



SUPPORTING A FAMILY MEMBER IN CRISIS

! Common Warning Signs !

1 Behavioral

- Impulsivity/increased risk taking
- Self-harm and/or substance abuse
- Excessive fear or anxiety
- Being depressed or withdrawn (esp. for two or more weeks)
- Saying goodbyes/giving away prized possessions
- Chronic exhaustion and sleep deprivation

2 Situational

- Major financial stress
- Loss of any major relationship (break-up or loss of friendship)
- Death of a friend or family member, especially if by suicide
- Toxic personal or work relationship
- Serious medical diagnosis or chronic illness
- Being abused and/or bullied

3 Verbal

- Talking about death, dying, or suicide
*"No one would care if I'm gone."
"You would be better off without me."
"_____ will never get any better. I might as well end it."*
- Using written statements in emails or social media platforms expressing feelings relating to death, dying, or suicide

How to Respond to Warning Signs

1. **Inquire**- "I've noticed you haven't been yourself. Are you okay?" OR "Are you considering suicide?" (If the situation warrants you to be concerned about their safety.)
2. **Reassure Your Support**- "I'm here for you." OR "How can I help support you?"
3. **Persuade Your Family Member to Get Help**- "Are you open to calling Suicide Prevention Lifeline/talking to your doctor/etc.?" OR "You are so important to me and this family; I want to see you get better!"
4. **Refer to Support**- "This is the phone number for the Suicide Prevention Lifeline/other resource. They can help you with what you are going through." (Hand them the contact information for the support service, or offer to call with them if the situation warrants it. See the additional support resources below.)

Dos & Don'ts of Supporting Your Family Members

- ✓ Allow the person to open up about what they are struggling with without providing judgment
- ✓ Discuss the support that is available (see below)
- ✓ Let them know they have your support
- ✓ Ask "how can I best support you?"
- ✗ Do not use terms like "crazy," "nuts," "druggie," etc.
- ✗ Do not suggest that they need to be medicated or give a diagnosis
- ✗ Do not minimize your family member's struggle or ignore warning signs

NOTE: Contact a support resource below if you have any questions or concerns. If you or a family member is in imminent danger, call 911 (US) or your country's emergency services line immediately.

Support Resources for You, Your Peers, & Your Family

National Suicide Crisis Lifeline: (800) 273-TALK (8255)

U.S Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

National Alliance on Mental Illness: NAMI.org

Substance Abuse Support: SAMHSA.Gov

Support for Family & Friends of Addicts: Al-anon.org or Nar-anon.org

(Your Company's EAP may extend to family members. Check with your company to find out more.)