

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Samaritans

(24 Hour National Helpline)

(08457) 909090

Email: www.samaritans.org

Bristol Crisis Service For Women

(Supporting women in emotional distress)

(0117) 925 1119

Friday and Saturday 9pm - 12.30am

Sunday 6pm - 9pm

Call from anywhere in the UK

LEAFLETS AVAILABLE

Sexual harassment at work.

Information for family and friends of survivors.

Information for women who want to volunteer.

Information on the police and courts.

Information for survivors of rape or sexual assault.

Information for adult survivors of child sexual abuse.

Information for workers.

Information on ritual abuse for survivors and supporters.

Resources and contacts list.

Survivors and self-harm - self-injury.

Survivors and flashbacks.

Personal safety.

WRASAC service information.

HELPLINE

(01382) 201291

Support workers are available at the following times, to offer support and provide information.

Monday 12pm - 2pm

Tuesday 10am - 12pm

Wednesday 7pm - 9pm

Thursday 2pm - 4pm

Friday 7pm - 9pm

24 Hour Answering Machine

At any other time, messages can be left and will be returned discreetly, as soon as possible.

HOW TO CONTACT US

Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre

PO Box 83

Dundee

DD1 4YZ

Business line: (01382) 205556

Email: wrasac@btconnect.com

This leaflet is funded by Scottish Executive's Choose Life Fund.



WOMEN'S RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE



A free and confidential service

SUICIDE

SOME COMMON BELIEFS

If a survivor is going to take her own life, there is nothing you can do.

FACT: Many survivors who are feeling suicidal may well be undecided about dying. Appropriate support can reduce the risk. It may just be that they are finding it extremely difficult to cope with very strong and difficult emotions and suicide seems like the only option. However, if a survivor is making an informed choice about suicide you need to respect this.

If a survivor has a history of 'attempted suicide' then they won't do it for real.

FACT: Those people that have attempted suicide once are one hundred times more likely* than the rest of the population to attempt suicide again. Four out of ten people who take their own life will have made an earlier suicide attempt*.

Survivors who talk about suicide are the least likely to attempt it.

FACT: According to statistics, 80% of people who take their own life have given warnings about their suicidal intentions*. There is hardly anyone who will take their own life without letting others in their life know how they are feeling.

**The Samaritans, 2004*

Survivors say that they are suicidal to get attention.

FACT: This is not necessarily the case. Suicidal feelings often come from intense feelings of hopelessness, desperation and despair. It is when people's feelings are ignored that these feelings can be reinforced.

Talking about suicide can encourage the survivor to die by suicide.

FACT: If we acknowledge the strength of the fears and feelings and help the survivor explore the reasons for their suicidal feelings, this can provide a lifeline - it can make the difference between choosing to take their own life and living.

IF YOU FEEL SUICIDAL

Suicidal feelings can be frightening. For many survivors who feel suicidal, there seems to be no other way out. When you feel overwhelmed by it all, it is often the hardest time to reach out for help. It's normal to have suicidal feelings if you are dealing with flashbacks and feelings such as pain, guilt and anger. But having suicidal feelings is very different from acting on them.

Suicidal feelings can be very traumatic, but they will pass. After they subside, you need to continue caring for yourself. Healing may stir up old feelings such as terror and powerlessness, rage and grief. Your self-esteem sinks and you may say to yourself, "Who'd want to help me?"

"Who'd want to listen to me?" "What's the point". When you're in crisis, it's crucial that you reach out, get help, and get support.

DEALING WITH CRISIS

By listing names and numbers of the people who are supportive of you, along with useful phone numbers (perhaps The Samaritans, and WRASAC'S number and helpline times) this can give you an easy reference guide the next time you need to call someone. Sometimes just leaving a message for a friend or listening to a supportive voice can help you keep going.

You may be struggling with anxiety or panic attacks. If you learn to recognize the signals of impending panic, you can sometimes head off a full-blown attack. Once you're in the midst of a full-blown attack, you need a plan for coping with the mounting terror. Make a list of the things you can do to comfort yourself. What would help you calm down? Perhaps have a warm bath, listen to your favourite music, or go for a walk. One of the most effective ways to calm down when you're in a panic is deep breathing exercises. Include on your list simple things that satisfy as many senses as possible and include reaching out to others.

If you are worried that you can't control your suicidal feelings, take the time *now* to create a plan for keeping yourself alive.