

Reasons for Living

Who will I share my plan with?

Making my situation safer

My warning signs

Lifting my mood

My informal support



Samaritans

Support 24/7
365 days.
Call 116 123

CALM

Helpline for men.
5pm-12am
0800 58 58 58

Papyrus Hopeline

Helpline for young
people. 9am-12am
0800 068 4141

SHOUT

24hr Crisis Text
Service. Text
Shout to 85258

My distractions

My professional support

In an emergency

- If you have already attempted suicide, taken an overdose or seriously harmed yourself **call 999 now**. Explain what is happening. You can stay on the phone until the ambulance arrives.
- If you are struggling to stay safe, or your thoughts of suicide are becoming too overwhelming then call NHS 111 or the NHS Universal Mental Health Crisis Line

24hr Universal Mental Health Crisis Lines

North Cumbria **0800 652 2865** - South Cumbria **0800 953 0110**
Newcastle or Gateshead **0800 652 2863** - North Tyneside or Northumberland **0800 652 2861**
South Tyneside or Sunderland **0800 652 2867**



**Safety
planning**
Managing
thoughts
of suicide

**Every
life
matters** ...

Suicide Safer Cumbria
every-life-matters.org.uk
Charity No.1180815



www.stopsuicidenenc.org



Writing a Safety Plan

Many people will have thoughts of suicide - but thinking about suicide does not make it inevitable that you are going to take your own life. A safety plan helps prevent us turning these thoughts into actions.

A Safety Plan includes what you would do, and who might support you, in a crisis. The Plan can help us manage those fleeting thoughts of suicide that emerge at the edge of your mind – through to situations where the desire to die becomes so overwhelming we no longer think we can keep ourselves safe. The plan is about finding hope when all feels lost, even if it's just a glimmer.

- Make your Safety Plan before you reach crisis point. Being prepared is key.
- Ask someone to help you write your plan.
- Make sure you have access to your plan when you need.
- If you name someone in your plan, tell them, and if its OK share your safety plan with them.

Before starting this plan, we recommend you visit www.every-life-matters.org.uk/safety-planning or www.stayingsafe.net for more ideas and instruction on how to write your safety plan.

My Reasons for living

It is important to remember that as well as having reasons for dying there are also reasons for living.

Have these in your plan as a reminder of your reasons to stay alive – they may be written down, or photos, or objects. They may be people or animals, commitments or future plans or the hope that things may change. Some people make a Hope Box with reminders of people and places that are important as well as things to sooth and distract. And don't worry if you can think of any reasons right now, still complete your plan, some will come to you.

Making my situation safer

Do you have a plan of how you would take your own life? Do you know what you would use? Consider making it harder for yourself to get hold of them, especially when you are feeling in crisis. Can you remove these means from your house? Or give them to a friend or family member to keep. If you have previously attempted to take your own life before think about what made it harder to stay safe then. Learn from the experience.

My warning signs

How do you know you're not feeling safe? It could be triggered by certain events, anniversaries or times of year. It might be about what's happening in your relationships. Does your behaviour change, or do you have particular feeling or thoughts before you start thinking about suicide? Could **other people** close to you recognise these signs and help you become aware of them?

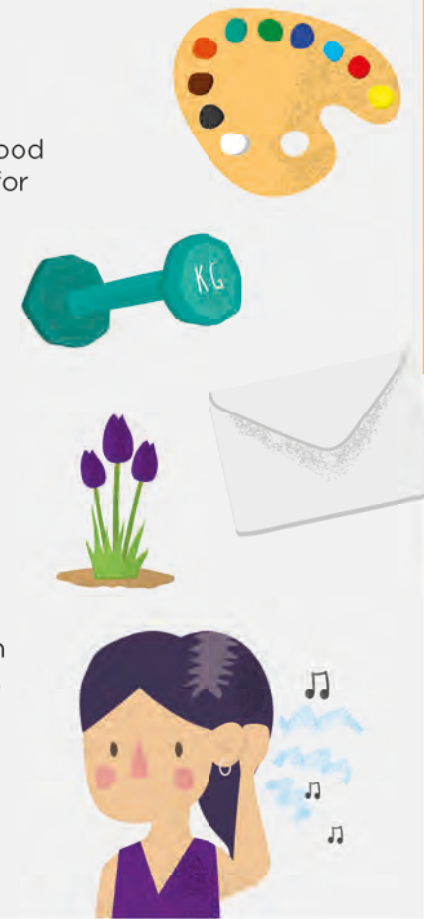
- ! **Alcohol and drugs can make you act more impulsively, or impair your self-control, so it is important to limit your consumption.**
- **Ask a friend or family member to help you.**

Lifting my mood

The first stage of managing those emerging thoughts of suicide is knowing how to lift our mood and distract ourselves. Think about what works for you, be realistic, and remember different things might help at different times.

Mood lifting might include:

- **Physical** – go out for a run or a walk, head to the gym
- **Creative** – draw, colour, make a playlist, bake
- **Productive** – make lists, have a clear out, garden, write yourself a letter
- **Chilling out** – meditation, have a bath, listen to music, spend time with a pet, game, watch your favourite movie (on repeat if necessary)
- **People and places** – can you go out and catch up with a friend, play football with mates, go to a museum, go to a faith centre.



My informal support

If your chosen distractions are struggling to lift your mood, and thoughts of suicide are still present, or growing, reach out to informal support. These are the safe and trusted people, or organisations, that you feel comfortable to talk about how you are feeling – including talking about your thoughts of suicide. They might be friends and family, a support worker, a helpline or online forum. Try to list three people/organisations, and let them know they are on your safety plan if you can.

For more information about the range of support available to you in your local area, including NHS Universal Crisis Line Numbers visit-

Cumbria www.every-life-matters.org.uk
North East www.stopsuicidenenc.org



My Distractions

If the thoughts of suicide continue to get stronger we need to take further proactive steps to keep ourselves safe. Try to press the pause button and stay safe for now.

Studies suggest that the urge to act on thoughts of suicide are strongest for 15-30 minutes. You need to focus on how you will get through this period of time.

This is where your Safety Plan is so important. You need strong distractions and activities to get you through one minute at a time. Step by step. Find what works for you. Others have found the following helpful; Breathing exercises, games on your phone, focussing on your reasons for living or our Hope Box, repeating positive affirmations, physical distractions like flicking rubber bands on your skin or holding an ice cube.

We strongly recommend you visit www.every-life-matters.org.uk/safety-planning for more ideas about distraction techniques.

Though you may feel overwhelmed – it's important to remember these feelings will pass.

My professional support

If you are in crisis or no longer feel able to manage the thoughts of suicide or keep yourself safe then identify in your Safety Plan how you will get professional help. Are you connected with any mental health professionals? Do you have a Care Co-ordinator for example? If you are, do you know how to get hold of them in a crisis? Get their contact details in your plan and in your phone.

If its your first time in crisis contact the NHS Universal Crisis Numbers listed over the page, or **contact your GP** for an emergency appointment, or **call NHS 111**, they can direct you on how best to get help or how to access out of hours' doctors.

