



NAVIGATING THE JOURNEY AS A CAREGIVER

Your loved one is living with **SUICIDAL IDEATION**

What's next?

Your Journey as a Caregiver

As a caregiver, it can feel overwhelming to know that your loved one is thinking of hurting themselves. But there is HOPE. Suicidal ideation should be taken very seriously, but it is not a sure sign you will lose your loved one. This is the time for suicide prevention measures, a journey which you and your loved one can undertake TOGETHER.

This journey is an opportunity for you as a caregiver to practice acceptance, good listening, and maintaining those caregiver boundaries to make sure you take time to rest and recharge. It is also necessary to ask for help when you need it. In the words of Brené Brown, "We were never meant to do this alone."

Information on Suicidal Ideation

Suicidal ideation is more common than one might think. According to a CDC study, around 10% of Americans had thoughts of suicide in June 2020. People complete suicide for many reasons, including depression, psychosis, chronic pain, grief, isolation, rejection, and many others. Among the highest risk groups are Black and Indigenous people of color, essential workers, transgender persons, survivors of suicide loss, young people, and of course, persons living with mental illness.

Sometimes what look like self-sabotaging behaviors, such as substance use and self-mutilation, are actually that person's efforts at avoiding suicide. It is important that your loved one feels you accept them for who they are, no matter what they are going through.

Know that talking about suicide will not give your loved one the "idea" - it can actually help prevent the immediate risk of suicide.

When responding to a loved one's suicidal ideation it is best to withhold judgment, seek to understand their experiences, and most importantly utilize outside help.

On the next page is a list of resources for you and your loved one regarding suicidal ideation.

If you are currently experiencing a crisis, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741-741.

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let's talk about SUICIDAL IDEATION

Resources for You and Your Loved One

- **Courage to Caregivers** has a dedicated resource page for **Suicide Awareness and Prevention**
- Info, training, and support for caregivers from **Suicide is Different**
- **Seize the Awkward** on how to talk to a friend about suicidal ideation
- Information for someone whose loved one has attempted from the **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)**
- Information and resources for someone who is at risk from **AFSP**
- **The Suicide Prevention Lifeline**, with trained advocates available 24/7
- **Calm Harm**, the free app for moments of self-harm urges
- **The Trans Life Line** run by and for trans people, one of the highest risk demographics in the United States
- **HelpGuide**'s info for persons battling self-harm (and their families)
- Self-harm prevention project by the **Self-Harm Initiative**
- The **American Association of Suicidology**'s resources for survivors of suicide loss
- Resources for survivors of suicide loss from the **Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)**
- A place of remembrance and healing for suicide loss survivors by **Alliance of Hope**
- **The Trevor Project**: chat, text, and phone suicide prevention services for LGBTQ+ youth
- **The JED foundation** on what to do if concerned about your teen's mental health (PDF)
- Video: **SPRC**'s Effective Suicide Prevention Model (4 minutes)
- **The Crisis Text Line**: free SMS crisis counseling
- **Mental Health America** on preventing suicide in older adults

Preventing Caregiver Burnout

We give our BEST care when we are also taking care of ourselves! Make time to recharge, even with a short moment that's just for YOU. Connecting with other caregivers is another powerful form of self-care. Learn more about our One-to-One Caregiver Peer Support program on **our website**.

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