

SELF-REPORT TOOL

This document is for your reference and protection. There may be people who will try to generate inconsistencies or discrepancies in your account in order to suppress or discourage your reporting, or diminish your experience. Use this reference when you need to restate the event or answer questions. Your account should be written as soon as possible, but also reviewed and amended 48 hours after the incident. It takes 2 nights of sleep to solidify memory. The idea that the most accurate memory is immediately following is a myth and not based on science. A copy should be given to at least one member of your team.

If there are gaps in your memory of the event it does not mean that you were not harmed or that your report is invalid. Do not let anyone use gaps in memory to invalidate your experience.

As part of creating a fully detailed account, use these guidelines, and also include all the facts you believe are relevant. And if you're not sure if it's relevant – include it.

Start with:

- Location
- Date
- Time

Witnesses

- Names and contact information
- If you don't have names, describe each of them (physical description)
- Why were they there?
- Did anyone assist you?
- Did anyone assist or encourage the perpetrator?
- Was anyone else targeted?

What happened immediately before the incident?

- Were you threatened?
- Were you lured or drawn away from a safer situation or place?
- Were you misled, deceived, or drugged?

Detailed account

- Be descriptive and factual
- Lighting
- Sounds
- Everything you saw
- Duration of event
- Everything the perpetrator said – quote as directly as possible
- Was any of your property taken?

What happened immediately after?

- How did you extricate yourself or did somebody “rescue” you?
- Who did you tell?
- Describe medical needs and treatment if any were necessary
- Who else helped you?
- Were you denied the opportunity to report to authorities?
- If you reported, to who? Get copies of all reports and keep with this Self-Report.

Review your Self-Report. Is it thorough, detailed and factual?

Did you use specifics?

Example: Instead of “he took my stuff”, describe as “he took my backpack that contained a cell phone, wallet that had debit card and ID, sweatshirt, hairbrush, and history textbook”. If you are unable to write, use voice dictation or have a team member* write for you.

Law enforcement may have assumptions of how a victim “is supposed” to act. Just because you can present a coherent and factual account does not mean you weren’t harmed. Be confident, persistent, and engage your team* and allies.

*If you are not yet familiar with the GGWW Team philosophy and practice, go to Build Your Team under the Tools tab on ggwwrights.org