

Coping with Suicidal Thoughts

There are some tools you can use to help keep you safe when you are having suicidal thoughts. If you find you can't keep yourself safe, please call 988 where trained crisis lines counselors are available 24/7.

Sharing your burden with a friend, family member, or therapist is a great first step. It can be hard to open up, but we know that many people with suicidal thoughts feel better after disclosing their feelings. Be honest about how you feel. If you have a plan, tell them. Try not to isolate – socializing and keeping busy are strategies that effectively reduce suicidal ideations.

Removing means from your home is an important safety measure. It's best to call a family member or friend to help you gather them. If you can't get in touch with anyone, then go to a safe place – that can be a friend's house, coffee shop, or library.

Having a safety plan can be helpful when you are having suicidal thoughts by reminding you of your unique coping strategies and the available resources that can keep you safe. Your mental health provider, friends, or family members can help you complete your plan. [Mysafetyplan.org](https://mysafetyplan.org) is a great online tool.

Focus on positive thinking. Start thinking about reasons you have for living – it could be your relationships with friends, family members, your faith, your dog or cat, your job, or your hobbies that give you a reason(s) to live. Write those down and remind yourself of them when you are experiencing suicidal thoughts. Think about the people you love and those who love you.

Taking care of yourself is also important so eating healthy, exercising, getting a good night's sleep, and abstaining from or decreasing use of alcohol or drugs can help you feel better. Having a routine and sticking to it can help decrease suicidal thoughts.

Find activities that have brought you joy in the past – it might be cooking, journaling, reading, chatting with an old friend, walking in the woods, or running – and try them again.

Remember, you do not have to do this alone. Utilize support networks and ask for help as you're able, and know you're always welcome to call the 24/7 National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline by dialing 988.

Source: Barbara Stanley, Gonzalo Martínez-Alés, Ilana Gratch, Mina Rizk, Hanga Galfalvy, Tse-Hwei Choo, J. John Mann, Coping strategies that reduce suicidal ideation: An ecological momentary assessment study, Journal of Psychiatric Research, Volume 133, 2021