

September is Suicide Awareness Month

The CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) reports that suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the U.S. In 2019, suicide claimed the lives of over 47,500 people— this does not include the *millions* of people attempting suicide.

What People Who Have Been Suicidal Want to Tell Someone Who is Suicidal Today:

- **If you are feeling suicidal, you are not alone.** You are NOT unworthy, unimportant, unloved or any of the other things your brain might be telling you when you're feeling suicidal.
- **Find at least one thing you want to stay for.** Whether it's for a family member, event, or trip—find that one thing.
- **Take it day by day, hour by hour or minute by minute, if you need to.** Don't let the weight of the future be heavy on your shoulders. You don't have to be OK forever, you can be OK for just this minute. You can deal with the next minute when it gets here.
- **It's OK if all you did today was barely hold yourself together.** If all you did today was hold yourself together, I am proud of you! Please stay strong and get help! Even in your darkness, you could be someone's light.



Warning Signs

While suicide does not have one single cause, there may be warning signs that a person could be in acute danger and may need help urgently. Warning signs may include:

- Talking about feeling empty or hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or feeling that there is no solution
- Feeling unbearable emotion or physical pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Talking about feeling great guilt or shame

- Using alcohol or drugs more often
- Changing eating habits or sleeping habits
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge

Risk Factors for Suicide

Suicide does not discriminate, people of all genders, ages, ethnicity and socioeconomic status can be at risk. It is important to remember that suicidal behavior is complex with no single cause. Risk factors can include:

- Depression, mental health disorders, and substance abuse disorders
- Chronic pain
- A personal or family history of suicide
- Exposure to family violence

If You Know Someone in Crisis

The National Institute of Mental Health recommends 5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain:

- **Ask.** "Are you thinking of killing yourself?" While it isn't an easy question to ask, it is important to ask. If the answer is "Yes," then the person needs immediate medical care. Mandatory reporters are required to assist the person in receiving immediate professional care.
- **Keep the person safe.** Reducing a suicidal person's access to highly lethal items or places is an important part of suicide prevention and can make a difference.
- **Be there.** Research suggests that listening and learning how the person is thinking and feeling may reduce vs. increase suicidal thoughts.
- **Help them connect.** Save the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK (8255)) and the Crisis Text Line numbers (741741) in your phone, so you have them if you need it.
- **Stay connected.** Studies have shown that the number of suicide deaths go down when someone follows up with the at-risk person.

https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/why-people-kill-themselves-5-221839354.html?fr=sycsrp_catchall

https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/people-apos-ve-suicidal-want-174213773.html?fr=sycsrp_catchall

https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention#part_2351

