



Guidelines on what to do if someone tells you they are thinking about ending their life

- 80% of people who attempt suicide try to talk to someone about the idea in the weeks before the suicide attempt. This is a call for help. They are in terrible pain because they have become engulfed with problems and they believe the only way forward is to end their life. Research shows that people think it will be best for everyone if they do this. They are looking for a solution to end their unbearable pain and they believe ending their life is the only solution.
- If someone tells you they are planning to kill themselves it is perfectly normal to be terrified and scared. Do not blame yourself if you feel like this. This is one of the most difficult situations anyone can face. It is a myth that there is nothing you can do to help someone who is planning to kill themselves. You can help the person diffuse the situation they find themselves in so they have time to reconsider and look at options to help face the unbearable state they find themselves in.

Here are some guidelines you can use:

Make a Contract

- Tell them that there are a couple of things that you need to do together and that you will support them. Tell them you want to support them to reconsider. Always use the word we. You will act as a team. Try to establish eye contact. You will help the person and there should be an understanding of respect between the two of you
- First the person must make a commitment to you that they will undertake not kill themselves at least not for an agreed amount of time until they have looked with you at the options for life

Make them Safe

- Tell them that you need to keep them safe while you both look at the options for survival. Ask them if they have made a plan to kill themselves. If they have, ask them to tell you and try to remove anything they may consider using.

Suicide or Survive Limited

A Registered Charity No: chy16442

Tel: 1890 577 577

Web: www.suicideorsurvive.ie



Build up a Network of Rapid Supports

- You cannot carry the responsibility to keep this a secret . Tell them that you must work together to agree who else you should talk to.
- Build up a rapid support structure for the person and for yourself.
- Call one or all of the organisations below to gather information about what type of help and support there is in your area:
 - National Office of Suicide Prevention 01-6352139 or 01-6352179
 - Action on Suicide www.actiononsuicide.ie
 - Suicide or Survive 1890 577 577
 - 1Life Suicide Helpline 1800 247100
- Advise the person to go to see their doctor or other existing mental health supports they may already have. Offer to travel to the doctor with them
- If it is late at night or at the weekend and you are unable to reach services go immediately to A & E
- If the person requests you keep it a secret it is necessary to share your limitations and how you cannot do so but wish to work with the person.
- Encourage the person to make a plan with you on a course of action to take
- Constantly keep the person involved/updated on information you have received or people you talk to
- Agree a crisis plan should they become distressed and want to break your agreement
- This is a very difficult situation. Seek some confidential counselling for yourself if you feel distressed.

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