

Spare a thought

Spare a thought for others who may be far from happy this christmas. The festive season is a time to celebrate, a time to reflect on the best of the last year and to look forward to the New Year to come. A time to spend with gathered friends and family, where we can catch up and have fun.

For some less fortunate, this time of year can be an added pressure. Not necessarily from a financial point of view but the emotional burden placed upon them. Some, are in a very dark place; so much so in fact, that they may never have discussed their predicament with even their nearest and dearest, assuming their pain runs so deep that nobody could ever hope to understand. Saddest of all, some will contemplate and act of finality, believing the only answer is to take their own life. Suicide can affect anyone, anywhere, at any time. Often, suicidal thoughts are directly attributable to clinical depression and although eminently treatable, the stigma attached to depressive illness can stop individuals from seeking the help they need. There is help. The Suicide Awareness Group was established in 2004 by Maureen Leitch and Joyce Macrae. Both have felt the pain of losing a loved one to suicide. The mission of the group is to prevent suicide through public awareness and education, eliminating the stigma as serving as a locally based resource to those touched by suicide. As a group, SAG have found that by listening to a person and letting them talk, confidence can be gained allowing them to move on to dealing with the problems and issues troubling the individual. SAG have been very grateful to receive funding from the lottery and from Choose Life, working closely with the new co-ordinator, Angela Fisher. SAG find they are visited by the family and friends of the people who have died through suicide. Just for them to chat to someone that has been in the same position helps them and as Joyce says without the group and the huge help from her family and friends she could not have got this far. SAG is vitally aware how successfully suicide can be prevented by educating others about the symptoms of depression and the warning signs of suicide and one of their objectives is to increase the knowledge amongst our community; a community that is unfortunately blighted by suicide. SAG group members couldn't be doubted for their devotion and commitment to their mission as they are all responsible of manning a 24hr helpline. If you are having suicidal thought - or you suspect someone might be contemplating suicide or if you simply want to know more information on the subject, please call the 24hr helpline on 01463 237314.