

Suicidal Thoughts



There are times in life when we might feel totally, hopeless, helpless, overwhelmed with emotional pain. It can seem like there is no other way out of our problems, we've run out of ideas, possible solutions. Our problems seem unfixable. The pain feels like it will never end.



We believe we've run out of options, and suicide is the only answer left. Maybe the suicidal thoughts come to mind, you might have mixed feelings about them. Suicidal thoughts are very common, but can be frightening and confusing. We tend to avoid talking about them, so we don't realize how common they are. Suicidal thoughts are a sign to change something in your life - NOT to end your life!



For some people, suicide may be a way of getting back at others, or showing them how much pain you're in. But after suicide, you won't be there to see that they feel guilty, or finally understand your pain. Feelings will pass. Depression feels permanent, but it's transient. Things will change. Depression comes and it goes.



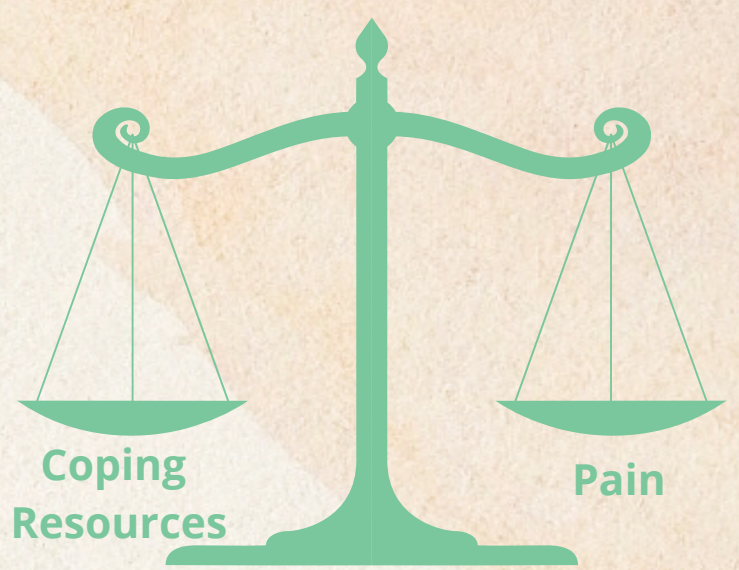
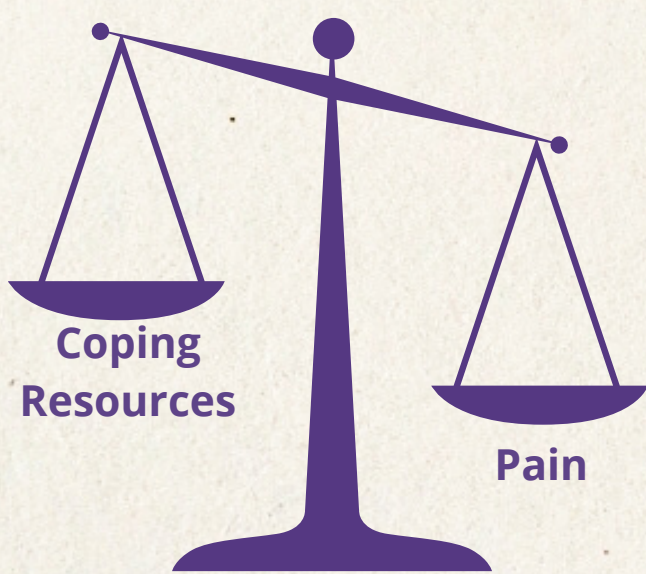
Over 90% of people who survive a potentially lethal suicide attempt, do not go on to kill themselves. It is a temporary crisis, an attempt to stop the inner pain. You will get through this tunnel and come out the other side. The feelings will pass! Depression and pain distort our thinking. It can seem like we're wearing very dark tinted gloomy specs. Everything looks different to how it really is.



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Thoughts are thoughts- not necessarily how things are, although it certainly feels like the thoughts are true. Thoughts affect the way we feel, and thoughts and feelings affect the way we react, what we do. Suicidal thoughts can result when we experience too much pain, without having enough resources to cope.



Reduce the pain

Self Soothing:

- Do something that will help you feel better, right now.
- Perhaps collect items into an emergency bag or box that you can turn to.
- Use all five senses to find things that will soothe you.
- Vision

Focus your attention on looking at something nice, nature, a painting, watching a favorite programme or movie.



- Hearing

Listen to a favorite piece of music, sounds of nature, or sing.



- Smell

Really notice smells- favorite soap, food, essential oil.



- Taste

Use sensation of taste to focus your attention. Eat mindfully -savoring each moment.



- Touch

Wear soft comforting socks, stroke a pet, or even give yourself a hand massage



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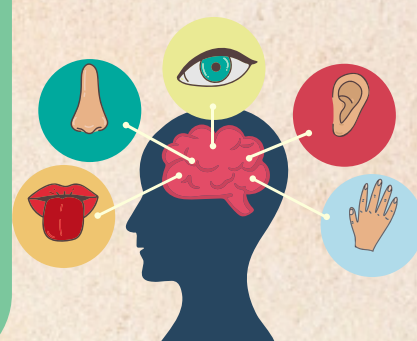


Avoid alcohol & drugs- Whilst it seems like they help for a while, they will make your problems worse.

A useful reminder, using the 5 senses, to help you shift focus of attention and ground you into the present moment:

- 5 things I can see
- 4 things I can hear
- 3 things I can touch
- 2 things I can smell or taste
- 1 breath.

Then continue to just notice your breathing and the sensations of breathing in your belly.



Ask yourself:

- Are these thoughts facts or my opinion?
- What has helped me feel better in the past?
- What can I do right now that will help me feel better?
- What gives my life meaning? What are my goals, dreams or life values? E.g. Family, friends, pets, helping others, faith, spirituality, community life, connecting with nature.

Tell yourself:

I've coped this far, I can get through the next ... (day, hour, 10 minutes) Things will look better in time.

Depression is temporary - this will pass.
Depression is distorting my thinking - these thoughts are the voice of depression. They are not facts. I don't have to act on them. The vast majority of people get better from depression. I will look back and be pleased that I chose to live.



[Safety Plan worksheet](#); [Safety Plan Cards\(PDFs\)](#)
[Alternative Thoughts](#); [Actions worksheet \(PDF\)](#)
[Crisis Management Plan worksheet \(PDF\)](#)

Take things a little at a time.

Set out to get through the next day, the next week or month, perhaps the next hour or even less. Tell yourself: "I've got through so far, I can get through the next hour"