



# Understanding & Responding to Stalking



The Office of Wellness  
and Mental Health

[wellness@nvcc.edu](mailto:wellness@nvcc.edu)



Dear Reader,

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with some important information to help you understand stalking. Some of the content in this booklet may be difficult to acknowledge or process for both survivors of stalking and those close to survivors. We encourage you to contact us at OWMH if you have any questions about the contents of this booklet. OWMH wants to support you in any way that we can. Included within this booklet: definition of stalking, seriousness of stalking, types of stalkers, reporting options, safety planning and resources for you.

If you, or someone you know, has experienced stalking, remember

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE** and

supportive resources are available to you.

The Office of Wellness and Mental Health

(OWMH) provides FREE services which are available

by email at [wellness@nvcc.edu](mailto:wellness@nvcc.edu)

and

<https://www.nvcc.edu/wellness/index.html>



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## **How The Office of Wellness and Mental Health (OWMH) can help**

Northern Virginia Community College's Office of Wellness and Mental Health (OWMH) is committed to providing information to anyone impacted by sexual assault, dating/partner violence, stalking and sexual harassment. Support is available to students, faculty, staff and family members of any gender regardless of age, ability, ethnicity or orientation at no cost.

Support offered include:

- To report the incident - contact [titleix@nvcc.edu](mailto:titleix@nvcc.edu)
- Crisis intervention services and referrals
- Psychological, medical, legal, and campus support and information
- Court or hospital information
- Referrals to community resources
- Educational programs for the NOVA Community
- Information support for other options

**Contact NOVA's OWMH for assistance**

**Email: [wellness@nvcc.edu](mailto:wellness@nvcc.edu)**

FOLLOWING  
SOMEONE  
WITHOUT PERMISSION

**A Crime**

Intolerable and  
dangerous

NOT A FRIENDSHIP

## *Stalking is...*

*Not a joke or  
game*

Harassing someone  
through the internet

**Different for  
each victim**

Persistent and unwanted contact that causes fear

**DISGUSTING**

*Sending unwanted  
gifts, letters, cards  
and emails*

Unacceptable

## **The Truth About Stalking**

**Stalking is a  
serious issue**

Stalking is a pattern of behavior or course of conduct that is directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear. This pattern can be difficult to recognize. There must be 2 or more such behaviors to be considered stalking.

Anyone can be stalked. Regardless of an individual's race, gender or sexual identity, sexual orientation, religion, education, occupation, style of dress, or lifestyle. The blame for this crime lies solely with the perpetrator. So remember this isn't your fault.

In the United States, 7.5 million people are stalked each year. On college campuses over 13 percent of women will be stalked in a year. At least 54 percent of female victims and 48 percent of male victims are stalked before the age of 25. Perpetrators often have an intimate relationship or close friendship, but they may also be classmates, co-workers, neighbors or strangers.

Stalking is more dangerous than some people acknowledge. An episode of stalking may last for more than a year. Stalking at times either precedes or follows a sexual assault. A stalker may physically assault their victim, causing bodily injury and lasting psychological wounds. Stalking is unpredictable. No two stalking situations are alike. Trust your instincts.

It is important to seek support to understand more about stalking and what your options are. If you are being stalked, know that you are not alone and there are resources available for you.

**Contact OWMH at [wellness@nvcc.edu](mailto:wellness@nvcc.edu) to receive assistance and support. Being stalked is a crime and against NOVA student conduct policy. NOVA OWMH can help you think about your options and talk about how the incident has impacted you.**

### **Stalking Behavior**

A stalker may do anything to cause fear in the victim such as:

- Send unwanted phone calls, text messages, and emails
- Spread rumors about the victim
- Track the victim with the use of technology
- Follow, spy and "coincidentally" shows up wherever the victim is.
- Drive or hang around the victim's workplace, house or campus
- Break into the victim's home
- Steal your identity
- Leave unwanted notes, gifts and flowers
- Threaten to harm victim's loved ones
- Threats of suicide or homicide
- Crossing jurisdictions/borders to stalk
- Vandalize the victim's property (house, car)
- Kidnap victim or children
- Commit violence toward pets, friends and family
- Commit physical and sexual assault

### **Stalkers Often Display These Characteristics**

These are common examples of characteristics that a stalker might have.

- Jealousy
- Narcissism
- Selfishness
- Controlling
- Manipulative
- Deceptive
- Obsessive and compulsive
- Socially awkward or uncomfortable
- Blames others for his or her problems
- Falls instantly in love
- Unable to take "no" for an answer
- Unable to cope with rejection
- Often switches between love and rage
- History of domestic violence

## **The Progression of Stalking**

### **Information Gathering**

The stalker begins by trying to find out as much as they can about their victim. A former intimate partner may have already have this information. A stalker would want to know about their victim's everyday routine.

The stalker may go to great lengths to learn about their victim.

The stalker might check the victim's social media pages. The internet makes it easier for the stalker to find every little detail about their victim. Twitter, Facebook and Instagram might give the stalker information about the victim's plans, friends, family, school, and job.



### **Unwanted Contacts**



Unwanted contacts are the most common aspects of stalking. When the unwanted contacts first begin, the stalker may believe that he or she is being charming by leaving love letters, flowers and gifts. However, when the victim doesn't return the romantic gestures, the unwanted contacts become disturbing. The victim may receive dead flowers, hateful letters and more.

A stalker may even call/message their victim. The stalker might call the victim repeatedly. Sometimes the stalker might try to engage the victim in a conversation. The stalker may send messages through social media pages. Even if the victim blocks the stalker's social media pages, the stalker might make new pages to harass the victim using another identity.





Following the victim around is another form of harassment that the stalker uses. The stalker may "coincidentally" show up to where the victim is. Sometimes the stalker might observe the victim from afar or sometimes the stalker may approach the victim and try to engage in a conversation with the victim. This might make it very challenging for the victim to escape the stalker. The victim might move to a new location and change all of their personal information but the stalker may still find them. It can become a continual attempt to stay one step ahead.

### **Threats, Vandalism and Violence**

Not every stalker escalates beyond information gathering and unwanted contacts. However, there are a few who do move on to threats, vandalism, and violence. It's difficult to pinpoint which stalker might become more dangerous. Every stalker is unpredictable. A history of violence may increase the chances of future violence, but that is not always the case.

The stalker's threats may increase and be more explicit. The stalker may write threatening letters and send them by mail, email, social media, or phone (text or voicemail).

Vandalism is another tactic that a stalker may use. The stalker may just watch the victim's home or actually break into the victim's car or home to leave notes, take personal possessions, or damage belongings.

A stalking case doesn't always escalate to violence but when it does, it can be a scary situation, not only for the victim but also for the victim's loved ones. The obsession of a stalker may result with physical or sexual assault.



## **Stalking in Domestic & Dating/Partner Violence**

Stalking is often linked to domestic and dating/partner violence. A stalker can be someone the victim knows. The greater the relationship prior to the identified stalking, including spouses or intimate partners, the more likely the stalkers are choosing to use their behaviors to gain or regain power over their victims. In these cases, the majority are male perpetrators targeting female victims. Risks increase when the stalker is or was an intimate partner.

- Studies show increased fatality risk by the stalker
- The stalker already has extensive and intimate knowledge of the victim and routines (history, social or family contacts, daily routines, co-workers, neighbors, children, pets)
- The stalker may know the victim's hopes and fears
- The stalker can make it look like there are "legitimate" reasons for the behavior
- The stalker has opportunity for regular contact with the victim through children's activities, court dates, family, mutual friends, work, school, etc.
- Risks increase if the stalker has access to weapons
- Children in common may be at risk

## **Stranger Stalking**

Anyone can be a stalker. Sometimes a stalker is unknown to the victim. About 1 in 5 stalking victims are stalked by a stranger. Being stalked by a stranger can not only cause fear but also be challenging too. It's difficult to look out for the stalker when the victim has no idea who the stalker is. It's important for a victim to know that he or she did nothing to attract this stalker. It's never the victim's fault. It can happen to anyone.

## The Use of Technology To Stalk

Technology has made it easier for a stalker to monitor his or her victim. A stalker may use technology such as computers, cameras, phones, GPSs, social media, web cams and online history to facilitate both direct and indirect contact with the victim. Due to modern technology, the victim may have a difficult time fleeing from the stalker.

If a stalker has access to a victim's computer, the stalker can track the victim by looking at the history or websites visited on the computer.

There are two reasons why stalkers may have access to the victim's computer. One could be because the victim may have had a personal relationship with the stalker and decided to share his or her passwords with the stalker. The second reason could be the stalker knows how to hack into computers. With hacking abilities, it can be easy for a stalker to install spyware onto the victim's computer. Spyware is a software that can be installed onto a user's computer to collect personal information or monitor internet user's browsing habits.



**Tips: It's important to not share passwords with anyone even if it's a loved one. Frequently change computer passwords.**



Telephones and cellular phones can be used to threaten or harass via text messages, IM's, emails, and social media outlets. If the stalker has a chance to take the victim's cellphone, then he or she could install spyware onto the cellphone without the victim's knowledge. Spyware can provide all of the information that is on the cellphone and can allow the stalker to listen to the victim's conversations.

**Tip: It's important for the victim to keep his or her cellphone next to them. Don't make it so easy for the stalker to take it.**

**Global Positioning System (GPS) technology can be used by a stalker to track or follow a victim.** GPS devices are considered a stalker's best weapon. Not only do these devices make it easy for a stalker to find the victim's location but they are easy to install. Some ways a stalker could install the GPS would be by attaching it to the victim's car, hiding it in the victim's bag or activating the GPS tracker on the victim's cellphone.



**Tips: Have a mechanic examine the car to make sure there are no tracking devices attached. Do not leave the cellphone unattended. Also call the phone provider company to make sure that the GPS isn't activated.**



Social Media is another way a stalker can gain personal information about the victim. The stalker may have found out where the victim works, goes to school, who the victim's friends are and the victim's location just by social media pages. The stalker may also create fake social media pages to harass the victim. The stalker may post hurtful comments under the victim's pictures, post offensive pictures, or write false accusations on the victim's profile page.

**Tips: Make sure to block the stalker on every social media page even if the stalker keeps creating new pages. Also change all of the social media passwords frequently. Always make sure that the passwords are difficult to guess. Do not use names or anything that holds personal meaning. Use numbers, letters and symbols to form a strong password. Make sure all the social media pages are private. Do not add strangers as a friend. The stalker might create social media pages to access his or her victim's social media pages.**



If the stalker has advanced computer skills, then there may be a chance he or she may know how to hack into the victim's webcam. Over the years, a lot of hackers have learned how to hack into webcams without people's knowledge. It's become very easy to hack into someone's webcam and peek into their private life. If the stalker can't physically watch the victim then most likely he may hack into the victim's webcam just so he or she could see the victim.

**Tips:** Make sure to have a difficult password for the webcam. Don't share it with anyone. After using it, remember to turn off the webcam and unplug it. If the webcam is a part of the laptop then make sure the green light is off. The safest option for this is to cover the webcam. Place a post it or tape a piece of paper over the webcam.

Every computer has an online history and it shows all of the websites that the victim has visited. The online history can provide information about the victim's internet searches and favorite websites. Some people even have passwords that are automatically saved onto their favorite websites. Now, if a stalker has access to the victim's computer, then most likely he or she may visit the victim's online history. All of the information about the victim that the stalker needs to know is listed in the history.



**Tips:** Always clear the online history after using the computer, especially after using someone else's computer. For safe browsing, use Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox and click on the option that says private browsing so it doesn't save the online history.

## **Is What I'm Feeling Normal?**

As a survivor of stalking, you may experience many emotions.

Common survivor reactions include:

- Confusion - You can't believe that you're being stalked.
- Fear/Anxiety - You're constantly thinking about what your stalker is going to do. You're afraid to continue your normal lifestyle.
- Anger - You're upset because your stalker won't go away and your life isn't the same anymore.
- Shock - You feel numb and cut off from your emotions. You almost feel frozen.
- Helplessness - You just want these problems and your stalker to disappear but aren't sure if they will.
- Uninterested in reporting - You don't believe anyone is going to help you if you do report.
- Out of Control - You don't know where to turn. Everything seems pointless and difficult. Nothing seems to be in your control.
- Exhausted - You can't deal with this much longer.
- Depressed - You're feeling hopeless, upset, and tearful.
- Stress - You have a difficult time concentrating. You keep forgetting things. You can't seem to stop worrying.
- Sleeping Problems - You're having nightmares. You can't seem to fall asleep or else you want to sleep all the time.
- Isolation - You feel like no one understands you. You constantly feel alone. You feel disconnected from your friends and family.
- Nervousness - You're jumpy and getting startled by little things. You can't seem to calm down.

It is normal for you to feel this way due to the situation. However, you should know that there are resources.

## **Should I Seek Supportive Services?**

Supportive Services can be a great option for a victim. Many people often shy away from supportive services because they believe it's for the mentally ill or they're ashamed of what happened to them. However, this is completely false. Supportive Services will help the victim during this traumatic experience.

OWMH's mission is to address the issues of sexual assault, stalking, and dating/partner violence by providing confidential support and services to anyone. Contact OWMH by e-mail at [wellness@nvcc.edu](mailto:wellness@nvcc.edu). We are available to help and support anyone in the best and safest way possible, including referrals to police and/or other community agencies that may be helpful.

### **Benefits of Supportive Services**

- Understanding what is Happening
- Making Decisions about Legal and Campus Options
- Enhancing Academic and Social Functioning
- Minimizing the Negative Effects of the Assault
- Building Social Support
- Protecting Oneself from Further Victimization



## **Benefits of Supportive Services**

**Understanding what is Happening:** There might be a chance that the victim is feeling confused and unsure of what actually is happening, especially if the perpetrator is an acquaintance or dating partner. Supportive services offers an opportunity to review the incidents in question and become clearer about how to manage the stalking.

**Making Decisions about Legal and Campus Options:** The victim might be unsure about how to proceed in terms of reporting the stalking to police, pressing criminal charges, or initiating campus proceedings. With supportive services, the victim can discuss various options and arrive at a decision which will most likely promote healing and resolution in the victim's individual circumstance.

**Enhancing Academic and Social Functioning:** Stalking is a traumatic experience that may have disrupted the victim's life and may temporarily make it difficult for the victim to function at their usual level. Supportive services can help the victim develop effective coping strategies that make it more possible to pursue school, work and social relationships.

**Minimizing the Negative Effects of the Stalking:** The victim might experience a wide range of feelings including anger, depression, guilt, and fear. Additionally, the victim might experience physical symptoms such as difficulties with memory, nightmares, sleeping, or concentrating, as well as disturbances in interpersonal relationships. Supportive services provides assistance with "working through" the trauma of stalking, with the goal of minimizing negative psychological and social effects.

**Building Social Support:** A major goal of supportive services is to help the victim build a support network of people who can help the victim through this difficult time. For many, a support group can be an instrumental part of the recovery process. Talking with others who have had the same experience can greatly decrease feelings of shame and isolation. Also, supportive services can include the victim's partner or family members, as they may need help understanding how to be supportive.

## **Stalking is a Crime**

Besides the fact that stalking is ethically and morally wrong, stalking is a crime in all 50 states. The first stalking law was enacted in California in 1990 following an attack on one actress and the death of another at the hands of their respective stalkers. Even though stalking came to people's attention because of celebrity stalking, it is now known that most stalking occurs to regular people. Virginia passed its criminal stalking law in 1992. Virginia has also passed a civil stalking law that provides victims a cause of action to obtain compensation for actual losses as well as emotional pain and suffering. The Federal government has enacted similar laws.

### **VA Criminal Code 18.2-60.3 Stalking (2016 amended)**

- Any person ... who on more than one occasion engages in conduct directed at another person with the intent to place, or when he knows or reasonably should know that the conduct places that other person in reasonable fear of death, criminal sexual assault or bodily injury to that person or to that of the person's family member is guilty of a Class 1 Misdemeanor
- If the person contacts or follows or attempts to contact or follow the person ... after given actual notice that the person does not want to be contacted or followed, such actions shall be evidence that the person intended to place that person, or reasonably should have known...
- Conviction of a second offense within 5 years is a Class 6 felony
- Proof must be beyond a reasonable doubt

### **VA Civil Code 8.01-42.3 civil action for stalking (2001)**

- A victim has a civil cause of action against an individual who engaged in conduct that is prohibited under 18.2-60.3 whether or not the individual has been charged or convicted for the alleged violation, for the compensatory damages incurred by the victim as a result of that conduct, in addition to the costs for bringing the action. If compensatory damages are awarded, a victim may also be awarded punitive damages.
- No action shall be commenced under this section more than 2 years after the most recent conduct prohibited under 18.2-60.3
- Proof is preponderance of evidence

## **How to Build a Case**

No matter which option the victim chose for reporting, collecting evidence is very important if the victim is preparing a case against the stalker. The victim needs to keep all the evidence. It's also important to make sure that the victim documents every encounter with the stalker.

### **Collect Evidence**

- Keep a journal to write down any encounter with the stalker. Make sure to include the time, witnesses and location.
- Save everything! Keep all the letters, text-messages, social media messages, gifts, emails, etc.
- Make sure to handle the physical evidence carefully. There might be fingerprints on the evidence that could later be useful.
- Make sure to take pictures. Take pictures of the location where the stalker left something or property he or she damaged. Be cautious when taking pictures of the location and damaged property. It can provoke the stalker. Taking pictures of the stalker is not the best option.
- Keep all the paperwork organized. Be sure to have all the police reports, telephone records and emails organized in a folder.
- Inform neighbors, friends, police, and professors about the stalker.
- Have witnesses! Be sure to ask anyone who has seen or been a part of one of the stalking incidents to write it all down. Ask them to testify or give a statement in court.

Consider getting a protective order.....

## **Obtaining a Protective Order**

Protective Orders are legal orders issued by a magistrate or judge to protect the health and safety of a victim and his/her family or household members. There is no charge to obtain this order.

In Virginia, the victim can obtain a Stalking Protective Order. The victim must have been subjected to an act involving violence or threat of violence. An order will prohibit the stalker from contact with the victim and can also add protections at home, work, and school.

Is a protective order right for you? Each situation is different. Such an order can provide legal protection but they cannot necessarily protect the victim from violence. To help protect you, please contact OWMH for safety planning assistance. If you are being stalked by a family member or former family member, you may be eligible for family abuse protective order. Both types offer the same protections. They are handled in different courts.

### **There are three types of protective orders**

**Emergency Protective Order (EPO)** - Usually requested by a law enforcement officer after an incident. An EPO lasts for 72 hours or until court is next in session.

**Preliminary Protective Order (PPO)** - Only a judge or magistrate can issue a PPO. The victim must obtain a PPO within a short time after the victim has become a victim of stalking. This lasts 15 days or until the final Protective Order hearing.

**"Permanent" Protective Order (PO)** - A judge can grant a PO that lasts for up to two years. The accused stalker must be at this final hearing. At the end of two years, the victim can request an extension if needed.

How do I obtain a protective order? The victim does not need an attorney to file for a protective order. To find out more information about how to file, go to [www.courts.state.va.us](http://www.courts.state.va.us) To access I-CAN! (an online forms completion program), from the main menu select "Programs" and then click "Assistance with Protective Orders (I-CAN!).

## **Reporting Options**

As a member of the NOVA community, these are some choices a NOVA member has when it comes to reporting. Below are some options. If there are any questions about any of them, just ask OWMH.

The Office of Wellness and Mental Health (OWMH) - For support and assistance only.

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**Criminal Case** - To have the perpetrator arrested and prosecuted in court. The perpetrator must be found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt which can result in incarceration. To start the process the victim first needs to make a police report in the jurisdiction where the incident occurred. The police will investigate and if there's enough evidence, the perpetrator will be arrested. This case will go to the prosecutor for review. The prosecutor will then make a decision whether or not to set a trial date.

**Title IX** - A federal law that protects students, staff, and faculty from sex and gender discrimination . Anyone who experiences sexual misconduct at NOVA may contact the Title IX Office for assistance. An administrative process can be held to hold the perpetrator accountable, using the preponderance of evidence (more likely than not) standard. No police report is required in a Title IX case. If the perpetrator is found responsible, academic sanctions up to and including expulsion are possible. If no investigation is requested, the office can still provide accommodations as needed. Services available by phone 703.323.2262.

**Civil Case** - To bring a lawsuit against the perpetrator or third party for personal damages. The perpetrator must be found guilty using the preponderance of evidence. To start the process the victim must hire a civil attorney to take the case. No police report is required but filing a police report is important to strengthen the case. The attorney will collect evidence and prepare for a civil trial in a community court house.

## **Where to Get Help**

Most sexual assault services provide resources for stalking.

### **Campus**

NOVA's Office of Wellness and Mental Health (OWMH) -  
[wellness@nvcc.edu](mailto:wellness@nvcc.edu)

NOVA Title IX Coordinator - 703.323.2262 or [titleix@nvcc.edu](mailto:titleix@nvcc.edu)

NOVA Police Department - 703.764.5000

NOVA Human Resources - 703-323-3110

LiveSafe App - <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/livesafe/id653666211?mt=8>

### **Local**

Alexandria Sexual Assault Center - 703.683.7273 (24 hour)

Alexandria Domestic Violence Shelter - 703.746.4911 (24 hour)

Fairfax County Domestic and Sexual Violence Services - 703.360.7273  
(24 hour)

Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter/LAWS - 703.777.6522 (24 hour)

Action in Community Through Service Sexual Assault Services (ACTS)  
(PWC)- 703.368.4141 (24 hour)

Doorways for Women and Families (Arlington) - (703) 237-0881 (24 hour)

Prince William Domestic Violence Intervention (Turning Points) -  
703.221.4951 (24 hour)

### **National**

Stalking Resource Center - (202)467-8700 or [www.victimsofcrime.org/src](http://www.victimsofcrime.org/src)

Victim Connect Hotline - 855-484-2846 (for immediate assistance)

Emily Spence-Diehl, *Stalking: A Handbook for Victims*, 1999, Learning  
Publications, Inc.

## How to Stay Safe?

### **Home**

- Add alarm system or small motion sensor alarms to home
- Trim bushes and trees around home to eliminate hiding spots.
- Identify escape routes out of the house
- Use deadbolts on all doors
- Attach motion-sensor lights to outside of home
- Install locks on bedroom doors
- Install locks on windows
- Don't throw away anything in the trashcan that has personal information such name, phone number, etc.
- Keep cellphone charged
- Keep important documents in a security box at a bank
- Inform the apartment building's security guard
- Consider getting a dog
- Consider getting a security system

### **Car**

- Look inside and underneath the car before getting inside
- Drive with the doors locked
- Always leave enough space between cars while driving. It will make it easier to change lanes
- Speak with a locksmith about upgrading the car's locking mechanisms
- Ask mechanic to check car for GPS devices

### **School**

- Show the campus police and friends a picture of the stalker
- Ask campus police for an escort to the parking lot
- Download the LiveSafe App
- Inform professors about the stalker
- Park in a different spot everyday
- Change class schedule, if needed

### **Work**

- Inform all coworkers about the stalking
- Change work schedule, if needed
- Walk with a coworker from the parking lot to the workplace
- Distribute a photograph of the stalker to coworkers
- Try not to work alone
- Tell all the coworkers to not disclose any personal information
- Ask all coworkers not to speak with the stalker
- Consider carpooling
- Park in a different spot everyday

### **Public Areas**

- Change daily routine
- Only tell loved ones and friends about future plans
- Tell friends and family about the stalking
- Avoid isolated areas
- Never walk to the restroom alone
- Have an easy access to the car keys
- Be aware of all the exits located in any building

## Online

The internet can be a *scary* place these days which is why it's important to surf the web safely. With technology, it has become easy for a stalker to harass his or her victim. There are ways to be safe online. Below are options that may help reduce this type of stalking.

**Here are some ways to stay safer:**

- Make sure to have a strong password (Symbols, Numbers, and Capitals, more than 8 characters)
- NEVER share passwords with anyone
- Change passwords every few weeks
- Don't use the same password for different accounts
- Don't share any personal information online
- Make sure to log out of all social media
- Don't accept friend requests from strangers
- Always be cautious about posting personal information
- Block anyone who seems suspicious
- Set all social media profiles on private

## **Safety Plan**

The following information includes ways to plan for your safety.

- Program 911 into your cell phone.
- Let your friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, and security know about your situation.
- Give them photos of your stalker/harasser, as well as identifying information about their car, license plate, etc.
- At work have your phone calls screened and be notified if it seems that your stalker is trying to reach you
- Consider obtaining a protective order and distribute copies to local law enforcement, campus police, and work security.
- Keep a detailed log of all your contacts or suspected contacts, including saving any e-mails, written notes, telephone calls, texts or other messages.
- Take extra safety measures to protect your personal information.
- Any written or telephone threats should be taken seriously. Notify the police immediately. Save the threat.
- Be alert of any unusual packages, boxes or devices found on your property.
- Keep your friends and family informed about where you are going. Use the support network.
- Change your routine periodically, as well as the routes.
- Change your phone numbers, passwords and PINs frequently.
- Document all changes made as a result of the stalking.
- Trust your instincts.

## **Self-Care Techniques**

Self-Care is important and can help a lot during the intensity of stalking. Below are suggestions that might help during this time.

### **Self-Care Techniques:**

- Support from Loved Ones - Try to find trusting people who will listen to you.
- Stress Reduction Activities - Yoga, meditation, massage and music are great stress reducing activities.
- Keep a Journal - Writing in a journal is a good way to express feelings. It's a healthy way to release emotions.
- Take Small Breaks - Taking short breaks can be relaxing. Find a place that is peaceful. Read a book or listen to soft music.
- Support Group - Joining a support group can help a lot. Speaking or listening to individuals who have been in the same situation can be helpful. OWMH has a great support group that is looking for individuals to talk or listen.

Self-Care isn't always easy alone. It's better to have someone's support on this path. Consider speaking with OWMH for assistance about any of these options.



Remember!!

**You are not alone.**

**It's not your fault.**

**We believe you.**

***We are here for you.***

The Office of Wellness and Mental Health

by email at [wellness@nvcc.edu](mailto:wellness@nvcc.edu)

<https://www.nvcc.edu/wellness/index.html>



The Office of Wellness  
and Mental Health

[wellness@nvcc.edu](mailto:wellness@nvcc.edu)

