

*Collective Care is our Greatest Defense

HOW TO BECOME
PART OF A
SUPPORTIVE
PRO-ABORTION
COMMUNITY
IN THE FACE OF
ABORTION BANS



ABORTION
ON *our*
own terms

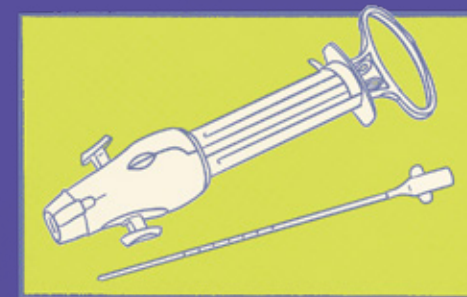


TABLE OF CONTENTS

What Is a Self-Managed Abortion?	04-05
The Power of Community Support	06-07
Building Support in Your Community	08-09
Community Support in Action	10-11
Supporting a Self-Managed Abortion	12-13
Finding Your Place and Growing Your Network	14-15
Trusted Resources and Legal Support	16
Abortion Pills 101	17

DISCLAIMER:

The information in this zine is meant for general educational purposes only. It isn't a replacement for medical care, advice, diagnosis, or treatment from a healthcare professional, and it shouldn't be considered legal advice. If you have questions about your health or a legal matter, we encourage you to speak with a qualified professional.



We trust people to decide what is best for themselves and their families. Self-managed abortion and abortion pills give us control over our bodies and futures, keeping power in our hands and care on our own terms –no matter the policies of the country or the laws in your state.

We will always fight back, and support self-managed abortion in our communities, to create a world where abortion is completely accessible, and free from stigma and the risk of arrest or imprisonment.

One of our most powerful tools to defeat ongoing attacks against abortion is the long tradition of sharing critical information and resources. **Becoming part of a community support network that helps people to access self-managed abortion is an incredible way to continue this tradition.** Join us in this vibrant, joyful, and impactful movement to meet community needs and keep our friends, family, and neighbors safe.



WHAT IS A SELF-MANAGED ABORTION?



SELF-MANAGED ABORTION (SMA) IS WHEN SOMEONE ENDS THEIR OWN PREGNANCY OUTSIDE OF A CLINIC, DOCTOR'S OFFICE, OR HOSPITAL. THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SELF-MANAGE, INCLUDING SAFE AND EFFECTIVE ABORTION PILLS, MIFEPRISTONE AND MISOPROSTOL, MASSAGE, MANUAL VACUUM ASPIRATION (MVA), HERBS WITH THE SUPPORT OF AN EXPERIENCED HERBALIST, AND MORE.

EVERYONE'S REASONS FOR HAVING AN ABORTION, INCLUDING THE TYPE OF ABORTION THEY DECIDE TO HAVE, ARE DIFFERENT AND VALID.

Some people choose to self-manage an abortion because:

THEY FACE BARRIERS TO IN-CLINIC CARE BECAUSE OF COST, TRANSPORTATION, IMMIGRATION STATUS, CHILDCARE, OR ABORTION RESTRICTIONS.

THEY WANT MORE CONTROL OVER THEIR ABORTION EXPERIENCE.

THEY NEED AN OPTION THAT FITS THEIR SCHEDULE.

THEY WANT MORE PRIVACY.

THEY HAVE FACED STIGMATIZING EXPERIENCES WITH HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN CLINICS BECAUSE OF THEIR IDENTITY.

THEY JUST WANT TO

Whatever the reason, people deserve accurate information, support, and access!

"WE DREAM INTO REALITY, A WORLD WHERE ALL PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO A TOTALLY SAFE, SUPPORTED, AND STIGMA-FREE SELF-MANAGED ABORTION."

PEOPLE HAVE BEEN HELPING EACH OTHER GET ABORTIONS FOR GENERATIONS.

Long before hotlines, websites, and social media existed, people shared information, methods, transportation, childcare, money, meals, and emotional support with one another. That tradition continues today through community support networks.

Some networks are organized groups, others form organically among friends, neighbors, classmates, family members, coworkers, or trusted community members who are committed to looking out for each other.

Community support networks can share knowledge and help make sure that no one has to navigate an abortion alone. Some people may prefer to have their abortion on their own, and the role of community support for them may be to provide information that helps them act on their decision confidently. By joining and creating these networks, we are building a world where everyone can self-manage an abortion with whatever logistical and emotional support they want throughout the experience.



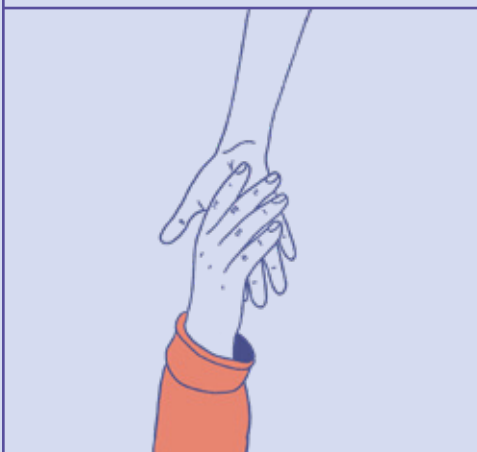
There is no single model for finding or developing a network. Networks could be:

- A group chat of trusted friends
- Local abortion funds
- Local birth worker collectives
- Students supporting students
- Neighbors helping neighbors
- Health care providers sharing best practices
- Community organizers sharing resources
- Faith leaders offering care and support
- People connecting others to logistical help

No one knows their community better than those living in it. What determines the best care for your community depends on the unique circumstances, people and the local legal and abortion access landscape. If you want to create support for people in your community who need abortion care, first think about the ways you already show up for and interact with the people you share space with:



Educate yourself: Learn about self-managed abortion, what it is, how people have them, why, and what is helpful to those individuals.



Find existing resources: Begin making a list and/or a map of local resources, such as

- Nonjudgmental health centers
- Abortion funds and practical support networks
- Doulas and doula collectives
- Bail and legal defense funds
- Harm reduction groups
- Domestic violence support and shelters
- Housing support and shelters
- Utility assistance programs
- Food banks and community fridges
- Emergency contraception distribution programs
- Breastfeeding support and breastmilk donations
- Diaper and formula donation centers
- Community birth centers



Become a trustworthy community member: Relationships are the foundation of every strong network. Build trust over time, and communicate to those around you what kind of support you're willing and able to provide.

Keep showing up. Consistency matters more than perfection – show up to events, respond to messages and questions that might come your way, and be honest about what you do and do not know.



Learn your style of info-sharing:

How do you feel most confident and comfortable sharing info on SMA? Do you like mentioning it to people in person once you come to know them? Do you prefer to send links with reliable information to friends?



Know the risks: Unfortunately, people have been criminalized for self-managing and helping others to self-manage. The place with the highest instances of criminalization is the emergency room. You can read about laws in your state at [INeedAnA.com](https://www.ineedana.com), and contact ReproLegalHelpine with questions by calling 844-868-2812.



Check in on your own stigma:

Where might you judge yourself or others and their reproductive needs? Investigate what you find and work to dismantle the inner police.





SHARING OUR STORIES OF

COMMUNITY SUPPORT



"BEING A PART OF A COMMUNITY
SUPPORT NETWORK IS HOW I
PRACTICE HOPE AS A DISCIPLINE AS
OPPOSED TO A PASSIVE WISHFULNESS."



LO,
NORTH CAROLINA

**HOW DID YOU FIRST JOIN A
COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORK,
AND WHY?**

I was moving back home to North Carolina, looking for a community with whom to continue reproductive justice organizing. I connected with this phenomenal Black birthworker who plugged me into our local abortion fund, which I joined a few months later as a helpline caseworker and doula volunteer.

WHAT DOES THIS NETWORK DO?

The network provides financial, practical, and emotional support to people traveling to or from North and South Carolina seeking abortion care. It is sustained by a small and mighty team of dedicated organizers who return calls on the helpline; allocate funding for clinic visits, transportation, childcare, and meals; provide

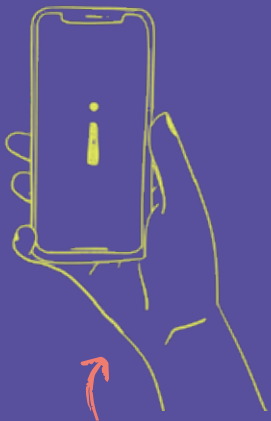
emotional and informational support before, during, and after an abortion; distribute emergency contraception, pregnancy tests, and safer sex supplies; engage with community members at local events; keep folks up-to-date on local legislation through the newsletter; and connect folks to local resources for intimate partner violence, housing, diapers, and everything in between.

WHY IS THIS WORK IMPORTANT?

This work is important because it helps meet the needs of our community where our local, state, and federal governments continue to fail us. Community support networks are the embodiment of collective power and work to build the worlds we envision where every person's basic needs are met.



HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER IN ORDER TO HELP OTHERS EXPERIENCE A SAFE, SUPPORTED SELF-MANAGED ABORTION:



INFORMATION:

Do they know the abortion process and what they may experience?



FOLLOW-UP CARE:

Do they know of trusted healthcare providers in their community that they can go to receive follow-up care, if needed?

DIRECT SUPPORT:

Are there trusted birthworkers, community healthcare workers, or friends they can safely source medications, herbs and experienced herbal care, or other tools from, and who can answer their questions?



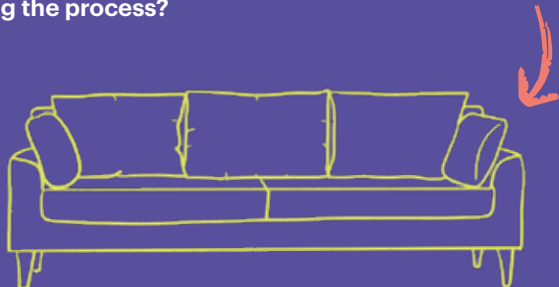
CHILDCARE:

Do they have someone they trust who can take care of their children, if needed?



A SAFE PLACE TO LAND:

Are they housed? Is their housing safe and free from violence? Do the people in the household know about their abortion plan, and are they able to support them during the process?



ITEMS TO HELP WITH THE PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE:

Do they have access to maxi pads, disposable underwear, heating pads, Tylenol, herbal tea, and soothing balms?



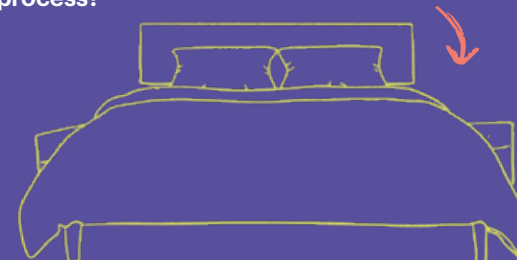
COUNSELING AND THERAPY:

Do they have the number for the Miscarriage and Abortion Hotline to call for medical support? Do they have the number for All-Options or Reprocare to process their experience? Do they have a therapist, family member, or friend they could process and share with?



REST AND RECOVERY:

Is there spaciousness in their life for rest and recovery in the days following their abortion process?



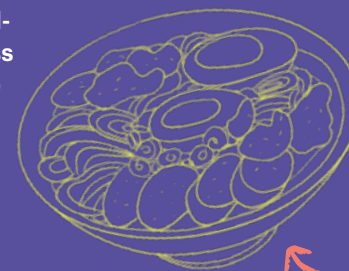
SUPPORT PERSON(S) / DOULA(S):

Do they have a trusted support person/doula to journey through the physical and emotional experience with? Can this person serve as a bridge to information and resources to meet their needs? Or, are they choosing to do this on their own, and if so, what support can be provided from afar?



MEALS:

Do they have food that is easy to make if they are feeling crummy? Do they have money for food and delivery options?



SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE:

If desired, do they have a mentor and/or spiritual guide that they can trust and turn to? Do they have a religious community or a prayer that would bring them comfort?

This No one comes into something NEW and magically knows how to be great at it, or even what their exact place is. It can take time and a VARIETY of experiences to know what you like doing and where you feel most comfortable. Being honest with yourself and others will help you find your place in a community support network. Over time, as you ~~gain~~ gain comfort and confidence in your ~~know~~ knowledge, you might find yourself naturally expanding to provide support in different areas.

Just learning to speak with new people about providing SELF-MANAGED ABORTION support is a MASSIVELY important way to find others who may benefit from your knowledge, your network, and to meet others who may want to join.

Ideas

to

engage

and build

your

network

TO SPREAD AWARENESS:

CREATE A CHAT GROUP WITH FRIENDS WHO WANT TO LEARN MORE.

HOST A BOOK CLUB THAT INCLUDES BOOKS ON ABORTION, REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE, AND MUTUAL AID.

TABLE AT A FAIR OR FARMERS MARKET TO GIVE OUT INFORMATION ABOUT REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, AND BE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS.

SHARE THIS AND OTHER ZINES WITH INFORMATION.

CREATE CARE KITS AND KEEP SOME READY TO GO, INCLUDING IN YOUR CAR.

DEVELOP A BUSINESS CARD THAT INCLUDES LOCAL RESOURCES AND WEBSITES.

RESOURCES:

REDUCE
LEGAL RISK,

HAVE
SUPPORT
ON-HAND

While a self-managed abortion is medically and physically safe, there can be legal risks. You can minimize that exposure by having a list of places that will answer all kinds of questions while keeping your experience confidential. This includes:

The Miscarriage and Abortion Hotline:
Speak to real, pro-abortion medical professionals by phone or text for medical questions, concerns or information on how to self-manage.

☎ 833-246-2632

🌐 MAHotline.org

📱 @MA_Hotline

The Repro Legal Helpline:

Speak to pro-abortion legal professionals for questions on your legal rights and risks when having or supporting someone who is self-managing an abortion. Their Repro Legal Defense Fund offers funding support for legal defense, and bail funds.

☎ 844-868-2812

🌐 ReproLegalHelpline.org

📱 @ReproLegalDefenseFund

Reprocare Helpline:

Find emotional support and guidance before, during and after an abortion from trained peer-support staff.

☎ 833-226-7821

🌐 Reprocare.com

📱 @Reprocare_Healthline

Know your local resource: Search/contact your local abortion fund as a great resource for local info on how to access abortion care – no matter the laws and restrictions that may be in place.

ABORTION PILLS 101

Abortion pills are a safe and effective way to end a pregnancy.

THERE ARE TWO COMMON APPROACHES TO END A PREGNANCY UNDER 12 WEEKS:

1

Mifepristone and misoprostol used together



Swallow 1 mifepristone pill with water

24-48 hours later, dissolve four misoprostol pills between cheeks and gums for 30 minutes (two on each side of the mouth). Let them dissolve for 30 minutes, swallowing any remnants.



30 min

2

Misoprostol used on its own

Place 4 misoprostol pills inside between the cheeks and gum (two on each side of the mouth), and let them dissolve there for 30 minutes, swallowing any remnants.



30 min

3 hours

3 hours later, take another 4 misoprostol pills the same way.

3 hours

3 hours later, take another 4 misoprostol pills the same way.

FOR A TOTAL OF
12 PILLS OVER 6 HOURS

The protocol can look different past 12 weeks, but medication abortion has been used safely and effectively at all stages of pregnancy.



ABORTION ON *our* *own terms*

Abortion On Our Own Terms is a national campaign working to educate people on and destigmatize self-managed abortion. With this knowledge we keep the power over our bodies and futures in our hands and on our own terms.

 Visit us at AbortionOnrOurOwnTerms.org

 [@AbortionOnOurOwnTerms](https://www.instagram.com/AbortionOnOurOwnTerms)

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