

Let's talk about suicide awareness.

Keep asking the people around you about their mental health. Show you care. Show your friends, colleagues, and family that you love them and are there for them.

Suicide is preventable – it's not an inevitability. Thoughts of taking one's own life, and actions, could result from so many different experiences and factors – at the same time, there are many ways of helping. But there are two things that anyone could benefit from: **space to talk and being asked if you are ok.**

Myth: “asking someone about suicidal thoughts could cause harm and feels awkward”

Truth: asking someone if they're having suicidal thoughts does not increase suicidal thoughts – it may well help reduce some of their distress and shows them that you care enough to ask.

Myth: “they don't seem upset, so they must be fine”

Truth: struggling with mental health and suicidal thoughts is often not obvious. People process and manage emotions differently, and they may be afraid of stigma and judgment about how they feel.

Check in on everyone's mental health, including people who seem happy. It's with you as their partner, friend, colleague or family member.

Warning signs of suicide:

- Talking about suicide, or talking about plans
- Withdrawing from social contact
- Unusual mood changes
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol

If you're at all concerned, just ask.



Supporting someone in Distress.

What if someone tells you that they are experiencing suicidal thoughts?

Keep a calm tone, listen to them, ask open questions, invite them to open up (if they're comfortable), and let them know that you're always there. Ask what they need, and if there's anything you can do to support.

Support might not mean just talking – people often find gestures, proactive planning, and distractions helpful:

Connection: Making it easy for them to spend time with others, rather than alone

Distraction: Helping them think about how they could distract themselves

Thinking ahead: Together, writing down a plan of who they can talk to, and what helps to soothe them if they experience suicidal thoughts or intense emotions

Planning activities: Setting regular plans (for a walk, shared hobby, dinner together)

Offer signposting to places that can help:

- Pieta House: www.pieta.ie
- Samaritans: www.samaritans.org/ireland/samaritans-ireland
- HUGG: hugg.ie

What if it feels urgent?

If the person is in a mental health crisis, planning to act on their thoughts, or if you or they have concerns about their safety, call an ambulance or take them to A&E: A&E have mental health professionals able to support people in crisis. Stay with them and support them. The GP can offer help and advice, too: encourage them to contact the GP, or contact their GP or family if it's appropriate.

