



**Take it seriously.  
Every thought of suicide deserves help.  
Don't stop until you get the right help.  
If someone tells you....**



- **That you are attention-seeking, a drama queen or king...**
  - Indeed, people who have thoughts of suicide do need attention. They need support, counseling, possibly medication, assistance with life problems and life skills, help-seeking skills, and more. People who say that suicidal persons are attention-seeking often mean that they are manipulative or “gaming” for some kind of payoff. Take every warning sign seriously, every time!
- **If you are an adolescent, that you need more limits, more boundaries, more rules...**
  - Sometimes, youth may have a story of increasing difficulties, more problems, that seem to compound and pile up. This can be a possible sign that depression, or hopelessness or another mental health condition is taking hold. Or perhaps, there has been a private struggle...getting bullied, sexual harassment, a defeat or humiliation. Problems can get worse and worse if no help is provided. An uninformed care provider may naively suggest that more parental boundaries, rules, and limits are the key to solving these behavioral difficulties. Though fair boundaries and limits are good for healthy life management, there have been too many tragic assumptions along these lines and the problem of suicide risk was completely missed. Be sure to help your parents and/or your care provider to know exactly how badly things are, emotionally, psychologically, talk about any thoughts of suicide, and ask for a formal suicide risk assessment.
- **That you should just pray about it, or go to church more, or hand your troubles over to God...**
  - It's not that God, prayer, or going to church (or one's preferred faith-based community) isn't helpful, a good idea, or a resource..... Suicidal risk is, at the bottom line, a medical emergency and medical care should be added to any other coping skills and resources. Some persons have reported that they prayed more, attended church more, and yet their emotional pain persisted. It led to more questions and defeatedness... remember that depression is a medical problem and can be life-threatening, just like other illnesses that deserve medical care.
- **That if you are talking about it, then you must not really mean it....**
  - Persons who have thoughts of suicide most of the time have been found to have told at least two people. They tentatively attempt to get help by sharing some clues, and to test the waters...will my friend take me seriously? Will my teacher tell me I'm crazy? Will my coach judge me if I reveal how low I feel? Every request for help, either tentative or bold, deserves to be taken seriously. Don't stop asking for help until you get the right person!

**You matter! We care! Reach out for help right now!**

**1-800-273-8255 (TALK)**