

CARE RESOURCES

SUICIDE

I WANT TO DIE

If you've been having thoughts like this, we want to let you know that you are not alone. Many of us have experienced suicidal thoughts at some point in our lives. However, it is also important for you to know that the feeling of hopelessness you may currently be experiencing is temporary; help is available and there is hope, even though you may not feel that way at the moment.

The thought "I want to die," usually comes up when people are in so much psychological pain and hopelessness that they feel they can no longer bear it. We understand how terrible this pain feels, and **this pain is often made worse by thoughts of being a burden to others or not belonging anywhere.**

The combination of these Critical Inner Voices and the emotional pain people are feeling can **lead them to believe that they shouldn't be alive and the people in their lives would be better off without them.** However, this is never the case. **Harming yourself will only hurt the people that you love.** Studies show that each person who commits suicide directly impacts at least seven people. Furthermore, the feeling of being in unbearable pain *will* pass. The most important thing to do is to keep yourself safe while you are feeling this bad.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GUILT AND CONVICTION

The Enemy always makes things seem hopeless. He sends you signals that you are no good, you have no value, and you are not worth even occupying a human body. You have no chance at success in this life. There is no possible way that you'll ever amount to anything. There is no way that God would ever save someone like you. You have no chance at making it to heaven and so why not just give up? You might as well do whatever you want because you're not going to be saved anyway, so why not enjoy the sin while you are at it since you are not going to be going to heaven anyway? The Enemy sends a deadly message that suicide will ease your pain and so why not end this misery right now? There is a total condemnation in the Enemy's messages.

The Holy Spirit on the other hand seems to tell you that what you are doing is wrong. You would be better off not doing what you are doing. He tries to stop you from doing something wrong even before you do it. However, there is no condemnation, there is always hope, there is a conviction about something being wrong. It is not a judgmental conviction but a conviction that it is best for your own good if you avoid doing something in particular. And even when you do what you know to be wrong, you want to make it right with God. You feel remorse and want to confess to God your sins and have all guilt removed. Then, after confessing, you feel better and your fellowship is restored once again.

WHAT MAKES PEOPLE FEEL SUICIDAL?

1. Conditions associated with increased risk of suicide
2. Death or terminal illness of relative or friend.

3. Divorce, separation, broken relationship, stress on family.
4. Loss of health (real or imaginary).
5. Loss of job, home, money, status, self-esteem, personal security.
6. Alcohol or drug abuse.
7. Depression. In the young depression may be masked by hyperactivity or acting out behavior. In the elderly it may be incorrectly attributed to the natural effects of aging. Depression that seems to quickly disappear for no apparent reason is cause for concern. The early stages of recovery from depression can be a high risk period. Recent studies have associated anxiety disorders with increased risk for attempted suicide.
8. Emotional and behavioral changes associated with suicide
9. Overwhelming Pain: pain that threatens to exceed the person's pain coping capacities. Suicidal feelings are often the result of longstanding problems that have been exacerbated by recent precipitating events. The precipitating factors may be new pain or the loss of pain coping resources.
10. Hopelessness: the feeling that the pain will continue or get worse; things will never get better.
11. Powerlessness: the feeling that one's resources for reducing pain are exhausted.
12. Feelings of worthlessness, shame, guilt, self-hatred, no one cares. Fears of losing control, harming self or others.
13. Personality becomes sad, withdrawn, tired, apathetic, anxious, irritable, or prone to angry outbursts.
14. Declining performance in school, work, or other activities. (Occasionally the reverse: someone who volunteers for extra duties because they need to fill up their time.)
15. Social isolation; or association with a group that has different moral standards than those of the family.
16. Declining interest in sex, friends, or activities previously enjoyed.
17. Neglect of personal welfare, deteriorating physical appearance.
18. Alterations in either direction in sleeping or eating habits.
19. (Particularly in the elderly) Self-starvation, dietary mismanagement, disobeying medical instructions.
20. Difficult times: holidays, anniversaries, and the first week after discharge from a hospital; just before and after diagnosis of a major illness; just before and during disciplinary proceedings. Undocumented status adds to the stress of a crisis.
21. Suicidal Behavior
22. Previous suicide attempts, mini-attempts.
23. Explicit statements of suicidal ideation or feelings.
24. Development of suicidal plan, acquiring the means, rehearsal behavior, setting a time for the attempt.
25. Self-inflicted injuries, such as cuts, burns, or head banging.
26. Reckless behavior. (Besides suicide, other leading causes of death among young people in New York City are homicide, accidents, drug overdose, and AIDS.) Unexplained accidents among children and the elderly.
27. Making out a will or giving away favorite possessions.
28. Inappropriately saying goodbye.
29. Verbal behavior that is ambiguous or indirect: I'm going away on a real long trip., You won't have to worry about me anymore., I want to go to sleep and never wake up., I'm so depressed, I just can't go on., Does God punish suicides?, Voices are telling me to do bad things., requests for euthanasia information, inappropriate joking, stories or essays on morbid themes.
30. History of mental disorder or substance abuse
31. Family history of suicide, violence or abuse
32. Incarceration – being in prison or jail
33. Recent loss or other stressful life event
34. Exposure to others' suicidal behavior, such as family members or celebrities

35. Terminal illness or chronic pain
36. Antidepressant medication treatment can also increase the risk of suicide for some people, particularly during the first two months of treatment or dosage change.

MORE CUASES AND SIGNS TO RECOGNIZE SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR

1. A complete withdrawal from friends and family,
2. Uncontrolled anger or rage,
3. A sense of futility, apathy, hopelessness, or helplessness,
4. Rapid mood swings,
5. Romanticizing the idea or thoughts of death or suicide or having a death wish,
6. having served in wars and been victims of or witnessed violence and death (like many veterans have),
7. Having been frequently incarcerated,
8. Keeping or having a fascination of firearms or other weapons,
9. Having had or experienced family violence or have a family history of suicide and/or mental illness,
10. Having had or experienced sexual abuse in their family,
11. Have overwhelming debt,
12. Are abusing controlled or prescription drugs &/or have excessive alcohol use,
13. Quitting work or school or performing poorly at work or school,
14. Sleeplessness.
15. Lack of interest in any activities like sports, parties, recreation, shame or guilt, writing out a will, and giving their valuables away.
16. Talking about suicide.
17. Seeking out lethal means.
18. Self-hatred or self-destructive behavior.
19. Sudden changes in mood, personality or daily routine.
20. Getting affairs in order.
21. Unusual visits to family and friends as if to say goodbye.
22. A less obvious sign can be a person's sense of calm and happiness after a long period of depression, which can signal that the person has come to a final decision to commit suicide.

The good news is that about 3 of every 4 people who are contemplating suicide give warning signs and most try to communicate these to someone they know.

IS IT A SIN TO TAKE YOUR OWN LIFE?

Committing suicide is sin. For three reasons:

1. First, it is disobedience to the command of God, "*You shall not murder*" (Exodus 20:13). And disobedience to God's commands is sin.
2. Second, it is presumption upon God's sovereign prerogatives to give and take life. God alone can create a human person, and therefore personhood belongs to God. We have no right to dispose of ourselves or others as we please. The Lord has sole rights over what he has made. Murder and suicide intrude on the sacred ground where God alone is the giver and taker.
3. Third, it is failure to trust in God for the help needed to survive and cope. And the Bible says that whatever is not from faith is sin (Romans 14:23).

Therefore, we are on firm biblical ground when we say: it is sin take your own life.

The Only Way Sin Can Be Forgiven Is in Our Relationship to Jesus Christ by Faith

- **Every one of us is a sinner.** It doesn't matter how many "good" things we do or have done. We have dishonored God by the meagerness of love to God and the shallowness of our trust in God and the inconsistency of our obedience to God.
- If we don't find a way for our sins to be forgiven, we will be cut off from God forever, because God is holy and cannot look with favor on sin.
- Nor can he sweep sin under the rug as though the dishonoring of his holy name by our sin were of no consequence. It is of infinite consequence. And that's why God sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world to die for sinners.
- The prophet Isaiah foresaw this great sending of the suffering Messiah. *Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-6)*
- **Jesus Christ came into the world and fulfilled this great Jewish prophecy by dying on the cross and becoming a curse for those who trust in him.** "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).
- His apostle Peter said, "To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name" (Acts 10:43).
- **So the issue for every one of us is: do we have a relationship of faith with Jesus Christ so that our sins are forgiven? It is the most precious gift in the world. And there is no other way for a sinner to get to God than through the shed blood of God's Messiah, Jesus Christ—by trusting in his name.**
- No amount of good works can earn God's salvation. And no amount of bad works disqualifies a person from God's converting grace. A thief hung on a cross next to Jesus as he was dying. His life was one total waste of sin and unbelief. And in that last moment his eyes were opened and he threw himself on the mercy of the King of the universe and said, "Remember me when you come into your kingdom." And Jesus, with all the sovereignty of one who would not be defeated by death, said, "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:42-43).
- **In the eleventh hour a lifetime of sin and unbelief can be forgiven by faith in Jesus Christ.**

JESUS WANTS TO TRADE YOU

(Isaiah 61:3a) To grant [consolation and joy] to those who mourn in Zion –

- *beauty instead of ashes,*
- *the oil of joy instead of mourning,*
- *the garment [expressive] of praise instead of a heavy, burdened, and failing spirit...*

People who wish to die cannot bring themselves to place to pray or sing praises to God. **But people who pray and sing praises to God learns how to turn their mourning into dancing, their hopelessness into a sure future and their ashes becomes beauty!**

Seek Immediate Professional Help

- You have seen just how infinite God's love is for you, so much so that He sent the One and only Son to die for you, that He will never leave you, never let you beg for bread, has thoughts of you each and every day, has plans for you that include ruling and reigning with Jesus Christ in the world to come, and that you are exceedingly precious to Him. I pray that you will place your trust in Him for He cares for you and He cares what happens to you.

- He never wishes you to come to any harm and if He could speak to you right now, and you or someone you know is suffering from a severe depression and contemplating suicide, **He would want you to seek help. Everyone needs help at one time or another.**
- Talk to someone. If you know of someone who has or is talking about suicide tell others, seek the help of others, call the helpline yourself to see what you can do to help. I beg you to reconsider. You or someone you know is just too precious to lose.

7 THINGS THAT GIVES HOPE

1. **Understand the Depths of God's Love for You.** God so loved you that He sent His only Son to die for you so that you could have eternal life and not have the wrath of God placed upon you (Rom 6:23, 3:23). What we deserved, Jesus received (John 3:16).
2. **Understand What God Thinks of You.** God has daily thoughts of you that can not even be counted like the grains of the sand (Psalm 139:17-18) and has actually inscribed your name on the palms of His hands and your dwelling place [where you live] is always before His eyes (Isaiah 49:14).
3. **Understand God Has Plans For You.** God has plans for us too wonderful to even describe (Psalm 40:5) and these plans include His purpose to prosper us (Jer 29:11, Psalm 115:9).
4. **Understand God Predestined You Before Your Birth.** God not only predetermined to save you (Rom 8:30) but He chose you before the earth even existed to adopt you as His own son or daughter (Eph 1:5).
5. **Understand That God Came to Rescue You and Die for You.** God sent Jesus, the Son of God, to come and rescue you from death (John 3:16) and by no mere chance or accident He sought you out (Luke 19:10) and ransomed His own life to save yours (Mark 10:45).
6. **Understand that God Choose You to Be Rulers in the Next World.** It is shocking to many that not only did God come to die for us, to save us, but to make us kings and priests in the Kingdom of Heaven (1 Peter 2:9) and we will actually rule with Christ (2 Tim 2:12, Rom 8:17).
7. **Understand that God Promises to Supply Every Need We Have.** God has given His unbreakable word to supply every need we will ever have (Phil 4:19) and we will never, ever need to beg for anything, even our daily sustenance (Psalm 37:25, Isaiah 41:17).

PRACTICAL STEPS

1. Recognize when you are starting to feel really bad.
 - Don't wait to be in a deep hole first.
 - It is easier to deal with these feelings when you catch them early.
 - Learn to immediately recognize: "wow, things are starting to feel dark for me, I need to get out of these feelings".
2. Respond quickly and establish a crisis plan.

Plan specific actions that you will take when you start to feel bad. These will help interfere with two behaviours that fuel a suicidal state: passivity and isolation.

 - **What activity are you going to do to make yourself feel better?** (ie: take a walk, play with your dog, bake brownies, meditate, watch a funny movie.

Do not isolate yourself!

- **Where are you going to go to be with people and take your mind off your negative thoughts?** (ie: to the mall, to the park, to an athletic event),
- **Who are you going call to talk to?** (ie: a specific friend, relative, minister) Make sure that you have that person's phone number.

*People are often too nervous, ashamed or afraid to talk about the fact that they are having suicidal thoughts. **However, sharing these feelings with someone you trust is often the first step to feeling better.***

Find someone you trust, such as a friend, therapist, family member, teacher, member of the clergy or counselor for a helpline. Let the person know how bad you are really feeling. Don't be afraid to tell them if you are suicidal and/or have a suicide plan.

Just talking about how you feel and how you got to this point in your life can be a huge relief and help you find a way to cope with the pain you are currently experiencing.

- **Positive lifestyle changes are very important.** Eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly and getting enough sleep are vital for relieving stress and promoting emotional well-being.

Studies show that exercise can be as effective as antidepressants when it comes to treating depression and anxiety. Try to get your heart rate up for 20 minutes a day, five days a week; it has been scientifically proven to help you will feel better emotionally. Even just taking a walk around your neighborhood can help your body start to release endorphins, which reduces depression.

- **Expand your social support network beyond friends and family.** Join a discipleship group, or the hour of power prayer and surround yourself with positive people that can help change the atmosphere of your life. Or volunteer for involvement in community projects which will take your mind off of yourself.

MORE ADVICE ON WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU THINK I WANT TO DIE

Avoid Drugs and Alcohol

- Alcohol and drugs often intensify suicidal thoughts. Avoid all alcohol and any drugs that have not been prescribed to you by your doctor.

Regulate Your Sleep

- Lack of sleep can contribute to depression and lead to an increase in suicidal thoughts. Try to regulate your sleep, aiming for eight hours a night. If you find yourself without any energy and sleeping most of the day, it is important to get up and try to do something active. Even if it feels, like the last thing in the world you want to do.

Challenge Negative Thoughts About Yourself

- Suicidal thoughts are usually accompanied by a lot of other negative thoughts about ourselves. It is important to recognize that these negative thoughts are not accurate. They are a part of your Critical Inner Voice and you can challenge them.

Treat Yourself the Way You Would Treat a Friend

- It is important to have compassion for yourself in your suffering. Instead of beating yourself up for feeling bad, try to treat yourself the way that you would treat a good friend. “Think of everything that is going wrong in your life. Think of all the reasons you have for dying by suicide. Now imagine that someone you care about very much came to you with the same problems, the same reasons, the same desires to die. What would you tell them? Would you say to this person you care about, “You’re right, you should kill yourself”? If not, why?”
- The practice of treating yourself with the same kindness and compassion as you would treat a friend is called self-compassion. There are three steps to practicing self-compassion:
 - Acknowledge and notice your suffering.
 - Be kind and caring in response to suffering.
 - Remember that imperfection is part of the human experience and something we all share.

Promise Not to Do Anything to Harm Yourself Right Now

- Suicidal thoughts come and go. Even though you may be in a tremendous amount of pain right now, it is important not to act impulsively on your self-destructive thoughts. Make a promise with a friend, a therapist or with yourself that you will not do anything to harm yourself for a certain amount of time.
- Many people find it helpful to follow the “3 day rule”. When they feel as though they want to die they give themselves time to feel better. It can give people who are hurting some distance between the thoughts and the action. Putting time between the thoughts and the action saves lives, because no matter how permanent the pain may feel, the suicidal thoughts will come and go, they will not last forever.

Make Yourself Safe

- Take the necessary precautions to make yourself safe.
- Remove any items you could use to harm yourself from your home.
- Do not isolate yourself.
- Follow the practical steps as given on page 4 and 5.

PRAYER FOR HEALING FROM DEATH WISHES

Dear Heavenly Father, I confess, as sin, the death wishes I have made and the desires to commit suicide (any attempts I have made at trying to do so). I renounce all of these thoughts, attempts, or vows in the Name of Jesus.

I repent for rejecting myself and I give You back any ground I have given to the adversary in this area. I command all dark spirits of death, suicide, depression and hopelessness to leave, in Jesus’ Name and close every gate of inner vows I have opened which gave them permission to enter my life.

I also command the spirit of infirmity to leave and I will no longer take assignments from the evil one, but from the living God who has created me and who loves me.

I accept my body and my present life situations and I ask that You reconcile me to myself and I declare my refusal to follow the enemy’s plan for my life, that is by hating myself and seeing myself as a loser, as You have created me fearfully and wonderfully.

Reconcile me to my perfect time, place and position on this earth. I trust You Lord to lead my life in order to fulfil the purpose You have in me, to glorify You. Thank You for rescuing me from myself. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

PRAYER FOR INNER HEALING

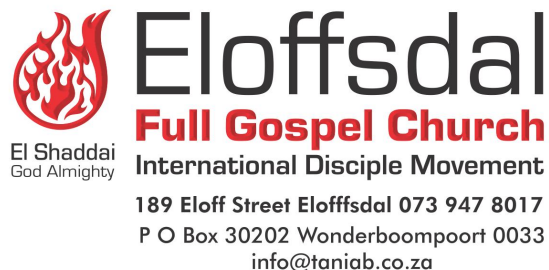
Dear Heavenly Father, I come into Your presence now, and ask You to surround me. I come under Your authority and Your claim upon my life (Colossians 2:29). I give myself to You – body, soul and spirit. I give my heart to You in every way, including the broken places within me. I declare Your authority over my heart, for You have made my heart and You have redeemed my heart with the blood of Your Son Jesus Christ (Psalm 33:15; Romans 2:29).

Jesus Christ, I invite You into my emotions, into my memories and the broken places within me. I give You permission to have access to all of me. I open the door to these particular places in my heart and invite You to come into my broken place and shine Your light here (Revelation 3:20). Reveal to me all that is going on here. Show me what this is about and come meet me in this place.

Jesus as You come into this broken place and speak to me about this wound, give me ears to hear and eyes to see what You are revealing. And then I ask You to forgive me where I have mishandled my brokenness. Forgive me for all my efforts of self-protection and self-redemption and for all my false comforters [*Renounce specific sins you are aware of here that you used to comfort yourself*]. Cleanse my heart of every sin by Your shed blood.

As these broken places have become sites of spiritual strongholds I now break every agreement I have made with Satan and his lies. I renounce all the false beliefs I have had that were dirty, lustful, and addictive; lies that I was not good enough, lies that I will never be happy nor can never trust anyone again (*name all the lies you have agreed with*) (Romans 6:16). I renounce any claim I have given to my enemy and in the Name of Jesus I command the enemy to flee (James 4:7).

And now Jesus I invite You to come and do that which You have promised You will do, namely to heal my broken heart and set me free from all my sin and shame. Bring my broken places into Your love, healing and restoration. I welcome Your healing and I welcome this part of my heart back home. Come bind me up and make me whole in Jesus' Name. Amen.



If you would like to speak to someone about your situation, we would love to help you and pray with you. Please contact the El Shaddai FGC Offices or you can email us at info@taniab.co.za