



Supporting a young person experiencing thoughts of suicide

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About us

Charlie Waller was a strong, funny, popular, good-looking and kind young man, with a close and loving family. To the outside world, he had everything to live for. Yet in 1997, at the age of 28, Charlie took his own life. He was suffering from depression.

In response to this tragedy, his family founded The Charlie Waller Trust, to open up the conversation around depression, and to ensure that young people are able to understand and look after their mental health and to spot the signs in others.

Charlie sits at the heart of our story, our vision and our purpose.



We're talking mental health

Our vision

A world where people understand and talk openly about mental health, where young people and those who support them are equipped to maintain and enhance their mental health and wellbeing, and have the confidence to seek help when they need it.



Who am I?...

Julie Castleman

Therapist: BACP Accredited

Charlie Waller: Consultant Trainer

National Trainer: MHFA England

National Tutor: Suicide First Aid

University Counselling and
Mental Health Manager



Evidence based training



Positive

We take a positive approach to mental health. We focus on prevention and early intervention, and recognise the importance of offering hope.



Proven

Our consultancy, training and resources are all based on sound clinical evidence.



Practical

We give people practical strategies and tools to care for their mental health, and to support others in doing so.



Charlie Waller Course Terms for online sessions

Sharing personal experience

The sharing of personal experiences or 'stories' helps to educate and train.

Participants should understand that during a session, a Trainer may encourage and seek out examples of personal lived experience from individuals and where appropriate may also choose to share personal stories of their own. Additionally, anonymised client case scenarios might be shared.

By participating participants agree that unless the individual/trainer states otherwise, such personal information is kept confidential by all participants who hear the personal story.



Safety first

- ✓ Confidentiality: 'what's said in the room stays in the room'
- ✓ Respect individual perspectives
- ✓ Listen to each other
- ✓ Sensitive issues, including suicide, will be discussed
- ✓ Monitor your own wellbeing
- ✓ Know where to access support



Objectives for the session



Define
Suicide



Discuss
How to support a
young person
experiencing
thoughts of suicide



Do
Reflect and learn



Personal reflection

What words/thoughts come up for you when you think about suicide?



Enter code: 6085 1287



What is suicide?

‘Suicide is the act of intentionally killing oneself’

Suicidal feelings can mean having abstract thoughts about ending your life or feeling that people would be better off without you. Or it can mean thinking about methods of suicide or making clear plans to take your own life.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>





Statistics...

UK 2020, population 67.22 million

Reported deaths by suicide

6,199

Thoughts

5% of the population may think about suicide

Impact

How many people are impacted by suicide?

Impossible to say.

‘Suicide is the biggest killer of young people under the age of 35 in the UK’

<https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>





What leads a person to experience thoughts of suicide?

‘Suicide is rarely the result of a single event or factor. It is usually a result of a person feeling hopeless about life due to a combination of biological, psychological and environmental factors.’

HEADSPACE.ORG.AU





Risk factors

- Gender
- Mental illness
- Physical illness
- Previous suicide attempt
- Experiencing family difficulties or violence, or family history of suicide
- Social isolation
- Criminal/legal problems
- Financial problems
- Work/study problems
- Drug and/or alcohol problems
- History of Adverse Childhood Experiences, trauma or abuse
- Relationship problems
- Recent tragedy or loss
- Prolonged stress
- Identity Factors





Protective factors

- Positive coping and problem-solving skills
- Beliefs (cultural and religious) which discourage suicide
- Connections with others (family, friends, community)
- Good relationships with care providers
- Access to physical and mental health care
- Limited access to lethal means





*What can we do to support
a young person?*



3 Things we can do to help a young person?

1. Recognise the signs
2. ASK about suicide and listen
3. Link the young person to appropriate support





Warning signs

Be alert to your senses

A young person may show signs through
CHANGE...

- Physical
- Behavioural
- Emotional
- Language

Signs may be overt or implied...





Warning signs

I need to get these
thoughts out of my
head

I want to die

Talking or
writing about
death or
suicide





Warning signs

Everything is bad,
inside and outside
of me

I've let everyone
down

Feelings of
despair,
failure or guilt





Warning signs

I can't focus on anything, it's all too much

Everything's going wrong

Drop in work/study attendance or performance





Warning signs

I need something
to escape the pain

It's the only thing
which helps me cope

Self-harm





Warning signs

I cannot imagine
a future where I
will have
overcome this

There's no
point...nothing will
ever get better...

Expression of
helplessness or
hopelessness





Warning signs

I feel better
knowing I have
that choice

I've researched it
and obtained the
resources

Planning or
preparing for
suicide





Warning signs

Relief... a decision
has been made to
end the pain

It's all fine now, I
don't need any more
help...

Sudden
unexplained
recovery





Warning signs

I need to tie up the loose ends before I go...

I'd like to thank you for everything you've ever done for me...

Giving away possessions

Putting affairs in order





Warning signs

Relief... a decision
has been made to
end the pain

I'm not going to tell
you because I don't
want you to stop me

No obvious signs
Concealing
intentions
Gut instinct





Warning signs

Don't ignore your gut feeling if you are concerned about someone.
Some people won't be open about how they are feeling.

(Rethink, 2010)





Myths and Facts

Myth: People who are suicidal want to die.

Fact: The majority of people who feel suicidal do not actually want to die; they just want the situation they're in or the way they're feeling to stop. The distinction may seem small, but it is very important. It's why talking through other options at the right time is so vital.

Myth: Talking about suicide is a bad idea as it may give someone the idea to try it.

Fact: Suicide can be a taboo topic. Often, people who are feeling suicidal don't want to worry or burden anyone with how they feel and so they don't discuss it. But, by asking someone directly about suicide, you give them permission to tell you how they feel. People who are struggling or have felt suicidal will often say what a huge relief it was to be able to talk about what they were experiencing.

Once someone starts talking, they've got a better chance of discovering options that aren't suicide

<https://www.samaritans.org/>



Ask about suicide

‘Are you thinking about suicide?’

By using the word suicide, you are telling the young person that it’s OK to talk openly about their thoughts of suicide with you.

“Sometimes, when people are they think about suicide. Is that what you’re thinking about?”

“You said that you don’t want to go on anymore, I’d like to understand what you mean by that. Are you having thoughts of suicide?/Thinking about ending your life?”



What not to say...

- X** Are you thinking of doing something silly/stupid?
- X** Are you thinking of hurting yourself?
- X** Do you want to die?



Listen...

You don't need to have the answers, we are not there to fix, we are there to offer support

Show empathy, this can help a person feel heard and less alone



“Seek first to understand... then to be understood.”

STEPHEN R. COVEY

THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE



Appropriate support

- Follow your local/organisational procedures
- GP/CAMHS
- Samaritans, call: 116 123 email: jo@samaritans.org
- SHOUT, Text: 85258
- CALM, call: 0800 58 58 58
- Papyrus, call: 0800 068 41 41 text: 07860 039967



In a crisis dial 999 or go to A&E



Apps and online resources

- Hub of Hope
- Stay Alive
- Hub of Hope
- Headspace





Safety planning



Safety planning



My Safety Plan



Getting through
right now

Making your
situation safer

Things to lift or
calm your mood

Things to distract
you

People to support
you

List who you can
talk to if you are
distressed or
thinking about self-
harm or suicide

Emergency
professional support

<https://stayingsafe.net/sites/default/files/BlankSafetyPlan.pdf>



Hopebox

- Helpline numbers
- Personal safety plan
- Supportive letters
 - To future self
 - From loved ones
- Reminders of insights gained during counselling/therapy
- List of distraction ideas
- Breathing exercise instructions
- Coping statements
- Coping strategies
- Future goals





Hopebox

Self soothing for the senses:

- **See**
 - Images of loved ones; favourite places
- **Hear**
 - Favourite music; soothing sounds; audio books
- **Touch**
 - Stress ball; soft toy; hand lotion; clay/plasticine
- **Smell**
 - Aromatherapy oils; perfume; candle
- **Taste**
 - Chocolate, sweets, mints, flavoured gum





You're important too...

Don't forget your own mental health

- Having a conversation with someone can be upsetting and have an impact on your own wellbeing
- Be sure to share your concerns with others
- What do you need for your personal self-care?



Training feedback

Feedback from participants on our training is a key component in evaluating the effectiveness of and in making improvements to our training and resources.

We would be very grateful if you would complete this short survey based on the training you have received today.

<https://forms.office.com/r/X7Wa8AvC8Q>



*Thank you
for listening*

The Charlie Waller Trust

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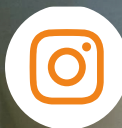


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charliewaller.org
/donate



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Charlie Waller Trust
@charliewalleruk

A circular inset image showing two hands forming a heart shape, with a blurred background of people.

Fundraise for us

Fundraising for us not only brings in money to help us continue our work – it also raises mental health awareness and what people can do to take care of their wellbeing.

Find out more

charliewaller.org/get-involved

A circular inset image showing three young people sitting on a concrete ledge outdoors. The person in the center is wearing an orange t-shirt with 'HOPE KIDS' printed on it. The person on the right is wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans with a large tear. The person on the left is wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans. They are all looking down or away from the camera.

Students Against Depression

Our Students Against Depression website is full of clinically based self-help information and activities for students experiencing depression, anxiety and other common mental health problems.

Find out more
studentsagainstd Depression.org