



**Let them know
you care.**

One of the most powerful things you can do is to be present and supportive. Even when you don't know what to say, just be with your loved one and listen to their concerns. Let them know their life matters to you.

Resources



Visit

- Your Primary Care Provider
- Mental Health Professional
- Emergency Department
- Urgent Care Clinic



Find a Behavioral Health Provider

- findtreatment.samhsa.gov
- mentalhealthamerica.net/finding-help



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Veterans: Press 1



Text TALK to 741741

Text with a trained crisis counselor from the Crisis Text Line for free, 24/7



Call 911 for Emergencies

Supporting Your Loved One After a Suicide Attempt



Acknowledge Your Own Feelings

Your loved one has been through a health crisis, and that can be scary for both of you.

When someone you love attempts to take their life, it can evoke a range of strong emotions. You may feel angry, sad, or afraid, or even feel as though you have experienced a trauma.

Taking steps to take care of your own emotional needs at this time, possibly with the help of a mental health professional, will better prepare you for supporting your loved one through their recovery.

Reaching out to others may help you to maintain the strength and balance you will need to support your loved one's recovery.

Be Supportive

During their suicidal episode, your loved one may have perceived themselves as being alone, or a burden to you and the others who love them.

For the first few weeks, ask how you can best support them, and stay connected. If they want to talk, listen without judgment. Don't try to solve anything. Just make yourself available. If they have difficulty talking to you, help them to connect with others. Let them know they are not alone.

There are so many ways to connect and send strong messages of support. Face to face is best, but you may also use video, phone, text and social media.

"I care."

"I want to understand."

"I'm here for you."

Recovery is a Process

"My loved one is home from the hospital. Does that mean they are better?"

The recovery process is different for everyone. Healing emotionally and physically following an attempt can extend long beyond hospitalization, and will involve support from professionals, as well as friends and family. The first six months after a hospitalization are especially critical to the suicide attempt survivor's recovery, and the risk for suicide remains elevated for an even greater period of time. Don't be discouraged by what may seem like setbacks or slow progress – this may all be part of the recovery process.

Encourage your loved one to communicate openly with their treatment provider, particularly about thoughts of suicide or challenges to staying in treatment.

A Plan for Recovery

You probably have questions about why this happened and what steps can be taken to prevent future attempts.

Openly communicate with your loved one – perhaps with the help of their treatment provider – to establish a reasonable and balanced plan to stay safe when thoughts of suicide arise.



How You Can Help

- Ask your loved one how you can help make their environment safer; take action to reduce access to means, such as removing or safely storing firearms and medications; and – when possible – collaborate with their treatment provider on ways to help keep them safe
- Encourage them to talk to their therapist or doctor about developing a safety plan (You can find more information about safety planning at afsp.org/safetyplan)
- Encourage them to engage in healthy eating and exercise, as well as regular sleep
- Help identify ways to support their recovery, such as reducing their workload, and allowing others to help them with daily responsibilities
- Encourage them to engage in self-care and relaxation activities, such as meditation, spending time in nature, and listening to music that helps their mood
- Familiarize yourself with resources available for those in recovery from a suicide attempt (You can find resources at afsp.org/resources)