Suicidal Feelings - How to Help Yourself

Everyone feels sad or unhappy at times, but depressing thoughts and feelings of hopelessness can lead to thoughts of suicide. It can seem as if life is too tough to handle. It is as if the mountain is just too high and your climbing skills are not great enough. At that moment these dark thoughts and feelings may seem overwhelming and never ending. It is important to **remember these feelings are temporary!** They will go away. If you feel as though you have reached the point where suicide is the only answer, it is time to let someone know immediately. This is the first step to feeling better. The following steps will move you to safer ground and lead you in a positive direction out of depression.

HOW TO COPE AND PREVENT SUICIDE

- **Let family, friends, teachers and/or counselors know.** Get help. Try not to isolate yourself from those who care about you. Even though you may not feel sociable or think that you are not good company, talk with someone everyday. It is best if it is face to face. Remember, they will want to help you.
- Eat a regularly spaced and well-balanced diet, and get plenty of rest.
- **Avoid alcohol and drugs** because they will only make you feel worse and may also lower your inhibitions. Remove them from the home. If you are thinking of taking an overdose of your prescribed medications, give your medicines to someone who can give them to you one day at a time. If you are on antidepressants, let your caregiver know of your feelings so he or she can provide a safer medication, if that is a concern.
- Remove weapons or poisons from your home.
- Try to stick to routines. That may mean just walking the dog or feeding the cat. Follow a schedule and remind yourself that you have to keep that schedule every day. Play with your pets. If it is possible, and you do not have a pet, get one. They give you a sense of well-being, lower your blood pressure and make your heart feel good. They need you, and we all want to be needed.
- Set some realistic goals and achieve them. Make a list and cross things off as you go. Accomplishments give a sense of worth. Wait until you are feeling better before doing things you find difficult or unpleasant to do.
- If you are able, try to **start exercising.** Even half-hour periods of exercise each day will make you feel better. Getting out in the sun or into nature helps you recover from depression faster. If you have a favorite place to walk, take advantage of that.
- Increase safe activities that have always given you pleasure. This may include playing your favorite music, reading a good book, painting a picture or playing your favorite instrument. Do whatever takes your mind off your depression and puts a smile on your face.
- Keep your living space well lit with windows open, and let the sun shine in. Bright light definitely treats depression, not just people with the seasonal affective disorders (SAD).

Above all else remember, **depression is temporary**. It will go away. Do not contemplate suicide. Death as a permanent solution is not the answer. Suicide will take away the beautiful rest of life, and do lifelong harm to those around you who love you. **Help is available**.

National Suicide Help Lines With 24 Hour Help Are:
1-800-SUICIDE
1-800-784-2433

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