When a Loved One Struggles With Suicide:
What You Need to Know & How to Help

You don't have to do this alone. Help is always available.

FACTS vs MYTHS

FACT: Asking directly about suicide does not cause someone to start thinking about it. It can actually help them feel seen, cared for, and more willing to talk about what they're going through.

MYTH: Asking someone about suicide will put the idea in their head.

FACT: Suicide is preventable. With the right support, people in crisis can get the help they need.

MYTH: If someone really wants to die, nothing can stop them.

FACT: Suicide prevention is everyone's business. You don't need to be an expert. Anyone can help prevent a suicide!

MYTH: Suicide should only be discussed with trained professionals.

How Can You Help

1. ***Ask directly***: "Are you thinking about suicide?"
2. ***Listen with care***: Let them share without judgement and offer your support.
3. ***Encourage them to seek help:*** Suggest they see a doctor, therapist, or counselor, or call/text 988 for immediate support. Go with them to appointments or check in later.
4. ***Make their home safer:*** Lock away items that might be dangerous (medicines, guns, knives, etc.)

Understanding Suicide Risk

Suicide risk isn't always constant—it can change quickly. A person might seem okay one day and really be struggling the next.

Safety plans can help your loved one stay safe during tough moments. Remind and encourage them to use it.

Most suicide attempts happen during a short-term crisis. That's why it's so important to remove or lock away anything that could be used to cause harm, especially during times of struggle.

Signs that Someone Might be Struggling

F ***Feelings***: They might say they feel very sad or hopeless, like no one cares, they're a burden, or things will never get better

A ***Actions***: They might hurt themselves (cutting, burning), stop doing things they used to enjoy, start using drugs or alcohol, give away their stuff, or say goodbye in unusual ways

C ***Changes***: You may notice big changes, like sleeping a lot more or a lot less, eating much more or not eating at all, acting very angry, moody, agitated, or quiet, or you may notice they seem off

T ***Talk***: They might say things like "I wish I weren't here", "Everyone would be better off without me", or "I want to die"

S ***Situation***: They might be going through a big loss (death, breakup, job loss), bullying or big life changes, or problems at school, work, or home

Make Your Home Safer

If someone in your home is having thoughts of suicide, making the environment safer can help protect them during a crisis. Limit access to anything that has been considered or used in a past attempt.

- ***Firearms***: The safest option is to store them outside the home. If they must stay in the home, keep them unloaded, locked, and store ammunition separately.
- ***Medications***: Lock up all prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Safely get rid of any expired or unused medications.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE
24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT

Learn more about 988 here: