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# live to tell and tell to live

[www.kasp.org.uk](http://www.kasp.org.uk)

A booklet by young people who have experienced childhood sexual abuse – written for other young people who have also experienced childhood sexual abuse.

This booklet has been written by young people, aged 16-25 years old, who have experienced childhood sexual abuse. The booklet is offered for other young people, around the same age bracket, who have also experienced childhood sexual abuse.

The young people involved in the design and content of this booklet are or have been attending Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project in Fife, and it is their courage, determination and great generosity that has brought about this booklet. It is a very important contribution that the young people have offered, finding the words that other young people may not be able to find for themselves, and so we hope that the booklet really helps you.

We have called it *Live to tell, and tell to live* for very clear reasons. At KASP we very much believe that people can be SURVIVORS of childhood sexual abuse, and *Live to tell* reflects how people can survive and live beyond childhood sexual abuse, and go on to tell, if they choose to. However, some young people also explain that in order for them to find their childhood in a different way, to adjust to their experiences and build a life for themselves that can be happy and successful, the key to all of this is to tell their stories, in order to live through them. So, it is important for the young people to *tell in order to live*.

# live to tell and tell to live

## Acknowledgements and thanks

### To young people

As we already mentioned, this booklet would not be possible without the contribution from young people, and we sincerely thank all of the people who have been involved. We know that these young people hold hope for other young people that the booklet will really help.

### To FRASAC

We also thank FRASAC (Fife Rape and Sexual Assault Centre) for their valued input to the materials in the self help section. If you have been affected by rape or sexual assault you can contact FRASAC, and their details are at the back of the booklet.

### To AEGON

KASP extend great thanks to AEGON UK for their support, funding and professional input. Without this we would not have been able to produce this booklet for young people. If you are interested in learning more about AEGON UK or to enquire about employment, their contact details are at the back of the booklet.

## Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project

Kingdom Abuse Survivors Project (KASP) provides a wide range of services to enable survivors of childhood sexual abuse throughout Fife, to address the issues relating to their experiences of sexual abuse. KASP offers the range of services from anyone who is 16 and above. One part of the service is to offer counselling and support to young people (both male and female), between the ages of 16 and 25 years old. This part of KASP is funded by the Big Lottery.

If you would like further information or to contact us check out our website, [www.kasp.org.uk](http://www.kasp.org.uk) or you can call us at Kirkcaldy on 01592 644217, or at our Cupar offices on 01334 656176.

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## Being Normal

When I walked through the doors of KASP 5 years ago, I only had one dream, to be like everyone else to be "NORMAL" but I knew I was evil.

I was frightened, confused and very unsure; it is the hardest thing I have ever done but by far the best. I was tired of just surviving I wanted a life. My life had become an endless round of self-harming routines, drinking, cutting, starving/binging and many suicide attempts – to name a few!

To the outside world I was "NORMAL" because I was the best at painting on the smile, but behind closed doors was a different matter, just like my childhood! I wanted to tell my secret, so I did and I still am!

The early days, weeks and months were a constant struggle, getting out of bed was like climbing Mount Everest. As the days, weeks and months passed I talked and I remembered I cried, I got angry, I felt pain and sadness, embarrassment and shame. I got frustrated and confused but I kept on coming and talking and slowly got to know me, one day at a time, one piece at a time. I was pulling myself apart and putting the pieces back together in the right place.

This has been a long hard slow process and still can be at times but 100% worth it. I have learnt to follow my instincts and listen to my inner voice, we all have one. My instincts and inner voice will tell me right from wrong and I get it wrong many times.

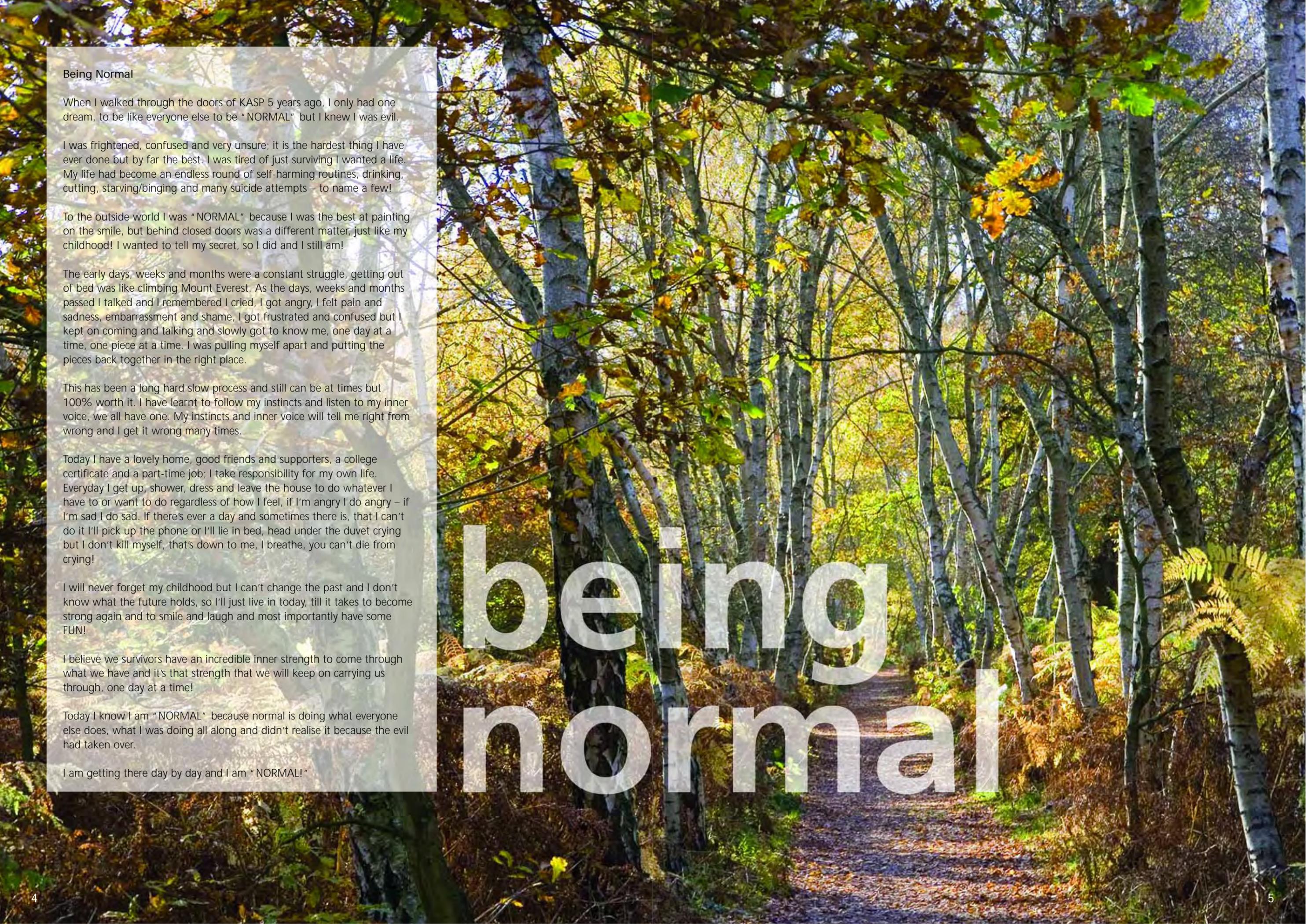
Today I have a lovely home, good friends and supporters, a college certificate and a part-time job; I take responsibility for my own life. Everyday I get up, shower, dress and leave the house to do whatever I have to or want to do regardless of how I feel, if I'm angry I do angry – if I'm sad I do sad. If there's ever a day and sometimes there is, that I can't do it I'll pick up the phone or I'll lie in bed, head under the duvet crying but I don't kill myself, that's down to me, I breathe, you can't die from crying!

I will never forget my childhood but I can't change the past and I don't know what the future holds, so I'll just live in today, till it takes to become strong again and to smile and laugh and most importantly have some FUN!

I believe we survivors have an incredible inner strength to come through what we have and it's that strength that we will keep on carrying us through, one day at a time!

Today I know I am "NORMAL" because normal is doing what everyone else does, what I was doing all along and didn't realise it because the evil had taken over.

I am getting there day by day and I am "NORMAL!"



being  
normal

### As a survivor at KASP

I feel that speaking to someone (a counsellor) at KASP has really helped me. It was a big step to take but I am glad I took it. I feel more in control of my life now; I'm not saying it is easy but I am getting there. Before I started going to KASP I lived in the past. I never thought I could ever trust anyone again as the people I did love and trust hurt me and let me down. But, that's not the case at KASP – I feel I can be myself and not be judged.

I feel I can open up and speak about my feelings more freely and openly now.

When I first started speaking to someone at KASP just over a year ago, I felt like I was the one to blame – it was all my own fault and I also felt guilty, like I did something wrong. KASP has helped me turn this around. I have learned to know that none of the blame and guilt belongs to me – it all belongs to the one that abused me.

I am glad I have someone at KASP to speak to about the abuse that I went through as a child, and how it used to eat me up inside for many years. But, I am glad it's coming out now, even if it's a little bit at a time.

Cherylleigh Niven. September 2008.

### As a counsellor at KASP!

I have thought long and hard, searching for the words to describe my experience of being a counsellor at KASP, and in particular with one survivor. Perhaps my long hard search for words is the point – it reminds me how hard it can be for young people, actually for anyone who is a survivor, to find the words. Remember that for some survivors of childhood sexual abuse, they have endured experiences, for which they have no words, nor are they "allowed" to find the words – instead, they have had to keep a silence.

I have been working with CLN for over a year now, and we have met weekly, with the exception of holidays. Just coming in to the room for the first time, I'm sure, was daunting and a bit scary – after all, the survivor is meeting someone who is a "random" at that point! I think the starting point for us was to put in place some ways of working, like the time we start and finish and what might happen in the sessions, in particular talking about confidentiality. I hoped, as we began, that this would create a sense of safety for the client, and thinking back I think that happened. I didn't expect her to trust me, just to take a leap of faith.

Each person is different, their experiences, reactions and feelings are all unique. Sometimes it can feel like some sort of dance between 2 people, as we worked out how to be in the relationship, in a way that supported her to work through her problems. I have so much respect for her in being honest about holding back what she wasn't ready to talk about, and finding the words for what she was ready to explore. Sometimes we worked together and the client did drawings or paintings, when words were too hard or not enough.

It is impossible to summarise where we are at just now. At best I can say that there are days that she can feel her own power and sense of control in her life, and other days her feelings become overwhelming and scary. Our relationship is one where we can be with each other, no matter if it is a "good day" or a "bad day". What matters is that we have built up trust and safety, and she can bring herself, however she is, knowing that I hold no judgements about her, and that I accept her how she is, moment to moment.

I am always aware that we only meet for an hour a week, and that the rest of the week she is out there, sometimes feeling alone, sometimes feeling the support of friends, but not family. It can feel like a sentence for her sometimes, I think, and other days she can feel free. We keep going, regardless, and when it's hard we know that the year to date has brought her a sense of feeling like she is moving along in her journey, really surviving her experiences, with hope. Nothing will take her experiences away, nothing will wipe out memories but we hold hope that the affects will not be so strong in her life.

Lorna

### Client life story

I was sexually abused by my step father from the age of 8 till 14. I felt unable to tell anyone until I was 18, when my mother left my step father.

I believe that – because of my abuse – I took risks with my sexual and physical health, became very promiscuous and abused both drugs and alcohol. Often I would find myself in dangerous situations but seemed not to worry about this and now I admit I was on a path to self destruction.

When I was 19 I lost my biological father, and ended up in a very controlling relationship. My partner emotionally abused me before he cheated on me and I finally ended the relationship, but went through an extremely difficult period when my self esteem, confidence and self respect were at an all time low. I had started my counselling by then and was extremely depressed, anxious and emotional as the formerly repressed memories of my trauma began to come to the surface.

Slowly I learned that I was not responsible for any of the awful things which had happened to me. My counselling has helped me to value myself, to grieve for my father, to grieve for the lost 6 years of my childhood and to look towards the future with a more positive attitude.

Currently I am looking at the 'lost' six years and I am experiencing quite a lot of flashbacks and recurrent nightmares, but I know now that I am ready to do this work and that I am a survivor.

### Client Life Story

I was sexually abused by my best friend's grandfather when I was on holiday with her family. I am uncertain what age I was when the abuse took place. I kept this to myself for a very long time, until I began my nursing training. Then something happened and I was faced with the memories of my abuse.

I ended up taking a year off from my training and began my counselling. I was in a relationship where I was being emotionally abused and my partner was also very controlling. Apparently this happens quite a lot. After hearing that my friend had gone to the police to report her grandfather, I spoke to my counsellor, who helped me to report my abuse and when I did a further five people came forward. The day before the trial, my abuser hung himself. I felt cheated. But he left a note, admitting his guilt and although I could not see justice being done at least I had the proof I needed.

I continued with my counseling and this helped me to look at myself and to become more self confident, more self assured and my self esteem increased ten fold. Ultimately I separated from my partner and I am now enjoying life, becoming involved in new hobbies and meeting new people.

I too am a survivor.

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what are flashbacks

what helps me relax

why self harm

dealing with self harm

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## What are flashbacks?

Flashbacks are memories of past traumatic experiences, which are terrifying, such as sexual abuse in childhood. When a person experiences a traumatic situation which can create a shock to your body and mind, our brains have a way to let our mind run away, and this often happens when we can't actually/physically run away. It's the way our brains try to help us cope. Many people who have experienced sexual abuse, rape or any other traumatic event can go on to experience flashbacks. It tends not to be like an ordinary memory, but more a sudden and unexpected intrusion.

A flashback can feel almost as real as when it originally happened and can also be as frightening. You may have the sense of panic, being trapped, feeling powerless, with no memory stimulating it. The feelings are so frightening because the feelings/sensations are not related to the reality of the present. You may begin to feel that you are crazy and are afraid of telling anyone what you are experiencing.

These experiences can also happen in dreams, often called 'night terrors'. If this happens try to write it down, then go and have something warm to drink, watch some TV, listen to music or do something else that you find relaxing. It's often best not to try and sleep until you have been able to relax for a while.

Not everyone's flashbacks are visual. Some take the form of words and phrases or sounds that were heard in the past. They can be accompanied by intense feelings, e.g. shame, sadness, anger, or physical sensations known as 'body memories', which may have been felt at the time of the original abuse or traumatic event.

Flashbacks can happen at any time, anywhere and often occur without warning. They can be triggered by the time of year or day, TV programmes, films, smells, words, phrases, songs, places, someone who reminds you in some way of your abuser, pictures, tastes, a particular feeling such as fear or anxiety, having sex or being intimate with your partner. These can occur instantly or sometime later. Sometimes a flashback can occur in response to hearing voices that tell you to do things, e.g. harm yourself or someone else. Hearing voices can be very frightening.

## Flashback Halting Protocol

Right now I am feeling \_\_\_\_\_  
(Describe your current emotion e.g. 'terrified')

And I am sensing in my body \_\_\_\_\_  
(Describe your current bodily sensations, e.g. 'pounding heart, tight chest, shaky legs')

Because I am remembering \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name the trauma by the title only – no details, e.g. 'being hurt by my mother')

At the same time, I am looking around where I am now in \_\_\_\_\_ (the actual current year), here \_\_\_\_\_ (name the place where you are)

And I can see \_\_\_\_\_ (describe some of the things that you can see right now in this place)

And so I know \_\_\_\_\_ (name the trauma by title only again, e.g. 'being hurt by my mother').

It is not happening now or anymore.

Adapted from: Rothschild, B. (2000) *The Body Remembers: The Psychophysiology of Trauma and Trauma Treatment*, New York: Norton

## Ideas on how to cope with flashbacks

Tell yourself that what you are experiencing is a flashback and that this is a normal reaction to the abuse or traumatic event you experienced. It may be useful to look around you and take note of what is happening in the here and now, to bring yourself back to the present.

You may find it reassuring or grounding to carry a stone or something familiar and comforting in your pocket that you can stroke, hold or rub when a flashback occurs. Some women keep an elastic band around their wrist and 'ping it' to try and bring them back to the here and now.

Breathe! When we get scared we stop breathing and our body begins to panic from the lack of oxygen. Try to breathe from your diaphragm. Put your hand just above your navel and breathe so your hand is pushed in and out. This can help prevent a panic attack.

If the flashback occurs whilst you are out and about, try to get yourself to somewhere that you feel safe and secure.

It may be useful to write the flashback down or tell it to someone you trust - although it can be very painful to speak about it, talking it over with someone can help your healing.

If you self-harm in response to a flashback, try to take some precautions to minimise the longer term harm that you might do to yourself (see our Self-Harm leaflet).

You could try and identify if there is anything in particular that triggers your flashbacks. It may be useful in the short-term to avoid your triggers, although you can't always control when they occur.

If you start experiencing a flashback while having sex with your partner, you can stop and take time to relax. It's OK to take time out from the sexual side of your relationship to work through these memories if you need to.

Take time to recover after a flashback. Do something that helps you relax, e.g. have a bath, and listen to your favourite music.

When I am feeling upset, down, angry I think of a nice relaxing place were I would like to be. Even if I just imagine that I am at the place in my head it seems to help. I normally think of a place like the seaside, where I am on my own; that's calm. I just lie down and close my eyes and breathe slowly, and imagine the sound of the waves crashing together, the seagulls crying.

The sun is beating down on me, the wind blowing gentle, over my face. I just lie there and close myself off from the rest of the world even if it only lasts ten minutes. It makes me feel so much better.

Cherylleigh Niven

### Anger could be one letter away from danger

Being angry is not a problem – how you show your anger could be. It is important to be able to acknowledge your anger and work out what's the best way to deal with it. Sometimes to keep it in means you will feel it building up inside and it can end up hurting you more than anyone else. Sometimes, though, to let it out can be a good idea and sometimes it can feel too scary to let it out.

Anger is a really important emotion. It can be helpful, positive and useful in letting us know that we are upset about something.

Things that people say make them angry are:

Not getting to do what you want

No money

Seeing violent behaviour or being violent

Loosing someone

Falling out with friends

Being abused

Being bullied/being humiliated in front of others

Parents divorcing

Living in a place you don't feel safe

Being in trouble with the police

Taking drugs

what  
helps  
me  
relax

### Tips to help you manage your anger

- Get some air and come back in a few minutes (time out)
- Do some exercise
- Walk away
- Count to 10 backwards
- Do relaxation exercise
- Say it out loud from your point of view, without attacking the other person
- Learn to express your feelings, either by talking to a friend or by venting feelings in other ways, perhaps creatively through painting or writing
- Talk to a counsellor/teacher/friend – get it off your chest
- Distract yourself with something else
- Write it down
- Challenge yourself to do something about the situation that made you angry
- Punch a cushion to let off steam

### Ways to help you cope with anger – Breathing exercises to calm you

#### Step One

Lie down (like on your bed) or sit somewhere and drop your shoulders

#### Step Two

Breath deeply, count to 5 as you breathe in and then count to 6 as you breathe out

#### Step Three

Say to yourself inside " keep your cool"

You can do this exercise on the bus, at home, at school – you can do it anywhere when you feel angry. It's a great way to cool down and no one will really notice what you are doing.

## What is Self-Harm?

Self-harm is when someone deliberately hurts or injures her- or himself. Self-harm is also sometimes called self-injury. For the purposes of this publication we will refer to both using the term self-harm. Self-harm can take a number of forms including:

- Cutting or blood-letting
- Burning yourself
- Hitting yourself, hitting walls or other hard objects
- Getting into fights or excessive risk taking/putting yourself in dangerous situations
- Breaking bones
- Hair or eyelash pulling
- Scratching, picking or tearing at your skin causing sores and scarring
- Inhaling or taking harmful/poisonous substances

## Who Self-Harms?

All sorts of people self-harm. Often they carry on successful careers or look after families, and there is little outward sign that there is anything wrong. Self-harm seems to be more common among women, partly because men are more likely to express strong feelings, such as anger, outwardly.

Self-harm by young people is not unusual but, again, it is often hidden because it is done in private or because people are ashamed or afraid.

Research published in 2001 suggested that as many as 215,000 eleven to fifteen year olds in Great Britain (1 in 17) may have harmed themselves. The numbers may be higher because self-harm is often hidden. The average age for children starting to harm themselves was thirteen. The earliest reported incident in the research was at age seven.

At its peak, one of the people interviewed had harmed herself over 10 times a day, either by cutting or blood-letting. However, many participants had also gone for periods of days or months without self-harming, before starting again.

Each year more than 24,000 teenagers are admitted to UK hospitals after deliberately harming themselves. A recent survey of teenage girls in Edinburgh showed that nearly one in three have self-harmed.

Some comments made by people who self-harm include:

" Pain can make someone feel more alive"

" The drops of blood are like a substitute for the tears I cannot cry"

" Cutting makes the blood take away the bad feelings"

" It helps me cope with my feelings"

" Self-harm gives a sense of control when other parts of life may not"

" I do it coz I want to live"

" To express my pain externally"

## Why Self-Harm?

People who self-harm usually do so because of some difficulty they have or have had. It can include anxiety, depression, being abused, bereavement, peer pressure or being bullied. For most people it is a way of getting through great emotional pain. A number of self-harmers refer to self-harming acting as a safety valve – a way of relieving the tension.

It may be difficult to understand why someone would deliberately harm themselves but it's important to remember that many people do things that are harmful from time to time. Some people smoke, drink too much or overeat. While these things may be thought to be more socially acceptable than self-harming, they can also be harmful ways of dealing with stress and the pressures of everyday life.

## Why Is Self-Harming A Problem?

People who self-harm describe it as giving them relief from overwhelming feelings and pressures and therefore as a means of preventing suicide. However, when people harm themselves there is a risk of serious physical damage and infection. In the longer term there is a risk of permanent damage and scarring.

People who harm themselves often feel ashamed, guilty and disgusted and become depressed about what they are doing. Once people start self-harming they can become 'addicted' to it and, just like any other bad habit, it can be very difficult to stop.

## Strategies to Deal with Self-Harm

### Buy yourself some time

If you get the urge to harm yourself, tell yourself that if you still want to do it in 10 minutes, you can. When the 10 minutes is up, see if you can manage another 10 minutes. Gradually increase the time you wait.

### Learn how you feel

Are you feeling angry, sad, depressed, craving sensation, wanting focus, wanting to see blood, wanting to see scars/pick scabs? Try and match the feeling to an activity e.g.

#### Angry

Use a pillow to hit a wall or, rip up an old newspaper

Go for a walk or a bike ride

Clean the house

Pop bubble-wrap

#### Sad, depressed

Something slow and soothing

Take a hot bubble bath

Listen to soothing music

Call a friend and chat about things that you like

Get magazines and catalogues and cut out all the words and pictures that make you feel good/happy

Make a list of all your good points

### Craving sensation

#### Do something that creates a sharp physical sensation

Try squeezing ice HARD (this really hurts!) or rubbing ice on the part of your body you feel like injuring;

Put a finger into a frozen food (like ice cream) for a minute

Some people find that putting an elastic band on their wrist and pinging it really hard takes their mind of self-harming

Spin yourself round on the spot until you get dizzy

### Wanting focus or control

Focus hard on your breathing (in through nose, out through mouth)

Do something that you really need to focus on like playing a computer game

Choose a random object like a wastepaper bin, and try to list 30 different uses for it

5-4-3-2-1 rule: name 5 things you can see, 4 you can hear, 3 you can smell, 2 you can touch and 1 thing you like about yourself

### Wanting to see blood/burns/cuts

Draw on yourself with a red felt-tip pen or lipstick

Make a tray of red blood by dropping six or seven drops of red food colour into a shallow bowl of water. Use this to draw on the parts of your body that you want to cut/burn

Use red play dough and place it on your body where you want to cut. Use a blunt knife to cut through it

### Wanting to see scars or pick scabs

Get a henna tattoo kit, put the henna on as a paste and leave it on overnight; the next day you can pick it off as you would a scab and it leaves an orange-red mark behind

# focus

# control

## Staying safe

Until you feel ready to stop, try to look after yourself and take care of your injuries. If you must cut then you can try to do so in the least harmful way and decide beforehand what you are going to do and stick to your limits.

- Don't share items you use to self-harm with anyone else. If you do you risk infection (hepatitis, AIDS etc)
- If you are cutting use something clean and sterile
- Try to keep cuts shallow and avoid harming yourself near main arteries and tendons. Try to avoid cutting your wrists. Keep first aid supplies on hand and know what to do in the case of emergencies.

If you think the wound is infected see a doctor or nurse immediately.

- Do as little as you can. Set limits – decide how many cuts or burns or bruises and how big they will be – and set these limits so that they are just enough to relieve your distress but no more.
- Make sure your tetanus protection is up to date.
- Avoid alcohol or drugs if you think you are likely to self-harm – these can lower your inhibitions physically, which can lead you back to harming yourself.
- Eat well – a diet rich in carbohydrates is thought to increase levels of serotonin in the brain which is thought to improve mood. Mood swings are often said by people to be triggers for their self-harm.

Also avoid alcohol and caffeine as these can lead to sleeping problems and anxiousness.

- Don't drive yourself too hard. Many young people who self-harm are high-achievers, and sometimes they put themselves under too much pressure. Sometimes it's OK for your work or your performance to be "good enough".
- Stay in a public place – if you only self-harm in private, staying in a crowd of people might stop you from hurting yourself.
- Even if you don't want to stop yet, it's important to try to talk to someone you can trust.

With thanks to FRASAC (Fife Rape and Sexual Assault Centre) for providing this information.

# staying safe

## These are some things you might want to consider to help yourself

- Remember that you are a strong person who has survived your abuse – what you are experiencing now are memories and its after effects
- Memories and feelings may at times feel unbearable – sometimes doing something very practical, for example cleaning the house, or doing some gardening can help
- Routines are important, remember to try and eat regularly – looking after yourself is important, even if you don't feel like it
- Comfort yourself – remembering the abuse you experienced can leave you feeling vulnerable and drained. Try doing something for you that takes your thoughts and mind somewhere less painful – for example go for a walk, listen to some soothing music, watch a favourite video
- Find a person who you know and feel safe with – or a place where you feel safe and comfortable
- Some survivors find self help books useful – the survivor agencies both have libraries of books you can borrow, or look in your local library under health and personal development

Different people find different things help them cope at bad times – maybe try to write your own list of things which help you cope

## The Hidden crime – Male rape and sexual assault

There are myths around the sexual assault of men, which leads to many misunderstandings about the crime and the victims it affects. This has consequences in the way that men see themselves as victims of sexual crimes and stops them from talking about what has happened to them and stops them, therefore, getting help and support.

Myth – Male rape doesn't happen

Fact – Stereotypically, men are seen as being responsible for sexual crimes and not the victims. Reported figures show that men are victims too.

Myth – Male rape is a gay crime.

Fact – Research shows that the majority of sexual assaults against men are committed by heterosexual males.

Myth – A man who is sexually assaulted by another man must be, or appears to be, gay

Fact – Rape is not about sexual attraction. It is about power over someone, domination and control.

Myth – Men are less affected by sexual assault than women

Fact – Rape and sexual assault are traumatic for men and for women and may have lasting after effects. Men find it difficult to talk about their experiences for fear of being ridiculed and not believed.

## Domestic Abuse

If you've been physically or mentally harmed by a parent, carer, older relative or someone you're in a relationship with, you should remember that you are not to blame. Many victims of domestic violence believe that they have in some way created or caused the problems that led to the violence. This is not the case. The only person to blame is the one who is committing the violent acts.

Often domestic abuse happens between two adults. However, many young people can be affected by domestic abuse because they have seen, heard and witnessed the domestic violence taking place. This can be very upsetting for young people, who often feel like they have no control in a situation like that. People go on to adult life remembering their experiences, remembering what they saw and heard and it can be difficult to deal with this.

Many people do not realize that they are or have lived with domestic violence/abuse. If you are not sure if you have been affected by domestic abuse, here are some ways that abuse of that nature can occur...

### Emotional...

- constantly putting a person down
- following a person or constantly asking them to say where they are
- keeping someone in the house, stopping them going to work or seeing friends

### Physical...

- hitting, pushing, kicking, pinching
- throwing or smashing things

### Mental...

- making threats to hurt someone
- living in a state of fear or terror
- telling you that you deserve it

Remember that if this has happened to you – you are not alone. You can ring Childline, Womens' Aid, KASP Domestic abuse project or Victim Support in Fife.

The numbers are at the back of this booklet.

## Feelings about disclosing to someone

If you have not already told someone that you trust about your experiences of childhood sexual abuse, you may well be finding it difficult to keep it all in. You might be thinking about telling someone. Perhaps if you go through these statements and fill in the answers it may help you prepare to tell.

My initial feelings about telling are:

My fears about telling are:

The things which would help me tell are:

Things that get in the way of me telling:

How I might feel after I have told someone I trust:

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daddy's little girl

who am I? (part one)

who am I? (part two)

just a child

time to play

### Daddy's little girl

Daddy's little girl wants to cry  
But daddy says "there's no reason to cry,  
Daddy makes you feel happy, why  
Do you want to cry?"  
"Daddy you are hurting me, and I want  
you to STOP! You make me  
want to cry."  
"But, my little girl, if you cry, I  
will never stop because I want  
to make you happy."  
"But, daddy, what you are doing  
is making me sad.  
STOP IT".  
"Wipe away the tears," he says  
"because daddy is going to show you something special  
today."  
"Please daddy, I want to go and play"  
"No!" he yells, "I have something to show you:  
"Daddy, I don't want to see,  
Can I go and play before it's time for tea."  
"NO, you can play here with me"  
"But...daddy, you are too big to play:  
"Don't be silly" he would say.  
"You play here with me, and then you can go and play after tea."  
"But, daddy you always say that, but mummy doesn't  
let me out after tea."  
"Well, if you do as I tell you, I will speak to mummy,  
to see if you can play after tea."  
(I knew her answer would be NO  
but I didn't let the unhappiness show.  
So, daddy made me play with him for the rest of the day.)  
"That will teach you for answering me back,  
get your tea, before I get you on your knees."  
During tea, I just stared at the wall as I felt so small.  
Mummy would say "eat your tea  
or you will go over my knee.  
I would try and eat my tea,  
but I knew what would happen.  
When I finished he would bath me,  
do bad things to me.  
He put me to bed and I would hide  
under the cover with teddy, I knew what would happen.  
When everyone else was in bed,  
daddy would come and see me and make me sad.

Cherylleigh Niven

### Who am I? (Part one)

Who am I?  
Big and strong  
Wait, that's all wrong  
Who am I?  
Loud and proud..  
Wait, that's not aloud.  
Who am I?  
Angry and sad,  
When I should be glad.  
Who am I?  
Standing tall,  
Just waiting to fall.  
Who am I?  
Always on my knees  
Wanting, waiting to be free.  
Who am I?  
Small and weak  
Frightened to go to sleep.  
Who am I?  
Crying in pain  
Wanting someone to blame  
A silly child ... that is  
Who I am?

Cherylleigh Niven

### Who am I? (Part two)

Who am I?  
Someone that's scared and shy.  
Scared in case I cry, shy to  
Tell my life, in case they say I lie.  
Well, I know who I am!  
Am big and strong, that has done  
Nothing wrong.  
I AM A SURVIVOR  
That's who I am  
I might feel low at times  
But that's life. I just have  
To keep up the fight  
For a while.  
Then, they will see the real  
Me – loud, outgoing, brave, fun,  
Happy, in control and more.  
Then, I will not be scared  
Anymore, because I have nothing  
To hide or fear, because I have  
People that care about me and  
Will be there to help me become  
FREE.

Cherylleigh Niven

### Just a Child

I was just a child  
who didn't know right from wrong,  
Life just seemed to carry on

I was a small child  
upset and scared inside  
but couldn't go outside

I was a small child  
who was abused  
by the one I loved

I was a small child  
crying inside wanting it  
to show on the outside

I was just a child  
hurting over and over again  
I didn't know if it would  
ever end.

I was a small child  
wanting to be free  
instead of being told  
to get on my knees  
while he shouted "yes please".

I was just a child  
hiding under my bed,  
in case he got me inside his shed

I was a small child  
scared to tell  
in case he made my life hell,  
which he did anyway.

So, I wish I did tell  
but who? Would they listen?  
I don't think so.

I was just a child  
longing for someone to love me  
And I could love them back

Cherylleigh Niven

# time to play

## Reach out to your childhood!

Your journey can be a long and hard one. It can be a sad, upsetting and scary journey to take, that journey where you live to tell and tell to live.

Lots of people really feel sad, when they begin to think of what they have lost out on, and it can be really upsetting to know you missed some of the childhood fun that other young people experienced. So, here's some ideas for you to try, to help you have fun and to help you to feel the innocence of simple fun activities. Give them a try!!

Buy yourself and ice cream

Have a go on a swing

Kick up some leaves in the park

Make a sand castle on the beach

Draw a picture

Hug your teddy

Lie in the sun and feel the warmth on your face and body

Dance and sing to music (get that hairbrush out and sing your heart out!)

Go see a children's movie

Have a scoop of ice cream in some fizzy pop

Buy a comic

Blow some bubbles, you can even do it with washing up liquid!

W	H	Y	Q	A	W	N	E	L	O	T	S
A	G	M	P	G	O	V	P	A	T	T	D
A	H	B	O	U	U	X	S	P	B	E	S
Z	Q	K	W	I	K	I	B	L	A	M	E
X	W	I	I	L	H	G	Q	Q	V	G	L
L	U	U	E	T	J	E	W	U	M	W	F
B	O	D	U	M	A	N	G	E	R	I	H
L	P	N	R	N	A	R	T	V	C	P	A
P	S	Y	E	Z	D	T	U	B	Z	Y	T
O	A	R	Y	L	N	V	T	M	S	N	R
Y	X	D	T	X	Y	C	P	Z	C	J	E
E	C	W	G	C	B	X	X	A	O	H	D
F	L	A	S	H	B	A	C	K	S	L	A

## Word Count

Some of the words hidden here are words that young people have used to describe how they are feeling or some of their experiences. Can you find the hidden words?

Jot down the words that you find below.

## Getting to know you, getting to know all about you....

All about you....	Fill in the rest of the sentence in the box below.
The things I'm best at are	
I like myself best when	
I want	
I am	
My friends like me because	
One of the good things about me is	
I feel	
I think	
I'm getting better at	
I love	
I can	
I cry when	

survivor stories

self help

survivor poems

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paintings and drawings

contacts page



SCARED

X

I

W

SURVIVE INTO A BRIGHTER FUTURE



OPEN THE DOOR TO LIGHT AND LET DARKNESS OUT

SURVIVAL TRANSFORMATION

BE A SURVIVOR TALK IT THROUGH



**KASP**

29 Townsend Place, Kirkcaldy, KY1 1HB  
01592 644217,  
2a Burnside North, Cupar, KY15 4DG  
01334 656176

**FRASAC**

2a Burnside North, Cupar, KY15 4DG  
01334 655205,  
Townsend Place, Kirkcaldy, KY1 1HB  
01592 642336

**LGBT Youth**

info@lgbtyouth.org.uk,  
0131 622 2266

**Penumbra Self Help Project,**

2 Kirk Wynd, Kirkcaldy,  
01592 201872

**Youthlink Scotland**

The national youth agency for Scotland.  
www.youthlink.co.uk

**Breathing Space**

Free, confidential phone-line you can call when you're  
feeling down or depressed.  
www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk  
0800 838587

**Samaritans**

www.samaritans.org.uk  
08457 90 90 90

**Eating Disorders Association**

Website that has a special section for young people.  
Also runs self-help support groups across the UK.  
Youthline helpline offers confidential advice to anyone  
aged 18 or under affected or worried by eating  
disorders.  
www.edauk.com

**Family Protection Unit**

12 Carnegie Drive, Dunfermline, KY12 7PA  
Child Protection/Historic Crime Tel: 01383 312910

**Clued Up Drugs Awareness Project,**

www.cluedupdrugs.org.uk,  
The Bunker  
Unit 9, Coal Wynd, Kirkcaldy, KY1 2RB  
Telephone 01592 858248

**Womens' Aid**

15 Nicol St, Kirkcaldy, KY1 1QF  
01592 261 008  
or Cupar  
01334 657537

**Fife Alcohol Support Service**

17 Tolbooth St, Kirkcaldy KY1 1RW  
01592 206 200

**DAPL (Drug and Alcohol Project Leven)**

2 Parkdale, Park Drive, LEVEN, Fife KY8 5AQ,  
Telephone: 01333 422277

**Safe Space**

4 Victoria St, Dunfermline, Fife KY12 0LW  
01383 739 084

**Shakti Women's Aid**

Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5QY  
Tel: 0131 475 2399

**Rape Crisis Helpline**

08088 01 03 02

**GUM Clinic**

01592 643774

**Childline**

0800 1111

**NSPCC Helpline**

0808 800 5000

**Young Minds**

0207 336 8445