

# Dealing with suicidal thoughts

Kooth's support guide for young people

Having suicidal thoughts can be very scary and it can be difficult to know what to do. If you are currently having suicidal thoughts and feel you might act on them right now , we would encourage you to **call 999** to get help/support.

If you are not in immediate crisis but would still like help/support, please request a chat with one of our practitioners, contact **ChildLine on 0800 11 11** (for up to age 19), or **Samaritans on 116123** (for all ages).

This article contains further advice and support.

# What are suicidal thoughts?

Suicidal thoughts are thoughts that someone has about something happening to them to stop them from being alive.

Often, we think about suicidal thoughts in terms of the person doing something to hurt themselves. However, thoughts can also be considered as suicidal thoughts if they are about:

- **The person doing dangerous things to put their life at risk**
- **The person asking someone else to do something to them that will put their life at risk**
- **The person wishing something bad would happen to them to stop them from being alive**

Suicidal thoughts are very common, especially for young people. However, they are serious and hurtful to the person experiencing them.



## Why do people have suicidal thoughts?

There can be lots of different reasons why people have suicidal thoughts, and it would be impossible to cover them all. But, we thought it would be useful to list some of the more common reasons below:

- **Wanting difficult feelings to stop**
- **Wanting a distressing situation to end**
- **Losing faith in the “goodness” of the world**
- **Feeling hopeless**

Sometimes, suicidal thoughts come to us from our brains, as a reaction to a difficult situation. Usually, this is because we want to find a way for the difficult situation to stop and might be struggling to think of ways to make it stop. During these times, you may feel like ending your life is

the only solution for you, but it is not. Talking to others about suicidal thoughts and feelings can help your brain learn that there are other ways to help with the things you are going through.

However, we know that talking about suicidal thoughts can be difficult. So, we thought it would be helpful for us to talk to you about things you might be able to do to support yourself if you are finding talking to others hard.

## What can you do if you are experiencing suicidal thoughts?

Members of the Kooth team are trained to support anyone struggling with suicidal thoughts.

Here are three stages to help you support yourself if you are experiencing suicidal thoughts.

1

**Connecting**

2

**Understanding**

3

**Assisting**



1

## Connecting

You could do this by asking yourself questions like:

- What is making me feel this way?
- Is there something I want to escape from?
- Is there a feeling that I want to stop?
- Are there people I want to get away from?

Sometimes people can end up feeling suicidal because they don't feel like anyone is listening to their thoughts, worries, and feelings. It is important that feelings are taken seriously by everyone, including the person feeling them.

When someone asks questions about your suicidal thoughts, it can help you feel seen and heard. This is the same even if the person you are talking to is yourself. Connecting with your suicidal thoughts can help you manage your thoughts and feel more comfortable talking to others about them.

2

## Understanding

Some questions you might want to ask yourself include:

**Have those reasons for dying and or living changed since my first suicidal thought?**

**Are there things inside me that keep me safe? Such as:**

- My beliefs about suicide
- Hopes and dreams for the future
- Things you would like to see change

**Are there things outside of me that keep me safe? Such as:**

- Friends and/or family
- Organisations that support me (for example Kooth)
- Or maybe even a pet?

Listening to or having someone listen to your reasons for wanting to end your life, as well as your reasons for wanting to live, can help you feel cared for and accepted.

Getting used to talking about these things with yourself can help you prepare to talk to someone else about it and help you get the support you need.

## Assisting

You can do this by making a list of examples of all the different support resources below.



### Resources that can be available 24 hours a day

- Friends and family - you might include a parent, aunt/uncle, or best friend
- Emergency service - you might have the details for your local crisis service or 999
- Articles, activities and self-help tools on Kooth



### Resources that can support you through your journey

- Support workers - such as counsellors, psychologists, or psychiatrists
- Other professionals - such as teachers, tutors, or pastoral workers

Whatever you're going through, we're here to listen. [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com)