



# How Can I Tell If Someone Is Suicidal?

## Assessment To Determine If Someone Is A Danger To Themselves

Because of the mentoring relationship you have with your Life Group members, you will likely be one of the first people they come to with serious issues. You will also be able to pick up on other serious issues lingering beneath the surface. They may initiate the conversation, but more likely these issues will come up as you gain their trust and ask questions. If you are concerned that someone may be depressed or thinking about taking their own life, do the following assessment. **If you need help, talk to the staff immediately.**

### **If you are concerned that someone is struggling with depression, ask the following questions:**

1. Have you been feeling sad or unhappy? If they say yes, they may be depressed.
2. Do you feel depressed? Where would you rate yourself on a scale of 1-10? If it's an 8 or above, be concerned.
3. Do you ever feel hopeless? Does it seem as if things can never get better? Suicide is often associated with hopeless thoughts.
4. Do you have thoughts of death? Yes = suicidal wishes, but not necessarily suicide plans. Many depressed people say they think they'd be better off dead and wish they'd die in their sleep or get killed in an accident; however, most of them say they have no intention of killing themselves.
5. Do you ever have actual suicidal impulses? Do you have any urge to kill yourself? Yes = actual desire to die. This is a more serious situation.
6. Do you have any actual plans to kill yourself? If yes, then ask for their specific plans. What steps have they taken to put their plans into action? The more specific the plan, and the more preparations that have taken place, which means more actual danger.
7. When do you plan to kill yourself?
8. Is there anything that would hold you back, such as family or religious convictions? If the person says that people would be better off without them, then suicide is more likely.
  - a. If they say something would hold them back, emphasize that.
    - i. Ex. "Yes, your family would be completely devastated if anything were ever to happen to you..."

**If at the end of these questions you feel like this person is suicidal, then you need to follow the steps on the "What To Do In An Emergency" page.**

