

Hello,

Welcome to our podcast on suicide. I'm Dr. Charles David Tauber, CEO of the Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace, the CWWPP. If you want to know more about what we do, please see our website [www.cwwpp.org](http://www.cwwpp.org). You can make comments on this podcast and give your suggestions for future podcasts on the contact page of our website.

As mentioned, we are going to talk about suicide. This podcast is directed primarily at two groups. One group is those who are thinking of committing suicide and the other is those who want to prevent it.

Why do people want to commit suicide? First, very frequently, they have no goal in their lives and they see no future for themselves. They see no future in their work, hobbies, relationships, and they don't see a relationship in spirituality. All of those are very important to everybody.

People who want to commit suicide very frequently think of themselves as inadequate. They may have childhood issues. They may have been abused, they may have been rejected by others, that is, by family members or by people on their jobs, or by other people in parts of their environment. They may have been setting high standards for themselves that they cannot possibly meet.

They also may be in a situation where they are not able to care for their family or themselves. This may be financial, medical, or other aspects of their lives. They may have recently lost a loved one, which can be through death, illness, or rejection. They may not perceive reality in a good way. That can be simply through misunderstandings. It also can be because of psychosis. It can be because of drugs. Those drugs could be either legal, such as drugs used for disease, or they can be illegal drugs of various sorts. This includes alcohol.

Some diseases may cause a misperception of reality.

People who are very lonely commit suicide.

Many triggers make people want to commit suicide. There may be certain days, such as Christmas and other holidays, family affairs, and other things. Memories can be a trigger as well. Very frequently, people are depressed, and they are anxious.

Sometimes, a threat of suicide is used to manipulate people. Sometimes, a threat of suicide is a plea for help. There may be a family history of suicide.

Groups who are vulnerable to suicide include men, older people, and members of minority groups.

If you are thinking of committing suicide, please talk to somebody. It's very important to not keep your feelings inside. Talk. Talk directly to somebody. You also can call a suicide prevention line if one exists in your area, and in most areas they do exist. Get into a group of some sort, either in person or online. That can be a therapy group or an activity group of some sort such as

a course, sport, an art group, or any other kind of a group in which you will be talking to other people. This may even be a group of neighbors. It can be anything.

If you are thinking of committing suicide, think about your goals, and redefine them. Write an autobiography. See what your goals are in life. We said earlier that not having goals in life sometimes is why people want to commit suicide. Define them. Plan something in that context that will move you toward your goals.

Look at your perceptions. Do they correspond with the perceptions of other people around you, or are they different?

Write. Write out everything you can think of. Write out the facts and feelings. Make a video or make a recording of what you are feeling, not only the facts but the feelings as well. Do art, do music. Figure out a way to get your feelings out, something that you like. Do some exercise. Exercise helps to move the blood around the body, and it gets you feeling better. Get enough sleep. Do things that give you pleasure.

If you are working with people to prevent suicide, never, and I repeat never, think that somebody who is threatening suicide will not do it. There is a big possibility that they will. Take every threat of suicide seriously even if you think that the person is manipulating. Even when someone is using a threat of suicide as manipulation or as a plea for help, they might try it and it might succeed. This happens all too often.

There are some warning signs that people who may be going to commit suicide sometimes give. Such people talk and write about suicide. They withdraw from society. They increasingly use substances such as illegal drugs, pharmaceutical medications, alcohol, etc. People who have aggressive behavior may be on the verge of committing suicide. Impulsive people may be on the verge of committing suicide. People who are on the verge of committing suicide may have mood swings. They can be high one day and low the next. They might even change from hour to hour, or even more quickly. Unusual behavior in a person may be a sign of suicide. Saying goodbye, giving away the things that are important to the person also may be a sign of someone intending to commit suicide.

Now, these are all possible signs of committing suicide. They are not definitive and may have other causes. You must get a good picture of the person. Don't assume anything. Talk to the person in detail.

The most important thing that you can do to prevent suicide is to listen. Please listen to our podcast on listening to get some details about how to do it. A person who is thinking of committing suicide may have no one, may need to vent, may need to release pressure. Listen! Don't say too much. Listen! Provide a safe place and a non-judgmental atmosphere for the person to talk freely and regularly. Be empathetic. Let the person work out her/his issues. Don't

provide solutions. It is the person's responsibility to provide a solution. Be there, be empathetic, be non-judgmental. Reach out to the person.

Also, put anything that the person might be able to use for suicide in a safe place. That includes things like pills, knives, etc. Get the person to contact you when he/she is thinking of acting on committing suicide. Stay in contact with the person at that point.

If you are not sure what you are doing, contact a professional. It's extremely important to do that. Don't stay alone in your thoughts. If you think that a person will commit suicide and you have no other way of doing things, call an authority such as the police and or a hospital. You may prevent a suicide in that way.

If you are working on preventing suicide, it's very important for you to talk to other people. Join a group that works on preventing suicide. In many places, those groups exist. If there is none in your area, form one.

Learn about suicide, learn about what you can do. There is a lot of information about that on the Internet and in other places.

It is very important for you to get psychological supervision. Talk to another practitioner, talk to a professional. Don't let it stay inside you. These are very heavy things. If you don't get supervision, you might explode yourself.

We've talked about the first steps in preventing suicide and, if you are thinking of suicide, what you can do for yourself.

Listen to our other podcasts and listen to our next one.

Thank you for listening.

See you next time.