

SOS Détresse

Suicidality in crises

In a crisis, there might be moments when thoughts crop up like, *“It would be better if I just wasn’t here anymore”*, *“only one thing will help here”* or *“suicide would be a solution to my problem.”* This urgent desire for it to be finally over is linked to the wish that the almost unbearable sufferings should cease. Overpowering pain and agony that suddenly come upon us when we are in a crisis, like when getting the diagnosis of an incurable illness, losing a loved one, a partnership that has ended, having been given notice, as a youth no longer knowing who one really is, furthermore painful transitions at work or in private life.

Feeling hopeless - a sign to rearrange oneself

It is perhaps the perceived hopelessness you feel at that point as being so great and overwhelming that these thoughts enter your head, take hold and twist like a spiral. In a crisis situation these are more or less normal thoughts, possibly thoughts of fleeing, or even the feeling of defeat to not have managed something as you wished or maybe planned. It can be a signal that things cannot continue **this way**, that you have reached a crossroads and need to re-sort yourself and find a new direction. And this is not a crossroads in good weather, but in a storm. And you are the one sitting in the car, the windscreen wiper can barely push the water from the windscreen, the field of vision is severely restricted, and wherever you turn your head, you only get a blurred vision and it almost seems as if the water would break its way through the windscreen. What you would need now is a guide, someone who has a good sense of direction to lead you safely back into quieter waters.

Maybe this phase is accompanied by the feeling of being worthless, of having failed and perhaps even of hating oneself. The feeling of loneliness and emptiness might arise. It could also be expressed by the fact that you can no longer feel yourself and your body and are incapable of thinking straight.

This state or desire for one’s own death may probably frighten you, make you anxious and insecure.

What could be helpful?

At this point, it might be helpful to open up to another person. It could be supportive if this person helps you to open your mind again, to assist you in searching for alternative solution strategies, and like a guide, to offer you a piece of safety line. However, perhaps it is just this you are afraid of, of being misunderstood, of being labelled as *mad*, or *incapable*.

Maybe you have had a bad experience when confiding in a person. You may have heard sentences like “*you should not think about such a thing at all*”, “*get a hold of yourself*” or “*it’s going to be okay*”.

Or you have already spoken about your condition and encountered negative or derogatory attitudes such as silence, rebuff or phrases like “*you can’t do that sort of thing*”.

Misunderstanding can also be very painful. This misunderstanding certainly has its reasons for the others: perhaps in their own fear of not knowing how to react, fear of saying something wrong, perhaps because they wanted to do it particularly well, and due to their uncertainty did exactly what was not good for you. In this case, this was not the sort of person you would have needed to talk to. Be choosy! Check who can bear what and how you say it. Maybe this could also be a person who is not so close to you?

Trusting people who give guidance

Nevertheless, it would be important to confide in people who listen to you and give guidance. And consequently you can regain ground under your feet. Because you are not alone. In a crisis situation in which you are currently stuck, many people feel the same way. It helps to open up. Think about whom you can and wish to open up to. It can be relieving and help you to take a new turning at the crossroads.

SOS Détresse and its staff is happy to be at your disposal as willing and competent counsellors (tel. 454545 or SOS OnlineHelp).