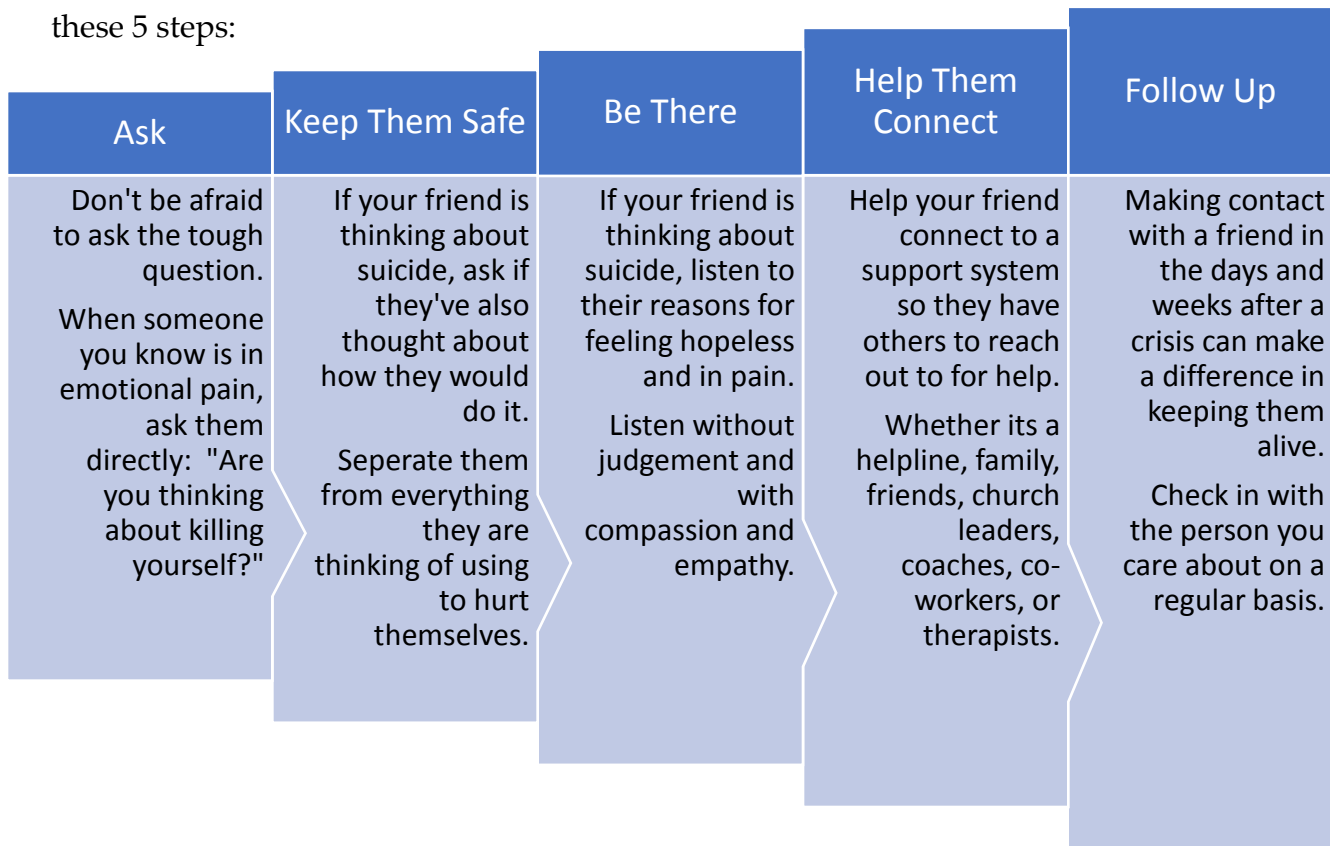


Help Someone Exhibiting Warning Signs or Risk for Suicide

If you think someone might be considering suicide, be the one to help them by taking these 5 steps:



Use the Do's and Don'ts

Talking with and finding help for someone who may be suicidal can be difficult. Here are some tips that may help.

Do's

- Be direct. Talk openly and matter-of-factly about suicide.
- Be willing to listen. Allow expressions of feelings. Accept the feelings
- Be non-judgmental.
- Get help from people or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.
- Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- Take action. Remove means, like weapons or pills.
- Offer hope that alternatives are available, but do not offer glib reassurance.

Don'ts

- Don't be sworn to secrecy - Seek support.
- Don't act shocked. This will put distance between you.
- Don't dare him or her to do it.
- Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or whether feelings are good or bad.
- Don't lecture on the value of life.

Be Aware of Suicidal Feelings

People having a crisis sometimes perceive their dilemma as inescapable and feel an utter loss of control. These are some of the feelings and thoughts people experience in crisis. If you or a friend are feeling this way, call anytime at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

- Can't stop the pain
- Can't think clearly
- Can't make decisions
- Can't see any way out
- Can't sleep, eat or work
- Can't get out of depression
- Can't make the sadness go away
- Can't see a future without pain
- Can't see themselves as worthwhile
- Can't get someone's attention
- Can't seem to get control

Practice Active Listening

When you actively listen to someone, you are letting them know that you care about what they are saying and can indicate that you are concerned for their health and safety.

Hearing someone talk is different from actively listening to what that person is saying. Active listening requires concentration and understanding. Improving your listening skills is easy to do with practice and these helpful tips.

- **Acknowledge the Speaker**

This can be as simple as a head nod or an "Uh huh." By acknowledging the speaker, you are letting them know that you are listening to what they have to say and reminding yourself to pay attention to what is being said to you.

- **Respond Verbally**

Asking questions or making statements may help clarify what the speaker is saying. It reminds the speaker that you are listening attentively and that you are here to help them and are truly concerned. Be sure to let the speaker finish talking before asking any questions.

- **Summarize What You Hear**

Reflecting on what the listener is saying is also a positive verbal active listening technique. By repeating, paraphrasing or even summarizing what the speaker has said shows that you are putting in effort to better understand them. Use phrases like; "what I'm hearing is..." or, "sounds like you're saying...." These tactics can also allow the speaker to hear what they are saying, which may help them find positive reinforcement.

- **Look the Part**

Keeping eye contact, maintaining good posture, and staying focused are key components of active listening and interpersonal communication. Being distracted and unfocused gives the speaker the impression that you aren't paying attention.

Information taken from <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-someone-else/>