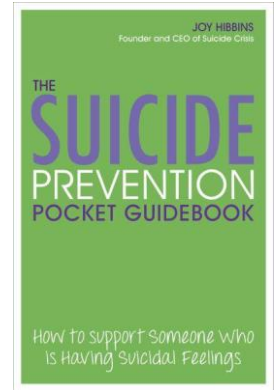


# Book review

## The suicide prevention pocket guidebook: How to support someone who is having suicidal feelings



**Category:** Book Reviews

**Author:** by Joy Hibbens

**Year:** 2021

**Publisher:** Welbeck Balance.

**ISBN:** 9781789562996

**Audience:** Supporting other

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to read this guidebook. Through being a clinician and educator for many years and understanding the impacts of mental health challenges on individuals, I feel privileged and confident to support an individual who may be experiencing thoughts of ending their life. But I know this is not the case for many in other walks of life, so this guidebook is a must for anyone who wants to understand the complexities of support, response, and care around this sensitive and vital issue.

Hibbens has used her own experiences as a person who has managed her own mental health challenges to set up a Suicide Crisis Centre in the UK. The Centre's zero-suicide outcome points to her expertise on this subject.

The guidebook is explicitly divided into two sections, with the first helping the reader to recognise a suicidal crisis. The chapter on myths and misunderstandings is powerful, demystifying common misinformation that the general community believes. Instead of blaming others for these erroneous beliefs, she explains why they have arisen, offering alternative ideas for understanding. Risk factors and warning signs are explained to lead the reader to recognise opportunities to notice, act and respond.

The second part is about response. It was encouraging to know that it is not only about asking the right questions to someone in distress, but also thinking about their body language and deeper-held attitudes around compassion and care. Once the reader has learnt these strategies, they are given ways to support an individual to develop a safety plan with creative suggestions.

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It was also significant to see the chapter on self-care for the carer, acknowledging how difficult a situation may be for anyone in the position of helping. Reading this guidebook assists the reader to be aware of the power of language, care and awareness and offers hope for all who may find themselves caring for another experiencing a mental health crisis.

**Review by Dr Chris Taua of Pumahara Consultants – Personal and Professional Development Specialists**

*Disclaimer: Please note these reviews are not intended as endorsements or recommendations from the Mental Health Foundation. This feature introduces resources that may be useful for individuals with an interest in mental health and wellbeing topics.*

