

A self help guide:

Are you distressed or thinking about suicide?



Thinking of suicide?

Thoughts of ending your own life mean that you have more pain than you can cope with right now.

Thoughts and actions are two different things – your suicidal thoughts do not have to become a reality. There is no deadline. Wait and put some distance between you and your suicidal thoughts and suicidal action.

Give yourself today

The option of killing yourself isn't going to go away. It is a choice you can make next week or next month. When you are feeling so bad the thought of just surviving the days ahead can seem overwhelming and unbearable. So try and focus on just getting through today, not the rest of your life.

Today may be painful, but you can decide to survive it and give some other options a chance, at least for a day.

Remember that however alone you feel, there are people who want to talk with you, who want to help.

If you are feeling suicidal, please **T A L K**

Tell someone what you are thinking and how you are feeling

Ask for their help, or seek help

Listen to their advice or advice from others

Know who to call in a crisis and keep the number with you at all times

Some examples of who to contact are given at the end of this leaflet

Things you can do to protect yourself from suicide

There are several things you may find helpful.

1. Seek help or support with any problems

- Ring 111 to access mental health services – 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Contact your general practitioner (GP). If you do not have a GP or do not know your GP's telephone number contact 111
- Phone the Samaritans 24 hour helpline on **116123** for confidential non-judgmental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

2. Strong, confiding relationships

Stress can cause problems with those closest to us. Strong relationships can help fight stress.

Confide in others. Who should you talk to? Try friends or relatives who you trust. Contact them and let them know how you feel. They may be able to see ways out of problems that you have not thought about. It will help to get things off your chest. It may also help you feel less isolated.

3. Musts and shoulds

Don't turn everything into an obligation. Work out what you can cope with. Not everything has to be done right now or especially by you.

Prioritise. If you do have a busy life, you must decide what has to be done and what can wait.

4. Coping with ruts

If you feel your life is in a rut – same old routine day in and day out – then think about a change. Plan your weekends and do something different; visit friends; go for a long walk; go for a drive; take up new hobbies.

5. Divide up problems

If you face a huge problem see if you can divide it up into 'bite-sized bits'. Then tackle the bits one at a time. Perhaps ask a good friend to help work this out.

6. Situations beyond your control

There are things in life that you can't change – people get ill, people die, people lose jobs. Try to recognise what you can control.

7. Other people's shoes

If you have a problem, think how you would react if a friend came to you with that same problem. What advice would you give them?

8. Keep a structure to each day

It will help if you keep a routine, even if you don't feel like it or if you are not at work. Get up at a reasonable time, get washed and dressed. Try to get out of the house. Try to see people. It is often helpful to make a schedule for each day the night before.

Other things you can do

Distance yourself from any means of suicide. Give your medicines to someone who can give them to you one day at a time. Remove any dangerous objects from your home. If you own a gun give the gun cupboard key to a friend.

Avoid using drugs and alcohol when you are feeling desperate. Although it is tempting to try to use them to try to numb painful feelings, they can make your emotions more volatile and affect your judgement. Friends sometimes suggest 'let's have a good drink' but think if you could suggest doing something else together instead.

Avoid doing things you're not likely to succeed at or find difficult until you're feeling better. Know what your present limits are and don't try to go beyond them until you feel better. Set realistic goals for yourself and work at them slowly, one step at a time.

In your daily schedule don't forget to include at least two periods of activity, building up to at least 30 minutes each, as you are able. These should be activities that, in the past, have given you some pleasure such as listening to some music, doing exercise, reading a book or magazine, taking a warm bath, gardening, playing with your pet, and going for a walk.

Take care of your physical health. Eat a well balanced diet. Don't skip meals. Go out for one or two walks a day building up to 30 minutes each time as soon as you are able. If you are not sleeping well it is still useful to use good sleep routines.

You may not feel very social but encourage yourself to talk to other people. If you are worried about becoming too emotional see if you can think of a couple of topics you are okay talking about. Increasing your contact with other people is likely to be helpful.

Remember that while it may feel as if it will never end, suicidal thoughts can often get better.

Main contacts

Make an urgent appointment with your general practitioner (GP).

If you do not have a GP, then please contact the local health authority and one or more of the resources below to get immediate help whilst you are being allocated a doctor.

Ring NHS 111 for urgent access to services - 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Accident and emergency (hospital)

Go to your nearest accident and emergency unit and tell the staff how you are feeling.

Visit www.nhs.uk (key the word 'suicide' into the search box in the right hand corner of the screen). There is a list of resources you can contact.

Samaritans

Confidential, non-judgemental, emotional support, for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide. They offer their service by telephone, email and letter, and face to face in most of their branches.

helpline: 116123 (24 hours)

email: jo@samaritans.org

write to: Chris, PO Box 9090, Stirling, FK8 2SA

www.samaritans.org.uk

In an emergency, phone 999

Useful contacts

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

For details of local practitioners

tel: 01455 883316

www.bacp.co.uk

Campaign Against Living Miserably [CALM]

A campaign and charity set up to reduce the high suicide rate among young men (under 35). They have a helpline, magazine and online community, but CALM listens to anyone who needs help or support.

helpline: 0800 585858 (free from landlines 5pm – midnight every Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday).

www.thecalmzone.net

info@theCALMzone.net

Carers Direct and helpline (NHS service)

If you need help with your caring role and want to talk to someone about what options are available to you. 'Call back' and online enquiry services.

helpline: 0808 802 0202 (freephone 8am to 9pm Monday to Friday, 11am to 4pm at weekends)

www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect

Carers UK (the voice of carers)

A charity set up to help the millions of people who care for family or friends.

20 Great Dover Street, London SE1 4LX

helpline: 0808 808 7777 (Wednesday and Thursday 10-12am and 2-4pm)

www.carersuk.org

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

For advice on a range of issues including money, family and daily life (their website has details of local offices and getting advice by telephone).

www.adviceguide.org.uk

CRUSE Bereavement Care

UK's largest bereavement charity. Promotes the well-being of bereaved people. Provides free care, support and information to all bereaved people and for those who are looking after them. See website for details of local branches.

helpline: 0844 477 4900

www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

Depression Alliance

National mutual support groups for people suffering from depression (over 60 groups across the country). The website contains information and you can request an information pack on depression.

20 Great Dover Street, London DE1 4LX

www.depressionalliance.org

information@depressionalliance.org

HOPELineUK (Papyrus)

A service staffed by trained professionals who give non-judgemental support, practical advice and information to children, teenagers and young people up to the age of 35 who are worried about themselves, and to anyone who is concerned about a young person.

helpline: 0800 068 4141 (free from landlines Monday-Friday 10am-5pm and 7pm-10pm, and 2pm-5pm on weekends)

www.papyrus-uk.org

If U Care Share Foundation

Charity based in the North of England set up by the family of a young man who died from suicide. It has three aims with regard to suicide: prevention, intervention and support of those bereaved by suicide.

www.ifucareshare.co.uk

share@ifucareshare.co.uk

Metanoia (means 'a change of mind')

Has a specific page that people thinking about suicide are encouraged to read. It directs people to some of the resources available, including the Samaritans.

www.metanoia.org/suicide

National Debt Line

Free and independent advice on how to deal with debt problems.

helpline: 0808 808 4000 (Monday-Friday 9am-9pm, Saturday 9.30am-1pm)

www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS)

A charity that wishes to meet the needs and break the isolation of those bereaved by the suicide of a close relative or friend.

The Flamstead Centre, Albert Street, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 5GU

helpline: 0844 561 6855

www.uk-sobs.org.uk

This leaflet was produced based on information provided by:

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