



Dear Friend,

Letter of Hope

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 have 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

Below is a list of organisations you may find helpful.

- “Read this First” An open letter to anyone thinking about suicide, includes useful resources and information www.metanoia.org/suicide
- Alcoholics Anonymous 0845 769 755
- CALM Campaign Against Living Miserably www.thecalmzone.net
- Carers UK 0808 808 7777 Provides help and advice
- Citizens Advice Bureau www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- Combat Stress 0800 138 1619 For service personnel, serving & former
- Cruse Bereavement care www.cruse.org.uk 0844 477 9400
- Devon Partnership NHS Trust <http://www.dpt.nhs.uk/Recovery-supporting-you-to-live-well.522.0.html>
- Gamblers Anonymous www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk
- Gingerbread 0808 802 0925 Help & advice for single parents
- HOPElineUK www.papyrus-uk.org Help & advice for children & young people
- Lesbian & Gay switchboard 0300 330 0630
- Narcotics Anonymous 0300 999 1212
- National Debtline 0808 808 4000 Charity offering independent debt advice
- Nightline www.nightline.ac.uk/want-to-talk/ Support & advice for students provided by trained volunteer students
- Recovery Devon information and resources on Mental Health issues www.recoverydevon.co.uk
- Refugee Action 0808 8000 630 Provides advice & information
- Relate 0300 100 1234 Counselling for couples and individuals
- Shelter 0300 330 1234 Advice and information for the homeless
- SAMARITANS Freephone 116 123
- The Big White Wall www.bigwhitewall.com Network for emotional health
- The Silver Line 0800 4 70 80 90 Info, friendship, advice for older people
- Y.A.N.A You Are Not Alone 0300 323 0400 Info & support for farmers

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