

How You Can Help Prevent Suicide, Part 2

Note: This is Part 2 of a three-part series. Find Part 1 [here](#), and watch for Part 3 coming soon.

You're worried. Quivering from nervous anxiety, you can't sleep. Your appetite is nil. You can barely concentrate on anything. Work is almost impossible. You're pretty sure your friend or loved one might be suicidal. How can you save them? Is there anything you can do other than locking them in their room, keeping vigil 24/7? No one can do that for long.

I've been in your shoes. I know the agony. You feel so helpless and alone. I wouldn't wish that torment on anyone.

This post is part of a series on suicide explaining a simple three-step method of prevention called QPR. This strategy was developed by Dr. Paul Quinnett at the QPR Institute: .

Please read my last article to familiarize yourself with the first step, Question.

QPR is an acronym which stands for: Question, Persuade, Refer. Today's post explains the Persuade step. You can read more about this life-saving technique on their website.

Persuade

This step begins with the simple act of listening.

Be a good listener. This could save a life. Listening well is the greatest gift you can give someone who's hurting.

Avoid offering advice.

Do these things instead:

- Give your full attention.

- Don't interrupt
- Don't be in a hurry.
- Don't make judgments or condemn.
- Tame your own fears so you can focus on the other person.

It's not an easy task.

Listen for the Problems and Confirm Suspicions

After asking the "S" question explained in my last blog, "Are you thinking about killing yourself?", listen for the problems they believe their death would solve.

Confirm your guesses and suspicions with follow-up questions. If they nod their head or say yes, then, as unlikely as it may seem, you've helped them to find a way to live.

The goal of the persuasion step is to hear confirmation of your suspicions then get help.

The Next Goal

A yes reply to any of the following questions is your next goal:

- "Will you go with me to see a counselor?" (or priest, rabbi, school counselor, school nurse, psychologist or any professional they're willing to go to).
- "Will you let me help you make an appointment?"
- "Will you promise me ... ?" (Not to kill yourself until this works?)

Often they won't follow through because they feel too helpless and hopeless. That's why it's a good idea to get the person to agree to go on living.

Say something like, "I want you to live. Won't you please stay alive until we can get you some help?"

It's been reported that just making the promise not to hurt or

kill oneself, but to go on living, tends to bring relief and the fulfillment of that promise. Dr. Quinnett says the response is almost always yes. The power of the relationship is the key.

What If They Say No?

You can still do something. Refusal doesn't mean QPR failed. Now you know they're definitely in danger, so you can take action. As of today, the laws of our country don't allow for an individual to die by suicide. Suicide is not an acceptable solution to life's problems. Provisions have been made to help keep suicidal people alive and protect them from themselves.

If you're concerned your loved one is at risk, please call **1-800-273-TALK (8255) The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**. *Anyone can call, any day of the year, anytime, including holidays. You can also call 911 or take them to the nearest hospital emergency room (if they will go peacefully with you).*

In my next post , I'll explain the third and final step of QPR: Refer.

Father, please comfort every person who reads this, who cares about someone who's suicidal today. Give them courage to ask the "S" question and engage in the persuade process. Use them to bring relief. Breathe life and strength into their own soul as well. Stay close while they endure the most difficult days of their life. Thank You for how much You care.

In the life-giving name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.

I find hope in the Scriptures. This is a favorite verse: "Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted in me? Hope in God, for I will yet thank Him for the help of His presence" (Ps. 42:5).

Recommended book: *Holding on to Hope* by Nancy Guthrie {eo}

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