

Dear Family and Friends.

If you are reading this, then your loved one or friend needs your help. They have just revealed a shocking truth to you that you will be grappling with in many ways.

Your first reaction will be disbelief. [I didn't notice anything odd back then or. Our uncle, family friend or church elder etc. wouldn't do that.] Another reaction may be denial. ["Oh boy, our family doesn't need this right now." Or "She's always been weird and now she's blaming someone else for her messed up life."]

Then you may be thinking, "This happened 30 years ago, why bring it up now?"

Another typical reaction could be anger.

Anger towards the perpetrator, who committed the offences, and then towards the victim for speaking up.

To back up your thoughts, you may require proof from the victim.

This proof may not be available.

Before you read on, know this.

Your initial reactions are normal and don't make you a bad person.

Just read on and we will try to help you understand the situation.

What we offer now, is based on our own personal experience and the work we are doing in the community.

Our facts are based on sound research.

We will guide you through the initial processes and offer some guidance in your responses.

The first thing you need to do is accept that the victim is telling the truth.

What they are telling you will not come easy after all these years and they have been badly hurt and wounded for a great part of their life.

Don't add to that pain with disbelief and counter accusations.

They have already suffered enough.

Let them speak and listen, listen, listen.

God gave you two ears and one mouth for just such a reason.

Don't jump to initial and hasty reactions that could do more harm than good.

When the victim has poured out their heart to you, ask them what they want you to do to support, and don't do anything they don't want you to

do.

This is the most delicate time of the process.

Accept that you will also need support to deal with this and make sure you get it.

Draw on your own friends and family for this support and read up on the topic.

We draw you now to our F.A.Q's page.

Print these out and share them together.

You can get through this if you stick together as a family and listen to each other.

For the victim reporting, know that the scope of victims may now have increased in number by those you have just shared this with.

There lives may never be the same again either. This should not stop you from telling the truth but may help you understand their reactions.

Please call on us to support you where ever we can.

We pray that you will seek guidance through this issue in love and compassion.

God bless you all.

Graham and Michelle Hood