

# Blue Knot Foundation

How you can get better after trauma

Easy Read fact sheet



## How to use this fact sheet



Blue Knot Foundation wrote this fact sheet.  
When you see the word 'we', it means  
Blue Knot Foundation.



We wrote this fact sheet in an easy to read way.  
We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Normal  
**Bold**

We have written some words in **bold**.  
This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.  
There is a list of these words on page 24.



This Easy Read fact sheet is a summary of  
another fact sheet. This means it only includes  
the most important ideas.



You can find the other fact sheet on our website at  
[www.blueknot.org.au](http://www.blueknot.org.au)



You can ask for help to read this fact sheet.  
A friend, family member or support person  
may be able to help you.

## Support for you



In this fact sheet, we talk about things that might upset some people.



If you get upset and need support, we have services you can contact.



We offer free **counselling support** to people with disability and trauma.



Counselling support is when you:

- talk to someone about how you feel
- talk about ways to help you feel better.



You can contact us by phone.

**1300 657 380**



We are open every day.

We are open between 9am and 5pm AEST/AEDT 7 days a week.

You can also contact us by webchat.

**<https://blueknot.org.au/survivors/blue-knot-helpline-redress-support-service/>**



You can contact us by email

**[helpline@blueknot.org.au](mailto:helpline@blueknot.org.au)**



In this fact sheet we also talk about **suicide**.

Suicide is when someone chooses to end their own life.

If you need to talk to someone, please contact:



Lifeline

**13 11 14**



Beyond Blue

**1300 224 636**

## **What's in this fact sheet?**

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## What is trauma?

**Trauma** is something bad that happens to you that can make you feel:



- sad



- scared



- stressed



- worried.

Trauma can affect:



- how you think



- how you feel



- your body.

Trauma can happen:



- once
- more than once.



Everyone deals with trauma in different ways.

## What is complex trauma?



**Complex trauma** is when you experience trauma:

- from other people
- for a long time
- lots of times.



**Sexual abuse** is a type of complex trauma.



Sexual abuse is when someone makes you do sexual things you:

- do not want to do
- are too young to do.



**Emotional abuse** is a type of complex trauma.





Emotional abuse is when someone:

- says mean things to you
- calls you names
- puts you down
- ignores you
- stops you from seeing your friends or family.



**Violence** is a type of complex trauma.



Violence is when someone hurts you physically.



**Neglect** is a type of complex trauma.



Neglect is when someone ignores you or doesn't look after you.



**Domestic and family violence** is a type of complex trauma.

Domestic and family violence is when you are hurt by someone close to you, such as:



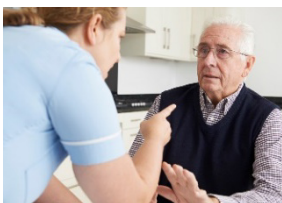
- your boyfriend or girlfriend



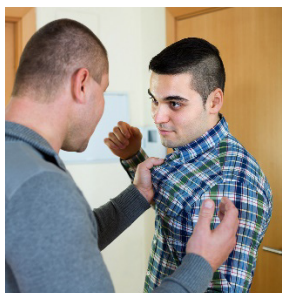
- your husband or wife



- a member of your family



- someone who is supposed to take care of you



- someone who lives with you.

## How trauma can affect your brain



Good things that happen to you can affect your brain.



Bad things that happen to you can affect your brain too.



Trauma can affect how well you deal with stress.

Trauma can make it hard for you to:



- think clearly



- feel calm



- remember things.



It can also change how you act.

## How you can get better after trauma

There are things you can do to:



- understand your trauma



- get better after trauma.

You can choose:



- when you want to get help



- who you can ask for help.



This might be different to what someone else needs.



Healthy relationships with other people can help you get better.

This can be with:



- a family member



- a friend



- a counsellor



- a support service.



It's important that you have good support.

People who support you need to:



- listen to you



- understand how you are feeling



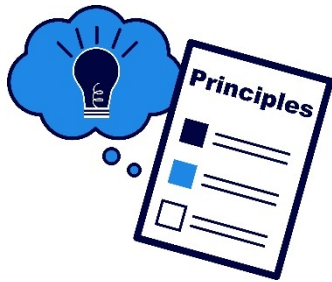
- show you respect



- use trauma-informed principles.

We talk about trauma-informed principles on the following pages.

## What are trauma-informed principles?

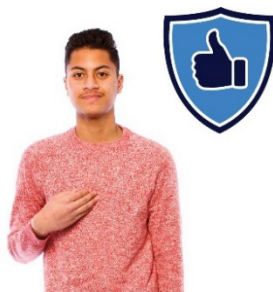


**Principles** are important ideas to think about.



**Trauma-informed principles** are important ideas to think about when we speak to other people.

There are 5 trauma-informed principles:



- Safety – helping you to feel safe



- Trust – building trust with you





- Choice – giving you choices about:
  - when you talk to someone
  - where you talk to someone
  - what you talk about



- Working together – working with you



- **Empowerment.**



The Empowerment principle is about you having power in your life.

## How to get better after complex trauma

Complex trauma can affect:



- your brain



- your body



- your feelings or emotions.



Complex trauma can affect the way your brain, body and feelings work together.

Support for complex trauma should include support for your:



- brain
- feelings or emotions
- body.

Some types of complex trauma support include:



- counselling support



- yoga



- art and music therapy.

## Coping strategies



Getting better from trauma can take a long period of time.



People create **coping strategies** to help them live with trauma.

Coping strategies can help you manage:



- how you feel



- how your body feels.



You might have one coping strategy.



You might have more than one coping strategy.



Coping strategies can make you feel good when you use them in the beginning.

But some coping strategies can:



- be harmful if you use them for a long time



- hurt you or other people.



When coping strategies become harmful, they can put you in danger.

Coping strategies that can be harmful include:



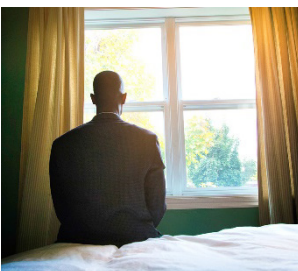
- drinking a lot of alcohol



- using a lot of drugs



- hurting yourself



- thoughts or attempts of suicide.

You can start to get better after trauma when you:



- know what your bad coping strategies are



- create coping strategies that are good for you.

## Word list

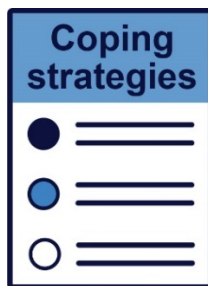
This list explains what the **bold** words in this fact sheet mean.



### **Complex trauma**

Complex trauma is when you experience trauma:

- from other people
- for a long time
- lots of times.



### **Coping strategies**

Coping strategies are things people do to try and live with the trauma.



### **Counselling support**

Counselling support is when you:

- talk to someone about how you feel
- talk about ways to help you feel better.





## Domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence is when you are hurt by someone close to you, such as:

- your boyfriend or girlfriend
- your husband or wife
- a member of your family
- someone who takes care of you
- someone who lives with you.



## Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is when someone:

- says mean things to you
- calls you names
- puts you down
- ignores you
- stops you from seeing your friends or family.



## Empowerment

Empowerment is when you gain the power to control your own life.



## Neglect

Neglect is when someone ignores you or doesn't look after you.



## Principles

Principles are important ideas to think about.



## Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is when someone makes you do sexual things you:

- do not want to do
- are too young to do.



## Trauma

Trauma is something bad that happens to you that can make you feel:

- sad
- scared
- stressed
- worried.



## Trauma-informed principles

Trauma-informed principles are important ideas to think about when we speak to other people.



## Violence

Violence is when someone hurts you physically.

## Contact us



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**[www.@blueknot.org.au](http://www.blueknot.org.au)**



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