

## **JACK'S CORNER**

**QUESTION:** I'm 13 and have a friend who talks about suicide. It really scares me. What should I do?

**ANSWER:** Thank you for having the courage to write me! You have already taken step five! Here are the rest:

**At every step pray for wisdom and strength....**

1. Any talk of suicide should be taken seriously. You don't know if the person really will try to kill himself or not. When young people talk about suicide, it is always **a cry for help**.
2. Ask the person directly if he is planning to kill himself. Talking about suicide **decreases** the likelihood a person will actually do it.
3. If he says "yes", tell him that you care about him and that you want to help.
4. If the person asks you "not to tell anyone", tell him you cannot keep that kind of secret.
5. Ask an adult whom you trust (Parent, teacher, counselor, coach, pastor etc.) to help find professional help for your friend.
6. Ask the adult to contact your friend's parents.
7. Stay with your friend until he can get adult help.
8. If you cannot find adult help, call 911 immediately.
9. **Remember, your job is not to fix things; it is to get help for the person.**

**The best way for you to love your friend is to help him get help.** Usually, people are suicidal for only a short period of time. If you can get him help, there is a good chance he will make it through this time in his life. Although at first he may get angry that you involved adults, he will thank you later. Don't try to argue your friend out of suicide, get him help! Once he has help, stay involved in his life.

Being a teenager is really hard. Sometimes life seems too painful to endure. Sometimes it seems that life will never get better. Your friend is blessed to have a friend like you! It is awesome that you want to share his burden, but this burden is too big for you alone. You must share this burden with adults who know exactly what to do.

I believe that knowing God can give us courage and purpose to live life. We can get through anything with God at our side. Often God chooses to use his people to help those in need. Thank you for your concern and willingness to help!

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