

# Supporting Someone who is Thinking about Suicide \*

\* ideas from people who have dealt with thoughts about suicide

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**Having thoughts about suicide is common. For many people that think about suicide, talking about their thoughts can help them move past them. It can be hard to know what to say or do. Here are some ideas...**

**Some things you can say when someone tells you they are thinking about suicide:**

- Do you want to talk more about it?
- Did something happen that made you feel this way?
- Have you felt this way before?
- What has worked in the past?
- Have you been able to share this with anyone else?
- What do you need to get through this?
- What would be helpful right now?
- I'm not sure what to say, but I can sit and listen.

**Some things you can offer when someone tells you they are thinking about suicide:**

- sit and listen
- help the person think through what would be helpful
- honor their preferences about what is and is not helpful
- being clear about your own limits and needs

**Some things you should try not to do when someone tells you they are thinking about suicide:**

- make it about yourself
- take charge
- try to assess or "fix" the person
- say things that can feel invalidating or minimizing of their experience
- say the person should feel guilt or shame about their feelings
- make promises that you cannot keep
- make decisions for them or go behind their back

