

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

TALK TO US

OFF THE RECORD

WHAT ARE SUICIDAL THOUGHTS?

When we feel hopeless and fed up with the thought of carrying on, we can begin to think about the 'what ifs'... What if I didn't have to feel like this? What if I wasn't here? What if I was dead? These 'what if' thoughts can become more and more serious, particularly if you have depression and it worsens. During this deep despair, thoughts of giving up and not struggling anymore can come into our minds and begin to linger, and death can begin to feel like the only escape. These thoughts can develop into 'suicidal ideation' when the thoughts begin to become more real. For example, you begin to spend long periods of time thinking about ending your life or thinking about the people you will leave behind.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF SUICIDE?

Some of the warning signs are:

- Feeling depressed (see depression information sheet)
- Feeling cut off from your body or physically numb
- A loss of energy
- You may have stopped taking care of yourself e.g. neglecting your physical appearance.
- Overwhelming feeling of hopelessness and helplessness
- Loss of interest in things that you used to enjoy
- Strong and persistent thoughts about ending your life
- Making plans for how you would take your life

I wish I wasn't me

CAUSES

Feeling like taking your own life can be symptom of a serious underlying issue, illness or cause. Usually someone feels suicidal as a result of a 'build up' of when things have become too much to cope with. The reasons behind feeling suicidal and thinking about dying by suicide are usually complex and very personal to the situation you are in at the moment. There are however things that make people more prone to experiencing suicidal thoughts, such as:

- Stressful life events
- Difficult experiences in early childhood
- Alcohol or drug misuse

HELP IS AVAILABLE FOR YOU

Suicidal thoughts are serious and if you recognise any of these warning signs in yourself or in someone close to you then it is important to take action. We recommended that you:

1. **Contact your GP.** Ring them and arrange to see them as soon as possible. If you are already receiving support from mental health services, contact your Community Mental Health Team.
2. **Go to your nearest A&E** and ask to be seen by the duty Psychiatrist, who will be able to assess you and give you the appropriate help.
3. **Emergency Services.** If you are concerned about an immediate risk of harm and you don't feel safe then phone 999 and ask for the police or ambulance service.
4. There are a number of phone lines that can help:
 - Every mental health trust in London has put in place a 24/7 crisis line for people of all ages - visit www.nhs.uk
 - **Samaritans** on 116 123 for 24- hour confidential emotional support.
 - **Childline** on 0800 1111 for 24-hour confidential support to children and young people up to 18 years old.