

I tried to end my life

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Have you recently tried to take your own life? Do you need assistance to identify what help is available? There are many ways of gaining support following your attempt including yourself, your family and friend network as well as professionals.

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Reach out

Many people who are experiencing thoughts of suicide may feel alone and isolated and that no one cares, however it is important to reach out to others.

It is important to surround yourself with people that you feel understand and support you. You need to bring together all of your resources, supports and coping strategies, while gaining assistance to effectively manage potential ongoing or future stressful events. It is likely you have been referred to a mental health professional, including psychiatrists, psychologists or a mental health care team. Clinicians are there to help you through this time and help you work through issues that may have led you to end your life. Also, family, friends and other supports can be helpful.



Have you recently tried to take your own life? How are you feeling?

Following a suicide attempt you may be feeling exhausted. Dealing with the reactions from others, the experience with emergency services and the event itself may leave you feeling overwhelmed. You may feel disappointed, angry, relieved. Your feelings are probably quite all-consuming at the moment but they will subside and you will be able to return to your normal life. There are treatment options available such as psychological treatments or medications or utilising both.

Call
Lifeline on
13 11 14
if you need
to talk

Strategies

There are a range of strategies that might help you at this time:

- **Make a suicide safety plan.** Include things such as reasons for living, helpful activities, list your triggers, people you can talk to, professionals that can help you, emergency contact details. This can be done in collaboration with other supports such as family/friends or a clinician. For more info on safety planning visit <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/beyondnow-suicide-safety-planning>
- **Identify coping strategies that work for you.** For example, you may seek to manage thoughts and feelings by distancing yourself. In order to allow you to seek help, commit to giving yourself time by saying something such as "I will wait 24 hours before I do anything to myself".
- **Remove items that you could use to hurt yourself** by asking a friend to look after them.
- **Engage in pleasurable activities.** Even in short periods pleasurable activities such as taking a bath, listening to uplifting music, watching a movie, catching up with a friend can help to improve your mood and distract you from negative intrusive thoughts.
- **Spend time with others,** friends, family, even being in a public space can help to prevent feelings of isolation.
- **Avoid alcohol and other drugs** — Alcohol and other drugs may increase risk taking and impulsive behaviours and therefore should be kept to a minimum. Alcohol and other drugs have an impact on your physical body and may increase feelings of depression.
- **Keep a diary.** Recording your thoughts and feelings helps to identify negative thinking styles, as well as recording progress.
- **Keep a list of support services** such as Lifeline (13 11 14) or the Suicide call-back service (1300 659 467), your psychologist, your GP or emergency services.
- **Identify your triggers.** If you are able to identify your triggers then you will be able to engage in protective behaviours prior to becoming suicidal. Triggers can include stressful situations, certain people, places or events or an anniversary of a painful event.
- **Calm down** by using strategies such as breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation or meditation. There are many apps available on your smart phone, or videos to watch on YouTube or you could borrow a CD from the library.

Reflections

Why are you still here? What are your reasons to continue living? Is it your children, your pet, your family? Whatever the reason, it may be beneficial to reflect on these and maybe even record them in a diary, on a phone, so you can remind yourself when you are at your lowest. Making a quick go to list, picture collage or voice message on your phone so you can gain quick access.



Following a suicide attempt it is important to look after yourself. Routines are an important part of recovery and may be helpful to assist you in putting 'one foot in front of the other'. Starting with nutrition, sleep and exercise will assist to improve your mood.

Where to go for support?

Are you still feeling immediately suicidal? It can be very difficult to know what to do and how to cope, but help is available.

- **Contact Lifeline:** 13 11 14 (available 24/7) or Online Crisis Support Chat (available nightly at www.lifeline.org.au)
- **Use available resources** — smartphone apps, online support groups
- **Talk to someone you trust** — you don't have to go through this alone. Tell them how you feel, and that you are thinking of suicide. Ask them to help you keep safe.
- **Get help and support to stay alive** — contact a helpline, your GP, a counsellor, psychologist or psychiatrist, a hospital emergency department, minister, teacher or anyone you trust to keep you safe.
- **If your life is in danger** — call emergency services 000. It can be very difficult to know what to do and how to cope, but help is available.

To search for local services and centres in your area visit the Lifeline Service Seeker Directory at www.lifeline.serviceseeker.com.au

“Talk to someone and eventually the light will shine.” — Steve

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Phone 13 11 14 | www.lifeline.org.au

Call Lifeline on 13 11 14 (available 24/7) if you are feeling suicidal or in crisis or visit www.lifeline.org.au to connect online with our Crisis Support Chat (available nightly), find a range of other useful factsheets and to find local services in your area.

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