

# **“PLEASE HELP ME...I WANT TO DIE!!”**

## **UNDERSTANDING SUICIDE**

Suicide and suicide attempts are desperate attempts by hurting individuals to escape from difficult situations. If you are ever confronted with a hurting person questioning the value of his or her life, the following information may be useful to you.

## **WHY SUICIDE?**

Suicide can appear to be the only option to individuals dealing with:

- **Alienation**
  - Loss or lack of relationships due to death or divorce, loss of a job, moving, conflict with friends or family, feeling separated from God
  
- **Depression**
  - Perfectionism in studies or work that may make them feel like a failure, a history of neglect and/or abuse, overwhelming stressors and conflicts
  
- **Anger**
  - Apathy or anger at a world they can't improve

## **WARNING SIGNS OF A SUICIDAL PERSON?**

- Previous suicide attempts
- Sleeplessness
- Extreme depression
- Withdrawal
- Poor work performance
- Contacting family and old friends
- Suicide threats (verbal, nonverbal, written)
- Sudden weight loss
- Lowered grades
- Fulfilling promises
- Giving away personal possessions
- Having a plan
- Acquiring means to commit suicide (guns, pills, etc.)
- Getting affairs in order (writing “goodbye” letters or a will)
- A sudden lift of spirits (which may indicate relief at knowing “it will soon be over”)

## SUICIDE – MYTHS AND FACTS

### The Myths

- People who talk about suicide don't commit suicide.
- Mentioning suicide may give a person the idea.
- Improvement of mood following a suicidal crisis means the risk is over.
- All suicidal persons are mentally ill.
- A suicide threat is just a bid for attention.

### The Facts

- A suicidal person may give many warning signs, ranging from the subtle to the obvious.
- A suicidal person already has the idea. Talking about suicide can be the best prevention. Many suicidal people want others to save them.
- Many suicides occur following the beginning of improved mood when energy has increased enough for the person to follow through on his or her intention.
- Suicidal persons are often average people who are extremely unhappy or upset.
- All suicidal behavior should be taken seriously since a bid for attention may also be a cry for help.



### WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR A SUICIDAL PERSON?

- **Give active support**
  - Make it a priority to spend time with a suicidal person. Take the person's feelings seriously. Listen and ask questions.
  - Stay with the person until professional help is available or you are certain the risk of suicide has passed.
- **Initiate some positive activities**
  - Help the person schedule some activities or work recreation.
  - Provide a change of pace by going out together for a movie, dinner, bike ride, walk, etc.
- **Seek professional help**
  - Find a professional and compassionate counselor at...

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