

# MYTHS ABOUT SUICIDE

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## Myth

People who talk about suicide rarely actually do it. (This relates to the belief that people are just seeking attention or are bluffing.)

- People who die by suicide often give a clue or warning of their intentions. The majority of people who attempt suicide say or do something to express their intention before they act. Always treat even subtle threats seriously.

## Myth

The suicidal person wants to die and there is nothing anyone can do, they will eventually do it.

- Often the suicidal person feels ambivalent about dying. People usually don't want to die; they want instead to end their horrible emotional pain. You can help by identifying the potentially suicidal person and talking to them about it.

## Myth

A person who has attempted suicide will always have thoughts of suicide.

- While a previous suicide attempt statistically increases the chance of another one, many people never attempt again. Often a suicide attempt is made during a particularly stressful period or during periods of major depression. With intervention and support a person may cease feeling suicidal.

## Myth

If you ask a person directly, "Do you feel like killing yourself?" this will lead to a suicide attempt.

- Usually, speaking to a person directly about suicidal intent will relieve the anxiety surrounding the feeling, and act as a deterrent to the suicidal behaviour. You don't create self-destructive feelings in another person simply by talking about suicide. If the thought was going to be there, it was there before you asked about it.

## Myth

A good job and stable relationships prevent people from contemplating suicide.

- People of all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds can feel suicidal. Although positive social connections are a major protective factor, biological, social, psychological, and spiritual risk factors contribute.