

Suicide Awareness and Prevention

**Where to Find Help if You're Feeling Suicidal
(You can get in touch about a friend who's struggling, too.)**

The Samaritans Crisis Help Lines (MA)

Boston: 617.247.0220

Framingham: 508. 875.4500

Statewide Toll-Free: 877.870.4673

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800.273.TALK (8255)

IM Hear_ Online Instant Messaging

(A program run by Samaritans for those more comfortable talking with someone online.)

samaritanshope.org/imhear-college.html

What You Can Do to Battle Suicidal Thoughts

Feeling suicidal or contemplating suicide isn't an unbeatable dilemma, and it's nothing to feel ashamed of. Thoughts like these are signs of a treatable problem, and help is available.

It's important to find someone you trust and feel comfortable talking with – whether that's a family member, a friend, a doctor, or a counselor. Practice expressing your emotions, thoughts, and feelings genuinely, and figure out where to go for help *before* you're in crisis.

Become familiar with your personal warning signs, and tell the people closest to you what they look like. Having others on the lookout for your mental health takes a lot of pressure off of you.

You might also find it helpful to try things like...

Writing lists of the people that are important to you, your hopes for the future, and the things that are special to you.

Reaching out to your friends and family – spending time with them might feel overwhelming sometimes, but going out with them or allowing them to visit you keeps your connections strong. Connect with people in your community or religious organization, too – shared faith and cultural beliefs could be valuable supports.

Getting exercise and spending time outside – staying physically healthy is good for your emotional health, too.

Staying away from drugs and alcohol, which have a tendency to make us more impulsive.

Getting a pet, even something small like a fish or hermit crab.

Maintaining your sense of humor, hope, and optimism.

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Warning Signs

Someone you know might be at risk for suicide if they...

- :: talk specifically about *how* they would end their life
- :: talk frequently about feeling helpless or hopeless
- :: express approval over someone else's suicide
 - :: say goodbye to the people they love
- :: don't seem interested in the future or can't envision a positive future for themselves
 - :: say things like, "I don't deserve to live"
- :: lose interest in their hobbies, social activities, schoolwork, relationships with family and friends, etc.
- :: miss a lot of school or allow their grades to slip
- :: intentionally avoid friends and people they care for

Risk Factors*

- :: family history or exposure to suicide or mental health needs
- :: abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, etc., or substance)
 - :: loss, or difficulty dealing with loss
 - :: being a suicide survivor
- :: lack of support structures at home or in the community
 - :: difficulty dealing with sexual orientation
 - :: family disruptions
 - :: trauma or traumatic events
- :: bullying or peer pressure (online or in person)
 - financial worries
- :: stress over succeeding in school or in life

*Remember: these things on their own don't mean someone will be suicidal, but they *might* contribute to suicidal thoughts or actions.

Talking with someone about suicide **WON'T** make them consider it for themselves.
It's a great relief to know someone cares, notices their pain, and wants to help.

How to Talk with Someone Who Is (or May Be) Suicidal

The Trevor Project developed this acronym to remind us how to talk to someone struggling with suicidal thoughts. For more information, check out their website: www.TheTrevorProject.org

Y-CARE – How You Can Help a Suicidal Person

You : You are never alone. You are never responsible for anyone who chooses to take their own life. As friends, family and loved ones, all you can do is listen, support and assist the person in getting the help they need.

Connect the person to resources and to a supportive, trusted adult.

Accept and listen to the person's feelings and take them seriously.

Respond if a person has a plan to commit suicide and tell someone you trust.

Empower the person to get help and to call The Trevor Lifeline at 866.488.7386