Faith matters

Face to face with suicide

In the U.S., more than 34,000 persons end their own lives each year. How can we comprehend such an act? What can we do when someone close to us displays suicidal tendencies? And how can we pull ourselves back together after the suicide of a spouse, child, parent, or friend?

A cry for help

Suicide is the culmination of a long and complex progression. A person who commits suicide is attempting to find a solution to their suffering by any means possible. Their desire to commit suicide is the expression of an unbearable existential pain that they want to end, even if it costs them their life. More than a death wish, suicide is the expression of a need for peace and quiet that they believe only death can bring. People often attempt to commit suicide to escape the pain of grief, of a professional setback, a breakup, a financial disaster, or an incurable disease. But they may also be trying to escape problems in their marriage, family, or professional life. They may be deeply depressed or have problems with alcohol or drug addiction.

The person who commits suicide often attempts to commit suicide is a call for help, a desperate cry to their loved ones that something needs to change in their own life. If you’re shaken by death, more than a death wish, suicide is the expression of a need for peace and quiet that they believe only death can bring. People often attempt to commit suicide to escape the pain of grief, of a professional setback, a breakup, a financial disaster, or an incurable disease. But they may also be trying to escape problems in their marriage, family, or professional life. They may be deeply depressed or have problems with alcohol or drug addiction.

For the persons who try to kill themselves, words are no longer enough—talking about their problems and difficulties seems impossible or even dangerous. More than a threat or blackmail, a person’s suicide attempt is a call for help, a desperate cry to their loved ones that something needs to change in their own life.

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Warning signs

SUPPORTING SOMEONE WITH SUICIDAL TENDENCIES IS ALWAYS ONDEAL. By being sensitive to certain warning signs, it’s often possible to attempt to short-circuit the process before it’s too late.

There are direct and indirect messages you need to watch out for. People contemplating suicide may say things like “I want to end it all,” “Life’s not worth it anymore,” or “I’ll never get through this.” These phrases should never be taken lightly. As a society, we should take a closer look at the warning signs of anxiety, boundary, and situation. Still, certain guidelines are useful:

- **SAD**: Share your feelings about the person’s suicidal statements and attempts. It’s crucial to get a sense of why the person is considering suicide. You can do so by asking them about their suicidal thoughts. For instance, “What problems motivate their suicidal thoughts?”
- **Encourage them to talk about their suicidal thoughts.**
- **Get involved personally.**

Help and sympathy

A PERSON WHO IS THINKING ABOUT ENDING THEIR LIFE needs first and foremost, understanding, boundaries, and support. These guidelines are useful:

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Moral lecture. Or you may try to have an answer for everything, or give recipes for happiness. Such attitudes won’t help matters, and may even make things worse.

Why did this happen?

I N L E T T E R TO EVERY TALENTED SOMEONE YOU LOVE HAS COMMITTED SUICIDE. Since then, everything’s been a face to face with emptiness, anguish, and, sometimes, where can you find the strength to go on?

Words fail in the face of such a tragedy. Suicide is a terrifying, brutal event that causes a shock and a wound. The bravery and loyalty of the act are difficult to fathom. How can we understand and accept what’s happened?

We experience feelings of devastation, paralysis, helplessness, guilt, and anger.

Grief after a suicide

I T’S HARD TO FIND YOURSELF BACK TOGETHER AFTER SUCH A SHOCK. The big question is: Why? You may look for small details, giving them too much importance or a false interpretation. You may take yourself too literally.

Since suicide is such a social stigma, the judgment of others may reinforce your guilt. If you need to take time to live through your grief. Accept that you did everything you could to prevent this disaster, and that the act itself remains a mystery. Even if you’d been able to prevent that tragedy, it’s likely you’d have done so.

Suicide is an easily preventable problem. These statistics confirm that suicide prevention is a major public-health problem that needs to be addressed more effectively. Let us hope that non-profit organizations and government programs can help put an end to such tragedies.

For a long time, people understood that those who killed themselves were suffering from depression. Now, however, it’s known that people suffering from depression don’t necessarily kill themselves.

A person who wants to end their own life needs, first and foremost, companionship, listening, and compassion.

A public-health problem

Men commit suicide at a rate nearly four times that of women, but women attempt suicide two to three times as often as men, and there are more women than men who commit suicide.

Groups like the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), for anyone in suicidal or emotional crisis, or for someone who knows someone in danger of suicide.

Suicide and the Church

For a long time, people who committed suicide didn’t have the right to a religious funeral. This is no longer the case. The Church now gives priority to welcoming the baptismed person and conducting them to their final resting place, as well as lending moral and spiritual support to their loved ones.

Facing the suicide of a child

For parents, siblings, and loved ones of someone who commits suicide is a very difficult trial to overcome. Although the pain seems insurmountable, it is possible to find help and support. Support groups and specialists can help you talk about what you’re going through and bring you out of your isolation.

A person who wants their own life to end...