

Recognizing Signs of Suicide

Suicide can be a final, desperate response to intolerable stress. Since one person's stress can be another person's challenge, it is important to be able to identify the common warning signs of a potential suicide.

Some common warning signs of suicide

- Talking about suicide (i.e. "If I were gone...", "I can't see the point of living anymore", "They'd be better off without me." etc.)
- Tidying up personal affairs
- Transferring land to loved ones
- Giving away personal possessions
- Arranging for the care of children, livestock or pets "just in case something should happen";
- Withdrawal from family and friends;
- Recklessness (operation of equipment, careless driving, general lack of concern for personal safety);
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness, apathy, sadness or loneliness.
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Increase in alcohol and/or drug consumption
- Dramatic changes in mood (eg. a sudden elated mood following a time of depression)
- Marked changes in behaviour, attitudes or appearance
- Suffering a major loss or life change
- A previous suicide attempt

If you know someone exhibiting some or all of these symptoms, it is important to take action. Talk to them about their feelings. Ask them if they are feeling suicidal, and do not judge them. Stay calm. Let them know that help is available and that you are there to support them.