



# 40 Actions of Hope

for World Suicide Prevention Day  
10th September 2021

Every 40 seconds someone dies from a suicide. – World Health Organisation

A suicide is a devastating tragedy that has a profound impact on those affected by it. The only way to prevent this tragedy from happening to those surrounding us is by raising awareness, reducing the stigma around it and encouraging well-informed action.

World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) is an opportunity to do just that.

## Creating hope through action

This year's theme for WSPD is a reminder that there is an alternative to suicide and aims to inspire confidence and light in all of us; that our actions, no matter how big or small, may provide hope to those who are struggling.

This 40 Actions of Hope Flashcard Deck is inspired by this idea and aims to spread awareness about this issue and share the ways in which we as individuals and community can help them out.

## How to use:

The card deck is distributed in three parts:

- **Awareness:** 10 cards dedicated to busting common misconceptions about suicide
- **Identification:** 10 cards to help you identify signs in yourself or your loved ones
- **Action:** 20 cards to suggest the different ways in which individuals, organisations can help those at risk

**You can use these cards to get inspired to help someone out, or even to fight misinformation. Pause, take time to reflect on them, share with your loved ones and use them to create hope in someone's life.**

**TW:** This content contains mention of suicide and self-harm. Discretion is advised.



# World Suicide Prevention Day



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It is estimated that more than 7,00,000 people die by suicide every year. It means that every 40 seconds, one person loses their life to suicide. There are multiple factors (mental health, relationships, economic situations) that may cause someone to consider suicide.

## Awareness



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77% of the total suicides occurred in lower and middle-income countries. Many experts attribute this to the prevalence of stigma and lack of resources for mental health.

## Awareness

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Men are 1.8 times more likely to die by suicide than women. Studies tell us that men may have lesser means of support. They also feel the need to conform to society's standards by not appearing "weak".

## Awareness

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Global suicide rates have increased by 60% in the past 45 years.

## Awareness



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In 2019, 1.39 lakh Indians died by suicide; out of them, 67% were between 18-45 years old. This has been largely attributed to family issues, mental health and various other “unknown causes”.

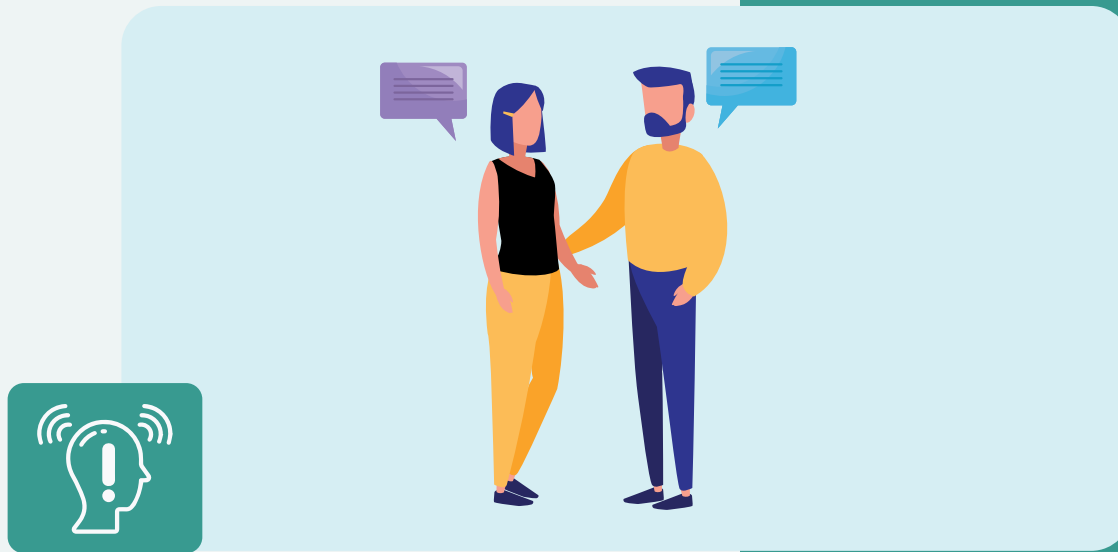
## Awareness



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## Awareness



**Myth:** Talking to someone about self-harm will lead to or encourage self-harm/suicide.

**Fact:** There is a lot of stigma and misinformation around the topic of suicide. By talking about it compassionately and attempting to understand the issue, you may encourage someone to seek help.





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## Awareness



**Myth:** People who talk about suicide are just doing it for the attention.

**Fact:** Suicide is complex. Many people who don't have strong coping skills and support systems feel that ending their lives is the only escape. At the same time, many people contemplating their death often seek help by sharing their thoughts.



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## Awareness



**Myth:** If someone has decided to kill themselves, nothing is going to stop them.

**Fact:** There are studies of survivors of suicide which show that many people are constantly looking for help. It is only the overwhelming pain that drives them to create a plan. Timely intervention can help in preventing grave harm.

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## Awareness



**Myth:** There are no signs that someone is going to kill themselves.

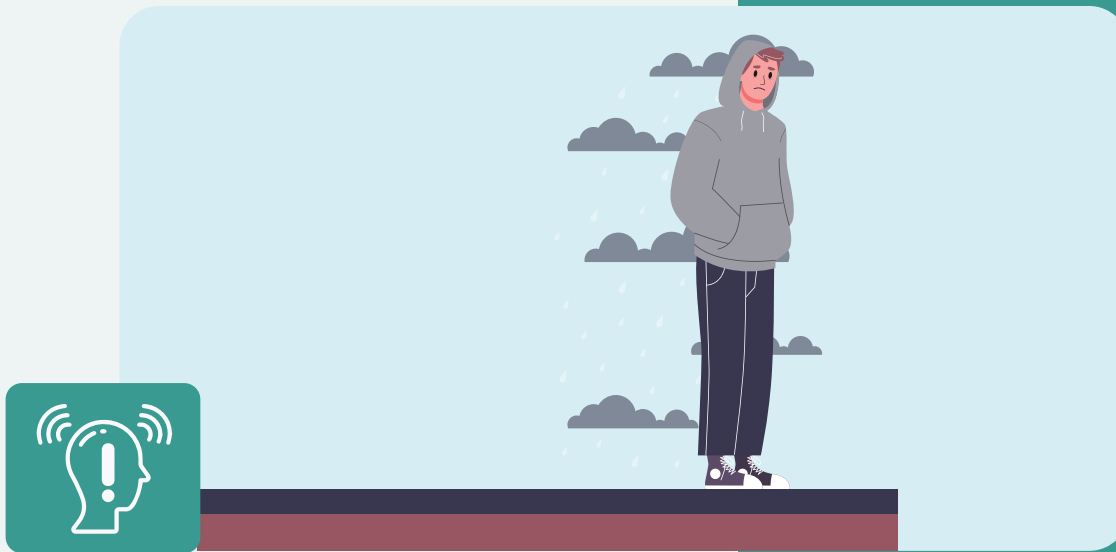
**Fact:** While it's complicated to gauge what is going on with someone, verbal and behavioural signs often point to the person being under severe stress. Paying attention to these cues can be very useful in determining if someone needs help.

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## Awareness



**Myth:** If a person has attempted suicide once, they won't do it again.

**Fact:** It has been found that people who attempt suicide are often trying to find a way to end the pain that they are feeling. Suicide seems to be their only escape from an ongoing problem. Therefore, seeking help becomes imperative to prevent a tragedy.

# 40 Actions of Hope:

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You constantly experience  
overwhelming negative thoughts.

**Identification**  
*self*

# 40 Actions of Hope:

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You experience frequent and unpredictable mood shifts.

**Identification**  
*self*

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You feel you are worthless and people would be better off without you.

**Identification**  
*self*

# 40 Actions of Hope:

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You cannot imagine any other solution to the pain that you are feeling.

**Identification**  
*self*





# 40 Actions of Hope:

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You feel like you don't have anything to live for.

**Identification**  
*self*

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They constantly talk about death/dying as the only way to escape their pain.

**Identification**  
*others*

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They avoid socialising or have reduced their participation in social activities.

**Identification**  
*other*

# 40 Actions of Hope:

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They have been posting about death/dying directly or indirectly on online platforms.

**Identification**  
*other*

# 40 Actions of Hope:

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They have been expressing that no one really cares about them, that they are a burden and will not be missed.

**Identification**  
*others*

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They may give away valuable possessions as a last act and write 'goodbye' notes to the people they love.

**Identification**  
*others*



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## Share with trusted sources

If you are having thoughts of self-harm, you could reach out to someone whom you trust. You can share as much as you like, at the pace that you're comfortable in. Sometimes, even a small measure like this can help you in the moment.

**Action**  
*self*

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*for World Suicide Prevention Day*



## Create a safe environment

If you are worried about acting on those thoughts, make your environment safe by removing objects that you might use to hurt yourself.

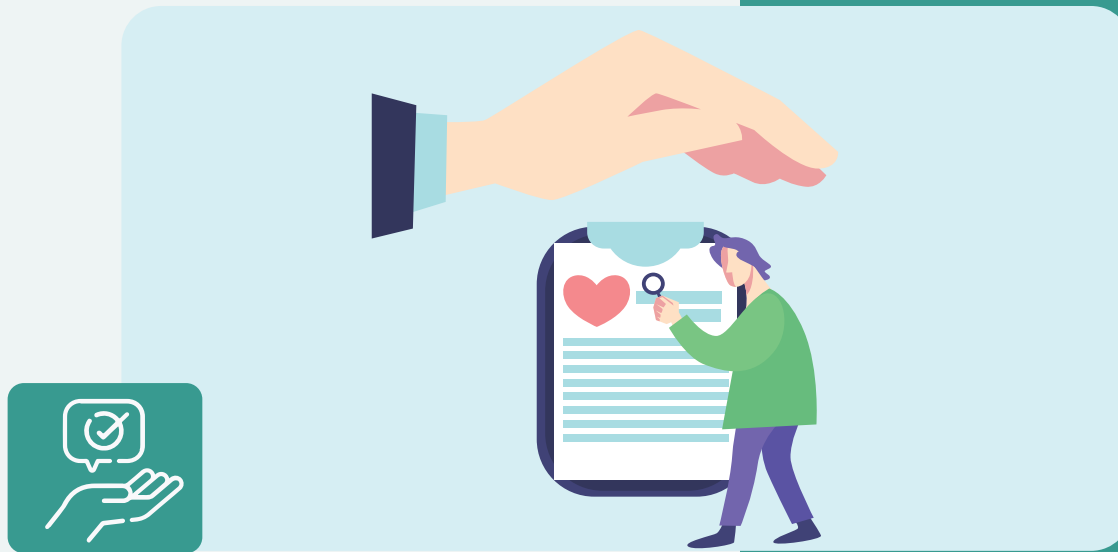
**Action**  
*self*





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## Have a suicide safety plan

If you struggle with thoughts of self-harm, create a suicide safety plan. This plan can help you with all the resources (people you trust, techniques that soothe you) when you are struggling with the urge to self-harm.

**Action**  
*self*



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## Notice signs

Notice those who aren't coping well. Try and correlate their behaviour with the warning signs. They might need help.

**Action**  
*others*



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## Reach out

Often, we hesitate to intervene thinking we wouldn't know what to say. Empathy, compassion, genuine concern, knowledge of resources and a desire to help are key to preventing a tragedy.

**Action**  
*others*

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## Listen

When reaching out to someone, don't try to "fix" their struggles. Let them share their struggle with you. Lend them a patient and empathetic ear.

**Action**  
*others*

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## Don't dismiss

If someone makes comments that indicate self-harm thoughts or behaviours, don't take them lightly. Instead, encourage that person to talk to their doctor or therapist or confide in someone they trust.

**Action**  
*others*



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## Ask

If you think that a loved one might hurt themselves, ask them about it. While you may be afraid to bring up the topic for fear of giving them ideas, those thoughts and feelings are already there. Asking them will encourage them to open up and seek help.

**Action**  
*others*



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## Be open

Be empathetic, non-judgmental, patient, and calm with someone who is struggling with thoughts of self-harm. They may pick up on your attitude and might be encouraged to mirror it themselves.

**Action**  
*others*



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## Be with them

If someone seems to be in imminent danger of hurting themselves, do not leave them alone. Take steps to get them away from any means that they could use to hurt themselves.

**Action**  
*others*



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## Create a culture of psychological safety

Foster a culture in your organisation, where employees can discuss their struggles without the fear of a reprisal.

**Action**  
*organisations*

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## Identify and assist persons at risk

Training stakeholders to identify people at risk for self-harm can help us reach those in the greatest need and provide them care and support. This could involve creating extensive training, and awareness programmes.

**Action**  
*organisations*

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## **Ensure access to mental health care**

Ensuring that individuals have timely access to evidence-based treatments, suicide prevention interventions, and coordinated systems of care can greatly help those at risk.

**Action**  
*organisations*

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## **Enhance life skills and resilience**

By helping people build life skills, such as stress management, and coping, one can prepare them to address challenges in their lives. Resilience, which allows individuals to bounce back from major life changes also helps in this regard.

**Action**  
*organisations*

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## **Promote social connectedness and support**

Supportive relationships can help protect individuals against suicide despite the presence of risk factors in their lives. Having social programs that promote a sense of belonging is a good preventive strategy.

**Action**  
*organisations*



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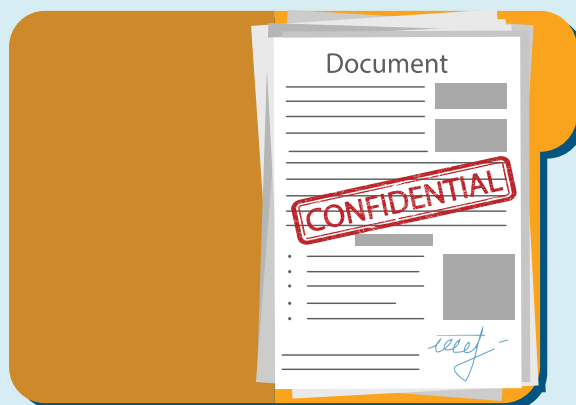
## **Give access to resources of support**

Create a referral guide to resources in your community that offer support and/or treatment for problems related to suicide and ensure that the employees have access to it. Display emergency numbers prominently.

**Action**  
*organisations*

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## **Encourage seeking help with promise of confidentiality**

Encourage employees to prioritise their mental health and seek help, if they need it. Assure them of confidentiality to nudge them to open up about their struggles.

**Action**  
*organisations*

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## Promote self- screenings among employees

Especially for those who have had major life changes recently, such as the death of a loved one, a chronic disease diagnosis. Check-in with them to see how they are doing.

**Action**  
*organisations*





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# NO

## ZERO TOLERANCE



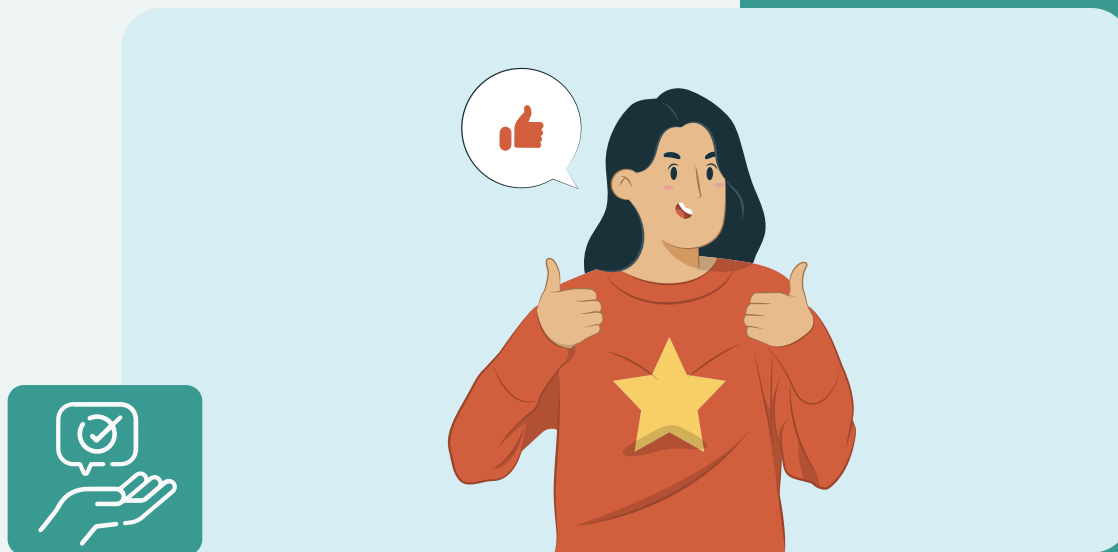
### Have strict policies against harassment and bullying

There have been many studies and experts who have spoken about the negative impact of harassment and bullying. Having the safeguard of policies discourages these harmful behaviours.

**Action**  
*organisations*

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## Have ambassadors who champion mental health

A message can be more impactful if there are many voices who talk about the resources and policies in place that support mental health. Employees have an increased awareness and feel supported through ambassadors.

**Action**  
*organisations*

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## Sources

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- <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/suicide-prevention/myths-and-facts>
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- <https://www.iasp.info/wspd2021/resources/#>  
International Suicide Statistics – Suicide.org
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- <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/average-381-suicides-daily-in-india-in-2019-data-2288951>
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- <https://workplacesuicideprevention.com/understanding-suicide/a-comprehensive-approach-the-stream-parable/>



# Help is a call away!