Dear Alice,

What do you do if you feel suicidal and don't have anyone to tell?

Answer

Dear Reader,

Dealing with serious thoughts of suicide can be scary, overwhelming, and consuming. It was a big step to write in about having suicidal feelings. This is a step in the direction of living. From here, you can choose to reach out to others who can help you. If you aren't able to tell a friend or family member you need help, the good news is that there are trained professionals waiting to help you through this.

While it's not totally clear from what you wrote, it seems that you may go through times when you feel more vulnerable to harming yourself. In these times, you may be in crisis. During crisis, part of you might want to die, but another part of you — if even a small part — wants to live.

During crisis, getting in touch with professionals can provide relief, understanding, and support. You can get talk with a trained counselor through a telephone crisis hotline. There are many hotlines; the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a great place to start because they are free, open every day, all day, and confidential. You don't have to know what to say when you call?if you don't know where to start or how to explain your feelings, you can just say "I need help." The counselor you speak with will take it from there.

Or maybe you're not in crisis and in danger of doing immediate harm to yourself right now. In this case, how would you feel about making an appointment with a mental health professional to explore your suicidal thoughts? Through this, you may be able to better understand and manage any future suicidal thoughts and feelings. If you're at a college or university, you can contact your school's student mental health service center. If you're not eligible for university services, and you've got health insurance, the health insurance company might have a list of providers for you to choose from. You can also ask your health care provider for a recommendation to a mental health provider.

Other helpful resources you can contact, whether or not you are in a crisis include:
In any case, you can be proud for reaching out to get help dealing with this difficult issue. Please continue to reach out and get the help you deserve. Talking with someone may help to remind yourself about that part of you that wants to live.

*Please* hang in there,

Alice!

**Category:**
Emotional Health
Suicide

**Related questions**

No purpose in life
Finding low-cost counseling
Will I be hospitalized for being depressed?
Suicide perspectives from readers
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**Resources**

Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) (Morningside)
Nightline (Morningside/Barnard)
Mental Health Service (CUMC)

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Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.

If you are in an urgent situation, please visit our Emergency page to view a list of 24 hour support services and hotlines.

Source URL: http://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/feeling-suicidal-help

Links