

5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain

1. **Ask:** “Are you thinking about killing yourself?” It’s not an easy question but studies show that [asking at-risk individuals](#) if they are suicidal does not increase suicides or suicidal thoughts.
2. **Keep them safe:** Reducing a suicidal person’s access to highly lethal items or places is an important part of suicide prevention. While this is not always easy, asking if the at-risk person has a plan and [removing or disabling the lethal means](#) can make a difference.
3. **Be there:** Listen carefully and learn what the individual is thinking and feeling. Findings suggest [acknowledging and talking about suicide](#) may in fact [reduce rather than increase](#) suicidal thoughts.
4. **Help them connect:** Save the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline’s number in your phone so it’s there when you need it: 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You can also help make a connection with a trusted individual like a family member, friend, spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.
5. **Stay Connected:** Staying in touch after a crisis or after being discharged from care can make a difference. [Studies have shown](#) the number of suicide deaths goes down when someone follows up with the at-risk person

Source: https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention/index.shtml#part_153220