

Songs
Alive, Sia
All Our Lives, Andrew McMahon in the Wilderness
At This Point in My Life, Tracy Chapman
Bird Set Free, Sia
Blackbird, The Beatles
Blended Family, Alicia Keys
Breathe Me, Sia
Bridges, Boy & Bear
Burning Hill, Mitski
Buzzcut Season, Lorde

Calling All Skeletons, Alkaline Trio
Cherry Wine, Hozier
Clean, Taylor Swift
Cranes in the Sky, Solange
Elastic Heart, Sia
Expectations, Belle and Sebastian
Feel Invincible, Skillet
Free Me, Sia
The Fighter, Gym Class Heroes
Goddess, Banks
I Believe, Christina Perri
I Forgive You, Kelly Clarkston
I Wanna Get Better, The Bleachers
I Was Here, Beyoncé
I Will Survive, Gloria Gaynor
I Won’t Back Down, Johnny Cash Version
I’m Still Standing, Elton John
It’s On Us, AJR
Liability, Lorde
Listen, Beyoncé
A Million Reasons, Lady Gaga
Mine, Phoebe Ryan
Missing You, All Time Low
Never Give Up, Sia
Not a Pretty Girl, Ani DiFranco
Not Ready to Make Nice, Dixie Chicks
Not While I’m Around, Glee Cast
Power, Little Mix
Patience, The Lumineers
Peace in the Valley, Elvis Presley
Praying, Kesha
Rainbow, Kesha
Reaper, Sia
Remember, Belle and Sebastian
Resolution, Jack’s Mannequin
Ribs, Lorde
Rise, Katy Perry
Rise Up, Andra Day
Shake It Out, Florence and the Machine
Stand Up For Something, Andra Day
Sunrise, Nora Jones
The Show Goes On, Lupe Fiasco
This is Me, Kesha
Till It Happens to You, Lady Gaga
(SN: Sexual assault)
Skyscraper, Demi Lovato
Still, Seinaboo Sey
Survivor, Destiny’s Child
Warrior, Demi Lovato
What Now, Rihanna
Who You Are, Jessie J
Writer in the Dark, Lorde
You Haven’t Seen the Last of Me, Cher
You Don’t Know, Katelyn Tarver
You’ll Never Walk Alone
You’re Only Human, Billy Joel

Songs
Footloose (2011)
“I have been so lost. I have been losing my mind. and you don’t even see it? You don’t even care.”
City teenager Ren MacCormack moves to a small town where rock music and dancing have been banned, and his rebellious spirit shakes up the populace.
Rating: PG-13

Lars and the Real Girl
A young man who experiences delusions strikes up an unconventional relationship with a doll he finds on the Internet.
Rating: PG-13

Silver Linings Playbook
After a stint in a psychiatric care facility, a former teacher, Pat, moves back in with his parents and tries to reconcile with his ex-wife. Things get more challenging when Pat meets Tiffany, a mysterious woman with problems of her own.
Rating: R
CN: Instances of physical violence in regards to romantic relationship

Perks of Being a Wallflower
An introvert freshman is taken under the wings of two seniors who welcome him to the real world.
Rating: PG-13
CN: Highlights issues of self-harm, drug use, suicidal ideation, and implied child sexual abuse.

Blue is the Warmest Color
Adèle's life is changed when she meets Emma, a young woman with blue hair, who will allow her to discover desire and to assert herself as a woman and as an adult. In front of others, Adèle grows, seeks herself, loses herself, and ultimately finds herself through love and loss.
Rating: NC-17
CN: Explicit sexual content

Moonlight
A chronicle of the childhood, adolescence and burgeoning adulthood of a young African-American gay man growing up in a rough neighborhood of Miami.
Rating: R

Please take particular care with movies; some artistic depictions can be triggering.
Movies

Contact
Dr. Ellie Arroway, after years of searching, finds conclusive radio proof of extraterrestrial intelligence, sending plans for a mysterious machine.
Rating: PG

Lady Bird
In 2002, an artistically inclined seventeen-year-old girl comes of age in Sacramento, California.
Rating: R

Wonder Woman
"When a pilot crashes and tells of conflict in the outside world, Diana, an Amazonian warrior in training, leaves home to fight a war, discovering her full powers and true destiny."
Rating: PG-13

The Hunting Ground
"An exposé of rape crimes on U.S. college campuses, their institutional cover-ups, and the devastating toll they take on students and their families."
Rating: PG-13
CN: Themes involving college sexual assault cases

Audrie & Daisy
A look at the effects that online bullying has on the lives of teenagers and their community.
Rating: PG-13

Maleficent
"I had wings once. They were strong. They were stolen from me."
A vengeful fairy is driven to curse an infant princess, only to discover that the child may be the one person who can restore peace to their troubled land.
Rating: PG

Marley and Me
A family learns important life lessons from their adorable but naughty dog.
Rating: PG

CN: Bullying, suicide
Shows (TV, Netflix, etc.)

Chopped (Hulu, Food Network)
A reality game show where chefs compete to create the best dishes.

The Office (Netflix)
A comedy about an office space, the staff who work there, and their daily happenings.

CN: Some scenes demonstrate sexual harassment

One Day at a Time (2017, Netflix)
A comedy featuring a veteran who is living with her mother and two children.

Gilmore Girls (Netflix)
A comedy that follows a mother and daughter living in a small town.

The Bold Type (Hulu, Freeform)
The Bold Type" is inspired by the life of "Cosmopolitan" editor in chief Joanna Coles. The show is a glimpse into the lives and loves of those responsible for a global women's magazine. Their struggles are about finding your identity, managing friendships and getting your heart broken, all while wearing the perfect jeans to flatter any body type.

BBC Planet Earth (Netflix)
“The Planet and its Wildlife”

The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt (Netflix)
Rescued after 15 years in a cult, Kimmy Schmidt decides to reclaim her life by venturing to New York, where she experiences everyday life with wide-eyed enthusiasm.

CN: Allusions to sexual violence in the bunker
Shows (TV, Netflix, etc.)

Veronica Mars (Go90)
A teen noir mystery drama series about a student who moonlights as a private investigator, under the guidance of her detective father.

CN: Deals with themes of sexual assault, abuse, rape culture, and violence

Buffy the Vampire Slayer (Hulu)
Buffy is a Slayer, one in a long line of young women chosen for a specific mission: to seek out and destroy vampires, demons and other forces of darkness, with supportive friends who aid in her battles with evil.

CN: Some depictions of violence

Survivor suggestion:
Re-watch things that you liked during your childhood.
“It was comforting, and a reminder that I’m still the same person.”
Thank you again to all the incredible survivors who contributed to the creation of this resource. As one person reflected in their survey response:

As survivors, “we are strong, worthy, and beautiful.”

For University of Michigan students, faculty, and staff interested in seeking out SAPAC services, please visit the [SAPAC website](http://sapac.umich.edu) to learn more.

For those not affiliated with the University of Michigan but living in Washtenaw County, please visit the [SafeHouse Center website](http://safehousecenter.org) to learn about their services.

For help from a national resource, please visit the [RAINN website](http://www.rainn.org) to learn more about their services.

For any questions, comments or concerns related to this resource, please contact Aysha Abiade, [ajabiade@umich.edu](mailto:ajabiade@umich.edu).