

# Survivor Specific Support



## How do I get URGENT support?

If you believe your life is in imminent danger, contact 000.

*"If in doubt, take the assumption that you require support"*

T. Adler, Semaphore, SA

## How do I get IMMEDIATE support?

If there is no imminent risk to life but you are still concerned, worried, or unsure, immediate support could be contacting:

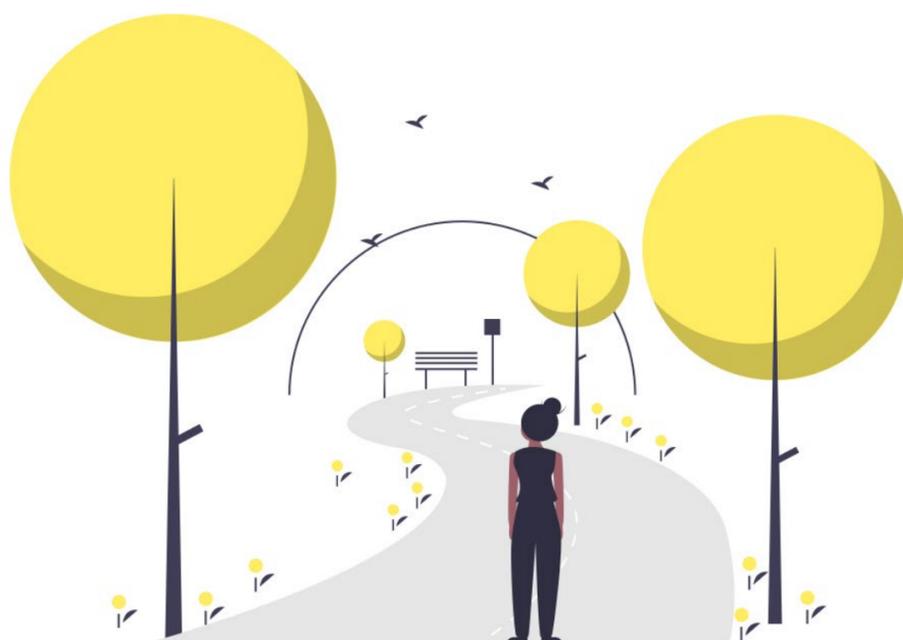
1. Crisis Assessment Team
2. Crisis Helpline
3. Friend/relative/Health Professional

During this time, safety is paramount. Where possible, have someone stay with you or remain connected with a support Service.



*"Talking with someone really helped lower my distress."*

J. Flynn, Perth, WA



## How do I get ONGOING support?

Sometimes support is required in an ongoing capacity. It's important to remember this is normal.

Ongoing support could be in the form of:

1. Second Steps Service Suite
2. Psychiatry/Psychology/Counseling
3. Psychosocial Support
4. Online Forums

Chat with a Second Steps Lived Experience Support Person who could help you access appropriate services.

# Survivor Specific Support

## What do I need to KNOW?

Suicidal thoughts should be taken seriously

It's ok if you are having thoughts about wanting to die or wanting to end your life and it's important to speak with someone about them rather than act on them

Thoughts to end one's life are usually a result of not being able to cope, feeling burdened or burdensome, an experience of intense emotional pain, or a need to escape life as it presently is

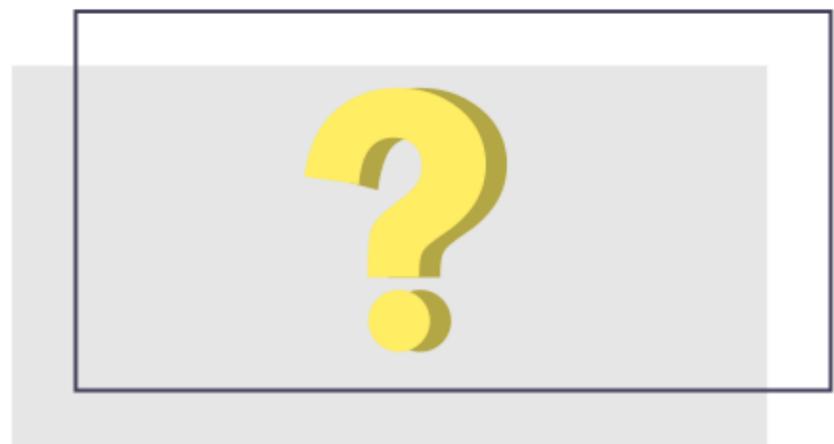
It can be helpful to remember that suicidal thoughts are experienced by others, so you are not alone in how you are feeling

Talking about suicidal thoughts with a supportive friend or family member or a professional can be helpful

Suicidal thoughts don't tend to stay with us for long if we're able to talk about the thoughts and get some help managing life's challenges differently

Having suicidal thoughts doesn't always mean that you want to die. Many people who experience thoughts of suicide want to continue living but feel they're unable to deal with their current feelings or problems

As much as it feels like there's no other option, usually there are, and there are plenty of people to help you find alternate solutions



*"I thought, after my suicide attempt, things would get back to normal, but I found myself having suicidal thoughts from time to time. Sometimes they felt so real and so intense, I couldn't cope with them on my own. This is when I'd call a crisis line, just to talk them through."*

M. Bartes, Kangaroo Point, QLD

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## What if I am having SUICIDAL thoughts?

After a suicide attempt, you may find that thoughts of suicide come up again. If you do experience recurring suicidal thoughts, there are a couple of questions you could ask yourself to help identify the type of support you need right now.

1. Am I able to manage the thoughts?
2. Am I able to keep myself safe from harm?

If you're not able to manage the thoughts on your own and or you're not able to keep yourself safe then we encourage you to contact a helpline such as Lifeline, Suicide Call back service, or your local Crisis Assessment Treatment Team.

If you think you might act on your thoughts or if your life is at risk, then please contact 000.

If you feel able to manage the thoughts and trust that you can keep yourself safe, it might be a good idea to try one or a combination of the following:

- Contact a friend/family member and tell them how you feel
- Speak with a professional or online support service
- Connect with some of our Lived Experience members on the Second Steps Facebook Group
- Journal your thoughts and concerns
- Try doing something opposite to how you feel, like watching a funny movie if you're feeling sad, going for a walk if you feel exhausted, relaxation if you're feeling restless.

If the thoughts persist then raise this with a health professional.



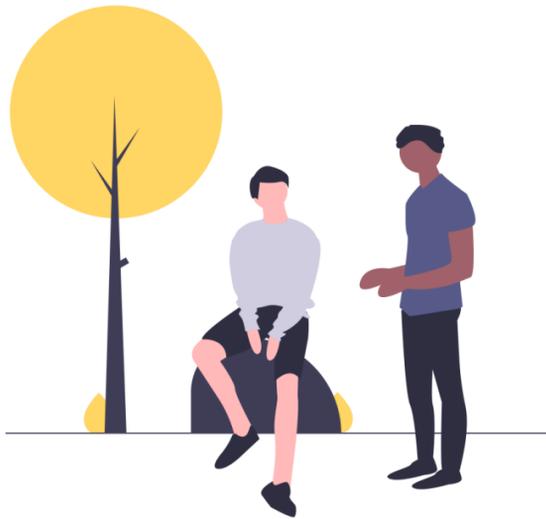
*"Life became a bit easier when I worked out how to deal with suicidal thoughts myself. I used lots of strategies like recognising my thoughts as just thoughts."*

S. Warren, Lilydale, VIC

# Survivor Specific Support

## How do I talk about MY EXPERIENCE with others?

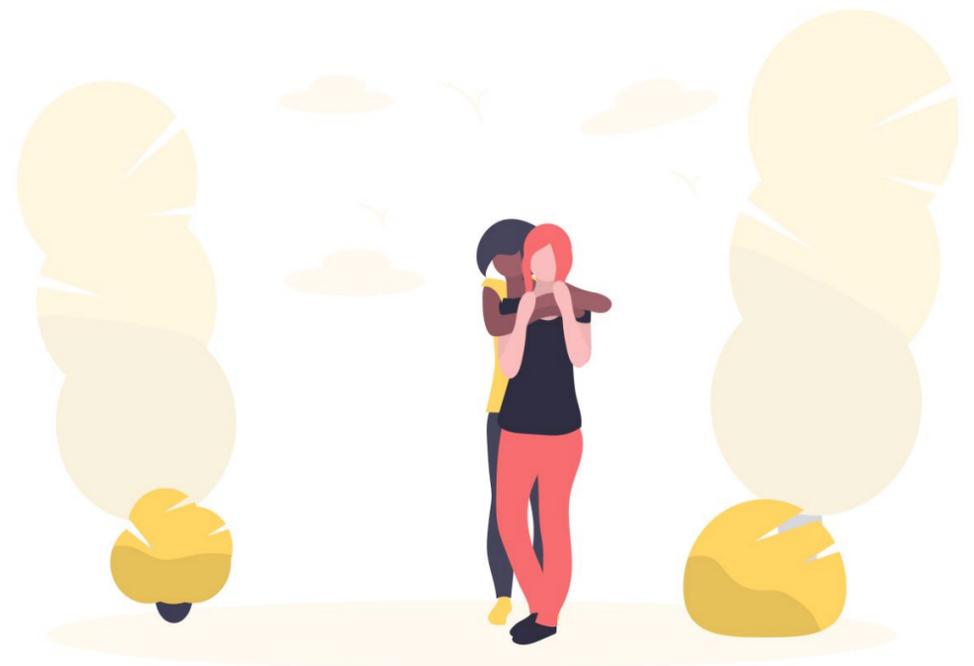
There are no hard and fast rules around communicating about suicide. One of the most important things to remember is that you want the conversation to be safe, honest, open, and relevant to the person you are speaking with.



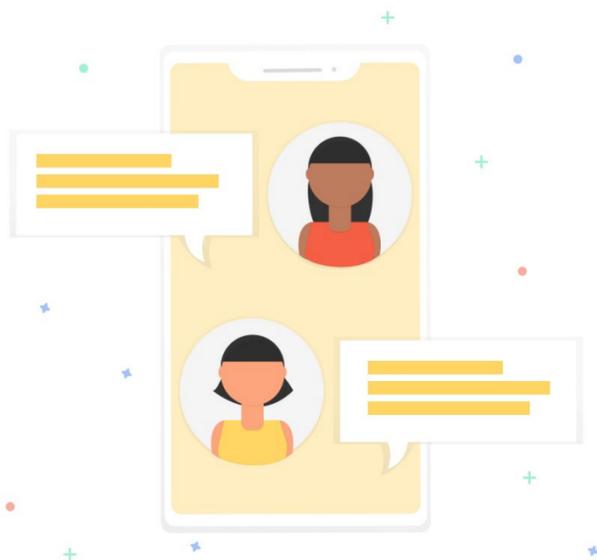
A good place to test out having open chats about your experience is through connecting with others with lived experience via our online community. Within the online community you can start discussions, hear the stories of others, and even share your own experience. Click [here](#) to learn more about our Online Support.

If and when you decide to speak with friends or family. It's important to remember they may not have the reaction you're hoping. This is likely because they may be concerned for you and they care about your wellbeing. Be prepared for questions people may have and decide how you will answer them honestly.

A lot of work has been done to help raise awareness of suicide and to reduce the stigma attached to it. That's not to say that everyone will be open to hearing about experiences of suicide. If you do receive a negative reaction from someone, try to keep in mind that another person's reaction is neither your fault nor your responsibility.



Try conversations in small steps. Find out what the person knows about suicide first. Lack of awareness can sometimes result in an unexpected response.



If you're still unsure, chat with one of Lived Experience Support Persons via the Online Community. They could give you examples of conversations that they or others with lived experience of a suicide attempt have had. Click [here](#) to learn more about our Online Support.

# Survivor Specific Support

## What happens AFTER a suicide attempt?

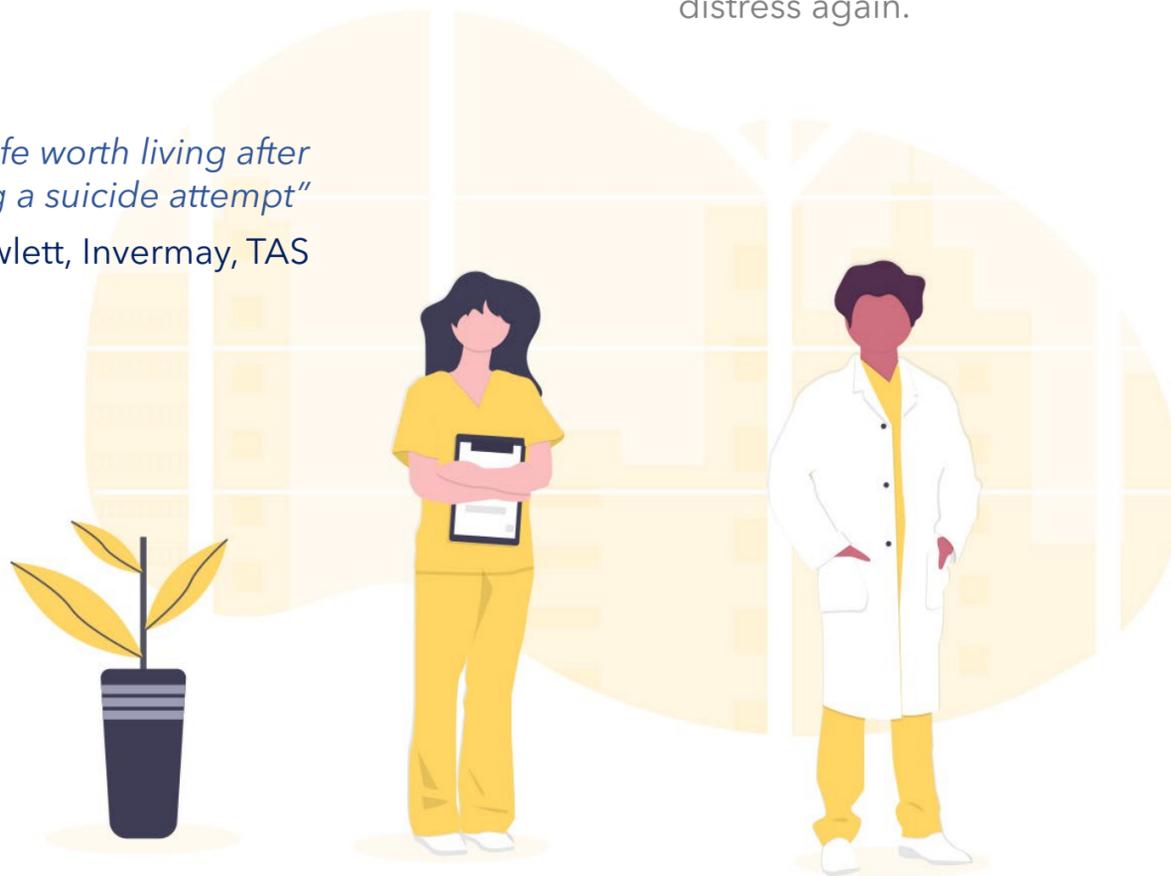
If you have experienced a suicide attempt, it's likely that you've visited a hospital emergency department, been in contact with emergency services or a CAT Team or have reached out to a family member or friend. If you haven't done any of the above, we encourage you to do so to ensure you're physical and emotional wellbeing can be assessed.

Depending on the help you sought you may find yourself with a variety of next steps. Usually, in hospital you will have your physical and emotional health attended to, you may be asked a series of questions to determine your level of safety to leave hospital and to determine what support you may require when you leave hospital. In some instances, it will be necessary for you to stay in hospital for a while to receive further, specialist treatment.

During your stay, a plan for ongoing support should be made in preparation for you to go home. This might involve connection to a support worker or case worker, follow up appointments with a Psychiatrist or other health professional, making sure you have someone to support you back at home, and making sure you know who you can contact should you experience suicidal thoughts or distress again.

*"You can return to a life worth living after experiencing a suicide attempt"*

J. Powlett, Invermay, TAS



Even if you don't stay in hospital, your visit to the emergency department or contact with a local CAT Team will have a similar outcome but will be dependent on your individual needs to keep you safe and well when you return or remain at home. Being back at home can be a little overwhelming. If you live with others, they may be quite concerned for you and have a lot of questions, or even feel quite helpless. If you live on your own it may be difficult to think about how you will get through this on your own. The most important thing to remember is that when you do return home, support is still available. We encourage you to remain connected with supports for as long as is needed by you.

Support can come in many forms, and you can discover more about the supports we offer at Second Steps on our website. It's important for you to choose the right type of support, the right level of support, and the right frequency of support for you. You have been through a tough time of late and you may find that you don't have the energy to think about all the supports you might want to access immediately. If you would like personal assistance to find supports, we offer this as part of our Individual Support. Click [here](#) to learn more about Individual Support.

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## What's it like back AT HOME after a suicide attempt?

The first few days or even few weeks following a suicide attempt can be exhausting. Try to be gentle and kind with yourself. You may be experiencing a range of different emotions, your mind may be full of thoughts, or you may even just feel numb. Give yourself time and take things slowly.

It can be difficult but try to put yourself and your needs first during this time. Also, try to attend any scheduled appointments in the first few weeks. The professionals or peers that you meet will become your support network.

It's not unusual for suicidal thoughts to re-occur in the months after a suicide attempt. If you experience these thoughts, speak with a health professional about them. Suicidal thoughts don't have to mean you are experiencing another crisis. They might just be your minds way of telling you that things are getting stressful. It's important to always tell someone about them until you reach a point where you have some strategies to use to effectively manage the thoughts on your own.

*"The first few days were a blur. All I could do was sleep. Someone would wake me to eat. Before I knew it, it was another day."*

V. Davide, Mildura, VIC



*"I couldn't have done it without a really good support network. My Doctors, my therapist, my neighbor, and my best friend literally saved my life. They helped give me the strength and the skills to get through."*

B. Nazrin, Carramar, NSW

Eventually, you might like to participate in face to face support with others who have been through a similar experience. For this, Second Steps offers Group Support, uniquely designed for suicide attempt survivors. This open group service gives you an opportunity to connect with others, including our lived experience support persons, participate in discussions about your and others' experiences, and discover some simple skills to help you return to a life you want to live.

Click [here](#) to find out more about Group Support.

In addition to health professionals and other people in your support network, there are also tools that you can use to assist you after a suicide attempt. Many of the tools we, with lived experience have found helpful can be discovered in our online learning programs as part of our Online Support.

Click [here](#) to find out more about Online Support.