

Welcome to our service

Thank you for contacting Break the Silence, we understand that just making this first step with our service is a significant moment and that it has taken a lot of courage to reach out. Knowing that you need a little help to deal with the thoughts, feelings and behaviours that are upsetting you is the start of a journey towards feeling supported, believed and listened to.

This document has been created to tell you a bit more about what coming to Break the Silence can be like.

Where we work

Break the Silence operates in East and North Ayrshire with outreach facilities in both of these areas. You can choose whether you want to have appointments using the NHS Attend Anywhere/ Near Me platform, Zoom, on the telephone or face to face.

Counselling / Psychotherapy

We understand that talking about what happened to you is often very difficult, and it has taken a lot of courage to come for help.

We offer a safe, supportive and non-judgemental environment where you can talk about what happened and how it may be affecting your life today.

We work to help you identify what you want to change in your life and then help you find the best ways to make those changes.

You do not have to discuss private details of your abuse and we will work at your pace.

Because counselling helps you identify your feelings around what has happened to you, you may leave sessions feeling unsettled at first. Your counsellor will discuss this with you.

Your counsellor will also ask you questions at regular times during your therapy which can help you to see your progress; give you and your counsellor a clear focus and help us to evaluate the counselling service.



Please note: Break the Silence does not offer support to those who have committed or been charged with sexual offences. Please contact STOP IT NOW on www.stopitnow.org.uk or First Tier for support should this be the case.

Our therapists

Our psychotherapists and counsellors are all specially trained to work with trauma. Our website is regularly updated with videos and photo's where you can meet members of our team – please feel free to look at them as they become available.

What we will offer you

- A caring, safe and professional therapy experience
- An initial information session with our client liaison team
- Confidentiality
- The opportunity to build a trusting relationship
- Fortnightly therapy sessions lasting approx. 1 hour
- Time out if required
- Up to 24 sessions of 121 therapy

Appointments

You will be offered an appointment every 2 weeks on the same day and at the same time.

At times there will be a short waiting list for our services, but we will endeavour to provide an appointment at the earliest opportunity.

Your **first** appointment will be an INFORMATION SESSION with our client liaison team (not a therapist), this is **NOT** a counselling session, we will be reviewing the welcome pack with you and reviewing the forms that are necessary for you to complete to commence therapy.

The **second** appointment is your first clinical session and is the start of the assessment process – it is time for your therapist to assess your readiness for therapy. This helps your therapist understand what has brought you to Break the Silence in more detail and have a good understanding of your

health and needs. It will focus on exploring what therapy might look like for you and the things we know can help you get the most from your journey with us.

What might happen when you start therapy

- You become less isolated as you deal with your abuse
- You might realise that you are not alone in living with your experience
- You create the possibility for receiving help and compassion
- You participate in ending child sexual abuse by breaking the silence that sustains it
- You can acknowledge the reality of the abuse
- You gain awareness of your feelings
- You open yourself up to healthy relationships
- You make changes that promote inner pride and strength
- You find it easier to think and behave in the here and now as past issues are dealt with

As a survivor you may be experiencing

- Anxiety / fear
- Phobias
- Self-harming
- Agoraphobia
- You may feel ashamed
- Eating Disorders
- Feeling guilty
- Feelings of self-blame
- Low self esteem
- Flashbacks
- Sexual problems
- A fear of medical procedures
- Relationship problems – lack of trust
- Fears of parenting or abusing own children
- Feelings of persecution

- Drug abuse
- Alcohol abuse
- Addictions
- Post-traumatic stress disorder

It can help people who have experienced trauma to know that these experiences are a normal response to being harmed in the way you have been. The feelings of guilt and shame are often a very upsetting part of the experience of being harmed. A helpful way to think about these feelings is that there is nothing wrong with you as a person, it is what happened to you that is wrong.

At Break the Silence, we understand the importance of the client-therapist/counsellor relationship. Although our therapists are well trained professionals not all relationships 'click' therefore if after you have started to work with us and you feel you would like to try working with another therapist please call the client liaison team at the office and they can talk to you more about this.

What happens next?

The next step is for you to read, sign and return three forms which form the basis of our commitment to working with you and your commitment to work with us:

- Client agreement
- Client privacy notice
- Online therapy guide

These forms will be sent to you as email attachments by our system and must be returned prior to starting therapy.

IMPORTANT

We know that for some clients keeping appointments can be challenging so if you realise you are unable to attend your appointment, please contact the office on 01563 559558, appointments@breakthesilence.org.uk or via our website to cancel your appointment, to enable us to reschedule your appointment.

Should you miss an appointment please call the office as soon as possible or contact us through the website. If after a week we have not had contact from a client their appointment slot is reallocated and although you are welcome to refer yourself back at any time we cannot guarantee you returning to the same therapist.

Thank you for reading our welcome pack

We are looking forward to meeting you and starting to support you in the changes you want to make in your life.

Please feel free to look around our website www.breakthesilence.org.uk or contact the office if you have any further questions or suggestions.