



Signs and Symptoms of Someone in Crisis

The behaviors listed below may be signs that someone is thinking about suicide.

- Talking about wanting to die or wanting to kill themselves
- Talking about feeling empty, hopeless, or having no reason to live
- Making a plan or looking for a way to kill themselves, such as searching online, stockpiling pills, or buying a gun
- Talking about great guilt or shame
- Talking about feeling trapped or feeling that there are no solutions
- Feeling unbearable pain (emotional pain or physical pain)
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Using alcohol or drugs more often
- Acting anxious or agitated
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Changing eating and/or sleeping habits
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Taking great risks that could lead to death, such as driving extremely fast
- Talking or thinking about death often
- Displaying extreme mood swings, suddenly changing from very sad to very calm or happy
- Giving away important possessions
- Saying goodbye to friends and family
- Putting affairs in order, making a will

If these warning signs apply to you or someone you know, get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has increased recently.

5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain

1. **Ask: "Are you thinking about killing yourself?"**
It's 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 an 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 what the individual is thinking and feeling. Findings suggest 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 it's there when you need it: 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You can also help make a connection with a trusted individual like a family member, friend, spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.
5. **Stay Connected:** Staying 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.

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

In an emergency, call **911**

In a crisis, text **HOME** to the crisis
textline **741741**

24 hour service for referrals to community
health care providers and resources,
call **211** or visit **211.org**

