



# FEELING ANGRY, SAD OR HOPELESS?

## GETTING HELP, FINDING HOPE

### *What challenges do people face as they get older?*

As people get older, they often experience losses and stresses which have a major impact on how they feel and function day to day. Some examples include the death of a spouse, family member or friend; loss of a home or income due to retirement; illness, including chronic/severe pain; or increased stress due to the demands of caring for someone else. Untreated depression (not a normal part of aging) is another factor.

### *Should I be worried if I or someone I know is having suicidal thoughts?*

Yes. Depending on the severity of the circumstances, and if a person is isolated and doesn't know where to get help, he or she may start thinking that "life isn't worth living." Suicidal thoughts are an indicator that someone needs help.

### *What can be done to prevent a crisis?*

If you or someone you know is experiencing stress, loss or depression, remember - **you are not alone!** You do not have to struggle with these issues by yourself. Getting help now can prevent more serious problems or crises.

To get help, call: **1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)**  
(Calls answered 24/7)



## HERE ARE SOME STEPS TO TAKE:

- **Consider talking to someone you trust.**
- **Seek a doctor's help** for pain, physical illness, or for answers to questions about your medicines (either prescribed or over-the-counter) and possible side effects. If you do not have a doctor, contact your local hospital for help in finding one.
- **Connect with others.** Family, friends and neighbors can often provide support if you tell them how you are feeling. Join a support group sponsored by a church, hospital, mental health center, senior center, or other organization.
- **Rediscover your gifts and strengths.** You have a lifetime of gifts, strengths and interests to offer. Renew those interests or take up a new hobby. Your local senior center offers meals, education and wellness programs, as well as opportunities to socialize and make new friends.
- **Share your gifts** by volunteering to help others. Call NH ServiceLink at **1-866-634-9412** to discuss volunteer opportunities in your region.
- **Take care of your health.** Exercise and eat a healthy diet. Limit alcohol use, which can aggravate existing health conditions, contribute to accidents and cause dangerous side effects when taken with medicine.

# **SUICIDE AND AGING**

## **PREVENTING SUICIDE AMONG OLDER ADULTS**

A person considering suicide may show one or more of the following warning signs.

### **WARNING SIGNS:**

- Talking about wanting to die
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious, agitated or reckless
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings.

### **ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE IF YOU ARE WORRIED SOMEONE MAY BE SUICIDAL:**

- Do not leave the person alone.
- Remove any firearms, alcohol, drugs or sharp objects that could be used in a suicide attempt.
- Call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**.
- Take the person to an emergency room or seek help from a medical or mental health professional.

### **HELPFUL RESOURCES:**

**Call 911** (*police, fire, ambulance*) when a person's life or well-being is threatened, property is endangered or an illegal activity is in progress.

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline** - 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).  
Available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week  
to anyone in emotional distress or crisis.

#### **Community Mental Health Centers**

Located throughout NH, these centers provide counseling, 24-hour emergency services, medication and other services. For a listing, call 211 or go to

The Bureau of Behavioral Health website at [www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dcbcs/bbh](http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dcbcs/bbh).

Developed by the NH Coalition on Substance Abuse, Mental Health & Aging.

For an electronic copy of this information sheet, go to the National Alliance on Mental Illness New Hampshire website at:

<http://www.naminh.org/education/publications>