

# Coping Mechanisms

Being around someone with suicidal thoughts can leave you feeling helpless, but there are things that you can do to try and help. For example:

- Teaching your child the motto 'This Too Shall Pass,' remind them as often as you can, that how they are feeling now, won't last. No situation lasts forever, and they should find comfort in the fact that situations, circumstances, and emotions pass
- Teach the 5-4-3-2-1 technique to focus on their senses:
  - Find 5 things they can see
  - Find 4 things they can touch
  - Find 3 things they can hear
  - Find 2 things they can smell
  - Find 1 thing they can taste
- Remind them that they have a 100% record of getting through every other difficult day, and this is no exception – they absolutely can get through it – tomorrow is a new day
- Remind them that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem and make them realise that it can't be undone, and that every difficulty is temporary
- Remind them that people recover from depressive thoughts every single day, and so can they
- Give them distractions – suggest hobbies, exercise, joining clubs, using fidget toys, colouring, painting, drawing, doodling, reading – anything that can work as a distraction
- Make plans – encourage your child to commit to future plans – give them something to look forward to and something to live for – to really live for

# Suicidal Thoughts

## Coping Mechanisms



The Lotus Mental Health

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

## What are suicidal thoughts?

Suicidal thoughts and behaviours are defined as a person wanting to purposefully take their own life. The thoughts and behaviours can manifest in several different ways, such as believing that the people around them, or even the world would be better off without them,.

'Methods' of suicide are considered, as are making plans to complete the act itself. Suicidal people often believe that there is no other way out for them. Often it isn't because they want to die, but because they want their pain to stop.

## What can you do?

Being around people who are experiencing suicidal thoughts is incredibly distressing. They often feel helpless, useless, and feel as though there is nothing they can do.

The first thing you should do is seek emergency help – dial 999 if you feel like your child is in immediate danger or take them to your local A&E department where they will receive immediate help and support.

There are also coping mechanisms that you can try and implement as best you can. It is important to find what works for you, your child, and your family, so here are a few examples to get you started...

## Coping Mechanisms

If your child(ren) are feeling anxious, there are things that you can encourage your child to do that can help them. They are:

- Nobody should go through difficult times alone, and this is something that your child needs to learn to understand, because of this, it is important for your child to learn how to open up to people about how they are feeling. A parent, carer, brother, sister, grandparent, auntie, uncle, cousin, a trusted friend, a counsellor – it doesn't matter who, as long as your child feels comfortable talking to someone who they trust, about how they are feeling.
- Encourage your child to get the thoughts that are in their head – out. An effective way that they can do this by keeping a diary. Simply writing down how they are feeling can be really useful. Not only will that work because it helps them put a place for their negative thoughts, but it can also be used as a point of reference for any particular triggers that they didn't realise they had.
- Writing a letter – this might seem a bit daft, but if they can write letters to themselves, particularly after particular difficult days, they can use the letters to read back and see themselves, through their own words, that they have overcome difficulties in the past, and therefore they know that they are capable of overcoming them again.