

SUICIDE

Obviously, all of the following ideas cannot be pursued in every conversation of someone calling with the desire to commit suicide. Please make yourself familiar with this information and keep it in mind as you chat. Think of BBN Chat as an ambulance service. We are not here to heal, we cannot fix every situation, but hopefully, we can help them to get to a place where they can get the help they need.

* Determine if the “suicide threat” is one that is **HIGHLY CRITICAL**

- 1) Let the person know we are not certified counselors but are Biblical Advisers.
- 2) In the course of your conversation with them ask good questions that will help you make this determination. (Try to do this as inconspicuously as possible.)

? Have they made any preparations? What? (tactfully seek this kind of information: time, place?)

? What are their plans for suicide? (planned method?)

? Do they have the necessary implement/substance nearby?

If all 3 of these are in plan and/or place, the situation is **HIGHLY CRITICAL.**

If you are convinced the situation is **HIGHLY CRITICAL**- Give them the following information and impress upon them how important it is that they seek immediate help. **Encourage them that they are wise and courageous to seek help.**

*****In the USA, recommend they go to this**

Crisis/Suicidal hotline: 988 or

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Outside the USA - try to find a Suicide Hotline for their country or area (***You can Google this info while chatting with the person***).

When talking with a suicidal person, [these are our main goals]:

(1) Allow the visitor to share their story, hurts, disappointments and/or plans. Try to diffuse the situation as much as possible with hope, compassion and a listening ear.

(2) Assure the person there is hope as long as they are alive & God is a God of

miracles.

- (3) Emphasize that when someone is hurting as much as they are, they may not see it or sense it, but that God cares and He is at work in their situation..
- (4) Share the Gospel as a source of hope. A new relationship with Jesus Christ can bring about change.

Helping the Suicidal:

1. Speaking with a suicidal person demands the greatest tact and patience.

Be a good listener! Let the caller/chatter do most of the talking until you get the complete picture. Punctuate the conversation with occasional questions to keep it flowing. Ask for further explanation of how he or she feels. *What has led you to that conclusion?* The phrase, *"tell me about that,"* is often helpful (or something to that effect).

2. As the conversation permits, offer words of encouragement to the suicidal chatter.

Stress that he or she has contacted the right place, because we are friends and are willing to listen. Suggest that God can help in revealing solutions and that He really cares and loves.

3. Don't minimize any feeling or conclusion the suicidal person expresses.

Allow him/her to vent all the stored-up anger, tension, and sense of desperation. **Try not to contradict any statement made, except to disagree with the proposed "solution."** If he/she says that life is not worth living, believe it! Probably for him/her in their present state, it isn't. **Avoid such statements such as,** *"Things can't be that bad, It's not as bad as it seems, etc..."*

4. Assure the individual that there is a solution for his/her problems and there is hope!

If he/she will permit God to intervene, He can forgive all the past, making things right through Jesus Christ. Jesus understands suffering. He was maligned, mistreated, and murdered. He truly cares about what happens to us. He loved us so much that He willingly died for us. Christ will come to us where we are- to our level of need, no matter how hopeless it appears. *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest"* (Matt. 11:28).

6. Explain that to help bring about this change, he or she needs to begin to read and study the Bible.

7. Encourage prayer, because communicating with God is necessary for change.

We can turn over to God all our emotions and our problems through prayer:
(1 Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:6)

8. Encourage them to begin regularly attending a Bible-teaching church nearby.

This will provide opportunities for worship, fellowship, Bible study, and service, all of which are important in the person's attempt to redirect the focus of his or her life.

9. **Recommend BBNradio.org** (Tell them the music is peaceful and the messages hopeful).

10. **If the caller/chatter doesn't choose to receive Christ, encourage him as best you can.**

Explain that he/she can act on what you have shared at any time. The door of access to God is always open. Recommend making contact with a local pastor for counseling.

- Immediacy is important.
- Assure the person that you care and that you will be praying for him.

Adapted from Truth4Freedom, 9-3-2015, https://truth4freedom.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/billy_graham_handbook.pdf