

# Thoughts About Suicide



There may be times when thoughts about death or suicide seem reasonable or perhaps comforting. Severe depression can darken your thinking to such a degree that you might be able to convince yourself that dying is your only option. These are scary thoughts that often lead to hurtful acts against yourself in an attempt to take your own life.

Suicidal ideas can take many forms (including thoughts and images) and range in severity. When suicidal thoughts are most severe, a person might hear voices instructing them to kill themselves. These are auditory hallucinations, triggered by biological changes in the brain. They are not real thoughts. Milder thoughts might include vague ideas about dying, much like a desire to disappear. In the middle range, a suicidal thought might be feeling okay about dying, but not necessarily doing anything to bring it about. For instance, wishing to fall asleep peacefully and not wake up.

Thoughts about death or suicide are usually the result of feeling hopeless about the future and helpless to make anything change. When you can't think of any other solutions to your problems and can see no reason to hold on, death may begin to seem like an acceptable option.

***To have a chance to change your life for the better, you have to stick around long enough to learn something new. To help fight off the thoughts about death and dying, try one of the two following exercises.***

## Reasons to Live

Make a list of reasons to continue living. When you begin to have dark thoughts about life, look over the list to remind yourself of reasons to hold on another day.

Reasons why I shouldn't leave: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

People to live for: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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## Thoughts About Suicide

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Things I would miss: \_\_\_\_\_

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Experiences I have not yet had: \_\_\_\_\_

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Things that matter to me: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Reasons to Have Hope

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Make a list of reasons that give you hope for the future. Resist the urge to tell yourself that there is no hope, so why bother. Here are some questions that might help you think of reasons to have hope.

- Are you doing anything differently now that might suggest there is hope for improvement?
- Are the problems that bring you down likely to be temporary? Will they resolve themselves with time?
- Why do other people believe that there is hope for the future?
- Can you think of some different things to try that might increase your hopefulness?
- Are there things you have done in the past that gave you hope for the future?
- Have you been through times like this before? If so, have things usually gotten better with time, effort or patience?

My reasons for hope: \_\_\_\_\_

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