

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: People walk on a footbridge during sunset in Kuwait. \_ Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

## Suicide: Breaking the silence and helping out



JUST KIDDIN', SERIOUSLY

By Sahar Moussa

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**W**hat are the reasons that make a person commit suicide? Is it depression, debts, addiction, bullying, family violence, physical or sexual abuse, losing a job, emotional pain or lack of faith? People of all genders, ages, and ethnicities can be at risk for suicide; that is why we should never disregard the warning signs. If you hear someone talking about wanting to die or kill themselves, feeling empty or hopeless or having no reason to live, feeling trapped or feeling that there are no solutions, feeling unbearable emotional or physical pain, talking about being a burden to others, talking or thinking about death often, withdrawing from family and friends and saying goodbye to them - know for sure that this person needs help. All thoughts of suicide should be taken seriously and require immediate attention.

We always hear on the news about the number of people who commit suicide and their nationalities, but we never hear the causes behind it. We read the doctors' analyses and reports and also hear various rumors, but what we should do is to deeply investigate the main reasons behind these attempts and highlight them.

I do understand that suicide is considered to be a taboo subject in the Arab world, but it is very important that families share and talk about it in public and spread awareness about the main reasons behind it. Families should reveal secrets in order to help other families that are going through the same situation. Maybe this can help and prevent someone else from committing suicide. Family and friends are often the first to recognize the warning signs of suicide, and they can take the first step towards helping a loved one find treatment for mental health. However, there must also be a platform to discuss these topics openly, to find solutions and save lives. It is also important that we increase mental health awareness in society and end the stigma surrounding it, so people will be more encouraged to seek help. As a community, our duty is to stand by each other and be involved in people's sufferings and pain, so we can ease them and save lives.

The latest suicide cases by citizens and residents raises a red flag, as many of them used various means and methods in

ending their lives. Unfortunately, suicides reached 120 cases from January until November 2021 - around 12 cases per month, according to official statistics. Security sources said a majority of these suicides are committed by Asians, with cases increasing since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic.

If someone tells you that they are going to kill themselves, do not leave them alone. Encourage them to seek help, or if they couldn't, then urge them to tell a trusted friend or family member about their negative thoughts or feelings. If you are feeling suicidal or have serious thoughts of depression and self-harm, you can reach out to professionals at the social development office by calling:

+965/9470-2266  
 +965/6602-2448  
 +965/9333-2007  
 +965/9960-3997 (children and teens)

For adults only:  
 +965/9967-0675  
 +965/6622-0282  
 +965/6507-9596

Phones are answered at various hours depending on staff availability. Please know that you are not alone. Don't give up. Your life matters.