

Common Myths and Facts About Suicide



Q1. Can I really help someone who may be at risk of suicide? My friend says they want to die, but I worry that talking about suicide might make those thoughts stronger.

Talking about suicide does not increase suicidal thoughts or make a suicide attempt more likely. In fact, asking direct questions about suicidal thoughts and offering support can be helpful.

Q2. Isn't suicide something that only happens to people who are weak-willed or suffering from severe depression? Isn't it rare for people in general to think about or attempt suicide?

Many people experience suicidal thoughts at some point in their lives. Although estimates vary, research generally suggests that approximately 15% of people will think about suicide at least once during their lifetime. Even psychologically healthy individuals can experience depression under severe stress and may have suicidal thoughts during moments of intense emotional pain.

Q3. What should I do if I am experiencing suicidal urges?

When people are struggling, it is often difficult to solve problems on their own. Asking for help is a courageous act. It is also a way of respecting and protecting yourself. With appropriate professional support, difficulties can be addressed together.

If you find yourself frequently thinking about suicide, you can assess whether you may be experiencing a suicide crisis using the following suicidal ideation screening questions. If one or more of the following applies to you, consider consulting a mental health professional:

1. Do you have thoughts or urges to end your life?
2. Have you developed a specific method or plan when thinking about suicide?
3. Have you recently made a suicide attempt?



KOREA UNIVERSITY
Student Counseling Center

Hey, my friend!
You can reach out anytime.



Student Counseling Center

(Humanities & Social Science Campus)

02 · 3290 · 1540

(Science Campus)

02 · 3290 · 4581

On-Campus Resources

Student Counseling Center

Hours : 9:00 AM–5:30 PM

Website : <http://www.kuscc.korea.ac.kr>

Location:

Main Campus: Central square, Room 114

Sciences Campus: Science Library, Room 306

Korea University Anam Hospital Emergency Medical Center

Tel : 02- 920- 5374

Off-Campus Resources

Health and Welfare Call Center (24 Hours)
129

Seoul Suicide Prevention Center (24 Hours)
1577-0199

Korea Lifeline (24 Hours) 1577- 9191
Seongbuk-gu Mental Health Welfare Center
02-2241-6304

A Guide to
Suicide
Prevention and
Response

Sharing Our Hearts

Tell us your story.
Even the fears you carry.
Even the feelings that have
become tangled and difficult.
We can hold your warm hand in
ours.
It makes us happy to be there for
you.

Let's share - together, now.

Hold me I'll hold you

There are moments when continuing life feels overwhelming.
When the pain feels as though it will never improve, or may even become worse, we may find ourselves thinking, "I wish I could disappear" or "I don't want to wake up tomorrow."

When experiences such as the loss of a loved one, failure, serious illness, humiliation, or injustice continue to pile up, and when it feels as though nothing and no one can help us escape the situation, we may begin to think about death as a way to escape the pain.

What we truly want to escape is the pain—not life itself. That person could be any one of us. It could be our friend, colleague, or neighbor.

This guide was created for all of us.



Let's work through this together



Recognizing a Suicide Crisis

- According to statistics, approximately 8 out of 10 people who die by suicide clearly communicate their suicidal intent beforehand.
- If someone appears to be struggling, ask directly: "Have things become so difficult that you've felt like you wanted to die?"
- Common warning signs of a suicide crisis include:

Verbal Signs Talking about feeling trapped with no way out, feeling hopeless about the future, or expressing thoughts of suicide.

Behavioral Signs Withdrawing from daily activities or obtaining items that could be used for suicide.

Emotional Signs Appearing severely depressed, anxious, exhausted, hopeless, or emphasizing feelings of worthlessness.



Responding to a Suicide Crisis

Suicide Crisis Emergency

- Clear and definite suicidal ideation
- Refusal to remove access to means of suicide
- Detailed suicide plan
- Loss of contact after hinting at or implying suicidal intent

Call **112 / 119** / **Contact the parent or guardian**
Contact the Seongbuk-gu Mental Health Welfare
Center Crisis Response Team (02-2241-6304)
Contact the Korea University Anam Hospital
Emergency Medical Center (02-920-5374)
▶ Ensure immediate safety.

Suicide Crisis

- Suicidal thoughts
- Unclear or tentative suicide plan
- Ongoing suicide risk
- Current psychiatric concerns
- Alcohol misuse
- Recent severe stress
- Lack of friends

Contact the Student Counseling Center
▶ In-person counseling (crisis counseling)
▶ Intensive case management
▶ Coordination with on-campus and community resources



Helpful and Unhelpful Responses

What Helps?

Start the conversation by expressing concern

"I'm worried after hearing what you've been going through. I'd like to talk about what's been happening. Even if I can't be of much help, I want to listen."

Encourage postponing any decision and continuing the conversation

"Things may feel hopeless right now, but there may be options we haven't considered yet. Could we put off that decision for now and talk a little longer?"

Communicate genuine support

"It sounds like you've been carrying a tremendous amount of pain. While we work on finding ways to make things better, I'll do my best to support you."

Seek consent before informing a parent or guardian

"When someone is in crisis, contacting a parent or guardian can help keep them safe. Is there anything that worries you about your parents knowing what you're going through?"

Contact the Student Counseling Center

"I understand that the Student Counseling Center can help in situations like this. How would you feel about going there together?"



What Does Not Help?

Dismissing suicidal thoughts

"You're not really thinking about suicide, are you?"

Simply telling the person that suicide is wrong

"If you die, everything is over."

Lecturing the person to endure it

"Everyone else deals with things like that."

Promising to keep it a secret

"I'll keep this between us."

