

# 5 Ways to Help During National Suicide Prevention Week (and Beyond)

Source: <https://themighty.com/2017/09/how-the-help-national-suicide-prevention-week/>

## 1. Say the S word.

Suicide. Yes, it can be uncomfortable to talk about, but the more you practice saying the word, the less uncomfortable it becomes. There is a misconception that talking about suicide will make someone more likely to act on it, but that couldn't be farther from the truth.

## 2. Be mindful of your language.

Be aware of saying things like, "That makes me want to kill myself," when you really mean something like, "That made me frustrated." Making light of suicide like this diminishes the meaningfulness of when someone says this and actually means it. We become desensitized and may interpret a cry for help as just a joke. If, of course, you are truly suicidal, then definitely express this to someone you trust or a professional resource.

## 3. Show respect with your choice of words.

Rather than saying "commit suicide," instead say "died by suicide." The phrase "commit suicide" stems from a history where suicide was considered a crime. By switching our words, we can acknowledge that these laws have fortunately changed and people with mental illness are now treated with more dignity.

## 4. Ask if someone is OK.

Whether or not someone's comment seems like a joke or real, simply ask if they are OK. Every single time you hear something! Many people who attempt suicide express their plans somehow beforehand. Your questioning and concern could easily save their life.

## 5. Put these numbers in your phone.

You may need these one day for a friend, or yourself. Taking care of yourself is just as important, if not more important, as taking care of others.

- Life-threatening emergencies (USA): 911
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1 (800) 273-8255
- Crisis Text Line: 741-741

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If you need support right now, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-8255**, the Trevor Project at **1-866-488-7386** or text "HOME" to **741-741**.

If you are hard of hearing, you can contact the Lifeline via TTY by dialing **800-799-4889**.

To speak to a crisis counselor in Spanish, call **1-888-628-9454**.

If you are a veteran (or your loved one is a veteran), you can reach the Veterans Crisis Line by calling **1-800-273-8255** and **Pressing 1**. You can also send a text to **838255**.