



CHESTER SEXUAL VIOLENCE  
SUPPORT SERVICE

## **MAKING THE MOST OF COUNSELLING**

People come for counselling because there is something about themselves or their lifestyle that they want to change.

Our counsellors believe that your experiences are unique and therefore you are the only one who knows your feelings about them. Through counselling you can begin to find your own solutions.

### **What will counselling be like?**

- Hard work.
- You will work with your counsellor towards what you want to achieve.
- The counsellor will listen to what you are saying; try to understand how you are experiencing your own world and what is happening to you.
- The counsellor will often reflect back to you what you have said and what they understand from this. Sometimes they will be right and sometimes they will be wrong, which will give you both an opportunity to clarify what you are saying.
- The counsellor has no interest in judging what kind of person you are. They want to help you to understand yourself and explore how your life can be as satisfying and as happy as possible.
- Counsellors believe in the healing that can occur when you are able to express your feelings. Your counsellor will encourage you to explore your feelings in various ways. You will be encouraged to recognise and take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings and behaviour.

**Counselling is not** the same as going to a doctor or other “experts”. Your counsellor will not tell you what is ‘wrong’ with you. Your counsellor will not tell you what to do, interpret, direct or act on your behalf. The counsellor will work with whatever you, the client, wish to bring.

## **Review**

At regular intervals your counsellor will encourage you to review the work you have done together. This will help identify whether counselling is achieving what you want to achieve.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

CSVSS offers a confidential counselling service. In accordance with ethical practice, counsellors receive supervision but the supervisor will not have personal information about you. Confidentiality will be maintained, except in the following instances:

- Where you give consent for the confidence to be broken.
- Where the counsellor is compelled by a court of law.
- Where the information indicates that there is significant risk of harm to you or to another adult or child, even if the information relates to a past event but could still pose a risk.

Wherever possible, your counsellor will discuss the matter with you first.

## **Records**

- Records of counselling sessions are kept to a minimum and are locked away at the CSVSS offices.
- Anonymous information is kept for annual statistics.
- All information is destroyed after 7 years except in exceptional circumstances.

## **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

- All CSVSS counsellors have counselling qualifications and have completed CSVSS counselling training.
- Every counsellor receives regular supervision in accordance with the BACP Ethical Framework (or equivalent).
- All volunteers are subject to checks by the Criminal Records Bureau.
- CSVSS is part of the Rape Crisis (England and Wales) network.

## **ANTI-OPPRESSIVE STATEMENT**

Everyone involved in CSVSS is working towards creating a safe and supportive environment.

We would like to draw your attention to the anti-oppressive stance held by CSVSS. This means that we are opposed to any form of discrimination or harassment.

We value equally people of any: sex, race, marital status, culture, domestic responsibility, class, nationality, age, HIV status, ability, sexuality, ethnicity, religion and emotional and physical condition.

We would appreciate your cooperation in helping us to meet this commitment. If you feel that we are failing in this anti-oppressive stance, please let us know.

## **COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS**

We welcome feedback about our service and invite you to complete our feedback forms at the start and end of counselling.

If you wish to make a comment, compliment or complaint about the service, please write to:

Chairperson  
CSVSS  
PO Box 280  
Chester  
CH1 1FB

(Please mark your envelope 'Private and Confidential'.)

Or email [chestersvss@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:chestersvss@yahoo.co.uk)

The BACP also has a complaints procedure and can be contacted at:

British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy  
BACP House  
15 St John's Business Park  
Lutterworth  
LE17 4HB

CSVSS Registered Charity No: 1133564

## **WE BELIEVE...**

Sexual violence is any sexual behaviour which has a damaging physical or psychological effect upon a person.

No one has the right to do things to anyone that they don't want.

Sexual violence can and does happen to anyone, regardless of sex, age, race, dress, sexuality, class, disability, occupation...

Any sexual attention that is unwanted, forced or pressured is a form of sexual violence.

Sexual violence is never the survivor's fault. People are responsible for their own actions.

People do not all react in the same way to being raped or abused.

People do not 'get over' rape or sexual assault. They learn to live with themselves again; as survivors rather than victims.

The process of coming to terms with an act of rape or sexual violence is complex and takes time.