

How to Help a Friend in Crisis

Be Direct If you think that someone is suicidal, ask him or her outright. Most people will be relieved that you did.

Get Them Talking Listen actively to the person. Encourage them to tell their story.

Stay Calm Don't rush in with advice, or tell your friend not to think that way. It's important for them to be heard, not lectured at.

No Taboos Do not be afraid of what your friend might say. The more comfortable and nonjudgmental you are, the easier it will be for them to talk with you.

Reassure Them Emphasize that there are options open to your friend besides suicide.

Break it Down Help your friend break down their problems into manageable pieces. Don't try to deal with everything at once.

No Secrets Do not promise to keep their plans a secret. You may need to involve family, friends, or counselors to help them.

Get Help Try to get the person to see a counselor. If they refuse, be patient but persistent. Emphasize that there are many types of counselors, including psychologists, psychiatrists, teachers, clergy, therapists, et al.

Suicide and crisis centers are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Contact (phone) information for the crisis center nearest you.