

Comforting Words to Help Gain Trust **By Ruth Rondon**

Before the detective left the rape exam room, he said, “Before I step out Ruth, is there a trusted person in your life that I can call for you?”

I was able to look him in the eye at this point. I didn’t feel he was disgusted with me or in a hurry to get on to someone or something else. I looked him in the eye and said, “No, there’s someone in the waiting room, with my clothes, waiting for me. But, thank you.” There was no one in my life I could trust, not even Henry, who was in the waiting room, but just being given a choice made me feel more like a human being and more in control.”

I thought *he must not be out to manipulate me for his own benefit, like so many others had, because he asked me if there was someone else **that I trusted**, that he could call for me.* So many others just went through the process and didn’t concern themselves with how I might be feeling in a hospital gown, lying on a gurney, amongst a room full of strangers. I thought maybe this guy was a sincere cop after all, but I still needed to see some action.

I had come to believe that the police were the bad guys even when I was 13 years old, when I was interrogated like a criminal. I was expected to perform sexually for some of the arresting police officers too, so why would I call on them? I never knew if I’d encounter a good cop or a bad cop if I called for help. I was afraid to take the chance. Granted, I received perks from the bad cops in exchange for sexual favors before but would you call on them after being raped and sexually assaulted? I had no energy to perform sexually again after being raped. I knew very well, that even a good cop can turn bad when presented with the temptation of such vulnerability. Plus, to add to the isolation, my traffickers and everyone else on the street reinforced that belief because in the street it was just understood. The fear of being labeled a snitch by those in “the game” and being arrested or abused by the police kept me from ever calling the police for help.

Comforting Words:

- You don’t have to do this alone.
- Having trusted friends and supporters in our lives is a human need WE ALL have.
- I am willing to fight for you, are you with me? I can’t do it alone and neither can you. United we stand, what do you say? Onward we fight? You have to be willing to fight. It’s your decision. I’m behind you 100% if you want to go forward with this.
- You are my priority right now.
- I’m a square but I’m one of the good ones.
- I’m a square but you CAN trust me.
- All kids need adults in their life who will stay with them. I’m one adult in your life, who will stay with you.