

## Immediately after an Attempt

You may have just returned home from the hospital. Or you may be trying to make sense of how you started having suicidal thoughts.

- You may be asking yourself: "What now?"
- In asking yourself this question, you have begun your journey toward recovery
- Others may have questions for you that you may find difficult to answer, and that's ok
- Suicide is complex and answers may not come easy
- Please know that while you have a journey of recovery ahead, it is one that many have been on and survived



[afsp.org/AfterAnAttempt](https://afsp.org/AfterAnAttempt)



## After a Suicide Attempt





## Reflecting on What Happened

**It may take time to better understand the thoughts and feelings that led you to attempt suicide. Most people find it worth the time and effort, and healing can start today.**

Many people who feel suicidal are experiencing a mental health condition, which is treatable. Leading up to the attempt, you might have had significant life stressors, found it difficult to express your feelings, or felt the need to isolate yourself from others.

While you may still have challenges, many people who survive a suicide attempt are able to realize there are people and treatment available to support them.

Know that you don't need to have all of the answers to heal from this experience. Research has shown that the vast majority of people who live through a suicide attempt do not go on to die by suicide and do reengage in life.



## Interacting with Family and Friends

You have just experienced a critical health event and just as you would while recovering from any other health concern, you will need time, reflection, and support from others.

Sometimes people, even those closest to you, don't know what to say following a suicide attempt. They may be frightened, confused, or angry, and say things that are not helpful to you. They may also avoid discussing it with you.

Those close to you will also need time to process what has happened. Their journey is not your journey however, and you are not responsible for how they decide to work through their feelings.

If asked about your attempt, tell people what you are comfortable telling them, or that you need time. Find a therapist and/or a support group. Enlist the help of family and friends with day-to-day responsibilities, if needed.

## Caring for You

### Be Kind to Yourself

You have just survived a life-threatening health crisis. Give yourself permission to heal at your own pace. Basic things like getting enough sleep, eating right, exercising and spending time with uplifting people can have a huge impact on your health and mood.

### Support Your Mental Health

Engaging in treatment for a mental health condition can be very helpful. To find a mental health professional in your area, visit [findtreatment.samhsa.gov](https://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov).

### Try Group Therapy or a Support Group

There are different kinds of support groups, including those for depression, anxiety, addiction and other mental health concerns and for survivors of a suicide attempt. A group can help you heal within a supportive community.

### Talk to People You Trust

When you're ready, let them know what happened and how they can help. As you share you may learn you are not alone.

### Join Our AFSP Community

Whether you visit our website, attend a community presentation, join a volunteer committee, or participate in a walk, you will be connected to people who understand the complexity of suicide and want to help prevent it. Visit [afsp.org/chapters](https://www.afsp.org/chapters) to find and connect with your local chapter.

## Planning for Safety

Having a plan for safety in place for what to do during moments of struggle can be life-saving. A mental health professional can help you come up with a personalized list of people you can call and activities to help if you are in crisis.

- ✓ Recognize your warning signs
- ✓ Employ healthy coping strategies that don't require the presence of others
- ✓ Engage with people and places that are encouraging and can distract from the painful issues
- ✓ Reach out to family, friends or health professionals who can help you in a crisis
- ✓ Make your environment safe
- ✓ Find ways to reconnect with what matters to you
- ✓ If you are in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text TALK to 741741 to text with a trained crisis counselor from the Crisis Text Line for free, 24/7

