

Session 10 - Family and Friends

Parents of children with same sex attractions

1. Respond, don't react.
2. Listen and understand.
3. Be prepared.
4. It's not your fault.
5. Love your children despite their behavior.
6. Be confident in what you believe, and speak truth.
7. There are deeper emotional issues going on.

An excerpt from an article about suicide on kidshealth.org

Why Do Teens Try to Kill Themselves?

Most teens interviewed after making a suicide attempt say that they did it because they were trying to escape from a situation that seemed impossible to deal with or to get relief from really bad thoughts or feelings. They didn't want to die as much as they wanted to escape from what was going on. And at that particular moment dying seemed like the only way out.

Some people who end their lives or attempt suicide might be trying to escape feelings of rejection, hurt, or loss. Others might feel angry, ashamed, or guilty about something. Some people may be worried about disappointing friends or family members. And some may feel unwanted, unloved, victimized, or like they're a burden to others.

We all feel overwhelmed by difficult emotions or situations sometimes. But most people get through it or can put their problems in perspective and find a way to carry on with determination and hope. So why does one person try suicide when another person in the same tough situation does not? What makes some people more resilient (better able to deal with life's setbacks and difficulties) than others? What makes a person unable to see another way out of a bad situation besides ending their life? The answer to those questions lies in the fact that most people who die by suicide have **depression**.

Depression

Depression leads people to focus mostly on failures and disappointments, to emphasize the negative side of their situations, and to downplay their own capabilities or worth. Someone with severe depression can't see the possibility of a good outcome and may believe they will never be happy or things will never go right for them again.

Depression affects a person's thoughts in such a way that the person doesn't see when a problem can be overcome. It's as if the depression puts a filter on the person's thinking that distorts things. That's why depressed people don't realize that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem in the same way that other people do. A teen with depression may feel like there's no other way out of problems, no other escape from emotional pain, or no other way to communicate a desperate unhappiness.

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Suicide Is Not Always Planned

Sometimes a depressed person plans a suicide in advance. Many times, though, suicide attempts happen impulsively, in a moment of feeling desperately upset. A situation like a breakup, a big fight with a parent, an unintended pregnancy, being outed by someone else, or being victimized in any way can cause someone to feel desperately upset. Often, a situation like this, on top of an existing depression, acts like the final straw.

Some people who attempt suicide mean to die and some aren't completely sure they want to die. For some, a suicide attempt is a way to express deep emotional pain. They can't say how they feel, so, for them, attempting suicide feels like the only way to get their message across. Sadly, many people who really didn't mean to kill themselves end up dead or critically ill.

Are your words contributing to feelings of rejection or abandonment? Are you making them feel like a disappointment to you?

Do they feel like they aren't wanted or loved?

8. He or she is your child, treat them like they are yours.

Talking to a family member, friend, or co-worker

1. Know what the Bible says about homosexuality.

- Genesis 1:27-28
- Genesis 2:18-25
- Genesis 19:1-13
- Ezekiel 16:47-50
- Jude 5-7
- Leviticus 18:22, 20:13
- Romans 1:24-27
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
- 1 Timothy 1:8-11

2. Know how to respond to common arguments and questions.

- "Jesus never mentioned it, so it must not be important to Him"
- "We are under the new covenant. The Old Testament law is irrelevant."
- "I was born this way. This is who I am."
- "The Bible is outdated. We've progressed as a culture in regard to homosexuality, just like we've progressed in regard to gender equality, women's right, slavery and racial divisions."
- Are you telling me I can't love? So I have to live a life of loneliness and misery?
- How is it fair that you can have what you want, by I can't have what I want?
- What about the LGBTQ people who produce good fruit?
- What about committed, monogamous, same-sex marriages?

- Can someone be gay and Christian?
- What about Jonathan and David, Ruth and Naomi, and the Roman Centurion?
- Is it a sin to experience same sex attraction?

3. Are they a Christian? Do they want to become a Christian?

If they aren't Christian and they don't want to be.

If you don't know for sure. Assume they aren't.

- Build a friendship, show you care. Don't have to agree with their lifestyle.
- Don't address sin.
- Show them who God is.
- Talk about your faith. Talk about your separation from sin.
- Be a light in the darkness. Be different from the world.

Matthew 5:43-48

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor[i] and hate your enemy.' **44** But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **45** that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. **46** If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? **47** And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? **48** Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

If they aren't Christian, but there is some desire for God.

- Invite them into your life, your community, family, marriage.
- Invite them to your group.
- Give them the entire gospel message.

If they are a Christian.

- Believe the best.
- Sooner rather than later, point out scripture that deals with this.
- If they are receptive, be patient with them. Be willing to walk with them and disciple them.
- If they disagree, respond to their reasoning with your knowledge.
- Be kind, loving and humble.
- Your motivation isn't to win an argument.