

Lancashire Traumatic Stress Service

Information for Families and Friends

When someone is having difficulty in managing their experience of trauma – they are not the only ones to be affected.

The effects will almost always be felt by members of the family and close friends.

Trying to be helpful when someone doesn't want to talk about what has happened is a real challenge.

Being woken in the night by your partner when they are having a nightmare can be a scary experience for you too.

When the person you love seems to have become distant or more irritable than usual, or seems constantly on edge or jumpy – that this can leave you unsure as to what to do for the best.

This can make it a difficult time for everyone.

The LTSS is always keen to meet with members of the family and the close friends of individuals who are referred to us where this may be helpful and of course where it is agreeable to the person concerned. (We cannot provide these opportunities without this agreement).

One of the main aims of our service is to work hard with individuals who are referred to us to try and help them make sense of what they are experiencing.

We are always pleased if there is the chance to include those who have a close relationship with the person concerned.

Having a shared understanding makes it more likely that helpful ways of managing and overcoming difficulties can be identified and implemented.

It is also really important that you make every effort to take good care of yourself. Sometimes it might feel hard to put yourself first but taking care of yourself, physically and emotionally is very very important.

There are also organisations that aim to provide advice, support and assistance to friends and families and you might want to think of contacting them.

Making Space for example provides a Carer Support Service which aims to support carers who are coping with the difficulties of caring for a family member or friend who has a mental health problem. They can be contacted on 01925 571 680 or more information can be found at www.makingspace.co.uk

You might also want to have a conversation with your GP about how you are managing if this seems sensible.