

Journey of the Devon Letter of Hope

Marie Ash



Supporting you to live well



Supporting you to live well

Below is a list of organisations you may find helpful.

- **"Read this first"**
www.recovery.org.uk
An open letter to anyone thinking about suicide, including useful resources and information
- **Abolish Anonymity**
www.abolishanonymity.org.uk
0800 917 600
- **Asylum Help**
www.asylumhelp.org
0800 800 830
help in different languages for asylum seekers in the UK
- **Big White Wall**
www.bigwhitewall.com
Anonymous online community for emotional health and support
- **CALM Campaign Against Living Miserably**
www.thecalmlive.net
0800 58 58 58
- **Carers UK**
www.carersuk.org
0800 600 7777
- **Citizens Advice Bureau**
www.citizensadvice.org.uk
0800 138 1819 or text 07537 464719
For further personal, serving and former
- **Crisis Respitement Care**
www.crisis.org.uk
0800 511 011
- **Devon Partnership NHS Trust**
<http://www.devonpartnership.nhs.uk/recovery-supporting-you-to-live-well-522-8.html>
- **Gendered Anonymity**
www.gendered-anonymity.org.uk
0800 801 9005
help & advice for single parents
- **HOPELINK**
www.hope-link.org
0800 508 61 41 or text 07796 209697
help and advice for young people
- **Narcotics Anonymous**
www.na.org.uk
0300 999 1212
- **National Helpline**
www.nationalhelpline.org
0800 808 8000
- **Nightline Association**
www.nightline.ac.uk/want-to-talk/
help for students
- **Recovery Devon**
www.recoverydevon.co.uk
Linking up to recovery based support, research and guidance
- **Refugee Action**
www.refugeeaction.org.uk
- **Relate**
www.relate.org.uk
0800 100 1234
Relationship support for couples and individuals of all ages, backgrounds and sexual orientation
- **SAMARITANS**
www.samaritans.org
Freephone: 116 123
- **Shelter**
www.shelter.org.uk
0800 800 8444
- **Switchboard LGBT+**
www.switchboard.org.uk
0300 330 9830
- **The Silver Line**
www.the-silverline.org.uk
0800 4 79 80 90
helpline for older people
- **VARA Project**
www.varaproject.org
0300 323 9400
help for those in farming

Dear Friend,

We are a group of people from Devon who are writing this Letter of Hope to you because we care about you and what happens in your life. We do not know you, you do not know us, but we care.

We care because, like you, we were struggling to stay alive. We attempted suicide. We went to A&E, were referred to the Crisis Team, or admitted to hospital after attempting suicide and we survived. We have done more than survive; we have found the courage to live again. So please, if you are ever in such a dark and desolate place that you feel like taking your own life, this letter has been written to ask you to hold on. Give yourself time.

We understand pain, especially emotional pain, which often others don't.

Emotional pain hurts so much. It is that pain, along with loss, that brought us to suicide and to hospital. Later we learnt that it was not death we wanted, but to end the terrible thoughts, feelings and pain we were experiencing. Because of the experiences we have been through, we came together to write to you offering Hope.

We survived. We want you to get through this too.

We won't pretend to know exactly what you are feeling, because your feelings are uniquely your own. It is okay to feel the way you do. You are not weak, selfish, or crazy.

You are not beyond help.

Please believe in yourself, in what tomorrow might bring. Believe that you can get through this moment. Allow hope into your life. None of us claims that it is easy. It can be challenging. But however hard things get, life offers possibilities that you may have forgotten exist or have never even dreamed of. There can be a time in the future when something makes you smile, sunshine brings you comfort, when the day ahead is so much better than today.

Please give yourself time.

We ask you to remember to seek help before life gets too painful. Ask for the help you need. You are not alone. Talk to a trusted friend, see your GP, contact a support group. Talk to the Samaritans on Freephone 116 123, or another National Helpline, many of which are listed on the back of this letter.

By talking things over a great sense of pressure is released, it becomes possible to feel better and for your problems to seem smaller and more manageable.

Please remember, if you ever feel suicidal, ask for help. Be clear to the person you speak with: Use words like 'I can't cope, I feel bad, I feel out of control, or I feel crazy. Tell people it's so painful, I want to die, or simply please help me. We could write so much more to you, a long, long letter; in fact, we did: we all did from our different perspectives and from our hearts, and it was those letters that led us to what is important, to the message in this letter to you.

Please keep this letter, though we hope that you will never need it again. We also hope that you can find someone or something to believe in. That can make all the difference. We have lived and we have loved again. We believe you can too.

We wish you well and we wish you a good life.

With love,

Devon 'Letter of Hope' Group

Feeling Suicidal? - The 3 Step Plan

1. Ring the SAMARITANS on Freephone 116 123 for immediate help and support
2. Make an urgent same day appointment with your GP or go to A&E
3. Tell a trusted person or friend who can help and support you

If you wish to read other letters of hope, please visit www.recoverydevon.co.uk and click on the 'Support' tab.

This Letter of Hope was written by people from Devon, who wish to offer help and hope to those who are thinking about suicide.





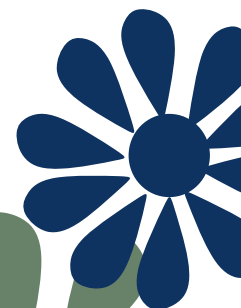
Devon Partnership
NHS Trust



Supporting you to live well

Where did the idea of the Devon Letter of Hope come from.

Who was in the group and how was the group created.



- How was the Devon Letter of Hope written
- What we learned in the process



- How has the Devon Letter of Hope been used
- On Bridges
- In briefing packs
- Liaison and diversion giving it to people in custody
- Individually given to people



- Within suicide prevention training for organisation and local groups
- Local Council's
- Benefit offices.
- Proposed to be part of a discharge package together with a safety plan.



A story of Hope from the bridge



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Thank you for listening and if you would like any more information please email me on:

marie.ash@nhs.net

