

SUICIDE

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. Suicide is also preventable. Most suicidal people desperately want to live; they are just unable to see alternatives to their problems. Most suicidal people give definite warning signs of their suicidal intentions, but others are often unaware of the significance of these warnings or unsure about what to do with them.

Warning Signs:

- » Talks about suicide, death and/or having no reason to live; expresses a sense of hopelessness
- » Seeks firearms, pills or other means to commit suicide
- » Has had a recent severe loss or the threat of a loss
- » Withdraws from friends/social activities
- » Loses interest in hobbies, school, etc.
- » Prepares for death by making out a will, or giving away prized personal possessions
- » Increased substance use
- » Dramatic mood changes
- » Takes unnecessary risks; reckless and/or impulsive
- » Has a history of suicide attempts
- » Has a physical illness
- » Has been unwilling to connect with potential helpers

Nearly everyone at some time in their life thinks about suicide. Most everyone decides to live because they come to realize that the crisis is temporary, but death is not. On the other hand, people in the midst of a crisis often perceive their dilemma as inescapable and feel an utter loss of control.

Frequently, they:

- » 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 the depression
- » Can't make the sadness go away
- » Can't see the possibility of change
- » Can't see themselves as worthwhile
- » Can't get someone's attention
- » Can't seem to get control

Because many suicidal people are not thinking clearly or rationally, they may be quite attracted to

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a permanent resolution to what is only a temporary problem. If you or someone you know needs support reach out to someone who can help including:

- » A community mental health agency
- » A family physician
- » A school counselor or psychologist
- » A suicide prevention/crisis center
- » A private therapist
- » A religious/spiritual leader