

be made up of your social community, involving social strategies, or can include ways to help regulate yourself after a distressing situation.

Social supports include:

- Friends and family aware of your situation
- Peer support workers and counsellors
- Online/through phone supports, such as the Mental Health Support Line
310-6789 (no area code)

Social strategies include:

- Making sure you have a friend with you when you know you may be in a triggering situation, or calling someone on the phone as you walk through a triggering space
- Setting up a safe person to go to for a distraction or place to debrief after an event has occurred

Personal supports include:

- A journal to document experiences and feelings
- A song, podcast, or recording that brings peace and comfort to listen to after an uncomfortable event or interaction
- Breathing exercises or movement that helps to reconnect with your body

CAMPUS SECURITY

PHONE

(250) 721 7599

Everyone deserves to feel safe, cared for, and supported; both by others and yourself. If there is ever an emergency or you are in need of crisis supports, help can be found at **911** or the Vancouver Island Crisis Society **1-888-494-3888**.

Other support ideas include:

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A safety plan is a proactive strategy to set boundaries, handle conflicts, and/or protect yourself from toxic, volatile, or unsafe relationships and settings. They are living documents, developed by you, for you.



anti-violence project

CALL & TEXT PEER SUPPORT

(672) 204 4545

EMAIL
avppeersupport@uvss.ca

WEBSITE

antiviolenceproject.org

IDENTIFY POSSIBLE LOCATIONS FOR UNWANTED CONTACT AND TRIGGERS

When dealing with environments or people that make us feel uncomfortable, it is helpful to be aware of where they might appear, and what they may do to negatively affect us. This is difficult as sometimes they can be unavoidable, such as in common areas, and it is unfair to have to rework our lives to account for someone else.

This does not mean avoiding those places completely, but instead being aware of when and where we may need to have supports in place. Once we can identify our times of need, we can figure out how to meet our needs.

Things to keep in mind include:

- Places that we know there may be people or environments that make us feel unsafe or triggered
- Aspects of an environment or person's behaviour that lead me to feel unsafe or triggered

DEFINE BOUNDARIES AND RESPONSE

Now that we are aware of when and where to be more cautious, we can figure out how best to address the situation. A good place to start is understanding what our boundaries are in an uncomfortable space as it helps to guide us and our actions. If we know our boundaries, it is easier for us to decide what we can navigate, where we need further support, and what we will not tolerate.

Boundaries when faced with a triggering person include:

- Not engaging with small talk
- Not making eye contact
- Leaving the space as soon as possible

Often when we are in triggering situations or with triggering people, it can feel as though we have no control. One way to help mediate this feeling is by remembering that we always have control of our responses and can choose how best to take care of ourselves in that moment. Responses that support us can be self-sustained coping strategies.

Self-sustained coping strategies include:

- Putting in headphones or opening a book to indicate to others "do not disturb"
- Excusing yourself from the space and/or person
- Carrying around a little trinket or toy to help ground you
- Breathing exercises to do in the moment

ESTABLISH AN EXIT STRATEGY

If you are feeling uncomfortable and as though the best course of action is to leave, it is okay to remove yourself from the situation. Ideas include:

- Saying you have an appointment and need to get going
- Calling over a friend/acquaintance in the area, or going over to see them
- If in the garden, saying you feel hot and want to go inside/get water
- Telling them that you do not have time or are unable to talk at the moment

While it may feel uncomfortable to not be truthful, it can be okay if it means it keeps you safe and regulated. It is up to you to decide how to both leave safely and feel good about your language.