Engaging with Individuals Threatening Self-Harm or Suicide

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Risk Factors Associated with Suicide

- Previous suicide attempts
- Family history of suicide
- Mental health diagnosis
- Social withdrawal or isolation
- Ready access to lethal means
- Unemployment
- Homelessness
- Alcohol or drugs misuse
- Addictive behaviours
- Debilitating or terminal illness
- Experience of bullying, abuse, trauma or neglect (without resolution)
- Loss or bereavement
- Domestic abuse
- LGBTQ+ community

Men in their mid to late forties are at most risk of suicide



Warning Signs of Suicide

- Expressions of hopelessness or helplessness
- Low self-esteem, feeling worthless or unwanted
- Overwhelming sense of shame, guilt or being a burden to others
- A dramatic change in personality or appearance
- 'Out of character' behaviour or extreme emotional turbulence
- Changed eating or sleeping habits
- A serious drop in school or work performance
- Little interest in the present or the future
- Written or spoken notice of intention to carry out suicide
- Use of suicide chat-rooms and pro-suicide internet sites
- Giving away possessions or organising personal affairs
- Sudden unexplained 'recovery'
- Self-harming, risky or addictive behaviours



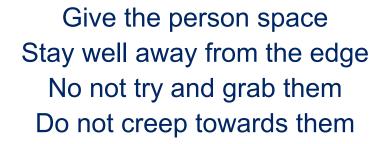






SAFETY FIRST

Do not put yourself at risk



Dial 999 – ask for the Coastguard





Let's Talk

Don't be afraid to ask the question – are you considering taking your own life?

- Suicide should not be a taboo subject we are afraid to discuss
- Talking about suicide will not give people encouragement to attempt it
- Suicide should not be viewed as attention seeking, but a sign that someone needs help
- Any indication that someone is considering suicide should be treated respectfully
- Suicide is not illegal avoid using the word 'committed'.



Engaging with Individuals Threatening Self-Harm or Suicide – What can help?

- Effective Listening Skills
- Be yourself natural and honest
- Let the person vent
- Encourage them to self-rescue
- Convey that you are there to help
- Be patient, and keep going even if they're not engaging
- Look for hooks
- Use one voice
- Be aware that a small thing to you could be huge to them





Engaging with Individuals Threatening Self-Harm or Suicide – Helpful Responses

- "I am sorry to hear that you feel that way"
- "From what I'm hearing, it sounds like you really mean what you're saying"
- "I really want you to keep talking to me"
- "I will stay with you until..."
- "You were saying that you felt..."
- "Why today? Why here?"
- "I can't begin to understand what you're going through"
- Emotional labelling "You look / sound..."





Engaging with Individuals Threatening Self-Harm or Suicide – What to avoid

- Don't try to analyse a person's motives
- Don't provide direct advice, try to solve their problems or provide them with therapy
- Avoid being an expert in mental health
- Don't say it will be ok. You don't know that it will be. Offer hope, not a solution
- Don't ridicule them or use guilt or emotional blackmail to try and dissuade them
- Don't lecture or judge them





Police Negotiator Tips – Things to Avoid

- Don't tell them you know how they feel
- Don't minimise the intensity of their feelings
- Don't assume that someone is making an idle threat
- Don't lie or make promises you can't keep
- Don't give them anything unless it's life or death (concessions)
- Don't be sworn to secrecy





If the person chooses to end their life...

- It's not your fault
- They put themselves there, not you
- You were only ever involved because you tried to help
- Walk away and don't look
- Seek support and be honest
- It's not your fault





Available Support

Get advice from 111 or ask for an urgent GP appointment if:

• you need urgent help for your mental health

Get help from 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.



Call 999 or go to A&E now if:

- someone's life is at risk for example, they have seriously injured themselves or taken an overdose
- you do not feel you can keep yourself or someone else safe

A mental health emergency should be taken as seriously as a physical one. You will not be wasting anyone's time.

Call: 999













