



## **MAKING THE MOST OF THERAPY**

Thanks for signing up to access online therapy through our partnership with BetterHelp. We are delighted you are here. We also recognise that you are likely to have a few questions about how exactly it works and therefore, in consultation with a forum of care leavers, we have produced this brief guide to help you understand, and make the most of this offer.

### **Number of sessions covered by this offer**

The code will give you access to free counselling for 6 months at a regularity of one session per week. Therefore, if you access one session per week you could take part in around 24 sessions in total. It is really important to realise that, no matter how many sessions you complete, the free access will end after 6 months (from the date you register). This means that it is important you are consistent in accessing sessions in order to get the maximum value from this offer.

### **Getting started with BetterHelp**

You may find [this short video](#) useful as an introduction to the BetterHelp platform and how things work.

### **Support in signing up to the BetterHelp platform**

In order to match you to the right therapist, BetterHelp will ask you some questions about yourself (what's on your mind, your beliefs etc). You may like to ask a trusted friend, support worker or your PA to help you fill in the form.

### **Finding the right space**

We would advise that, in advance of starting sessions, you have a think through a suitable space that you can use. Obviously it's important that it's private and has good Wifi but you may also want a different space than say, your bedroom, so you can 'locate' the conversation away from somewhere that is meant to be your safe place of retreat. We would also recommend viewing it more like a meeting (say with a support worker) rather than an informal chat with a friend and therefore we recommend you get ready for the meeting by dressing appropriately (avoiding pyjamas) and avoid taking sessions from your bed.

### **Decompressing after sessions**

Therapy, and particularly talking through difficult things in the past, can trigger some strong emotions and sometime leave you feeling a bit fragile. Therefore, we suggest you plan in advance how you will spend your time after sessions. This includes, where you will go, who you will be with and what you will do. We strongly recommend planning to be with trusted friends or advisers after sessions in order to be able to decompress and talk through any issues that have come up.

### **How to access sessions**

Each session can take place via video call, phone-call or live chat sessions. We strongly recommend using video calls (rather than phone-calls or chat sessions) but it's up to you. If



you do use video calls this doesn't have to be on your phone. You may want to access sessions on a tablet, laptop or PC instead of a mobile.

### **Planning next steps**

Free sessions will finish after 6 months (regardless of how many sessions you have completed). We recognise this is difficult especially as the cost of therapy is often prohibitive. We don't believe this means that you shouldn't start therapy but we do believe it means you should think about how to end it well and that both you and your therapist keep in mind when sessions will finish.

### **Finding the right therapist – and can I change?**

BetterHelp will automatically match you with a therapist who matches your objectives, preferences, and the type of issues you are dealing with. Once matched we recommend trying a minimum of 3 sessions with your therapist before making any decision on their suitability. However, if you feel your therapist isn't a good fit for you, you may choose to be matched to a different therapist. We would recommend you do this as little as possible in order to get the most from therapy.

### **The purpose of the mental health and wellbeing survey**

The reason we ask you to complete a health and wellbeing survey before you start therapy (and again after 6 months and a year) is to see if it makes a difference to your life. This is part of a research study by Concrete Rose to understand the impact of access to free therapy for care experienced young people. The questionnaire is confidential and simple. It does not ask for details about what you discuss in therapy but simply to gauge your emotional wellbeing.

### **Data protection and confidentiality**

Concrete Rose is committed to compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The information that you provide at any stage will only be used in order to process your desire to access therapy and to enable completion of the confidential mental, health and wellbeing survey. Nothing discussed in your therapy sessions will be available to Concrete Rose or BetterHelp representatives. We will not disclose any of your personal information to a third party unless we are legally required to do so. We are legally obliged, upon request, to provide you with all the information we hold about you.

### **What if things go wrong?**

If you have any complaints about the Therapy element of this offer you will need to contact BetterHelp directly (<https://www.betterhelp.com/contact/>). If you have any issues or concerns about Concrete Rose, in the first instance, please contact [hello@concreterose.co.uk](mailto:hello@concreterose.co.uk). You can also find our complaints procedure on our website.

### **Additional questions**

If you have additional questions or require extra information please do not hesitate to contact [hello@concreterose.co.uk](mailto:hello@concreterose.co.uk).



A lot of additional questions can be accessed directly in the BetterHelp website (<https://www.betterhelp.com/faq>) including:

- Who will be helping me
- How are therapists verified?
- Will my therapist treat what I say as confidential?