

## suicide **AWARENESS** and **PREVENTION** **LET'S TALK ABOUT IT.**



It is well-known that suicide is a major public health problem that can affect individuals, families, and communities. The statistics are not only alarming but support the need for ongoing suicide awareness and prevention strategies. As of 2020, here is what data on suicide tells us:

- **12.2 million** – the estimation of how many millions of adults seriously thought about suicide
- **46,000** – the number of deaths suicide is responsible for, making suicide the leading cause of death in the United States
- **30%** – suicide rates are 30% higher in 2020 compared to 2002
- **11** – someone dies from suicide every 11 minutes in the United States

Suicide awareness is the first step in preventing suicide. It aims to reduce social stigmas and uncertainty, promote positive dialogue and engagement, and increase knowledge and

understanding of suicide. Several programs, such as the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Suicide Prevention and Resource Center, and the Center for Disease Control (CDC), are working hard to foster suicide awareness.

Suicide is a complex issue, and multiple factors can contribute to it. Knowing what to look for is crucial in preventing suicide. Signs of suicidal behavior can be subtle and often missed entirely, but some signs to watch out for include reckless behavior, increased drug or alcohol use, giving away possessions, feeling hopeless or desperate, sudden mood changes, talking about being a burden on others, significant changes in sleep, and withdrawal. Factors that increase suicide risk include mental health illness, previous suicide attempts, serious medical illnesses, legal problems, financial stress, impulsive or aggressive tendencies, substance use, trauma, and a sense of hopelessness.

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If you suspect someone you know may be experiencing suicidal ideation, having a conversation with them can help. Being prepared before the conversation starts, expressing your concerns, validating their feelings, and creating a safety plan can all be helpful. Suicide prevention resources, such as texting 988 (the suicide hotline), should be provided to those who need them.

If you're experiencing suicidal ideations, talking to someone about how you're feeling is critical. Suicide isn't the only way to stop the pain, and with the right support and treatment, you can overcome those feelings.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I START HAVING SUICIDAL IDEATIONS?

It can be very overwhelming to experience suicidal ideation and may feel as if the thoughts will never go away or that it is the only way to stop the pain. With the right support and treatment, you can overcome feeling suicidal.

**The most important thing to do is to talk to someone about how you are feeling.** When life doesn't seem worth living anymore, it may seem that the only way to find relief is through suicide. When someone feels this way, it is hard for them to believe that other options are available. For passive suicidal thoughts with no plan or intent to harm oneself

Take a step back and separate your emotions from your actions for the moment.

- Recognize that depression and hopelessness can distort your perceptions and reduce your ability to make good decisions.
- Realize that suicidal feelings are the result of treatable problems.
- Act as if there are other options instead of suicide, even if you may not see them right now.

It may not be easy, and you might not feel better overnight. Eventually, though, the sense of hopelessness — and thoughts of suicide — will lift.

## IF YOU THINK YOU MIGHT HURT YOURSELF OR ATTEMPT SUICIDE, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO TAKE ACTION BY REACHING OUT FOR SUPPORT, SUCH AS:

- Call or Text the number 988, which is the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. 988 is more than just an easy-to-remember number — it's a direct connection to compassionate, 24/7 accessible care and support for anyone. It is confidential and free of charge. Nationally there are more than 200 crisis centers ready to offer help for emotional distress. You can also go to [988lifeline.org/chat](https://988lifeline.org/chat) to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.
- US Veterans who are in a crisis, can call 988 and press "1" for the Veterans Crisis Line, text 838255, or go to [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net).
- Call your mental health therapist.
- Reach out to a close family member, friend, or other loved one.
- Seek help from your doctor or other healthcare providers.
- Call 911 or the local emergency number.
- Contact a minister, spiritual leader, or someone else in your faith community.

DON'T try to manage suicidal thoughts on your own. You need support and professional help to be able to learn coping tools to overcome problems linked to suicidal thinking. It is a good idea to discuss your coping strategies with people you trust.



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JoDee provides guidance and support to each employee to foster a healthy work environment. Everyone deserves to have a safe and nurturing place to cope and heal and our programs are designed to give each individual client space to grow and achieve stability. I work from a strengths-based perspective and love helping others.

