

Support After A Suicide

Scottish Borders



The Clootie Tree is a place where people can tie a ribbon in memory of someone who has died by suicide and is a quiet place for reflection. The tree is located in the grounds of the Haining in Selkirk. A map is provided on the back page of this leaflet.

When someone dies by suicide it can turn your world upside down and the feelings you have can be powerful, deeply painful and overwhelming.

You might feel shock, disbelief, anger, guilt. You may be wondering why they have taken their own life and it can be hard to accept that you might never know. Whatever feelings you have, it's okay to feel that way. It's a normal part of the grieving process to have strong emotions and there is no one 'right' way to feel or act. People grieve in their own way so let yourself do that.

Sometimes people might experience thoughts of suicide themselves - not wanting to go on without the person they've lost or perhaps that person's death has intensified their own thoughts of suicide. If you are having thoughts of suicide, it's important to talk to someone. Details of support for suicidal thoughts are listed on the back page.

Support for people bereaved by suicide

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide helpline	0300 111 5056 [Open 9am-9pm everyday] https://uksobs.org/
Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide local support group	Group of people locally who are bereaved by suicide. Meets monthly. Contact the local Co-ordinator Gwen on 0756 131 9863 or email scottishborders@uksobs.org
After a suicide booklet (SAMH)	Provides further information about the practical issues that might need to be faced after a suicide and discusses some of the emotions you might be experiencing: https://www.samh.org.uk/documents/After_A_Suicide.pdf

Supporting someone bereaved by suicide

Knowing what to say or how to help after a death is always difficult, but don't let fear of saying or doing the wrong thing stop you from reaching out to someone bereaved by suicide. Don't hold back. Just as you would after any other death, express your concern, pitch in with practical tasks, and listen to whatever the person wants to tell you.

Stay close. Families often feel stigmatised and cut off after a suicide and it's important not to avoid contact because you're not sure what to say or do. Just be there for the person and listen. Ask if they would like to talk about what has happened.

Remember his or her life. Suicide isn't the most important thing about the person who died. Share memories and stories and use the person's name.

Help with practical tasks. Offer to run errands, cook some meals, give a lift to appointments or watch the children / grandchildren or care for elderly relatives. Ask directly, 'what can I do to help?'

Be there for the long haul. People experience grief for different lengths of time. The person may be back at work and socialising but it doesn't mean they don't need to talk about their grief. Acknowledge emotional days like birthdays or anniversary of the death. This shows that you care and that the person can talk to you.

Looking after your wellbeing

If you have been affected by suicide it's important to take steps to look after your mental health and wellbeing. The Six Ways to Be Well helps you to think about ways you can do this. For more information visit NHS Borders Wellbeing Point

www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/wellbeingpoint

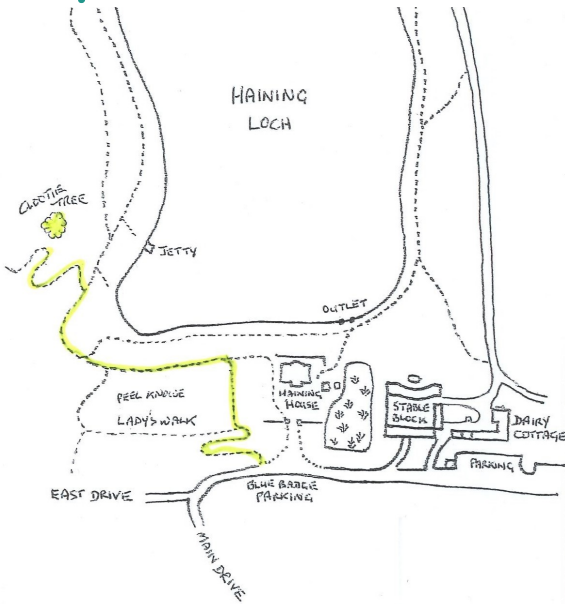


Supports for anyone having thoughts of suicide



Samaritans	116 123
Breathing Space	0800 83 85 87
NHS 24 Mental Health Hub	111
SHOUT text service	Text SHOUT to 85258
Stay Alive App	Download on Apple or Android
Childline (up to age 19)	0800 1111

Map to the Cloutie Tree



This leaflet was produced by the Joint Health Improvement Team in the Scottish Borders. For more information contact health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk