



Coping with Suicidal Thoughts

I'm seriously thinking about suicide. What should I do?

If you are thinking about suicide, you are not alone. Many people have thoughts of suicide, for a number of reasons. Thoughts of suicide can be very scary. You probably feel hurt, confused, overwhelmed and hopeless about your future. You may feel sadness, grief, anger, guilt, shame, or emptiness. You may think that nothing can be done to change your situation. Your feelings may seem like they are just too much to handle right now. It is important to know that thinking about suicide does not mean that you will lose control or act on these thoughts. Having thoughts of suicide does not mean you are weak, or 'crazy'. Many people think about suicide because they are looking for a way to escape the pain they are feeling.

Even though your situation seems hopeless and you wonder if you can stand another minute of feeling this bad, there are ways to get through this and feel better. You don't have to face this situation alone. Help is available. Here are a few ideas that you can use right now.

Connect with others: If you are worried that you may lose control or do something to hurt yourself, tell someone. Make sure you are around someone you trust. If you live alone, ask a friend or family member to stay with you. If you don't know anyone or can't reach friends or family members, call 1-800-SUICIDE (1 800-784-2433).

Keep your home safe by getting rid of ways to hurt yourself: It is important to get rid of things that could be used to hurt or kill yourself, such as pills, razor blades, or guns. If you are unable to do so, go to a place you can feel safe.

Develop a safety plan: It is very helpful to have a written safety plan when you have thoughts of hurting yourself. Have a trusted family member, friend, or professional help you to complete this safety plan. Keep this plan somewhere you can see or find easily. Write down the steps you will take to keep yourself safe (see the following example). Follow the steps. If you follow these steps and still do not feel safe, call a crisis line, get yourself to a hospital emergency room or call 911.

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This document is not intended to replace professional care with a therapist or physician.

Safety Plan

If you have thoughts of hurting yourself, start at Step 1. Go through each step until you are safe. Remember: Suicidal thoughts can be very strong. It may seem they will last forever. With support and time, these thoughts will usually pass. When they pass, you can put energy into sorting out problems that have contributed to you feeling so badly. The hopelessness you may feel now will not last forever. It is important to reach out for help and support. You can get through this difficult time. Since it can be hard to focus and think clearly when you feel suicidal, please copy this and put in places where you can easily use it, such as your purse, wallet or by the phone.

1. Do the following activities to calm/comfort myself:

2. Remind myself of my reasons for living:

3. Call a friend or family member:

Name:

Phone:

4. Call a backup person if person above is not available:

Name:

Phone:

5. Call a care provider (psychologist, psychiatrist, therapist):

Name:

Phone:

6. Call my local crisis line:

Phone:

7. Go somewhere I am safe:

8. Go to the Emergency Room at the nearest hospital.

9. If I feel that I can't get to the hospital safely, call 911 and request transportation to the hospital.
They will send someone to transport me safely.