

“Reach out to a loved one! People care more than you think they do. People want to help and have you feel better and be around to share in their lives! You will feel better soon!”

- Jane Panton, Alex Panton Foundation Chairperson

How can I get help?

If you are experiencing ongoing suicidal feelings, you might feel as if there's nothing that could help. There are various forms of support to help you cope with the problems that may be causing you to feel suicidal.

1. Going to your General Practitioner is a good starting point as he or she can refer you to talking treatments, prescribe medication, or refer you to specialist services, such as mental health services.
2. Contacting the Department of Counselling services at 949-8789.
3. If you are not comfortable approaching a medical professional yet, you can express your feelings in a supportive online community such as: Elefriends, Gender Trust, or Mood Juice.
4. Go to MindUK's page about **helping yourself cope right now**.

Getting help in an emergency

- If you don't feel you can keep yourself, or others, safe, seek immediate help
- Go to any hospital's Accident and Emergency Department
- Call 911 and ask for an ambulance if you feel you cannot get to the hospital on your own
- Ask someone else to call an ambulance or take you to the hospital



**ALEX
PANTON
FOUNDATION**

**Let's overcome the
stigma of mental
illness.**

**Suicidal Thoughts/
Feelings**



**MINISTRY OF
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

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What is suicidal ideation?

This is when someone is intentionally planning to take their own life.

Feelings include:

- Being preoccupied by abstract thoughts about ending your life
- Feeling that people would be better off without you
- Thinking about methods of suicide
- Making clear plans to take your own life

These feelings may build over time or might fluctuate from moment to moment.

It's common to not understand why you feel this way.

Here are some thoughts, feelings, and experiences you may go through if you are feeling suicidal:

- Hopeless, like there is no point in living
- Tearful and overwhelmed by negative thoughts
- Unbearable pain that feels like it will never end
- Useless, unwanted, or unneeded by others
- Desperate, as if you have no other choice
- Cut off from your body or physically numb

Who would self-harm?

Anyone can have suicidal feelings, whatever their background or situation in life. Suicidal feelings have a wide range of possible causes. They can be a symptom of an existing mental health problem or episode, mental distress, or sometimes a side effect of psychiatric, or other, medication. Some people can say why they feel suicidal, but in other instances there may not be a clear reason, or they may be unable to talk about what they are feeling or experiencing. If someone feels suicidal, their feelings may become more intense if they: drink alcohol, use street drugs, or have sleep problems.

People can also be more vulnerable to suicide if:

- **They have attempted suicide before.**

If someone has previously tried to end their life, there is a greater than average chance they may try to do so again in the future.

- **They have self-harmed in the past.**

Self-harm is not the same as feeling suicidal, but statistics show that someone who has self-harmed will also be more at risk of suicide.

- **They have lost someone to suicide.**

People who have been bereaved by suicide are also more at risk of taking their own lives.

Why you should ask if someone feels suicidal.

There is still a stigma around talking about suicide which can make it even harder for people experiencing these feelings to open up and feel understood. Asking someone if they feel suicidal or are planning to end their life may not feel like the right thing to do but in fact professionals recommend asking direct questions about suicide.

Research has shown that speaking openly about suicide decreases the likelihood of the person acting on their feelings. Asking simple, direct questions, such as, "Are you having suicidal thoughts?" or "Have you felt like you want to end your life?", can encourage them to be honest about how they are feeling.

Many people feel relieved and less isolated when they are asked.

"The earlier you let someone know how you're feeling, the quicker you'll be able to get support to overcome these feelings."

What can you do to help?

Talking to someone who will listen and being supportive can act as a first step towards getting help. If you feel able to listen, you could:

- **Ask open questions.** These are questions that invite someone to say more than 'yes' or 'no'. An example is, "How have you been feeling?" or "What happened next?"

- **Give them time.** You might feel anxious to hear their answers, but it helps if you let them take the time they need.

- **Take them seriously.** It is best to assume that a person is telling the truth about feeling suicidal.

- **Do not judge them.** You might feel shocked, upset, or frightened, but it is important not to blame the person for how they are feeling. They have taken a big step by telling you.

- **Help the person to seek help.**

