

A Guide to Intimacy and Relationships

1 INTRODUCTION

Human beings crave intimacy – to love and be loved. Babies literally fail to thrive unless they experience physical and emotional closeness with another human being and this need for intimacy never goes away. Being part of a loving relationship helps us to feel valued and cherished. It is good for our physical and emotional health and nourishes our soul.

This Guide is for people living with a disfigurement who would like to feel confident about being intimate with another person and developing a loving relationship.

It explores some of the more common concerns and introduces a cognitive-behavioural approach to understanding these and finding new ways to manage them. It also includes practical advice from meeting and approaching someone for the first time, to talking about your visible difference and preparing to get physical.

2 DISFIGUREMENT AND INTIMACY – SOME OF YOUR CONCERNS

Our fears and concerns around intimacy often stem from our core beliefs about relationships which are based on past experiences with our families, friends, previous partners, and even everyday encounters with strangers.

This section looks at some of the fears and concerns that many people with disfigurements have around intimacy and developing a loving relationship and explores some of the beliefs that may be causing you to think and act as you do.

“Why would anyone find me attractive with my looks?”

This is something we hear at *Changing Faces* all too often. If you're not used to being praised for your looks or you are more used to hearing negative or judgemental comments about your appearance, it is understandable that you may believe that you are unattractive, unacceptable and, even, unlovable.

It is also very hard to feel good about yourself and your appearance when such unrealistic images of 'attractiveness' exist across our society today. These images and the judgements passed on them can lead people to think that the only way to be successful in life and in relationships is to fit within a very narrowly defined stereotype.

“I'm so used to feeling rejected. It's pointless thinking I could ever meet someone special.”

Other people can react very negatively to someone who has a disfigurement. Being on the receiving end of unkind remarks or being avoided is very hurtful and can feel like rejection.

If you have also been teased or bullied about your appearance you may have come to believe that you are not “good enough” and assume that no one will find you attractive either.

If you anticipate being rejected by others, you may reduce your expectations or think that you ought to settle for less. Such beliefs can lead you to avoid meeting people who you might find attractive or prevent them from getting close because you don't want to raise your expectations that you might meet someone nice and risk being hurt again.

“I don’t know how to let someone get close to me.”

Some people are fearful of revealing more about themselves and talking about their disfigurement, particularly if they have never done it before.

If you have always been very independent - someone who has dealt with life’s challenges on your own - you might feel threatened by another person’s wish to know you better. You may have kept many of your experiences to yourself, especially in relation to your disfigurement, perhaps due to a misplaced sense of shame or embarrassment or the desire to protect your family and friends.

“I’m frightened of getting physically close to anyone.”

For some people, being physically close can feel very challenging.

If you don’t like your scar, mark or unusual feature you may not want your partner to see it or touch it because you believe that they will feel the same way as you and, as a result, find you undesirable.

Trying to explain to someone you find attractive that you have a functional difference – e.g. you can’t open your mouth wide, you have limited movement in your tongue, you don’t have any sensation on some parts of your body, you wear some kind of prostheses or that sex is painful can create added pressure at a time when you just want to feel ‘in the moment’ with your partner.

Additionally, if you have had a lot of surgery or medical treatments, you may associate your body with negative and painful experiences or objectify your body as a ‘medical exhibit’. You may be worried that you won’t be able to enjoy the physical and sexual aspects of your relationship and you may struggle to see yourself as sensual or sexual.

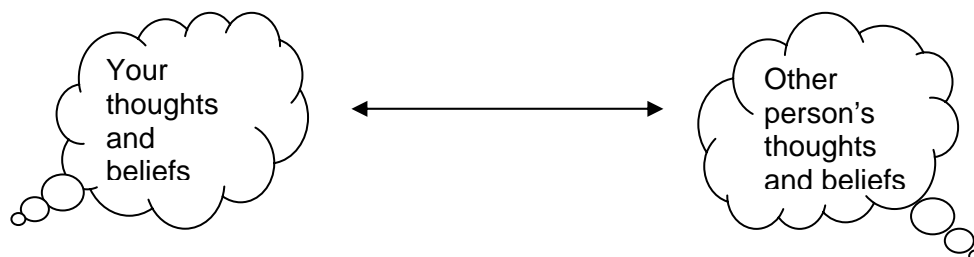
“I’ve never been out with anyone before.”

If you’ve never chatted someone up or been chatted up yourself, gone out on a date or had sex, the thought of being with someone can feel very daunting. You may feel under pressure to act as if you are more experienced and blame yourself when things don’t go so well.

3 UNDERSTANDING THE NEGATIVE FEEDBACK CYCLE

All of these concerns are very common and are based on thoughts and beliefs that have developed over time. Like any coping strategy, these beliefs are created to help you manage similar future events and to prevent further harm. They are not always helpful however, especially if they remain too rigid and create a negative feedback cycle:

Any social encounter involves the interaction of two or more people coming together with their own past experiences, beliefs and assumptions.



If your past experiences have led to negative beliefs about yourself and/or others, you may take these forward into new relationships and encounters and behave according to your belief again.

For example: If your past experiences have led you to assume that everyone will reject you, you may adopt behaviour to defend against possible rejection. It's normal to have this protective instinct towards yourself but it can mean you limit your contact with other people and avoid getting into close relationships.

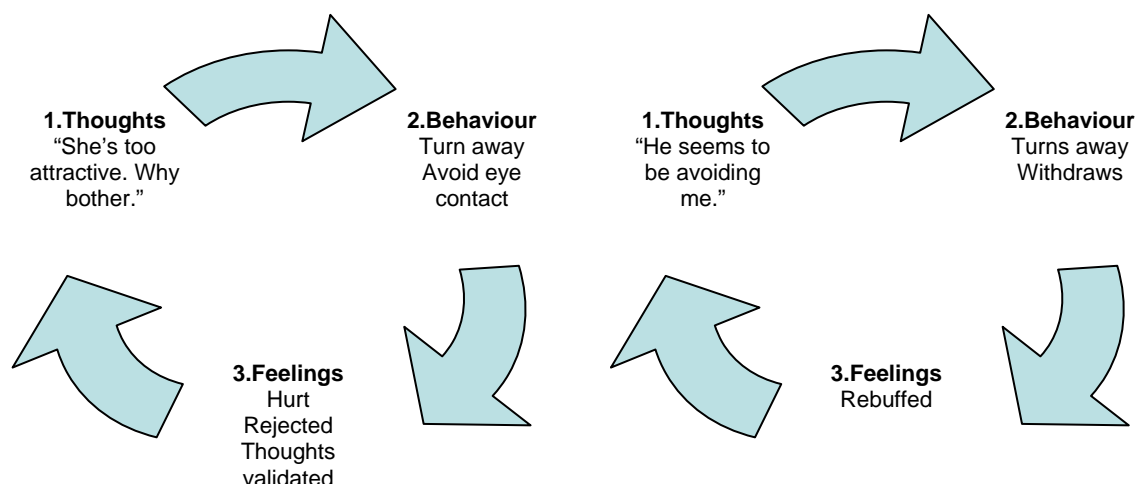
Transferring old negative assumptions and behaviour onto your current encounter can be counterproductive because you are more likely to create the very experience that you are trying to avoid. Take a look at the following example:

Ben was at a friend's party and noticed a young woman he found attractive on the other side of the room. His automatic thought was, "She's too attractive to notice me. Why bother, she'll never be interested." As a consequence of these thoughts, Ben failed to notice that Sarah had looked over at him. Instead, he turned away from her, avoiding any eye contact.

In response, Sarah felt rebuffed and interpreted Ben's body language as disinterest and subsequently also turned away. On noticing this, Ben further interpreted Sarah's response as rejection which confirmed his original belief that she would not be interested in him - and so the negative feedback cycle is complete.

Ben:

Sarah:



What's going on for you?

Think about what happens when you meet someone you find attractive for the first time. Do you make negative assumptions about what is going to happen? How do you behave as a result? If you feel self-conscious, do you avoid eye contact or avoid conversation? Perhaps you try to hide your fears by being aggressive and pretending not to care? Perhaps you try to conceal your disfigurement by pulling your fringe over your eye or holding your head down?

What's going on for the other person?

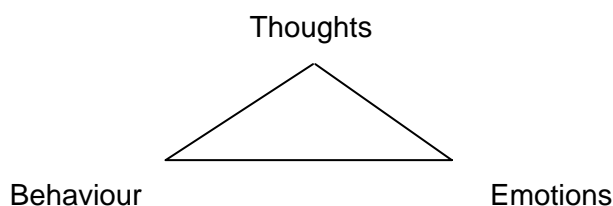
Now think about what might be going on for the person you find attractive. Many people feel uncertain about how to behave when they meet someone with a disfigurement for the first time. Perhaps they've never met someone with your condition or type of "difference" before.

They might be taken by surprise and yet their natural curiosity can mean they want to look at you. They might be worried about embarrassing you and themselves. Whatever the reason, the resulting behaviour is often awkward and clumsy. Some people may even avoid you because they just don't know what to do. As demonstrated in the negative feedback cycle, this behaviour could lead you to interpret that they are either not interested in you or worse still, repelled by your appearance.

It is no wonder that these encounters can feel so difficult!

4 THE COGNITIVE-BEHAVIOURAL APPROACH

As you saw from the example, our individual thoughts and beliefs are core to our experience of situations. They can inform our feelings about a situation, which, in turn, can influence our behaviour.



It is this interplay of thoughts, feelings and behaviour that provides a framework or approach to enable you to have a more positive experience when you meet someone you find attractive or who finds you attractive.

‘Rethinking’ your thoughts and beliefs

Cognitions or ways of thinking tend to be quite automatic, usually occurring as spontaneous private thoughts or an internal dialogue. They can seem out of our control and are often accepted as reality without any further consideration.

Although we cannot prevent thoughts from coming into our minds automatically, it is possible to address them in a more systematic and rational way. By actively checking out your thoughts and bringing them into your conscious awareness, you can question their relevance and usefulness in each situation. If you realise that your thoughts are unhelpful or limiting, you can choose to replace them with something more positive and realistic, e.g. the negative thought, “No one will be interested in anything I have to say.” can be replaced with, “I have lots to offer that could be of interest to this person.”

This may sound overly-simplified but the process of attending to your thoughts and actively addressing them takes effort and commitment. If you can try out the principles of this approach in a simple scenario and experience the benefits, you will hopefully feel more encouraged to persevere.

Changing your behaviour

When we refer to behaviour, we mean how we communicate with others, both verbally and non-verbally. Like the cognitive aspect of this approach, we are often unaware of our own behaviour and its consequences.

Good social and communication skills are two of the determining factors in the success of a social encounter when one of you has a disfigurement. Appearance can undoubtedly have an effect on social interactions but research shows that the way you behave is MORE influential. By changing your behaviour you can literally change the way that other people respond to you – for the better.

Again, this may sound too easy but we only have to think about what it feels like to talk to someone who is very happy or excited. We tend to respond positively to their energy and their body language, which could include lots of eye contact, hand gestures and movement. Even their voice will change in tone and pitch according to the level of excitement.

The table below shows how to use this cognitive-behavioural approach to monitor your own thoughts and behaviour. It details how somebody might normally think, feel and behave in a typical problem situation and then sets out the new thought and behaviour response. A blank copy of this worksheet can be found at the back of the Guide and can be used to help you prepare for specific scenarios that you have previously found difficult.

PROBLEM SITUATION	AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS	EMOTIONAL RESPONSE	BEHAVIOURAL RESPONSE	NEW THOUGHT	NEW BEHAVIOUR
Being in the company of someone I like.	They will never be attracted to me. There's no point even trying.	Feel self-conscious and depressed.	Avoid them. No eye contact. Self-deprecating in their company.	I'm going to make the effort to get to know this person and let them know about me – only then will I find out if we get on.	Smile at them. Maintain eye contact. Approach them and introduce yourself.

If you would like to know more about the cognitive-behavioural approach or develop your communication and social skills, please contact one of the adult specialists at *Changing Faces*. *Changing Faces* also publishes a self-help booklet called "Everybody's Staring at Me" which provides a useful introduction to communicating when you have a disfigurement in a range of situations.

5 MEETING SOMEONE YOU LIKE FOR THE FIRST TIME

Working on your thoughts and behaviours using the cognitive-behavioural approach takes time and offers long-term benefits. The second part of this Guide provides some suggestions and strategies for the more practical aspects of meeting people and getting closer to someone you like. These can be used straightaway.

Where will you meet someone

You're more likely to meet someone you like in a place where you have something in common. For example, many people meet their partners at college, University, or work.

Depending on your religious or cultural background you may attend church, synagogue or other places of worship regularly. If it is important that your partner shares your religious or spiritual beliefs, this could be an obvious place to start.

If you enjoy health and fitness, your local gym or fitness club may well put on social events where you could meet like-minded people. Evening classes are also a great choice. You can learn a new skill, make new friends and increase your chances of meeting someone who enjoys doing the same things that you do.

Pubs and clubs are popular places to meet people as they are often very informal and sociable environments. There can be a lot of peer pressure at these venues and it can feel

as if appearances count for everything so you may decide that whilst pubs and clubs are good for a bit of fun, you're more likely to meet a partner elsewhere.

More and more people meet over the internet and through specialist dating agencies. Here are a few tips if you are considering this avenue:

1. Choose a reputable site or agency.
2. If you're asked for a photograph, send in one that tells the viewer something more about yourself rather than just a head shot. Try posting a photo of yourself on holiday somewhere special, or an action shot doing one of your hobbies - cycling, dancing or rock-climbing. By providing a context to your photo, you are more likely to capture the interest of the viewer and encourage them to take a look at your profile.
3. Consider how you word your profile or advert and ask someone to look over it for you. Don't feel that you have to refer to your condition or appearance. Get to know someone first and see if you have a connection with them. When you're feeling more comfortable you can tell them more then.

How to approach someone and start a conversation

Thinking about how you would approach someone and what you want to say before you are actually in a social situation can make a real difference to your self-confidence. Choosing clothes you feel confident in or wearing an accessory that says something about your individual style can also help.

When you approach someone, your non-verbal communication or body language will be doing the talking. An upright posture (head up, shoulders back) and a smile signals that you are both confident and friendly. Eye contact and a slight nod of the head let's someone know that you are approachable. Depending on the circumstances, offering your hand to shake may be appropriate - your hold should be firm but not crushing!

When you introduce yourself, speak as clearly as you can and look them in the eye. If you feel confident enough, say something about the food, the place or your host, e.g. "Hi! I'm Lisa. Have you tried these spring rolls? They're delicious!"

Many people worry that they won't be able to think of anything to say when they meet someone they like for the first time. Small talk is a great stepping stone to getting to know someone better. It doesn't require you to be funny or clever; you just need to be able to comment on the more general topics that are guaranteed to be a shared experience.

Although you may not know anything about the person you like, you can glean a certain amount of information about them based on the context in which you are meeting. Consider this as the 'thing' you have in common and use it to start a conversation.

For example, if you meet someone at a work event you can enquire about the department that they work in, or a particular aspect of their work. Perhaps you know mutual people? If you meet someone at an evening class, you might ask what interested them about the class that you are both attending. You could also enquire if they have done other classes, and offer your own experience. If you meet on the bus or train, you might comment on the journey, the weather or your newspaper headlines.

Unleash your inner flirt

Flirting is universal – and it can be good fun! You can flirt in a light-hearted way and it can be very helpful in letting someone know that you like them. If you would like to develop your flirting skills, here are a few hints and tips:

- Words are less important when flirting than how you use non-verbal communication.
- Smile if you can!. Try not to worry if your smile is not symmetrical because of your condition – the other person would much rather spend time with someone who is relaxed and appears to be enjoying themselves rather than someone who withholds their smile in favour of maintaining a symmetrical expression. If you're unable to smile, you can use other non-verbal and verbal tools such as tipping your head to the side, being expressive in your hand gestures and laughing a lot.
- If you want to let someone know that you like them, make eye contact and hold their gaze for a few seconds longer than usual.
- Turn your body towards the person you are interested in and adopt more "open" body language, by unfolding your arms and either uncrossing your legs or pointing one foot in the direction of the person you like (Often this happens naturally).
- Lean in closer to the person you like when they are talking as this signals that they have your undivided attention.
- Mirroring the other person's body language so that you sit or stand in a similar way and use similar gestures, can communicate subconsciously to the other person that you are on the same wavelength.
- Laugh. Show that you are enjoying the other person's company. Change the tone and pitch of your voice, use hand gestures and move your body to add expression and energy to your communication.
- If you notice that the person you like is flirting with you too, you could take things to the next level. A gentle touch on the forearm or shoulder can feel more personal and intimate, something that only the two of you are sharing.

Are they interested

Sometimes, you can just sense the connection with someone. Subtle observation of another person's body language can also provide clues. Is their body turned towards you? Are they leaning forward or adopting a posture similar to your own. Are they maintaining eye contact and smiling at you? If they are more tactile with you and are asking more questions, it is likely that they are enjoying your company.

Asking someone out

If you would like to meet up with someone again, you could start by making a subtle enquiry to find out if they might be coming back to the same place when you are. You could say something like, "This has been great. Perhaps I'll see you here again?"

Alternatively, you could use your common interest as a reason to meet again. Something like the following could be appropriate, "There's a Hogarth exhibition on at the Tate Gallery next month. Would you like to go?"

If you're feeling more confident and you want to make your intentions more explicit, you could simply ask them out by saying something like, "I've really enjoyed tonight! Would you like to meet up again, perhaps for a drink?"

What if someone declines your offer

Everyone gets turned down at sometime or other. It's not very nice, but it doesn't have to be the end of the world. Just because someone doesn't want to meet up again, it doesn't mean they haven't enjoyed your company or that they are making a judgment about your appearance. People decline invitations for all sorts of reasons including the fact that they are just not looking for a partner at that time.

Sometimes it may be the case that, whilst they like you, they just aren't attracted to you. This can be disappointing but it's better to respond gracefully than to be hurtful in retaliation. This could spoil your chances of being friends or the chance of meeting someone else through

that person should you meet again. Far better they are left with a positive memory of you than a negative one. A simple response might be, "Well okay. Thanks for a nice chat. Enjoy the rest of your night." Then you can walk away with your dignity intact.

6 GETTING CLOSER

When you've been with someone a while, you will naturally start to share more about yourselves – your experiences, your achievements, your fears, your hopes and your dreams. This sort of communication is key to any relationship as it helps you to understand where you are both coming from and understand about each other's differences.

Talking about your disfigurement

You may also want to talk about your disfigurement or share your experience of living with an unusual appearance. Often this can be a sign of how comfortable you are with your partner that you are able to share something so personal. Equally, you may be feeling that avoiding talking about your disfigurement is actually getting in the way and you would rather get it out in the open so you can concentrate on developing your relationship.

If you are unused to talking about your disfigurement it can feel a rather daunting prospect. Here are a few things to consider.

When? This is a very individual decision. Talking about your condition or disfigurement on a first date may feel premature for many people, yet for others, it will feel natural and right. It depends on a number of factors including your own levels of confidence and how close you feel to the other person.

One way to test the waters is to introduce an aspect of your experience into a conversation and see if your new partner asks you more about it, e.g. "I love this sunny weather but I have to be careful about exposing my skin because of my scarring." By introducing the subject in a more informal way, it suggests that you are comfortable talking about your condition and they can be comfortable about it too.

Alternatively, you may prefer to set aside dedicated time to talk in more depth. If this is the case, prepare your partner by saying, "I want to tell you more about my condition. Can you come around this evening?" This clearly indicates your intention and the importance of this discussion.

Where? An environment that offers some privacy can enable you to talk in more depth, without worrying about being overheard or interrupted. You may prefer to meet on your 'own territory' or somewhere neutral.

How? It's important to recognise that the language you use to refer to yourself will communicate to your partner the value you place on yourself. When talking about your condition, use neutral words to describe the colour, size, texture or sensation. Avoid using negative words like scary, ugly or deformity. If you know the name of your condition, it is helpful to tell your partner this too.

You may want to write down the things you think your partner would need to know and perhaps even ask a close friend to check this over with you.

What if your condition does not affect your face?

If your condition is not usually visible, this conversation will reveal a new and unknown part of yourself to your partner. The way that you talk about your scar, mark or unusual feature is

the same as for someone whose disfigurement is more visible. The main difference will probably be the surprise that your partner may show. You can prepare them for this by stating explicitly that you have something important and personal that you want to share with them and it may come as a surprise.

Managing your partner's response

By this stage in your relationship, you will probably have a sense about your partner's level of sensitivity and they may have already shared personal aspects of their own lives with you. Whilst it's not possible to anticipate how your partner will respond, it is natural that they may be a little surprised or concerned for you. They may also want to ask questions and find out more. You may find it helpful to provide some written information at this point and let them know that you are happy to talk about your condition again at another time.

Helping your partner manage other people's reactions to your appearance

If your visible difference does attract attention, your partner might feel uncertain about how to respond. If they notice that other people are staring or overhear remarks or unnecessary questions, they may feel protective towards you or even angry. If you can talk about other people's reactions together, your partner will be less likely to respond in an unhelpful or counterproductive way.

Some couples use a secret (body) language to signal to one another if they are concerned about someone's reaction and they will use a strategy that has already been discussed. You could say something as simple as, "If someone asks me about my birthmark, I'll be okay to handle it. But if they keep on and I begin to struggle, I'll give you a wink and perhaps you could interrupt by saying something like, "Really, let it go!"

Let's talk about sex

If you and your partner are becoming more physically or sexually intimate you may need to talk further about your condition – especially if there are functional implications or differences in shape, texture or sensation.

Telling your partner about these aspects of your condition can remove some of the anxiety that could otherwise stop you both from enjoying getting closer physically and making love. Sharing something so personal may also bring you both closer as you find ways to manage things together.

Use language that is descriptive and neutral. Keep it simple, e.g. "I want to tell you about the scarring on my leg. It's dark pink in colour and it can feel a little bumpy in places but it doesn't hurt me at all."

If the shape or structure of your mouth is different, e.g. as a result of a cleft lip and palate or following treatment for oral cancer, you might be worried about kissing. It's okay to say to your partner, "When you kiss me on that side of my mouth it feels great, but on this side I feel very little."

Communication about your needs is essential. Does your partner know if your condition has caused differences in the shape or texture of your skin, or you have altered sensation? Some skin conditions can be very irritating and sore, and the skin can be highly sensitive. Your partner might be anxious that s/he could cause you harm or pain. A little humour can also be a great way to diffuse what could otherwise feel like a very intense conversation, e.g. "One of the benefits of my condition is that I'm highly sensitive to touch, but it also means I need you to take care when you touch me in certain places."

It's hard to expect your partner to be sensitive and understand exactly how you feel about something unless you're able to communicate to him or her how you feel in the first place. If you don't understand or feel uncomfortable about something your partner is doing, find out why s/he is doing it. Explore. Talk. Try not to assume.

It may be helpful to know that almost everyone feels self-conscious about becoming more physical and revealing their body to a new partner. If your fears about being more physical are affecting you and you don't feel like you can talk to your partner, do get in touch with one of our adult specialists at *Changing Faces*.

7 FEELING DIFFERENT ABOUT YOURSELF

As your relationship develops and you feel increasingly close to your partner you might find that the way you feel about yourself changes.

You may discover, perhaps for the first time, that you are a sensual and sexual being - something that you may have previously denied. If you haven't been in a relationship for a long time you may have lost confidence in your femininity or masculinity. Rediscovering this can feel wonderful and very empowering. You may also have more confidence in your body and just feel happier altogether.

Adjusting to the new you and all these different feelings and emotions can sometimes take a little time. So, take your time and enjoy being with your partner in a loving relationship with all of the fun and challenges that it will hopefully bring.

8 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **She says she just “wants to be friends”. I've already got plenty of those, I wanted something more.**

It can be disappointing if someone you like doesn't feel the same way. You will naturally feel hurt and perhaps rejected. If you really like this person it is worth staying friends even if you already have lots of other friendships. If she is a relatively new person in your life, she may also bring with her a number of other potential new friends. By increasing your social network you can also increase the chance of meeting someone who will be interested in taking things further.

If you do decide to give the friendship a chance, allow yourself some time to get over any embarrassment you feel and let the person know that you need that space. By giving this friendship a chance, it may bring more reward than you think.

2. **After a long time of being single, I was asked out by a man at my evening class. We have been out on a few dates now, mostly just to our local pub. Whilst it's been nice I don't think we have much in common and I find his manner rather rude and abrupt sometimes. I've enjoyed having male company and someone to take me out. I was on my own for so long I don't want to ruin this opportunity.**

It sounds as if you're not sure about your compatibility with this man. Understandably, you've enjoyed the experience of dating but it seems that you're worried about becoming single again. Perhaps you think that you ought to stay with this man because you don't know whether you will meet someone else again? Staying with someone because you fear being on your own again will only have a negative impact on your self-worth. You deserve to be with someone who you truly like and feel comfortable with. Rather than continue this

relationship, it would be best to make your feelings clear and then you can invest more time and energy in finding a more compatible partner. Use this experience to remind yourself that you are attractive to others and that it's okay to hang on for that someone special.

3. My cultural beliefs mean that my chances of finding a partner are very limited.

In some cultures, a condition which causes disfigurement is considered to be a sign of poor physical health. It can also be a reflection of how that person has lived in a past life. These beliefs can mean that someone who has a visible difference is judged negatively and their opportunities for finding a partner may be reduced as a consequence.

Many people find ways to either live with these beliefs or to counter them by adopting an alternative belief system. You may find it useful to consult leaders in your community about your concerns and how you can manage these beliefs and other people's reactions.

If you would like to discuss your concerns about your cultural or religious beliefs or your individual sexuality in more detail, then please do contact us directly.

4. I had an accident six months ago which left me with burns scarring to my body and face. My partner left me three months later. I've been feeling very low recently. I don't imagine that anyone will ever want me now.

It's understandable you're feeling very low at the moment. You've been through a great deal over the last six months. At the moment you're trying to cope with a number of losses – those related to your traumatic accident, physical injuries and the subsequent change to your appearance. You are also sadly dealing with the loss of your previous relationship.

You need to take things one step at a time. Surround yourself with family and friends who can offer you the support you need and deserve. Find a counsellor to speak to if you think you need that extra help. Right now it may be difficult to imagine that you could have another relationship but you are still grieving for your current losses and it's best to give yourself time to adjust to these and then you can begin to think about another relationship.

5. I have limited facial expression after some nerve damage. Will this affect my chances of meeting someone who finds me attractive?

Facial expression is an important communication tool as we tend to look at other people's faces to determine what the other person is feeling, what effect we are having, and, of course, to help us understand verbal language.

It is, however, not the only communication tool available to us. If your facial expression is limited or non-existent, you may feel self-conscious about smiling or worry that your smile is uneven. Similarly, if you have only one eye you may feel self-conscious about eye contact. Don't try to hide your mouth or look away as this will only increase people's curiosity or make them think you are not interested in them. Be more expressive with your other communication tools - your gestures, your posture and the energy you put into your speech. People respond to the "whole" message not just one part of it.

9 FINDING FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

If you have a disfigurement or are close to someone who has a disfigurement and you would like further information, support or advice about intimacy or developing a loving relationship, please contact Changing Faces on 0845 4500 275 and ask to speak to one of our adult specialists. Alternatively, you can email us at info@changingfaces.org.uk.

Changing Faces runs an Intimacy Workshop twice a year. If you are interested in attending this workshop or finding out more, please contact us using the details given above.

10 OTHER ORGANISATIONS AND WEBSITES OFFERING SUPPORT

Relate

www.relate.org.uk

Tel: 0845 456 1310 or 01788 573241

Offers advice, relationship counselling, sex therapy, workshops and counselling via the telephone, email or face-to-face.

British Association for Sexual and Relationship Therapy

www.basrt.org.uk

Tel: 020 8543 2707

A national charity specialising in sexual and relationship therapy. The website provides details of members in your area.

British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy

www.bacp.co.uk

Tel: 0870 443 5252

Email: bacp@bacp.co.uk

Provides details of counsellors and psychotherapists in your area.

OUCH!

www.bbc.co.uk/outch/about/

A BBC website that offers lifestyle information to people who have disabilities.

Brook Advisory Centres

www.brook.org.uk

Provide free and confidential sexual health advice to young people up to the age of 25 years.

WORKSHEET

Enter your own scenario and responses in the worksheet below:

PROBLEM SCENARIO	AUTOMATIC THOUGHT	EMOTIONAL RESPONSE	BEHAVIOURAL RESPONSE	ALTERNATIVE THOUGHT	ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIOUR	OUTCOME (complete after event)

