

How to Help Someone Who is Struggling with Suicidal Thoughts

1. If someone talks about wanting to end their own life take this very seriously. Don't consider it a joke or a cry for attention. Take what they say seriously and respond accordingly.
2. If you notice changes in behavior, take the initiative to ask them what's going on. Say something like, "I really care about you, and you haven't seemed like yourself lately. Is everything OK?"
 - Maybe they are a little more moody than usual. They don't laugh as much as they used to. They seem more subdued and depressed.
3. LISTEN - often people cry out in every way possible for a friend, or a spouse or parent to LISTEN to them.
 - Let them vent their anger, frustration or sense of desperation.
4. Assure the person that there is a solution to their problem, and that you will do everything you can to help them.
5. Pray with them and for them. They are wrestling with darkness!
6. Give them something to look forward to. Talk about something that you can do with them in the near future. Be sure to follow through!
7. Refer them to a professional. We go to a doctor for physical problems, why not for emotional problems? Help them understand that going to a professional is no different than going to an eye doctor, or a cardiologist.

Resources

1. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255
2. www.kaywarren.com/mentalhealth (Look for the Mental Health Resource Guide)
3. Rick@PastorRick.com (Rick Warren's ministry)