

Depression and Suicide Prevention



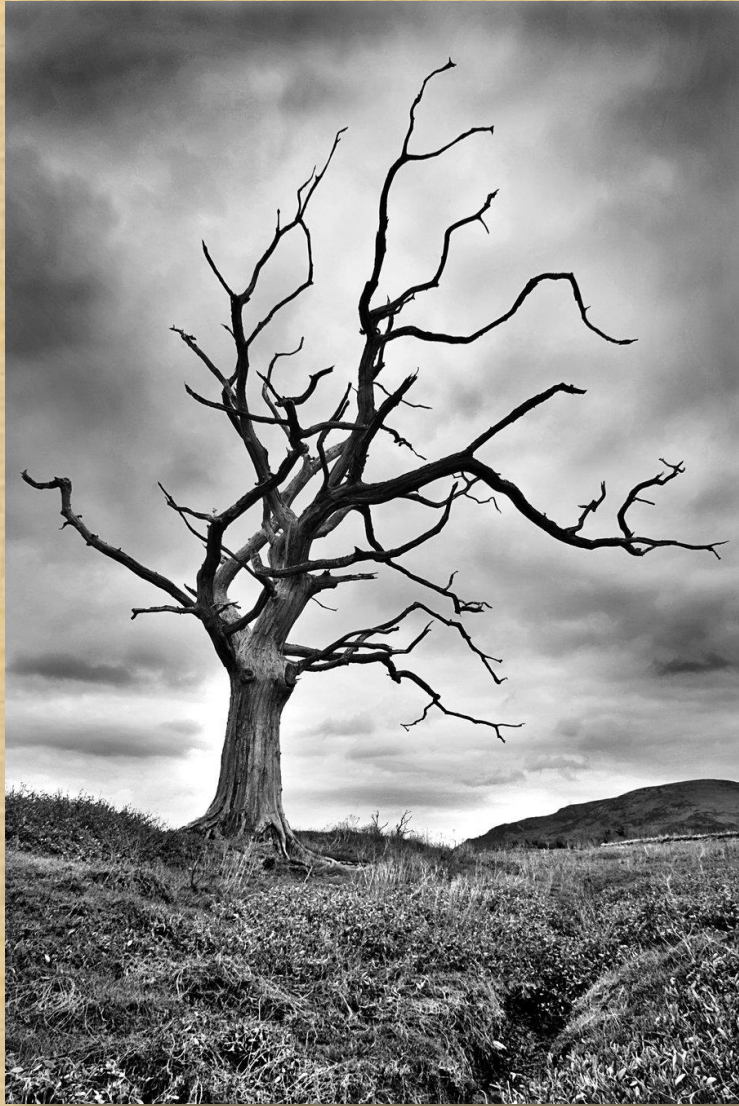


Help!











A graphic featuring two hands, one from the left and one from the right, reaching towards each other. The hands are rendered in a light, almost white, color against a dark blue, textured background. The fingers are slightly curled, suggesting a gesture of support or offering help. The overall composition is centered and symmetrical.

{SUICIDE}

IS 100% PREVENTABLE

SPEAK UP
REACH OUT



hello

friend!

Coping with Depression: What You Can do for Yourself

- Let someone know you are struggling.
- Stay active, attend classes, and remain social.
- Exercise.
- Be aware that depression influences thinking, so your thinking may not be accurate.
- Try to set realistic goals for yourself.
- Reduce your stress.
- Take extra special care of yourself.
- Seek the help of a counselor or medical practitioner

Depression: Symptoms

- Feeling depressed or sad
- Loss of interest in activities
- Crying frequently
- Irritable or angry
- Loss or increase of appetite
- Weight loss or weight gain
- Insomnia or sleeping a lot
- Exhaustion or loss of energy
- Feeling worthless
- Difficulty concentrating
- Trouble making decisions
- Hopelessness about the future
- Thoughts of suicide

Depression

Depression is more than having the blues or feeling down. Symptoms usually last for two weeks or longer and can be mild to severe. Typical symptoms usually occur all day for every day.



Depression: How can I help a Friend?

- Offer emotional support, understanding, patience, and encouragement.
- Engage your friend in conversation and listen carefully.
- Never disparage feelings your friend expresses, but point out realities and offer hope.
- Never ignore comments about suicide, and report them to your friend's therapist, doctor, or another authority figure.
- Invite your friend out for walks, outings, and other activities. Keep trying if he/she declines but don't push him/her too soon.
- Remind your friend that with time and treatment, the depression will lift.

Facts on Suicide

- Among young people aged 15-24, suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death, behind accidents and homicide. The number has tripled in recent years.
- Every day in the U.S., about 14 young people between the ages of 15-24 die at their own hands. That's one suicide every 1 hour and 40 minutes.



Suicide Myths

- **If a person really wants to kill himself or herself, no one has the right to stop him or her.**

False. We would help a person who was physically sick or injured; we need to help a person who is mentally ill.

- **Once a person is suicidal, they're suicidal forever.**

False. Teens who are suicidal can go on to lead useful lives, once they get help. Usually the suicidal feelings are for a limited period of time.

- **Improvement following a suicidal crisis means that the suicide risk is over.**

False. Most suicides occur within 3 months following the beginning of "improvement", when the teen has the energy to put their morbid thoughts and feelings into effect.

Suicide Myths

- **Teenagers who talk about attempting suicide are doing it for attention.**
True, and they NEED the attention. They need professionals to help them.
- **All teenagers who are suicidal are depressed.**
This statement is true, but the reverse is not true, most people will experience times in their lives when they are depressed, but have no suicidal ideation.
- **Suicidal people really want to die, so there's no way to stop them.**
False. They are depressed and need help. With help, they can feel better and find other solutions.
- **Talking about suicide will cause a student to attempt suicide.**
False. It's just the opposite: not talking about it could escalate the problem.

Suicide: Risk Factors

- Depression and other mental disorders, or a substance abuse disorder. More than 90% of people who die by suicide have these risk factors.
- Stressful life events in combination with other risk factors. However suicide and suicidal behavior are not normal responses to stress.
- Prior suicide attempt.
- Family history of suicide.
- Exposure to the suicidal behaviors of others, such as family members, peers, or media figures.
- Incarceration
- Family violence, including physical and sexual abuse.

Verbal Signs of Suicide

- "I can't go on anymore"
- "I wish I was never born"
- "I wish I were dead"
- "I won't need this anymore"
- "My parents won't have to worry about me anymore"
- "Everyone would be better off if I was dead"
- "Life sucks. Nobody cares if I live or die"

Suicide: Warning Signs

- Talking directly or indirectly about committing suicide or wanting to die
- Previous suicide attempt
- Abrupt change in personality and/or behavior (withdrawal, aggression, or moodiness)
- Increase in alcohol and/or drug use
- Rebellion and hostility
- Withdrawing from friends and activities
- Sudden drop in school performance
- Giving away special possessions
- Recent experience of loss
- Feelings of hopelessness or despair
- Unusual calmness after a loss or period of depression
- Neglect of personal appearance

Suicide Prevention: What can you do to help someone?

- Trust your suspicions—the majority of people who are suicidal show signs before making an attempt.
- Make yourself available to listen and talk.
- Remain calm.
- Ask directly about suicide—you will not be “putting thoughts into the person’s head.”
- Take the person seriously & show that you care.
- Offer support, but don’t try to handle this on your own.
- If the person refuses help, contact someone immediately.
- Maintain contact with the person until help is secured.