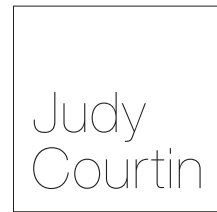


# Self care during your legal journey



*Legal*

Survivors often carry the scars of their abuse in the form of acute psychological distress, which can be debilitating.

The legal process can be an especially difficult time for a survivor, as our legal system has not been specifically designed to cater to the needs of highly traumatised claimants.

Some of these stressors may include giving evidence and being cross-examined (note that about 98% of matters settle **before** a trial), recalling and discussing intimate details of the abuse for the purposes of a medico-legal examination or during appointments with various other professionals during the legal process.

Delays in our court system can also compound distress. In many cases, it may take three or more years to finalise a matter through the courts.

Lawyers at JCL who specialise in working with survivors are well-trained to assist in making the process as simple and as comfortable for you as possible.

They will keep you informed every step of the way and use plain English, and will also seek your input, ideas and instructions each step of the way.

Part of that commitment also includes being available to answer any queries you have, no matter what they may be.

**At JCL, we pride ourselves on caring for our clients on all levels.**

Some actions you can take to help alleviate your own stress during the legal process include the following:

- regular exercise;
- keeping in touch with friends and family (where available);
- speaking to your GP if you have concerns about your health;
- reaching out to your lawyer if you have any concerns about your matter;
- pick up a creative pursuit – drawing, writing or just listening to music or reading a book; and
- acknowledge that it is legitimate to feel sad and angry about the abuse you have suffered.

## **Making a police report about historical sexual abuse**

If you wish to make a police report about historical sexual abuse, and you feel uncomfortable going to a police station, you may be able to make a report via email or via telephone.

**If you are in Victoria, you may consider contacting the specialised SANO Taskforce.**

Email: [sanotaskforce@police.vic.gov.au](mailto:sanotaskforce@police.vic.gov.au)

Phone: **1800 110 007**