

# NAVIGATING a mental health **CRISIS**



## WARNING SIGNS of Suicide

- ◆ Giving away personal possessions
- ◆ Talking as if saying goodbye or going away forever
- ◆ Taking steps to tie up loose ends, like organizing personal papers or paying off debts
- ◆ Making or changing a will
- ◆ Collecting and saving pills or buying a weapon
- ◆ Saying things like "Nothing matters anymore," "You'll be better off without me"
- ◆ Withdrawing from friends, family and normal activities
- ◆ Increasing drug or alcohol use

## WHAT TO DO if You Suspect Someone is Thinking About Suicide

If you notice warning signs, or if you're concerned someone is thinking about suicide, don't be afraid to talk to them about it.



**START** the conversation by sharing specific signs you've noticed, like:

"I've noticed lately that you [haven't been sleeping, aren't interested in soccer anymore, are posting a lot of sad song lyrics online, etc.]..."



**LISTEN, EXPRESS CONCERN,  
REASSURE**

“I may not understand exactly how you feel, but I care about you and want to help.”

“I'm concerned about you and I want you to know there is help to get you through this.”

“You are important to me; we will get through this together.”

Then say something like:

- ✓ "Are you thinking about suicide?"
- ✓ "Do you have a plan?"
- ✓ "Do you know how you would do it?"

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," seek help immediately.

- ◆ Don't leave them alone and stay calm
- ◆ Call their therapist or other health care professional
- ◆ Remove potential means, such as weapons and medications
- ◆ Call the National Suicide Prevention Line at 1-800-273-8255 or call 911
- ◆ If the situation is life-threatening, call 911 and ask for someone with mental health experience to respond, like a Crisis Intervention Team.

NAMI HelpLine

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www.nami.org



**If you or someone you know is in crisis, or is experiencing suicidal thoughts, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255) or call 911 immediately.**



## September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Faith communities provide a natural setting for suicide prevention. Spiritual beliefs and practices can help people experience greater hope and meaning in their lives. Faith communities also can provide opportunities for developing positive relationships with others and can be an important source of support during difficult times.



During Suicide Prevention Awareness Month – and year-round – faith communities can raise awareness of suicide, including its warning signs, how to support those at risk for suicide and where to access help, through flyers, posters, newsletter articles, online classes and other outlets.

Other ways faith communities can make a difference:

- Create a support group for suicide loss survivors - friends and family members affected by the suicide loss of a loved one.
- Have plans in place to respond to people showing warning signs of suicide.
- Offer support to members facing challenges with their relationships, jobs, health, or other concerns.
- Expand options for temporary help for those struggling to make ends meet.
- Encourage members to seek help, and provide referrals to mental health, substance use disorder, legal, or financial counseling services as needed.
- Apply policies that create a healthy environment and reduce stigma about seeking help.

**Prayer:** Guide us in caring for one another. Give us courage to reach out to those experiencing pain of mind and spirit. May we share Your comfort and love with them.

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