

### Is your involvement in our Lived Experience Network right for you, right now?

Before you make your decision, here are some questions to consider, either by yourself via self-reflection or with a trusted family member, loved one, or friend.

Involvement in our Lived Experience Network includes sharing parts of your personal experiences of suicide, and, for those who are Lived Experience Influencers, hearing about other peoples' experiences. Whilst you will have choice about what you share and with who, and Influencers will be given training and support in their roles, it is important to consider your own wellbeing.

It can be helpful to consider the following questions when deciding if this is right for you at the moment:

1. Does it feel like the right time for you to be reflecting on or sharing experiences related to suicide?
2. What is your motivation for being involved in this work?
3. What impact does talking about suicide have on you, mentally and emotionally, in recent times?
4. What impact does it have upon you when you hear about others' lived experience of suicide and how do you manage this?
5. Are there any particular times or dates when you feel more vulnerable?
6. Are you aware of any particular words, conversations, or triggers around suicide that affect you?
7. What self-care practices do you have in place to nurture yourself when you are feeling more vulnerable?
8. Do you feel ready for the next step in this process, and do you have any concerns?

If, after taking some time to consider these questions, you feel that applying to become a Lived Experience Influencer is right for you, then we welcome you to take the step.

Before you complete this next stage we thought it might be helpful for us to share with you some of the signs that we think demonstrate you are ready.

#### Signs that you are in a place to draw on your lived experience as a Lived Experience Influencer:

You have considered the emotional and mental impact of this work and it feels right for you at this point in your life.

- You feel at a point in your life, emotionally and mentally, where being involved in this work is unlikely to set back your own healing, and feel able to take a step back if that changes.
- You are motivated to draw on your own lived experiences and be part of our Lived Experience Network in order to help others and contribute towards change, even if self-healing may well also be an outcome of sharing your own story or supporting this work.
- You have talked it over with someone you trust who knows you well; a loved one, family member, or friend, and their reflections and support have helped you understand this is the right decision for you.
- You understand your own triggers and have things in place to support you when you are feeling more vulnerable. You also know when you need to reach out for more support. You have a support network or someone in your life that you can turn to when needed.
- If you plan to become an Influencer, you feel able to tell us if any part of the role is negatively affecting your wellbeing and take a step back if needed.

- You are doing this because it feels right for you. You are gentle with yourself as a result of the healing that has taken place so far.
- You have considered how involved you want to be, and you have the capacity and time to dedicate to this without overwhelming yourself.
- You are prepared to hear different perspectives and experiences of suicide and you are happy to be part of a group of individuals who have a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences and viewpoints.
- You have considered the implications of sharing parts of your lived experience related to suicide to yourself, your family and your friends.
- You feel ready to influence change in the attitudes and opinions of others, and also understand you may also experience changes to your own views, and may come across challenges.
- You are at a point in your life where you have allowed adequate personal healing time and your involvement in this project feels like a positive and rewarding opportunity.

If you feel ready to be involved having considered all of these points, then we welcome you to proceed to the next stage of the application process. Information about NSPA's Lived Experience Network can be found [here](#).

If you don't feel quite ready or you are unsure, we encourage you to take all the time you need, and thank you for your careful consideration and your interest in our work. If you have any queries, please email the programme team: [livedexperience@nspa.org.uk](mailto:livedexperience@nspa.org.uk)

If it doesn't feel right for you at the moment, we are likely to have other opportunities in the future, so please do feel free to come back to us at a time where your involvement feels right for you.

***Thank you for taking the time to consider your readiness.***

### Places to find support

If you need support at any time, now or in the future, you can find services that are local to you on the following website: <https://hubofhope.co.uk/>

The Stay Alive app is a pocket suicide prevention resource for the UK, packed full of useful information to help you stay safe. <https://www.prevent-suicide.org.uk/find-help-now/stay-alive-app/>

Samaritans also provides confidential emotional support 24/7 to anyone in distress, including anyone that is experiencing suicidal thoughts. Below are their contact details in case you feel you would like to contact them:

Helpline – 116 123

Email – [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)