

MANAGING SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

Use of self- soothing techniques

Self-soothing techniques are comforting activities (often with an outer focus) which one can do to temporarily cope with one's intense negative feeling. These may include hobbies an individual is fond of (e.g. listening to music, watching a movie, or going for a walk).

Distracting oneself

Doing activities to take one's mind off from the suicidal thoughts may also help. For e.g. gardening, cooking, exercising, reading, learning something new or talking to friends.

Minimizing time spent alone

It has been commonly reported that suicidal thoughts can be more frequent when an individual is all alone. In such cases, spending time with loved ones, planning one's daily schedule and engaging oneself in group activities may help

Managing triggers

If one has been able to identify the cues which increase the frequency of suicidal thoughts, then it can provide us some hints about minimizing such distressing thoughts/keeping them at bay.

But can you do something more ? Yes, ofcourse you can!

Try Talking to others

Reach out to people who are close to you. Take some time; promise yourself that you will give yourself time. Utilize that time to tell your loved ones about your problem. Call up someone you trust, it can be a close friend, your parents, siblings, partner. If it is difficult to find support from your immediate circle, reach out to someone in your wider network. Consider connecting to a counselor who will be compassionate and understanding

Fighting the hesitation to tell others

Try to tell others about your thoughts in the way you talk to yourself, so that they would understand better what is happening to you. Do not leave it to them to mind-read you. Be clear and tell them you are getting suicidal thoughts instead of vague statements like 'I can't deal with this anymore'. If you feel it will be too hard for you to tell this directly, try to write about it; send a message, write a mail and let them read it first before you discuss

Think about broadening your field of vision

Suicidal thoughts narrow our field of vision (like looking through a tunnel) and make it hard to see the broader/bigger picture. it would be very useful to deliberately make a list of various options apart from suicide, which can help you cope with your problems. A good way to start thinking about this is to make a list of all the problems you have in your life at present and then think about all the possible options to handle at least some of these. You can ask someone trusted to help you with this

Make a safety Plan

Write down a series of steps you will follow in case of a suicidal crisis. A safety plan should help you delay your urge to act on your suicidal thoughts. Write down the phone numbers of people you can contact immediately, which can include numbers of your family, friends and a therapist/ counselor.

Think about things which can make your life meaningful

Write down positive things about you and your life , about your plans for the future: dreams you want to achieve, goals you want to pursue. Keep a journal where you can write down about your feelings, expectations, joys and sorrows. Writing about your thoughts can help you gain clarity about the situations and allow you to express your emotions rather than bottling them up

Seeking Professional help

A mental health professional can help you in dealing with you suicidal thoughts and finding ways to cope with your feelings . If these feelings are a part of a health condition (e.g. severe depression), he/she can help you get the right kind of treatment.

Bottom Line

Suicidal thoughts and death wishes are a signal that something is going wrong in our lives. These indicate a need to look at what is going wrong and to actively seek help to sort things out. Having these thoughts does not make us weaker than others. It may help to ask yourself: 'What can I do right now to change slightly the way I am thinking and feeling?'

TELEMANAS NATIONAL HELPLINE NUMBER: 14416