

Safety Planning Film Script

The questions

- What is safety to you?
- What can you do to keep yourself safe?
- What are the things that make you feel unsafe?
- Can you talk us through what happens to you?
- How do you calm down when this happens?
- Are there times when you feel better? If so, when?
- Are there times when you don't feel safe?
- How do you, or can you communicate with people?
- Who can support you?
- What or who inspires you?
- What works for you, what is helping?
- What or who is keeping you alive?
- What do people who care about you say about you?
- Why do you want to stay alive?
- What can you do to make your environment safer?
- What do you hope to get out of the sessions?
- What strengths do you have?
- What goals do you want to achieve?
- What are the things you like to do?

What is safety to you?

For me, safety is about giving myself some space. It's about taking my time and slowing things down so I don't react on impulse when my thoughts of suicide are really strong.

Safety for me is being in a place where I can be myself, so I don't have to worry about who's around and what people might be thinking of me.

Quietenning the craziness in my mind, stopping the spiralling, stopping me losing control.

A place I can just be myself and relax, this is a place where I don't have to play the game, no more masks, a place I can be me; this is where the panic of pleasing everyone around me stops, my suicidal thoughts stop too.

Safety for me means not being judged for the things I'm going through and the way I'm feeling. So I guess meaning I can be myself and be accepted.

What can we do right now to keep you safe?

When my thoughts of suicide feel really overwhelming, I am better off in a safe place, away from the things I would use to harm myself. I usually regret self-harming because it makes the urge to kill myself stronger. If I can talk things through with someone I trust, that can help to calm me down.

When I'm feeling suicidal, I need some space. I hate the feeling of being shut in and any small places, so if I can, I like to be outside, even if this just means me standing in the garden. Once I'm outside, I feel like I can breathe, I can look at the sky, and I don't feel trapped.

Give me something to do, something that I want to do. Something I can lose myself in to help drown out the crazy.

I need calmness, I need calmness to focus on me, this can help me to look at what I can do to stop my suicidal thoughts which could be listening to my music, having a bath or even talking to someone who just gets me, understands me, my cat helps to calm me down too.

Well when my thoughts are racing and getting too much, I feel like I need to keep busy and try and distract myself. I feel like I can easily just start thinking about things and get myself really worked up which just makes me feel worse.

What are the things that make you unsafe (triggers)?

When someone is angry at me or I think I've done something wrong- I do nothing but worry about it. It's like I can't focus on anything else because the last thing I would ever want to do is upset someone. I just obsess over what's happened and think about killing myself so I can't hurt anyone else.

When I am in places with a lot of people and have no way to get out. I have social anxiety so even when people aren't looking at me, I feel like they are. If I feel that people are judging me, it makes me want to escape, get away from all the negative and hurtful comments. This becomes so big in my head that I just want to die to be free.

Flashbacks, I really hate the flashbacks. Sometimes though it can be the most random thing that like totally makes no sense. Someone saying or doing something that shouldn't bother me at all, but somehow leaves me raging.

Feelings of not fitting in, being the odd one out. I am a loner, and I know I don't fit in so yeah, I'm ok when I'm alone, but when I'm with lots of people I feel so crap! I see the looks, and I hear the sniggers, that's when I feel I should end my life, my rage takes over, and I just know life would be easier for everyone if I wasn't here.

I can sometimes find myself scrolling through social media and constantly comparing myself to other people. I sometimes find myself getting lost in news feeds, and I tend to feel worse after that. It makes me feel if I can't be like that, what's the actual point in me being here?

What happens – can you talk us through any things that happen to you mentally and physically?

I start to panic and shake- I feel as though I can't breathe- my arms go numb, and I feel as though I'm going to faint. I feel numb to everything around me, it's like nothing is real, and all I can focus on is getting myself out of the situation- ending my life is an escape for me.

When my social anxiety is bad, and it triggers thoughts of suicide, I start to hyperventilate. Sometimes I have panic attacks. I sweat and become really agitated, sometimes I'm sick. Being this way just because there are a lot of people around makes me feel pathetic, like I'm never going to be able to cope in the world, so I might as well die.

Like it's so hard to describe. Bit like being angry, but you don't know why you're angry, so that makes you raging – and I mean like proper fuming. I really want to hit something. And no matter what started it, I always, always end up angry with myself. That's when the craziness really ramps up.

Wow, I've never had to do that before, but I'll try. When I see people sniggering at me I start to feel physically sick and can't breathe, get really panicky and just want to disappear. This is when I see all the different ways I could end my life, they flash through my head so quickly, and it's so scary.

I guess I have really low self-esteem. So when I compare myself to other people and look in the mirror and feel like I don't fit in, I just get really upset and can't stop crying. I just feel like I'm never going to be that, so dying seems like the best thing, as no one is ever going to love me.

How do you calm down or feel comforted when this happens – is there anything you do? (Out on the street, at home, at school)

Having someone else there does help to ground me. I can tell them how I'm feeling and what I'm thinking- it helps me to make more sense of the situation and rationalise things. It just makes everything feel more real, if that makes sense?

Taking my focus away from the panic can really help. Grounding myself so my mind is distracted makes a real difference. It helps me to get through the moment, to calm my thoughts and remind myself that I'm not trapped, I can walk out of places. I have also learned to use breathing techniques, sometimes they give me a sense of peace and it feels like I'm getting some control back.

I have to be doing something. Don't tell me to watch a film or take a bath, that might work for some people but not me. I need to be creating, to have some control of the outcome – maybe I'm a control freak I don't know. So I either need to be drawing something, writing a story, playing music or playing a game works too – things where I have to make something happen.

I make myself turn away, I try to focus on taking deep breathes 'I put my hand on my stomach' which calms me down and helps me to breathe deeply (a trick my teacher taught me) I also know I have choices so I do what's best for me at the time, I could call a friend, nip the toilet or even go home if I need to.

I tried mindfulness a few times, and that helped, and also, I love to dance and sing. At first, I was too shy to sing in front of anyone, but my mum suggested this performing arts group, and I love it. My mum is really supportive, and I feel more relaxed and comforted when I'm with her.

Are there any times when you feel better?

Yeah- a better day for me is when my anxiety is manageable. There's nothing big going on- good or bad. Just a normal day where everything goes smoothly- I'm not asking to be happy- just to get by.

I feel better when I'm out walking, when I have space and time to be. When I'm alone, there's no pressure and no judgements. When my thoughts of suicide spiral it's good to be around somebody I trust. I have to make sure I don't isolate myself too much.

When I'm totally into something, like proper focussed on it. Doodling won't get it done but if I'm completely focussed on creating the best picture I can, that can one hundred percent make me feel better.

A good day for me is when everything's gone to plan in school or at home, like I've had no last-minute changes on my timetable or with my plans. These types of days really help my anxiety, but I really don't cope well with last-minute changes for some reason.

Erm, either when I'm spending some time with my mum or when I'm singing or dancing – it helps me escape and feel like I'm good at something, which is the opposite of how I feel most of the time.

Any times that you do not feel safe?

Sometimes when I'm alone at night- I'd say that's usually an unsafe time for me. I struggle to sleep, so it's a time when my thoughts can run wild. I sit awake thinking about every stupid thing I've said and done and wonder why I'm even here.

When my mind is racing with other people's judgements of me. I can remember every negative comment that's ever been said to me, every time somebody's made me feel small or worthless. When these thoughts take hold I can start to panic and I just want to die to escape it all.

Like I said, the craziness can happen at any time, like completely out of the blue, and that can be proper scary. As if I'm, I don't know, like some sort of Volcano that can erupt or whatever, without any warning.

On my own at night are when my thoughts seem to be racing around in my head and less controllable. It really affects my sleep, so I'm tired and sometimes grumpy the next day. I tend to go on my phone before bed even though my mum tells me not to, and I find myself looking at other people's profiles and wondering why I'm not like them.

I don't feel safe when I've been thrown into unfamiliar places with unfamiliar people, like a different teacher just turning up in my lesson who really doesn't get me can trigger off my negativity, or if we have to go into the main hall without any prior warning can also trigger my panic followed by my suicidal thoughts.

How do / can you communicate with people?

I find it really hard to tell people I'm struggling- I usually shut down and isolate myself, which I know doesn't help. It's strange because I really do want someone there with me, but the way I express myself seems to push people away.

When I'm panicking, and my social anxiety is high, I can't usually talk. Over time I've realised that I need to open up to people and let them know how things are for me, but I have to do this before things get bad, or it just won't happen.

That totally depends on what mood I'm in. When I'm feeling good, I am comfortable talking to anybody, I do all the eye contact, and I really think that I am a good listener and I love to talk. When the crazy hits me, and I'm spiralling, that's when I start with the shouting, the storming off and then the seething in silent rage.

It's been so hard learning how to reach out for help with how I feel. I used to try to cope by myself, but by putting my guard right up only made everything extremely difficult. I have managed to find someone I trust in school who really gets me, who I can go to if I'm struggling. Building this relationship has massively helped me.

If I haven't had much sleep and I'm grumpy the next day, I find myself not wanting to speak to anyone. My mum suggested keeping a mood diary which I didn't want to do at first as I felt silly, but it did make me see the times where I felt worse and kind of what was triggering it more.

Who can support you? / Who can you call?

At school, I have a group of friends who usually notice I'm upset and will try and comfort me. At home, I sometimes hide how I'm feeling because I worry a lot about upsetting my mum. Sometimes, I talk online with other people who struggle- they can be really supportive, and they don't know me, so I can say how I really feel.

I have some really good friends that know what I'm going through, and I can speak to them. When things get really intense, I can always call them. My best friend Jamie is the best person I can speak to; he's so relaxed and easy to talk to, he makes me feel calm, and it helps so much.

My foster carers are good, to be fair, although I don't think they knew what they were getting into when they fostered me. If I'm in a full-on proper rage, I'm not sure there is anyone who I could speak to. Maybe I need to start talking when I can feel the craziness coming before I turn into a complete angry mess. There are some people from school I could talk to then, as well as my carers.

I warm to people who have time to for me. I can normally tell by my gut feeling who really wants to listen or support me. Those who don't judge me cos I'm having a bad day are the ones. My teacher is amazing support in school, but I only have a couple of friends too (quality over quantity) 'dad says'. My dad is the calming one at home. He just knows how to say the right thing when I'm at my worst.

My mum is my rock and always helps to make me feel better. I do have a couple of really close friends at school, and I sometimes see them at the weekend, but I only tell them bits and bobs of what's going on. They always ask when they see that I'm down, so perhaps I should be more honest with them.

What / who inspires you?

I've always looked up to my big sister Ella- she's really confident and clever. She's never afraid to stand up for herself and other people too. I would love to be like her one day.

Jamie, he hasn't had the easiest life, but he takes everything in his stride, nothing stresses him out, and he's so good at talking to people. One day I hope that I can be like him.

I love learning about celebrities that have had horrible starts to their lives but go on to be mega successful. It shows me that it's possible. If they can do it maybe I can.

My dad is my inspiration- he has done an absolutely amazing job bringing me and my brother up alone. I want to be as strong and confident as him one day, and he says I will be too, because he was like me as a kid.

Everyday my mum is the person that tells me it's ok to be different and be me. I struggle to believe this most of the time, but knowing she means it and that she's there makes me want to be more like her and believe what she's saying.

What works for you / how have you come to this place / achieve what you have despite (xyz) challenges? You have strengths – you are still alive.

I honestly suffer with my mental health to the point it physically hurts. Every day feels like a challenge, but I have to keep going. I keep going because I know there is a chance I can feel different one day. I know other people have got through this, which is why I still try.

For me, it's been about learning to open up, which doesn't come easy to me. I tend to close off from things and shut down, but living that way made me not want to be here anymore. It's hard to be open, but I had to find a way. Life was too hard. I guess that it takes courage to try to change things, so I must have some of that.

Focussing on the future. Although, actually, that's a bit weird because sometimes I totally can't imagine the future. I literally have to break down time until I can manage it. Getting through a day can seem too far off, then I focus on getting through the next ten minutes, or five or two or one. But I think what helps me get through those times is thoughts of a better future. I have to believe my future will be better than my past and present.

I feel I have done really well to get to the point I am at now, my anxiety can kick in at any time, and when it does, it's really scary, but I am managing things much better. Dad says to take each day as it comes and that there's always a way through. I use my supports now, and before, I didn't have any, so being honest about how I feel is my way forward.

I feel like it has taken me a while to tell my mum about how low I've been feeling, she always knew I lacked confidence, but since I told her about having thoughts of suicide, she has literally been amazing. I was so scared to how she was going to react, so I put it down in a letter as I found this easier than saying it out loud. I was really proud of myself for telling her the truth, and I think sharing this with her is helping at the moment and keeping me alive.

Who/what (people/animals) is keeping you alive?

My pet dog Clarence- he's a rescue dog, and he was abandoned by his old owners. I could never leave him- just as he never leaves me when I'm struggling. It's like he can tell I'm not ok, and sometimes he just sits with me, and that is enough.

My little sister keeps me alive. She looks up to me and loves being around me. We didn't have the best time growing up, and I was the one that looked after her. I couldn't leave her to manage on her own, I don't know what she'd do.

Am I the most self-involved person ever if I say 'me'. Maybe not the me right now, definitely not the crazy me. But the me that I could be, the me that I want to be.

Dad, my friends, my teacher and my cat, have all made me start to realise that I can feel comfortable in myself and around certain things. They have made me see that keeping myself isolated in my thoughts is what was making my life a dangerous one.

Obviously, my mum, but I also have a bunny called Harvey, who I love because he's mine, and I feel like I take really good care of him. Sometimes on my way home from school, I pick him some dot leaves because they're his favourite, and when I get home, I give them to him. I know he can't speak, and it might sound daft, but it helps just being with him.

What do people who care about me say about me?

I guess they would say that I'm kind. I do really care about other people and always put others first. I just want everyone to be ok- I don't want anyone to feel like I do about myself so I make an effort for them.

That I try, that I don't always get it right, but they know I care.

My friends will say I'm funny, in a mad way, maybe caring too. My foster carers are always going on about my creativity. That's the positive thing when I am being my best me. I don't want to think about what they say about me when I'm raging.

They say I should be my own best friend, only because I treat my own best friends with kindness, and I really don't treat myself with any sort of kindness.

My mum says I'm unique and talented because of my dancing and singing, and my dance teacher says the same. I guess I would say I'm kind because I do think about other people and especially my mum and Harvey.

Why do I want to stay safe?

I know that if I wasn't here, my family and friends would really miss me and be sad, and I suppose that's why I want to stay safe- for them. I guess a part of me also wants to stay safe for me- just to see what could happen one day.

For my sister, for Jamie and my other friends. I know we're not a conventional family, but we are one. I know that they would hate to lose me, so when things are really tough, I think of them.

I want to stay safe for that future version of me. I want to show the people that have abused me that they didn't break me completely. That I am stronger than they will ever be.

Dad says I should stay safe for me; then I can build my confidence up so when people snigger and stuff at me, it won't affect me anymore, but deep down, I want to stay safe to make my dad and my brother proud of me because they do believe I can be stronger.

Because my mum would be on her own and that makes me feel really sad. I would love to become a professional singer or dancer, so I guess that's also a reason, but more because of my mum. My mum says I need to think about me more but I find this really difficult when I don't even like looking in the mirror, the only time I do is at dance class, and sometimes I have to go to the bathroom to calm myself down.

What can I do to make my environment safer?

My thoughts of suicide are worse when I'm near something that's part of my suicide plan. When I'm struggling, I know I am safer staying inside. Sometimes I even put on my PJs as a commitment to not going outside.

When my thoughts of suicide are strong, I need to be able to get out. If I'm in a small space and am feeling trapped, I usually harm myself, so being able to step outside and get some air is the thing that helps me most.

I know I need things to do when I'm feeling crazy. But when I'm like that, I can't think of things. Maybe I should just have as many projects on the go as possible all the time, so there are more things to do when I'm spiralling.

Being around people like friends and family can help when my thoughts of suicide are overwhelming me and makes me feel safer.

Not being on my own that often, as this is when I feel not as safe. I know I can't be with people 24 hours a day, but when my thoughts start getting overwhelming, knowing there are people around me stops me acting on my thoughts of suicide.

What's your best hope for coming away today/for having this conversation? i.e. speaking to mum etc.

My biggest hope is to be understood. I want people to understand that I don't want to be like this, that it's not a choice, it's not my fault, and it's not their fault. It's just how I am, and I'm trying really hard to get help.

I suppose I just want people to understand that you shouldn't judge others, you don't know what they're going through, so try to be kind. And for anyone who's going through thoughts of suicide, I want them to know that they're not alone; it's happening for more people than you think.

To come up with something, like a plan or whatever, for things to do when I'm spiralling. A list maybe, yeah like a list of all the creative project ideas I have, the pieces of music I want to learn to play, and computer games I know I invest in enough to stop the spiral.

To feel like I've been heard and that I'm not on my own. I feel like I have bottled all this up for so long and to talk about it is really helpful.

To feel that I'm normal. Sometimes I feel like I'm the only person in the world that feels like this, so feeling like I'm not on my own and that sometimes it's ok to not be ok is quite comforting.

What strengths do you have? If they answer with none, then a response might be to point out they are having this conversation/making the call – that's a very positive strength.

I don't feel very strong- ever really. But you're right. I guess it does take some strength to talk about these things cause lots of people won't say they think about suicide- it's not an easy thing to say.

I know that I challenge myself and that I don't give up. So I suppose I'm motivated, which sounds weird cause sometimes I can't even face people but I try.

Sometimes I think I am like the most resilient person ever, after everything I have been through. Other times I feel I have like no resilience at all because I can explode at the tiniest things. I guess I am creative and independent.

Erm, I guess I'm caring because I really love my friends and family. I also think that I am good at listening to other people and being there for them, but I know I also need to look after myself as well as this is something I don't really tend to do.

Probs my singing and dancing, but other than that, I don't know. I care about my Mum and Harvey, so I guess that makes me caring, but other than that, I'm unsure.

What goals do you want to achieve?

One day, I would really like to work with animals. I've been thinking about studying something to do with animals at college- I could maybe volunteer at an animal shelter to get some experience first. My ultimate goal is just to be ok.

I'd like to be better, get better so I could help other people. I understand what it's like to struggle, and I want to show other people that change is possible, but I need to prove that to myself first! Most importantly, I want to show my little sister that things can change, and that no matter what you've been through in the past, you can still make a good future.

I want to create something beautiful. I don't know exactly what it will be yet. But something that wouldn't exist if it wasn't for me. Something I can be proper proud of and that can actually inspire other people too.

My teacher has been so amazing, it makes me feel like I wouldn't mind going into something like teaching, but I know I would really need to work hard on my confidence and stop missing lessons.

There is a performance that I've been asked to be in by my performing arts teacher, which I would like to do even though I'm really nervous. I would get a certificate which I would love to have up in my bedroom. I think I would be really proud of myself if I was able to do that.

What are the things you like to do?

I am quite a quiet person, so I like to read books and watch old films. It feels like an escape if I am able to get lost in story- it's like a little break from my mind. I can be part of another world- a better world where everything is beautiful, and nothing hurts.

I like to be outside in nature. It makes me feel alive. I love to hear the birds singing and listen to the sound of the trees blowing in the wind. When I'm outside, I can lose myself, my problems just don't seem as big anymore.

I know I keep going on about it, but I love to create. Whether it's pictures, writing, music or whatever, I love it. I guess part of it is because it allows me to get my voice heard. When I've had years of not being heard, that is really important to me.

Honestly, spending time with my family, friends, and my cat is my favourite thing to do. I also like making a collage of things that make me happy.

Well, I like making up my own dance routines and sometimes show my mum. I do like to do mindfulness as well, so I think I need to do more of that, especially before bedtime, to see if it helps me relax more and sleep better. It might sound boring, but spending time with my mum and talking to her when I feel down can help me when I'm feeling overwhelmed as well.