

Know the Warning Signs

Although most depressed people are not suicidal, most suicidal people are depressed - know the warning signs of depression:

What to Do

Talking about the person's thoughts openly and frankly can help prevent a person from acting on them. This may include asking if the person has a particular plan or method in mind.

mentioning suicide may give the person the idea but this is highly unlikely; if someone is showing warning signs of being suicidal, he or she has, in all likelihood, already thought about it.

Sometimes people can't think of any other solutions to what is causing the distress. You can acknowledge that the person currently feels hopeless but also convey that things can get better and there are other options. You may even be able to offer some alternative actions.

anyone out of suicide. Rather, let the person know you care and understand, that he or she is not alone, that suicidal feelings are temporary, that depression can be treated, and that problems can be solved. Avoid the temptation to say things such as, "You have so much to live for," or "Your suicide will hurt your family or friends."

If professional help is indicated, a person is more apt to follow such a recommendation if you have genuinely listened to him or her.

Refer Person to Seek Professional Help

Be actively involved in encouraging the person to see a physician or mental health professional immediately. Individuals contemplating suicide don't believe they can be helped, so you may have to do more such as offering to go with the person to his/her appointment.

In an Acute Crisis

, particularly if you feel the person has already taken action (e.g., swallowed pills) or may do so without quick intervention.

Find local resources for help by visiting suicide.missouri.edu and navigate to the 'Looking for help?' section.