

How to Support Someone with Suicidal Thoughts

**A guide for recognising
signs and offering help**

Recognise the signs

Look out for changes such as:

- Not **eating or sleeping** properly
- Expressing **thoughts of suicide** or saying **goodbye** unexpectedly
- **Pulling away** from loved ones
- Talking about feeling **hopeless**
- Using more **alcohol or drugs**
- **Giving away belongings**

Trust your instincts -
these signs matter

Life challenges

Sometimes, suicidal feelings are linked to **difficult life events**.

Times when someone may be at greater risk include:

- **Money problems**
- **Relationship** breakups
- **Job loss** or **work stress**
- **Death of someone close**
- **Loneliness** and **isolation**
- Serious **illness or injury**

Start the conversation

If you recognise any of the signs:

- Be **calm, empathetic and open**
- Ask **open questions**:
 - “What is life like for you right now?”
- Take their words **seriously**
- Try to **listen without judgement**, even if it is hard to hear
- Ask **direct questions** about suicide

Research shows talking openly about suicide **reduces risk**

Encourage professional help

Help them understand that:

- Asking for help shows **strength not weakness**
- Doctors and counsellors are **trained to help**
- **Treatment really does work**
- **You'll be there to support them** on their journey

Offer practical support

Small actions make a **big difference**. Ways you can support someone:

- **Check in** regularly
- Help with household tasks like **shopping or cooking**
- Assist with **paperwork or prescriptions**
- Offer to **go to appointments** with them, even if you stay in the waiting room

Be there for them

Recovery is a journey.

You can help by **giving consistent support:**

- Encourage them to **continue treatment and medication safely**
- **Discourage drugs or alcohol** as coping tools
- **Celebrate the small steps**

Being there matters more than
having perfect words

In an emergency

Call 999 straight away if:

- They have **a plan to end their life**
- They have **the means to do it**
- They're saying **goodbye**

While waiting for medical help:

- **Stay with them** until the help arrives
- **Remove anything** they could use to harm themselves

Look after yourself too

Your wellbeing matters.

Supporting someone can be emotionally hard:

- **Talk to friends or family** about how you feel
- **Take breaks** when you need them
- Keep doing **things you enjoy**
- **Ask for help** if you are struggling

**You can't help others
if you're not okay**

**You don't have to have
all the answers.
Just being there matters.**

Some important resources:

- Samaritans: **Call 116 123**
- Text **SHOUT** to **85258**
- NHS **111** for health advice
- Emergency: **999**

**Find more support at
www.cygnetgroup.com**