



Understanding Suicide

Suicide is a leading cause of death for all age groups. The friends, family, and colleagues of someone who has died by suicide often question what they might have done to prevent the loss. They may also be at greater risk for suicide.

People who are struggling with suicidal thoughts frequently:

- Feel hopeless
- See no way out of their problems
- Struggle to get attention or support
- Have experienced a recent severe loss or series of losses
- Cope with chronic, long-term physical or emotional pain
- Have a history of previous suicide attempts

Signs that a person may be thinking about harming themselves include:

- Talking about suicide
- A preoccupation with death and dying
- Giving away prized possessions
- Drastic changes in behavior
- Seeming happier or calmer following a period of depression
- Withdrawing from friends or social activities
- Engaging in risky behavior, such as driving dangerously or abusing alcohol or drugs

If you are concerned that a friend, loved one, or colleague may be suicidal, please reach out. These steps may be helpful:



- **Be direct.** Calmly ask, “Are you thinking about hurting yourself?”
- **Listen.** Let the person express their feelings without interruption.
- **Be available.** Show interest and support.
- **Remove means.** Suicide is sometimes an impulsive act. If you share a living space with the person, remove weapons or pills.
- **Offer hope.** Tell the person that you care about them and want them in the world. Encourage them to speak to their therapist or healthcare provider. They can also call or text the Suicide and Crisis Hotline at 988.
- **Seek help.** LifeMatters is available 24/7/365 to provide emotional support and helpful resources. Please call.

1-800-367-7474

Assistance with Life, Work, Family, and Wellbeing
mylifematters.com • 24/7/365

Call collect to **262-574-2509** if outside of North America

Language assistance services in your preferred spoken and written languages are available at no cost by calling 1-800-367-7474. The above information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to take the place of medical advice.

