

# Managing Difficult Feelings



**wakefieldcouncil**  
*working for you*

## MANAGING DIFFICULT FEELINGS

### What are suicidal thoughts and feelings?

If you are having suicidal thoughts you may think it's the only way to escape what you feel is an impossible situation, you just want things to stop getting worse.

You are not alone! Many young people have experienced or are going through these types of thoughts and feelings even if they don't show it. Thinking about suicide is more common than we realise.

Don't be afraid to **TALK**.

**T**alk to an adult you trust about how you are feeling

**A**sk for support

**L**isten to advice and try any self-help tips suggested

**K**eep yourself safe, know who to contact if things get too tough

You may feel...

...hopeless...  
useless... guilty  
...no point living...

you've let  
people down...

that everyone  
would be better  
off without you...  
...desperate ...

...alone...  
overwhelmed ...

frightened...  
confused...too  
much emotional  
pain...

numb...  
physically ill...

**Exam stress**  
**Loss and bereavement**  
**Bullying, violence or abuse**  
**Falling out with friends or family**  
**Embarrassment or pressure on social media**  
**Gender or sexual orientation**  
**Had a big disappointment**  
**Too much pressure**  
**Serious illness**  
**Anger**



## **Why do I feel like this?**

People will think of suicide for different reasons and it can be hard to identify and understand where these thoughts and feelings come from.

The trigger could be anything... difficult life events, feeling under too much pressure or a number of smaller things that have built up. Sometimes there is no reason.

Remind yourself these feelings will pass so try to put some time between these thoughts and any actions so you are able to get help. There are other options and solutions out there.

## How can I stay safe right now?

### In Crisis?

If you feel you cannot keep yourself safe from harm, or have a suicide plan that you are going to act on you need to **talk to someone straight away** and seek help.

Contact the **CAMHS ReACH team**. A parent/carer can ring or you can do this yourself if over 16yrs.

Available between 9am - 8pm, seven days a week  
tel; 01977 735865

If you're over 18yrs contact tel; 01924 316900.

Ring your **GP** (they also have an out-of-hours service) or **NHS 111**. Be honest and tell them how you are feeling.

If you need urgent medical treatment go to A&E or call 999.

The people answering these calls are friendly and are used to helping people talk about difficult things.

Remove anything that you could use to harm yourself.

Even situations that seem impossible right now can feel different if you remind yourself that these feelings will pass and that you have ways to get through this painful time.

## Things that may help

Remember that strategies work best when used as soon as you notice the thoughts and feelings, and not letting them build up.

Talk to someone you trust. Sharing how you feel means you are already seeking support. This is a positive step forward.

Contact a helpline (see page 16) they will listen and help you find your own way forward.

Go somewhere or see someone who makes you feel safe. If that feels too difficult, call them.

Take 5 minutes at a time. Try to distract yourself, distractions are a short term solution to help you slow your thoughts down and focus on something else for a while.

### Sit somewhere comfy and turn on your senses, start by finding

5 things you can see

4 things you can hear

3 things you can touch

2 things you can smell

1 thing you can taste



### Do something physical...

Pop bubble wrap, dance, sing, stomp your feet (with shoes on), have a pillow fight with the wall, go for a walk or bike ride, maybe clear out a drawer!!

### Do something creative...

Write how you're feeling or write about something totally different, do a blog or poem, read, draw, colour, knit, play a computer game or cook something to eat.



I don't know how to deal with my feelings

I feel really empty inside

Write down a list of things to **look forward to** like seeing someone who makes you laugh. Stick these around your room and house to remind you.

List all the **people who care about you** and would want to help if they knew how you were feeling. Keep their messages and photos on your phone.

**Look after yourself;** drink plenty of water, make something to eat and try to sleep. Avoid drinking alcohol or using substances.

Choose what you can cope with **right now**. Don't try to solve any problems.

**People do get through this** every day and so can you!

## How do I cope in the future?

Take one day at a time!

Remember it's ok NOT to be ok **sometimes**.

Write a **journal or blog** of your moods, thoughts and behaviour. Could you share this with someone you trust to see if there is a pattern?

There are trusted **websites** that offer different ways to cope (see page 16).

If you try one of the strategies, but that doesn't seem to help, **don't give up**, keep trying some take practice - you can still overcome these difficult feelings.

Recognise **we don't have control** over everything, such as people becoming ill or how other people behave.

**Be kind to yourself** don't put yourself down. Create a positive mantra such as 'I can do this' or 'I've got this' and repeat it every day.



Plan something to do each day - set yourself **small goals!** Go out in the **fresh air**.

**Meet up** with friends or family (even though you may not want to).

Spend time with **your pet**.

Allow yourself to **cry**. It's a natural way to reduce emotional pain and stress.

Find out about **Mindfulness**, it can help change the way you feel.

**Exercise** more. It's a great way to improve your mental health because it releases chemicals that help improve your mood.

Create and use your **self-care box** (see page 12) **Whatever works for you!**



## Getting Started

**Make a routine** - this will help change your mind set and keep you active.

Get up early, have a shower and get dressed even if you don't have anywhere to go.

**Eat and drink regularly.**

**Try to get 9 hours sleep-** good sleep helps our mental health in so many ways. Turn devices off 1 hour before going to bed as blue light keeps our body awake.

### **Find a purpose**

Find a reason to get out of bed.

Try a new activity or do something nice for someone.

## Create a self-care box

Find and decorate a box, fill it with things that make you smile and remind you of the positive things you've got.

You could add photos, a book, event or football match tickets, add something to keep your hands busy such as a stress ball, nail varnish, puzzle or colouring book, pens, even a piece of silky or furry material.

Have a list of people or helplines to talk to, USB stick with your favourite songs, ear phones.

Don't forget smells are good to lift your mood so add a scented candle or smelly shower gel and add a hot chocolate or chocolate bar...make it unique to you!



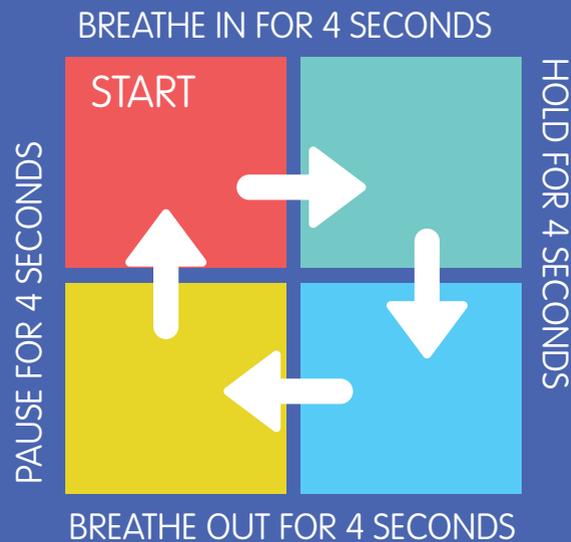
## Calming breathing

When we are anxious our breathing gets quicker, when our breathing is calmer our brain will start to feel calmer too!

### Rectangle Breathing

Draw or trace a square with your finger and count your breaths as you move round.

Repeat 3 times



## Creating a safety net

A safety net is there to help you if you start to struggle, it can help you put things in place so you can get the right support when you need it.

It's easier to put together a safety net when you are calm.

Ask someone to help you? But make it 'yours'.

Try to identify what triggers your thoughts and feelings that are linked with these difficult feelings or self-harming thoughts.

What can you put in place to reduce these triggers? (stay off social media on a night)

Make a list of things to lift and calm your mood (watch your favourite film or football team, photography or focus on your breathing).

Write down those who are important to you and things you are good at. Read these out loud and repeat if you are feeling low.

Identify things that can help you stay safe (use distractions, seek help)

Make a list of family, friends, professionals and helplines to contact, add their contact details below, also put them in your phone.

## My personal safety net

I start to feel like this when: .....

.....

I will reduce the risk of feeling like this by:.....

.....

I will lift or calm my mood by:.....

.....

I will tell myself: .....

.....

I can help me stay safe by: .....

.....

I will call or talk to: .....

.....

I will get help from these people  
and places: .....

.....

Keep a reminder of the people and things you love, feel good messages, photo's and videos on your phone, put them in your wallet or around your room.



## Here to help

### In crisis?

If you need urgent medical treatment go immediately to A&E or call 999.

If you have a suicide plan and are going to act on it contact the ReACH team. A parent/carer can ring if under 16 or you can do this yourself if over 16yrs. Available between 9am – 8pm, seven days a week tel; 01977 735865.

Over 18? Contact tel; 01924 316900

Contact your GP or call NHS

Direct free on 111.

A 24 hour helpline who provide health advice and access to out of hours GP.

### Kooth

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

Free, safe and anonymous online support for 11-25 year olds.

### Papyrus Hopeline

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

Offer online text or phone support to young people.

Call 0800 068 4141 or email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

### SHOUT

Text Shout to 85258.

Free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone struggling to cope.

**Samaritans Free**, any time, from any phone on 116 123

Email: jo@samaritans.org or chat through

[www.Samaritans.org](http://www.Samaritans.org)

Wakefield Samaritans have a drop-in (see their website).

### ChildLine

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Free, any time, day or night for help with any worry (under 19's). Call 0800 1111, email or use the online 1-2-1 counsellor chat

Stay Alive App to download from Grassroots Suicide Prevention.

### **Heads Above the Waves**

[www.hatw.co.uk](http://www.hatw.co.uk)

Online advice, support and strategies for young people suffering from depression and self-harm.

### **SelfharmUK**

[www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)

For young people to share their encouraging experiences through blogs, stories, poetry and art.

### **Mindout**

[www.mindout.org.uk](http://www.mindout.org.uk)

Online instant message service that's confidential and anonymous to support the wellbeing of LGBTQ+.

### **Mind**

<https://sidebyside.mind.org.uk/>

A safe place to listen, share and be heard.

### **Doc Ready**

[www.docready.org](http://www.docready.org)

Helps you prepare to talk about mental health to a GP.

### **The Mix**

[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

Helpline 0808 808 4994.

In crisis? text THEMIX to 85258.

Online one to one chat plus a counselling service (25 and under).

### **Young Minds**

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Emotional wellbeing support/ advice for children and young people.

### **Well Women**

Call 01924 211114

Face to Face Counselling and support groups available for 16+.

### **BEAT**

[www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

Support and advice around eating disorders.

### **Hope Again**

[www.Hopeagain.org.uk](http://www.Hopeagain.org.uk)

for bereavement support.

### **STAR**

[www.starbereavement.org.uk](http://www.starbereavement.org.uk)

local bereavement support for children and young people including those effected by suicide.

### **Victim Support**

[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

Call 0300 3031971.

Practical support for anyone (including those under 18's) who has been affected by crime.

### **Inspiring Futures**

Call 0300 123 1912.

Young people/adults (under 25) confidential drug and alcohol support service in Wakefield.

### **Talking Therapies**

Call 01924 234860 for local support around anxiety, OCD, low mood etc: for over 16 yrs.

### **Youth Work Team**

[www.wfyouth.co.uk](http://www.wfyouth.co.uk)

Provides groups for young carers, LGBTQ+ and young people with disabilities.

### **WF-I-CAN**

[www.wf-i-can.co.uk](http://www.wf-i-can.co.uk)

Offers information, support and self-care tips on a range of topics plus a one-to-one online chat service (see website for times or to arrange a chat).

Thank you to all the young people and groups who helped: Stripes, Youth Parliament, Young Healthwatch, Kidzaware, parents and colleagues who supported the development of the suicide prevention material. This leaflet is based on information adapted from Sheffield Suicide Prevention Strategy 2017 and North Yorkshire Council.