



HELP A FRIEND IN NEED

Facebook is proud to work with Samaritans, to share potential signs that a friend might be struggling to cope and may need your help. This guide was originally created in partnership with The Jed Foundation and The Clinton Foundation



POSSIBLE SIGNS THAT A FRIEND IS NOT COPING WITH LIFE



If you see someone posting worrying messages or content on Facebook, or behaving out of character, it may be a sign that this person needs help. **If you have a gut feeling that something is not right, you should act on it.**

Be aware of status posts, messages, photos or videos that include the following themes:

- Talking about feeling alone, hopeless, isolated, useless, or a burden to others: "I feel like I'm in a black hole"; "I don't want to get out of bed...ever"; "Leave me alone"; "I can't do anything right", "It's like the whole world is against me"
- Showing irritability and hostility that is out of character: "I hate everyone"; "F*@K the world"
- Showing impulsive behaviours: Like an increase in substance use, driving recklessly or taking other risks
- Insomnia posts: "3am again and no sleep"
- Withdrawal from everyday activities and losing interest in their appearance: "Missed another chem lab - I'm such a waste"; "Another day in bed under the covers"
- Use of Negative Emoticons: Repeatedly using emoticons that describe feeling:



SAD



GUILTY



DOWN



LOST



IRRITATED



BAD



ALONE



TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

If you see someone posting messages, photos, videos or links that suggest the person is not doing so well, you should reach out, talk to them as they may need some help. As a friend you know them best.

I can't handle any of this 😞

TIPS FROM FACEBOOK AND SAMARITANS





“I’ve noticed you haven’t been yourself lately. Are you okay?”

HOW TO HELP A FRIEND IN NEED

If you have a friend who seems to be struggling with a problem or something they may not be handling very well, there is a lot that you can do to support them. Don’t shy away from it, **reach out**, let them know they are **not alone** and that **it’s ok to ask for help**.

Be clear and direct, **do not use hints such as the “Like” button or replying with an emoticon, as these could be misinterpreted by the person you’re trying to help.**

We understand that it can be tough to start this conversation, here are some suggestions:

- “I’m worried about you because you seem...” (e.g., sad, withdrawn, etc). – Have examples ready such as, “I was worried when I saw your comment say...” **Be specific** about what you noticed.
- Sometimes it’s easy to want to try and fix a person’s problems, or give them advice. Let them make their

own decisions. “Do you want to talk about it?”; “What can I do to help?”

- Respect what they tell you. If they say no, don’t pressure them. You might say: “It’s okay if you don’t want to talk to me, but it is important that you talk to someone.”
- Check they know where to get help e.g. Samaritans – Phone: (UK) 08457 90 90 90 (ROI) 116 123, family members, their GP or mental health services.
- If you say the wrong thing, don’t panic; show you understand, they are going through a tough time.

Don’t be afraid to give your friend a call, pay a visit, or send them a Facebook message to let them know you are concerned. Offer to help connect them with any extra support needed.



Post Photo

No-one would care if I were gone

Post

WARNING SIGNS THAT SOMEONE MAY NEED URGENT HELP OR MAY BE AT RISK OF SUICIDE

While it can be hard, particularly online, to tell how someone is feeling, if they indicate that they may be thinking about suicide, you should always take this seriously.

Here are some examples of things someone at risk of suicide might say:

- Talking about suicide or wanting to die: “I want out”; “Everyone would be better off without me”;
- “There’s no reason to live”
- Intense and urgent feelings of struggling to cope or intense guilt or shame, feeling trapped: “I can’t take it [the pain] anymore”; “There is no way out”; “I’m done”; “I’m so sorry for all the trouble I’ve caused everyone”
- Showing rage or seeking revenge: “I’ll show you all”; “She’ll be sorry”
- Saying goodbyes, giving away personal possessions, posting pictures with sad captions of those they love: “I’ll miss you all”; “You won’t have to worry about me anymore”
- Glorifying or glamorising death, or making death seem heroic: “Death is beautiful”
- Asking about suicide methods



Samaritans is available round the clock for anyone struggling to cope

Phone: (UK) 08457 90 90 90 (ROI) 116 123

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Web: www.samaritans.org

HOW TO HELP A FRIEND IN URGENT NEED

1. If you think a friend is feeling suicidal or might need help, please contact Samaritans, who are available round the clock, every single day of the year.

You can reach **Samaritans** on:

Phone: (UK) 08457 90 90 90 (ROI) 116 123

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Face to Face at a local branch for more information visit: www.samaritans.org

2. You can also report someone who may be suicidal to **Facebook** directly [here](#).
3. If the person has made an explicit threat of suicide, you could contact the **emergency services** on 999.

REMEMBER TO:

- Listen without judgment, assumptions, or interruptions. Let them know that you believe what they are saying and take them seriously.
- Know your limits and do not place yourself in physical danger – the best way to help is to connect your friend to appropriate support.

No matter what, you shouldn't be embarrassed or worried about offending or upsetting your friend. Helping your friend may take some courage, but it is always worth the effort to support their health and safety.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SUICIDE PREVENTION ON FACEBOOK, GO TO:
<https://www.facebook.com/help/suicideprevention>

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO SUPPORT HELP YOURSELF OR A FRIEND, VISIT:
www.samaritans.org

This guide, while evidence based, is for informational and educational purposes only and is not intended to constitute medical advice or be a substitute for professional diagnosis and treatment.



T: (UK) 08457 90 90 90 (ROI) 116 123, E: jo@samaritans.org, W: www.samaritans.org

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