

There is a way out!

Austria is one of the front-runners when it comes to suicide. 20 out of 100 000 Austrians take their own lives – that is the highest suicide rate in Europe after Finland and Hungary.

They all do have one thing in common: The feeling of desperate hopelessness and faint without expectation of recovery. The paradox about it: it is supposed that rarely a suicide really wants to die. Therefore we should take possible warning notices and "silent" crying for help very seriously!

Generally speaking we can differentiate between an affective and a well-prepared suicide. The former is characterized by a chronic private or professional conflict, e.g. a breakup.

This is different with people with chronic depression, psychiatric or organic diseases. People who are confronted with such an ailment often plan their "exit of life".

It is often said:

People who really want to take their live do not talk about it!

But that is not true! 8 out of 10 ambiguously announce their suicide. Therefore it would be a fatal mistake to dismiss this ("He/She only wants to attract attention"). Moreover it is pretty dangerous to give someone an answer like: "Well, just go for it!" – that often is the lacking last "kick" it needs to realize the suicide.

However: do not make yourself responsible for it if you have not been able to foresee it. This is not easy, even not for specialists.

People with thoughts of suicide really want to die.

Also false! Most of them range between the wish to live and to die. This heavy intrinsic conflict is a very clear characteristic of people who are vulnerable to suicide.

A human being was vulnerable to suicide once will always be vulnerable to it.

There really is a possibility that someone who wanted to take his/her life sometime can overcome that crisis – with adequate professional help of course.

If a human being had overcome such a crisis, the risk of an anew suicide attempt is much lower.

Unfortunately this is also not true! A minimum of 80 % of all executed suicide attempts are preceded by a former suicide attempt.

You should not talk to someone about suicide when he/she thinks about it.

Far from it! To talk about someone's intrinsic pain helps most of the people to deal with their problems and to relieve pressure. People who are vulnerable to suicide feel lonely and left alone with their conflicts. One should not avoid asking the person concerned precisely about his/her plans to realize suicide. What should be avoided: reproaches and banal conciliations like: "Cheer up!" or "Don't lose heart!"

Warning symptoms:

Persons concerned feel inferior, unconscious and helpless with a hopeless mental attitude, an anxious behavior as well as an affinity to isolate themselves. Isolation forwards so-called

substitute behavior (alcohol, pharmaceuticals, drugs etc.).

Also people who are vulnerable to suicide are aggressive, partly as a result of disappointment and traumatic experiences (also from childhood). The person concerned often addresses his/her anger against him-/herself.

Increased danger of suicide exists during adolescence, pregnancy and lactation, menopause and especially in sophisticated years (most concerned are men between 60 and 70!).

Family members, partners and friends can cause a lot of positive energy by cautious approach but they will soon be overstrained. Do not hesitate to call for help. A specialist will first of all establish a relationship to the person concerned who gets the possibility to talk about his oppressed feelings frankly. And of course to find a way out. Modern pharmaceuticals can be applied.

The Swiss psychotherapist Verena Kast: "The sharing of problems is an important possibility to fight against anxiety. Who is really convinced that another person can help has already taken an important step to overcome a crisis." The step away from abysm.

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