

# WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT SUICIDE

## WHAT IS SUICIDE?

Suicide is when people harm themselves with the goal of ending their life, and they die as a result. A suicide attempt is when people harm themselves with the goal of ending their life, but they do not die. Avoid using terms such as “committing suicide,” “successful suicide,” or “failed suicide” when referring to suicide and suicide attempts, as these terms often carry negative meanings.

## WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE?

Warning signs that someone may be at immediate risk for attempting suicide include:

- Talking about wanting to die or wanting to kill themselves
- Talking about feeling empty or hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or feeling that there are no solutions
- Feeling unbearable emotional or physical pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Giving away important possessions
- Saying goodbye to friends and family
- Putting affairs in order, such as making a will
- Taking great risks that could lead to death, such as driving extremely fast
- Talking or thinking about death often

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM STRUGGLING OR SOMEONE I KNOW IS HAVING THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE?

If you notice warning signs of suicide—especially a change in behavior or new, concerning behavior—get help as soon as possible. Family and friends are often the first to recognize the warning signs of suicide, and they can take the first step toward helping a loved one find mental health treatment. If someone tells you that they are going to kill themselves, do not leave them alone. Do not promise that you will keep their suicidal thoughts a secret—tell a trusted friend, family member, or other trusted adult. Call 911 if there is an immediate life-threatening situation. You can also utilize the crisis resources handout.

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## WHAT IF I SEE SUICIDAL MESSAGES ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

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## DOES ASKING SOMEONE ABOUT SUICIDE PUT THE IDEA IN THEIR HEAD?

No. Studies have shown that asking people about suicidal thoughts and behaviors does not cause or increase such thoughts. Asking someone directly, “Are you thinking of killing yourself?” can be the best way to identify someone at risk for suicide.

## DO PEOPLE “THREATEN” SUICIDE TO GET ATTENTION?

Suicidal thoughts or actions are a sign of extreme distress and an indicator that someone needs help. Talking about wanting to die by suicide is not a typical response to stress. All talk of suicide should be taken seriously and requires immediate attention.

# WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER A LOSS

You may find yourself feeling **every** emotion.



**Some** emotions.



Or even **no** emotion.



What you feel may change every day. Every path is unique and that is normal. No one has the same experience and grief is a personal journey. It's important to honor your own process and acknowledge that there is no right or wrong way to grieve. Everyone's experience is valid, and what works for one person may not work for another.

There is no timeline for grief.

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## Grief Timeline

