## How we can help

Victim Support is an independent charity that offers free and confidential support to anyone affected by crime and traumatic incidents.

We will listen with compassion and tailor our support to you.

We can work with you to understand the impact of the crime, and where you may want further support. Our help could include speaking to the police, accessing legal advice, financial support or mental health services.

We also provide opportunities for you to share your experience with others, such as the media, or to help other victims.

## Telling the police

We are independent of the police and will support you whether or not you've reported the crime to them.

If you decide you want to report it, we can give you information about what to expect and support you through the process.

## Diversity matters and we value it

We are committed to supporting the needs of the diverse communities we serve. We can provide interpreters and information in alternative formats. If you have additional needs please let us know so we can put the right support in place.

**Supportline: 08 08 16 89 111**

**Your local Victim Support:**

Devon & Cornwall
0300 303 0554

We are an **independent** charity offering **free**, **confidential** support to people affected by crime and traumatic incidents.

For information and support, contact us by:

- calling: Supportline **08 08 16 89 111**
- using our 24/7 live chat service: **victimsupport.org.uk/live-chat**
- using BSL: **victimsupport.org.uk/bsl**
- Online: **victimsupport.org.uk**

To find out how you can help us, visit **victimsupport.org.uk/get-involved**

**@VictimSupport**
**VictimSupport**
**victimsupport_uk**
**Linkedin.com/company/victim-support**

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VICTIM SUPPORT

# COPING AFTER CRIME

**Helping you to manage the impact of crime**



REFLECT

**victimsupport.org.uk**

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## The impact

**Experiencing a crime or traumatic event can leave you feeling overwhelmed and distressed. It can seem as though your world has been turned upside down. Life may suddenly feel unsafe and it can be difficult to cope. You may notice a change in your feelings or behaviours.**

These changes could include:

- How you manage stress or respond to certain situations
- The conversations you have with other people
- The way you view yourself
- The level of trust you have in yourself or others
- Your motivation to complete everyday tasks.
- Trying to distract yourself from what's happening around you or your thoughts
- Experiencing strong emotions you don't normally have, such as anger
- Avoiding social events or hobbies
- Lower self-esteem than usual.

You may not even notice these changes are happening, or realise they may be connected to the crime.

It's important to know it's normal to feel a wide range of emotions, or to feel completely numb to it all.

Everyone will need to process what happened in their own way.

## Coping strategies

You may already know or use some coping strategies that could be helpful. Start by thinking about some of the things that may help you. Below are some ideas:

- Talking to someone you trust
- Writing down your feelings
- Going for a walk in nature.
- Having a long leisurely bath
- Gentle exercise
- Setting goals
- Learning something new
- A creative hobby such as painting, cooking or crafts
- Breaking down tasks to become more manageable.

How do you feel when you use these examples? Do they make you feel safer or calmer? Can you use them in your daily routine, or turn to them when you are feeling overwhelmed?

## Grounding techniques

Using a grounding technique is a good way to become more present in the moment. Here's an example of one called the **5, 4, 3, 2, 1 technique:**

**5.** Acknowledge five things you can see around you

**4.** Acknowledge four things you can touch or feel around you

**3.** Acknowledge three things you hear

**2.** Acknowledge two things you can smell

**1.** Acknowledge one thing you can taste.

## Understanding your needs

Take time to reflect on how you are feeling, and try to understand your needs. Keep note of how you are coping and what helps.

**The following questions may be useful:**

- Has the incident changed how you feel about yourself, or others?
- Has it caused a change in your behaviour or feelings of trust?
- Have you started using unhelpful coping strategies?
- What have you tried in the past that's worked for you?
- Have you stopped doing things you used to enjoy?

It can be confusing to know where to turn when you feel like this. Sometimes talking to someone you trust can help, or you may wish to work through your feelings on your own.

## My Support Space

My Support Space is an online resource designed to help you manage the impact crime has had on you. It includes interactive guides with videos, techniques, tips and activities as well as an online diary.

There are wellbeing guides that may help you to reflect on how you are feeling find ways to move forward.

To create your free account, visit:
**mysupportspace.org.uk/moj**

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