

Debunking Myths around Suicide

Myth

Fact

1

Someone who is suicidal is determined to die.

On the contrary, suicidal people are often ambivalent about living or dying. Suicidal thoughts are usually temporary and in response to a stressful situation. Access to emotional support at the right time can prevent suicide.

2

Only people with mental disorders are suicidal.

Suicidal thoughts and actions indicate deep unhappiness but not necessarily mental disorders. Many people living with mental disorders are not affected by suicidal thoughts, and not all people who take their own lives have a mental disorder.

3

Most suicides happen suddenly without warning.

The majority of suicides have been preceded by warning signs, whether verbal or behavioural. Of course there are some suicides that occur without warning, but it is important to understand what the warning signs are and look out for them.

4

People who talk about suicide do not mean to do it.

People who talk about suicide may be reaching out for help or support. A significant number of people contemplating suicide are experiencing feelings of hopelessness, despair, and anxiety, and may believe that there is no other option.

5

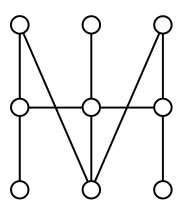
Once someone is suicidal, they will always remain suicidal.

Heightened suicide risk is often short-term and situation-specific. While suicidal thoughts may return, they are not permanent and an individual with previously suicidal thoughts and attempts can go on to live a long life.

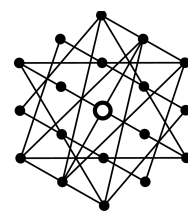
6

Talking about suicide is a bad idea and can be interpreted as encouragement.

Given the widespread stigma around suicide, most people who are contemplating suicide do not know whom to speak to. Rather than encouraging acts of self-harm, talking openly can give an individual other options, or the time to rethink their decision, thereby preventing suicide.



mariwala
health
initiative



Alliance
for Suicide
Prevention