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## Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain

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### 1. ASK:

“Are you thinking about killing yourself?” It is not an easy question but studies show that asking at risk individuals if they are suicidal does not increase suicides or suicidal thoughts.

### 2. KEEP THEM SAFE:

Reducing a suicidal person’s access to highly lethal items or places is important part of suicide prevention. While this is not always easy, asking if the at-risk person has a plan and removing or disabling the lethal means can make a difference.

### 3. BE THERE:

Listen carefully and learn with individuals thinking and feeling. Research suggests acknowledging and talking about suicide may in fact reduce rather than increase suicidal thoughts.

### 4. HELP THEM CONNECT:

Save the national suicide prevention lifeline’s number in your phone so is there when you need it: 1-800-273-8255. You can also help make a connection with the trust individual like a family member or friend spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.

### 5. STAY CONNECTED:

Stay in touch after a crisis or after being discharged from care can make a difference. Studies have shown the number of suicide deaths goes down when someone follows up with the at-risk person.

For more information on suicide prevention:  
[www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention)  
[www.bethe1to.com](http://www.bethe1to.com)



# September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month



Suicide claims the lives of more than **47,000 people** in the United States each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Suicide affects people of all Ages, gender, races, and ethnicities,

Suicide is complicated and tragic, but it can be preventable. Knowing the risk and warning signs for suicide and how to get help can help save lives. [www.bethe1to.com](http://www.bethe1to.com)

## KNOW THE RISK FACTORS

Risk factors are characteristics that make it more likely that someone will consider, attempt, or die by suicide. They can't cause or predict a suicide attempt, but they're important to be aware of.

- Mental disorders, particularly mood disorders, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and certain personality disorders
- Alcohol and other substance use disorders
- Hopelessness
- Impulsive and/or aggressive tendencies
- History of trauma or abuse
- Major physical illnesses
- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- Family history of suicide
- Job or financial loss
- Loss of relationship(s)
- Easy access to lethal means
- Local clusters of suicide
- Lack of social support and sense of isolation
- Stigma associated with asking for help
- Lack of healthcare, especially mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Cultural and religious beliefs, such as the belief that suicide is a noble resolution of a personal dilemma
- Exposure to others who have died by suicide (in real life or via the media and Internet)

## KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

Some warning signs may help you determine if a loved one is at risk for suicide, especially if the behavior is new, has increased, or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change. If you or someone you know exhibits any of these, seek help by calling the Lifeline.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill themselves
- Looking for a way to kill themselves, like searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or isolating themselves
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Extreme mood swings

**NATIONAL**  
**SUICIDE**  
**PREVENTION**  
**LIFELINE™**  
**1-800-273-TALK**  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)