

Suicide Prevention

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Suicidal ideation—thinking about committing suicide—is so complex that we can only touch on this important concern in a radio show. The bottom line: if you're thinking about ending your life, please GET HELP now! Keep reading for ideas, because YOU are worth helping!

When your friend or family member is contemplating suicide:

If the person is in in imminent danger [having a specific plan for ending his or her life] **call 911**. Listen, pay attention, noticing warning signs, such as:

- When he or she says things like, “I’m worthless, I’m a burden,” “I’m beyond help.”
- Your friend or loved one can’t sleep—or sleeps most of the time.
- Reckless behavior, such as ever-increasing drug or alcohol use.
- Withdraws/isolates from others.
- Mood swings; increasing anger or agitation.
- Doesn’t keep commitments (such as going to work or school).
- Spends time with new friends who encourage out-of-control behavior.



When you want to harm yourself but don't have a specific plan for how you'd do it:

- **Call 988** [Suicide and Crisis Lifeline].
- **Talk with a counselor.** If you need contact information, you could try the South Florida Association of Christian Counselors at sfacc.net, or the American Association of Christian Counselors (aacc.net), which says, “Asking for help is hard. Finding help shouldn’t be.”
- Ask a therapist to help you create a **written safety plan**, which could list places you could go to be safe, such as the therapist’s office, a hospital, ER, police station, shelter, etc.
- List additional **safety options** to avoid self-harm—such as staying with a family member or friend, checking in to a psychiatric facility, etc.
- List three **people to call** if you need help and several **things you could do** or several **places you can go** where there will be people and you’ll be safe until you get the help you need.

Be Proactive

- Listen to joyful music—especially when you feel gloomy.
- Notice what you’re reading, making consistently healthy choices in books, magazines, etc. (To ascertain whether it’s “healthy,” notice how you feel after reading or listening to it....)
- Tell yourself the truth, such as *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind* (2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV).
- Recognize what voice you’re hearing. In **John 10:10** (NASB), Jesus said, *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.*

“Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.”

Winston Churchill

Help Your Children Avoid Suicidal Ideation

- **By your actions and attitudes, help your children face life’s inevitable failures *joyfully!*** Team sports can be a perfect way to learn to win and lose with dignity and respect rather than allowing winning to be the primary goal.
- **Teach children to believe in God** and turn to His Word rather than focusing on problems. As King David said in Psalm 119:50, *This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your word has revived me.*
- **Walk by faith with an attitude of gratitude.** *Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude* (Colossians 2:1-2).
- Since we all experience problems and challenges at various times, **model hope by steadily focusing on God** each time difficulties occur. *When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your consolations delight my soul* (Psalm 94:19).
- Show your children how to **find and maintain balance in all five areas of life:**
 1. Physical—eat healthfully, exercise, spend time outdoors, etc.
 2. Mental—limit screen and social media time; keep learning and growing; do regular “thought checks” to manage and replace distorted thought patterns ([Overcoming Depression](#)).
 3. Social—develop healthy relationships
 4. Spiritual—take time daily with the Lord, applying His Word
 5. Emotional—identify and manage feelings, simply noticing them but not being controlled by them
- Understand and live as a **Creator rather than a Victim** ([How to Quit the Victim Game](#)).