

Condition:



Suicidal Feelings

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What are suicidal feelings?

Suicide is the act of intentionally taking your own life.

Suicidal feelings can range from being preoccupied by abstract thoughts about ending your life, or feeling that people would be better off without you, to thinking about methods of suicide, or making clear plans to take your own life. If you are feeling suicidal, you might be scared or confused by these feelings. But you are not alone. Many people think about suicide at some point in their lifetime.

Suicidal feelings and work

Suicidal feelings and thoughts are not permanent. The feelings can and will disappear or change. If you recognise the feelings are becoming too difficult for you to cope with seek help, make an appointment with your GP or ring a helpline. Talk to them about how you are feeling. If you feel you need to see someone immediately call an ambulance or go to A&E for support.

If you feel suicidal at work it is important you talk to someone straight away.

Top tips to help manage your suicidal feelings in the workplace

- **Tell someone you trust about your feelings.** It can be comforting knowing that someone knows and they can help you to think about other support options.
- **Ask for help.** If you are feeling overwhelmed with the feelings, ask a colleague you trust for help. Share how you are feeling.
- **Take advantage of employer resources.** Your workplace may offer an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which could offer free confidential counselling, helpline support or a GP service.
- **Use the support networks** you may already have in place such as family, friends, or support groups.
- **Ensure you keep up with any medication** you regularly take to support your mental health.
- **Be realistic about what you can do.** Do not over-commit and do not be afraid to talk to your manager; they may not be aware of how you are feeling

How do I know if I have suicidal feelings? What do they feel like?

Everyone's experience of suicidal feelings is unique to them. You might feel unable to cope with the enduring difficult feelings or other symptoms you are experiencing such as pain or hallucinations. You may feel less like you want to die and more like you cannot go on living the life you have. You might think others would be better off without you.

These feelings may build over time or might fluctuate from moment to moment. And it is common to not understand why you feel this way.

Here are some thoughts, feelings and experiences you may go through if you are feeling suicidal:

How you might think or feel

Hopeless, like there is no point in living

Tearful and overwhelmed by negative thoughts

Unbearable pain that you cannot imagine ending

Useless, unwanted or unneeded by others

Desperate, as if you have no other choice

Like everyone would be better off without you

What you may experience

Poor sleep with early waking

Change in appetite, weight gain or loss

No desire to take care of yourself, for example neglecting your physical appearance

Wanting to avoid others

Self-loathing and low self-esteem

Urges to self-harm

What causes suicidal feelings?

Suicidal feelings can affect anyone of any age, gender or background, at any time.

If you are feeling suicidal it is likely that you have been experiencing a growing sense of hopelessness and worthlessness for some time. You may not know what has caused you to feel this way but it is often a combination of factors such as:

- Mental health problems/depression
- Bullying or discrimination
- Domestic abuse
- Bereavement
- Long-term physical pain or illness
- Money problems or homelessness
- Isolation or loneliness
- Feeling inadequate or a failure
- Addiction or substance abuse
- Pregnancy, childbirth or postnatal depression
- Doubts about your sexual or gender identity

Talking to your GP or another health care provider about your suicidal feelings

Sometimes talking to professionals can be difficult, particularly around something as sensitive as suicidal feelings. It may help to write your symptoms, feelings and thoughts down, as well as how these thoughts and feelings are impacting on your life. If you get nervous or it is too difficult to talk about, the health professional can read your notes instead.

Treatments

- Crisis services (community mental health team)
- Talking treatments (counselling)
- Medication: Anti-depressants
- Telephone support

Your GP or crisis team will provide an assessment and refer you on to the services most suited to your needs, which in most cases would be a psychiatrist who specialises in mental health.

Managing your suicidal feelings

There are some things you can do alongside medical treatment that can boost your mood and help to distract you from the feelings you may be having. These include:



Take each day at a time

There might be good days and bad days. Try to focus on each day at a time and set yourself small, achievable goals. Try to be mindful and focus on what is happening now. This is helpful when you have thoughts or feelings that are hard to let go of. Remember for most people suicidal feelings are transitory.



Connect: Reduce social isolation

Suppressing your feelings when they happen can cause them to build up over time. Think about what caused you to feel suicidal and share this with those supporting you. Speak to someone in the office. Take time to visit someone's desk, even if just to say good morning. Relationships are so important for promoting wellbeing.



Keep learning

Develop coping strategies that work for you. Use Self-help / other resources and keep learning about what is helpful for you. Learning new things boosts self-confidence and makes you feel better. It can also work to distract you from your negative thoughts.



Be active

Doing exercise helps release special chemicals in the brain called endorphins which makes us feel better. It could be a short walk at lunchtime or getting off the bus one stop early to enjoy some exercise on route to work.



Focus on breathing



Distract yourself



Give back/volunteer



Avoid drugs and alcohol

Useful links

Helplines



SAMARITANS
116 123
jo@samaritans.org



Support
Line
01708 765200

Apps that may help



Stay Alive



MY3

“There is help out there in a number of different forms. Reach out for help, pick up the phone, or speak to someone you can trust – it will help. These feelings will pass.”



One small positive thought in the morning can change your whole day.