

Southeastern Pennsylvania **24/7 Crisis Centers**

Berks County
SAM, Inc. 877-236-4600

Bucks County
**Lenape Valley
Foundation** 800-499-7455

Chester County
**Valley Creek
Crisis Center** 877-918-2100

Delaware County
MVP Recovery 855-687-2410

Montgomery County
**Montgomery
County Emergency
Service** 610-279-6100

Philadelphia County
Northeast 215-831-2600
North 215-951-8300

**Center City &
South** 215-829-5433

West 215-748-9000

**Philadelphia
Crisis Line** 215-685-6440

Protective Factors

A protective factor is a characteristic or attribute that reduces the likelihood of attempting or completing suicide. They enhance resilience and help to counterbalance risk factors.

These are some things felt to deter suicidal thoughts and behaviors that you may be able to develop or enhance:

- Believing in the value of life
- Having reasons for living
- Strong social connections and supports
- Hope for the future and an optimistic outlook on life
- Spiritual beliefs against suicide
- Managing anger and impulsivity
- Maintaining sobriety
- Feelings of personal control
- Sense of self-worth and self-esteem
- Willingness to get help

If you are receiving mental health care, following your treatment plan, keeping your appointments, and taking your medications as prescribed, it may deter or help reduce the onset of suicidal thoughts.

This information is for educational purposes only. This information does not take the place of advice or help from qualified behavioral health or mental health professionals.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE



What to Know if You're Having Thoughts of Suicide



**Montgomery County
Emergency Service**

50 Beech Drive
Norristown, PA 19403
610-279-6100
www.mces.org

Purpose

You're reading this brochure because you might be thinking about suicide. Included is basic information on how to keep these thoughts at bay and keep them from getting to the point where you may act on them. ***Suicide is preventable, thoughts about it are temporary, and you can help yourself prevent suicide.***

The unanticipated nature of most suicides may lead to an obsessive search for the "why" by survivors.

How does suicide happen?

A suicide may occur when both a strong **intent** to die and the **capability** for potentially lethal self-harm **come together**.

A desire to die may result from a person's belief that they are a burden to those close to them or that everyone would be better off without them.

A capability for lethal self-harm may result from personal or job-related trauma, exposure to abuse or violence, pain, access to firearms or other weapons, military training, and many other experiences.



What are possible triggers for thoughts of suicide?

- Marital Issues, divorce, or separation
- Serious financial or legal problems
- Job loss or unemployment
- Death of a loved one
- Experiencing a death by suicide of someone close to you
- Severe injury
- Disability

What are warning signs of suicide?

Warning signs are behaviors that may **indicate** a person is **experiencing thoughts of suicide** and may be thinking of **harming themselves**.

- Talking about being trapped and experiencing a loss of control
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from family or friends
- An increase in anxiety, agitation, or sleep problems
- Mood changes such as
 - Increasing anger
 - Growing pessimism
 - Unnecessary risk-taking
- Growing self-criticism
- All or nothing, black and white thinking

What are danger signs of suicide?

- Indifference to job duties
- Giving away cherished or favored items
- Making final arrangements
- Sleep disturbances, nightmares

How can I get help for suicide warning signs?

- **Call** one of the numbers on the back panel of this brochure
- **Avoid being alone** whenever possible
- **Refrain from using alcohol or drugs**
- **Get away from objects you may use to harm yourself**
- **Reach out to a professional** such as a therapist or counselor

When should I get emergency help?

You should reach out for immediate help if you are:

- Voicing, emailing, or texting others that you are thinking of suicide
- Working out a specific suicide plan with when and how you would harm yourself
- Seeking out a way to harm yourself

Any one of the above signals immediate danger, and you must:

- Call your local crisis center immediately
- Go to the nearest hospital emergency department immediately
- or, if the above are not possible or available, dial 911 immediately



No Judgment. Just Help.