

# 5 Common Myths About Suicide

## ***Suicide is murder***

Thinking of suicide as *self-murder* is a huge misconception. We will never know what the last thoughts were of a person who has committed suicide, but we know from the many who have attempted and survived, what the thought process is. When I was suicidal, I was not thinking “murder”; I was thinking “euthanization”. When an animal is injured, to the extent of unresolvable pain or a severely debilitating deformity, the owner will “put the animal down”. When an owner euthanizes its animal because they deem the poor creature will have no quality of life going forward, we don’t consider that murder. We think of it as a “mercy killing”. To spare the animal a life of unimaginable physical, mental, and emotional agony, its life is ended; and this is the mindset of a suicidal person.

We are not thinking murder; we’re not even really thinking about dying. We’re thinking about *resting*. We’re thinking about *ending unbearable pain that we feel we cannot escape by any other means*. This is so important to remember because you need to be able to get in the mindset of a suicidal person to help them get out of the mindset. If you think of someone you love as murdering themselves, you will feel confused, angry, and desperate, which may cause you to do desperate things! If you stay focused on the fact that they are in pain, and looking for a way to escape that pain, you can help them find an escape route.

## ***Committing suicide is cowardly***

This couldn’t be further from the truth. It takes a lot of courage to face the complete and utter end of your life, leaving yourself at the mercy of an unknown fate. A person who is contemplating suicide is planning on leaving behind everyone they love, all their hopes and dreams, and all future prospects. They are considering committing an irreversible act that will permanently end their existence, to take a chance at *what’s behind door number two*. Behind that door could be the peace of nothingness or the joy of going to heaven. But it could also be eternal damnation, forever darkness, or reincarnation to a much worse life; not to mention a failed attempt that could leave you in a worse off situation!

*(I have an uncle who shot himself in the head, in a failed attempt. He was left blind in one eye, physically deformed, and paralyzed on one side of his body. He told me that he temporarily died after shooting himself. The medical team brought him back, but not before he visited hell! When we spoke about it, he said he regretted his actions, but is grateful God gave him another chance. He lives daily with the consequences of his choice.)*

I’m sorry to bust your bubble but making a decision like that takes a pair! But here’s the awesome flip side. Instead of telling a suicidal person they are being a coward, you can tell them the truth about how courageous they are. You can also tell them that if they are courageous enough to face the unknown of the afterlife, they are courageous enough to face

the unknown of their current life. They can use the same courage it takes to plan suicide to overcome their obstacles and plan their future!

### ***Committing suicide is stupid***

We already discussed this. Suicide is a logical and pragmatic decision. What's exceedingly stupid is to say to a suicidal person, "*Committing suicide won't solve **anything**,*" when in fact, it will solve EVERYTHING. The problems of life cease when life itself ceases. Thinking that way makes a lot more sense than someone who has never been suicidal, telling someone who already feels dead inside, that actually dying won't fix it!

Instead of trying to demean the person or make them feel like their thought process is illogical, turn that logic around for them. If they are smart enough to understand that death solves life, they are smart enough to figure out that different choices solve a difficult life. ***You can fix your problems by ending your life, or you can fix them by changing your life.*** Both are logical decisions, but one gives you a future hope and the other gives you an uncertain ending. That puts it in a different light!

### ***Nothing is worth killing yourself over***

Ughhh! I can't tell you how much I hated hearing this when I was suicidal. It must be one of the most arrogant and ignorant things you can say to someone who has lost their will to live because you don't know the measure of another person's pain. And furthermore, No one—and I mean *absolutely NO ONE*—wants to kill themselves over a single life event, a single person, or an isolated situation.

Suicidal depression is intricate and complex, consisting of many layers of unbearable, unresolved pain. You may know a few details about the situation that was *the straw that broke the camel's back*, but there is so much you can't see; so much you don't understand. You have no idea of the emotional weight someone is bearing, and what it costs them daily to live with that pain!

When emotional pain becomes unbearable, a person dies inside, making suicide the finalization of something that has already taken place in their soul. When you feel dead inside, killing the physical body is simply a manifestation of what already is. Instead of belittling and criticizing the person for wanting to die "over something so trivial", help them find the pain relief they need. Validate their pain and help them see that life is not always going to hurt as bad as it currently does.

### ***Suicide is selfish***

I can definitely understand why it would seem that way, but it's not an accurate interpretation of what is going through a suicidal person's mind. People who are suicidal often feel problematic and burdensome. They feel like they are *in the way* and making other people's lives painful and unpleasant. In their minds, suicide is a selfless act, done to permanently alleviate their loved ones of the burden of their presence!

How you combat this is not by telling them they're selfish. That will only reinforce the belief that they are a liability. You hit them with the truth that committing suicide will make the burden even heavier for those they are attempting to spare. The pain they leave behind will be inherited by those who are left behind. The hurt they escape through suicide will multiply in the lives of their loved ones, as unending grief fills the hearts and lives of all those who must live with the daily reality of their untimely death.

The truth is the person who commits suicide does not rid the world of the burden of their presence. Instead, they weigh it down with the heaviness of their absence. They leave their loved ones to bear the guilt of wondering if they could have and should have done more. They leave behind a legacy of perpetual and never-ending anguish; tainting every memory of their existence with the painful reminder that they robbed their loved ones of a future with them. Those left behind will forever mourn because someone they love decided to end their own life.

*Suicide may not be selfish, but it is sad, cold-hearted, and cruel.* It's okay to acknowledge that, but you don't want to say it to someone who is suicidal because it will make them feel worse. What you can do instead is help them understand they are valuable, loved, and needed. Dispel the lie they are telling themselves; the lie that it will be better for everyone if they're dead. Let them know how much they would be missed and how hurt and empty your life will be without them. Trust me, they NEED to hear this.