

DISPELLING COMMON MYTHS ABOUT SUICIDE

1 in 5 college students thinks about death by suicide during their college career. The suicide rate among young adults has tripped since the 1950s and death by suicide is now the second most common cause of death among students in college.

By educating ourselves and others, we are able to support students who have thoughts of suicide and to connect them with proper care.

MYTH: ONLY PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS ARE SUICIDAL

Suicidal thoughts stem from feelings of unhappiness and hopelessness, which any individual has the capability of experiencing. On the other hand, there are many individuals who live with mental illness who do not experience suicidal thoughts.

MYTH: ASKING SOMEONE IF THEY WANT TO DIE GIVES THEM THE IDEA TO DO SO

By asking someone if they are having thoughts of dying, you are DECREASING the chance that they act on such thoughts. Individuals are often relieved that someone is addressing it as we have an evolutionary instinct to survive.

MYTH: SUICIDE IS SELFISH AND A SIGN OF WEAKNESS

People who have thoughts of suicide often believe that their suffering and existence is a burden on others. Therefore, they are under the illusion that their death is a solution to ending other people's unwanted responsibilities of caring for the individual.

MYTH: MOST SUICIDES HAPPEN WITHOUT WARNING

8 out of 10 people who attempt to die by suicide have given warning to other people. It is important to look out for warning signs and to ask people directly if they are having thoughts of death if you suspect something.

MYTH: PEOPLE WHO ARE SUICIDAL ARE DETERMINED TO DIE

Most people who are having thoughts of death are not necessarily looking to die, but to end their emotional suffering. It is important that they learn realistic, healthy coping skills to end their suffering that do not include self harm or death.

MYTH: PEOPLE WHO SURVIVE AN ATTEMPT WILL NOT TRY AGAIN

People who attempt to die by suicide are 80% more likely to attempt another time. It is important that you look out for warning signs and express your concern if you suspect that they are unwell.

IF YOU ARE HAVING THOUGHTS OF HURTING YOURSELF OR DYING, THERE IS HOPE. CALL 911 OR THE NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE: 1-888-273-8255

Mercy College Student Counseling Center
CounselingCenter@mercy.edu / 914- 888-5150