

Talking about Suicide

Did you know? Asking about suicidal thoughts or feelings won't push someone into doing something self-destructive. In fact, offering an opportunity to talk about feelings may reduce the risk of acting on suicidal thoughts.

Before starting a conversation with someone you are concerned about, be sure to have suicide crisis resources on hand. The Suicide Prevention Lifeline and Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center are a few great resources available to share.

Find a private place to talk where there won't be any distractions. Set aside plenty of time to have a conversation and find a comfortable place to sit.

Let the person know why you asked to speak with them. For example, you can say, "I've noticed you aren't really interested in participating in the things you once enjoyed. I'm concerned about you. What's going on?"

During the conversation, there are a few things you can do to maximize the opportunity to help and to make the conversation about suicide less awkward.

1. Keep it casual. Think of it as just having a regular conversation with someone you care about.
2. Make yourself available. Be someone they can rely on.
3. Listen. Avoid offering advice or trying to fix their problems.
4. Let them take the lead on the conversation. Allow them time and space to open up when they're ready.
5. Help them talk. Ask open-ended questions. Avoid questions that require a simple "yes" or "no" response.
6. Let them know that it is okay to feel the way that they do.
7. Don't judge. Let them know this won't change how you feel about them.
8. Encourage them to speak with an expert about their feelings.

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If you are concerned about your or someone else's mental health, reach out to someone you trust right away.

**Crisis Text Line
Text HOME to 741741**

**National Suicide Prevention Hotline
Call 1-800-273-8255**

**Grassroots Crisis Intervention
Call 410.531.6677**

Visit www.grassrootscrisis.org