



Suicide Prevention

The Listening Place – Zilda Tandy



Overview

- ▶ **Face-to-face support for those who feel that life is no longer worth living**
- ▶ **Why TLP was set up & what it does**
- ▶ **How effective TLP is and its contribution as a charity**
- ▶ **Why TLP works**



Why TLP was set up

- ▶ **Suicide: 16 deaths a day in the UK, 2 a day in London**
- ▶ **Full extent of suicides not known – Coroners report reason for death as “unknown” to protect families**
- ▶ **Every suicide has a significant effect on many people friends & families, colleagues, neighbours – ripples of grief**
- ▶ **Huge stigma around suicide can make it harder for families to accept what happened**
- ▶ **Group of experienced Samaritans aware of gap in on-going support for suicidal people**
- ▶ **Mental health professionals confirmed the need for TLP’s listening support**
- ▶ **First opened for visitors in July 2016**



What TLP provides and how it operates

- Free, face-to-face support by regular appointment to anyone who is suicidal
- Warm, calm and caring environment discretely located in Pimlico
- The majority of visitors are referred to TLP
- Not a drop-in centre
- Fortnightly appointments for 50 minutes with the same well-trained volunteer
- Initially for 3 months, then reviewed, but support available for as long as is helpful
- No advice or judgement, and completely confidential
- Always ask about suicide and keep comprehensive confidential data
- Volunteer led, supported by mental health professionals – supervision and guidance



How effective is TLP?

- Reduction in suicidal feelings, and increased sense of support – significant improvement during the first 3 months of support, a number saying they no longer need TLP
- Referrals from all London boroughs
- Over 100 new referrals a month
- 60% NHS referrals, but anyone can make referrals
- We evaluate our service – specially designed questionnaires for this purpose
- Visitor's Experience Questionnaire gives qualitative feedback from visitors



Why does it work?

- Most suicidal people do not want to die – they want the pain to end
- Most suicidal people cannot discuss their suicidal feelings – response from friends & family
- The sense of isolation is unbearable
- Visitors become focused on suicide as a solution
- TLP gets alongside the visitor's pain & explore
- Well-trained volunteers 'actively' listen and talk calmly about suicide
- Suicides are not inevitable – the right intervention, right support at the right time can help prevent people taking their own lives



Volunteers

- Over 350 volunteers
- Not therapists
- A human being supporting another human being
- Compassion, warmth and empathy
- Quality of relationship is important
- TLP training gives life skills – it changes people
- Volunteers, by making a difference to someone else's life, contribute to their own sense of well-being
- If you want to feel good – do good!

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide. It features a dark grey arrow pointing right at the top, with several thin, curved lines in shades of blue and grey extending downwards and to the right from its base.

Quote

► Visitor quote from a review of a visitor supported by an LV on my shift:

“My counsellor helps me to help myself. He keeps me on the right track. He listens to me and guides me without telling me what to do. His encouragement is very much appreciated. He is what I would call ‘medicine’. Coming to The Listening Place is better than tablets. I am always happy in looking forward to coming here. Thank you to all the staff.”