

HOPELINEUK

If you're struggling with change and this has led to thoughts of suicide, or you are supporting somebody that is going through some changes and you are worried that they might be suicidal, you can contact HOPELINEUK.

HOPELINEUK

Call: **0800 068 4141**

Text: **07786 209 697**

Email: **pat@papyrus-uk.org**

Opening hours:

10am - 10pm weekdays

2pm - 10pm weekends

2pm - 10pm bank holidays

Our Suicide Prevention Advisers are ready to support you.

BEING YOURSELF DURING CHANGE



Being yourself during change



Change is something that happens throughout our lives. Whether we like it or not one of the few certainties of life is that change will come. On HOPELINEUK we hear a lot about changes and the difficulties that people have adapting to them. Some changes can be forced on us, others we might take on willingly, but they might be tougher than we expected. Sometimes when a change comes that is difficult it can affect the way we view ourselves, or our situation and even our lives. When change becomes overwhelming it can lead to thoughts of suicide.

So why do we have to experience change?

From childhood there are many life changes that we have to accept, we might be the only child in our family, then a sibling comes along. We have to leave the surroundings that we have become used to as a child and start nursery and school, meet a lot of people and start a new routine. When we have navigated our way through primary school, we have secondary school, with all the pressure of exams and stress of what the future might hold.

Throughout our formative years we are coping with changes. We take on new challenges, start and end our education, find and lose friends, start and end relationships, change homes, change careers and lifestyles. We make changes all of the time. They are usually challenging at some level even if the changes are something we chose to make.

So how do we take on new challenges and adapt to the changes that life throws at us?

What can we put in place to make things easier for us?

- **Make time for change** – It's coming anyway, so prepare yourself for the changes that you can. Be willing to accept changes and, when possible, find out more information to make you feel more prepared.
- **Accept that change will be a challenge** – Give yourself time to adapt to the change. Some changes are planned and we can make some preparations to help us to manage. Other changes are unforeseen, like the death of a loved one and there is no amount of preparation that can get us ready for some life changes that we face. When we have this sort of change we need to give ourselves the space to accept the change and not pressure ourselves to be okay.
- **Tell others how you're feeling** – Allow yourself to express your emotions safely. It's okay to feel scared and anxious about change, but we need to make sure that we have someone to talk to so that we're not carrying this worry alone.
- **Take time for yourself** – Give yourself time to reflect when you're going through change. How do you feel now? Has the change affected the way you see yourself? How has the change made a difference to your life?
- **Believe in yourself** – Often when going through change we forget how many challenges we've faced already. We can overlook how resilient we are and how many changes we've already managed. So remember where you've been and remember you don't have to face it all alone.

What can you do to help?

If you are around somebody that has been going through some life changes, whether that be a change in school, a new job or a breakdown of a relationship and you are concerned that they might be having thoughts of suicide, it's okay to ask them. As long as you're sensitive there is no right or wrong way to ask somebody if they are feeling suicidal. You won't increase any risk, put the thought into their head, or make it more difficult for them to seek support. What you will do is make yourself a safe person to talk to.

Be clear and direct, so there are no misunderstandings:

- Sometimes when people are managing a lot of change, it can be stressful and can lead to thoughts of suicide, is this how you've been feeling?
- It sounds like life is really hard right now, are you having thoughts of suicide?

Reflect anything that you might have noticed:

- Since you've been at your new school you seem distant and have talked about life feeling pointless. Does this mean that you're thinking about ending your life?
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Remember there is no right or wrong way to ask the question, but asking the question can be the start of somebody getting the support they need.