

SUICIDE: Top 5 Myths & Reducing the Risk

Top 5 Suicide Myths

MYTH

“People who suicide are weak or cowards.”

FACT

The person who is considering suicide is suffering immensely, which takes great strength to bear. Suicide is not an ‘easy way out’, physically or emotionally.

MYTH

“People who suicide are brave and honourable.”

FACT

While some cultures do consider suicide an honourable act in certain situations, we also must be careful not to glamourise or glorify suicide. For that reason there are strict regulations about how suicide should be reported in the media.

MYTH

“People who suicide are all mentally unwell.”

FACT

90% of people who suicide are found to have a mental illness, but 10% do not. Some of those people may not have a mental illness, but perhaps did have a sudden loss (job, finances, relationship, loved one). Others may have come to the decision to take their life after much consideration of their circumstances.

MYTH

“People who suicide are selfish.”

FACT

Usually when people think this, it is because they are focussing on the feelings of the friends and family left behind. What we know is that the person thinking about suicide is in such a degree of suffering that they consider the pain of living to be worse than the pain caused to friends and family. In many cases the person feels like a burden to others and thinks ‘they’ll be better off without me’. Suicide is not a selfish act.

MYTH

“People who suicide want to die.”

FACT

The majority of people who have attempted suicide, say that they did not want to die. But they did not want to continue living with the suffering they were in. Most people also state they are glad they did not die.

WHERE TO GET HELP

If you're concerned that you or someone you know may be at risk of suicide, please call one of these numbers:

AUSTRALIA

Suicide Call Back Service
1300 659 467

NEW ZEALAND

Suicide Crisis Helpline
0508 828 865

UNITED STATES

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

UK & REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Suicide Prevention Hotline
+44 (0) 8457 90 90 90

CANADA

Suicide Prevention Hotline
1-888-353-2273

SOUTH AFRICA

24hr Helpline
0800 12 13 14

To get your staff trained to respond to a mental health emergency, contact The WMHI.



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