



Suicidal Ideation: Know the Signs

In 2022, more than 49,000 people in the U.S. died by suicide and an estimated 1.6 million suicide attempts were made, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Suicide is now the 11th leading cause of death in the nation. If you notice the first warning signs of suicidal ideation, whether it's in someone close to you, or a coworker, or even someone you don't know well, it's crucial to speak up.

Start by expressing your concern in a non-judgmental and compassionate manner. You might say something along the lines of, "I've noticed you seem unhappy and I'm concerned about you. Is everything alright?" This lets them know someone cares and can help open the door for them to share their feelings.

Be attentive to signs such as:

Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain

Mentioning being a burden to others

Giving away prized possessions

Increasing use of alcohol or drugs

Acting anxious or agitated

Sleeping too little or too much

Withdrawing or feeling isolated

Displaying rage or talking about seeking revenge

Showing extreme mood swings

Engaging in daring or risk-taking behaviors

Expressing lack of interest in future plans

If they give any indication that they are struggling, guide them to immediate resources. Encourage them to reach out for professional help by calling the behavioral health phone number on the back of their health insurance card, contacting their Employee Assistance Program (EAP), or scheduling an urgent appointment with a local counseling office. In crisis situations, suggest they call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 9-8-8 or 800-273-8255.

Remember, your intervention could be a crucial step in helping them find the help they need. If you have lost a loved one to suicide, the impact can be intense and overwhelming. Know that you don't have to cope alone. Talk to a caring professional or join a support group to help you heal and move forward.

#StopSuicide

If you or someone you know is in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 9-8-8 or 800-273-8255.

