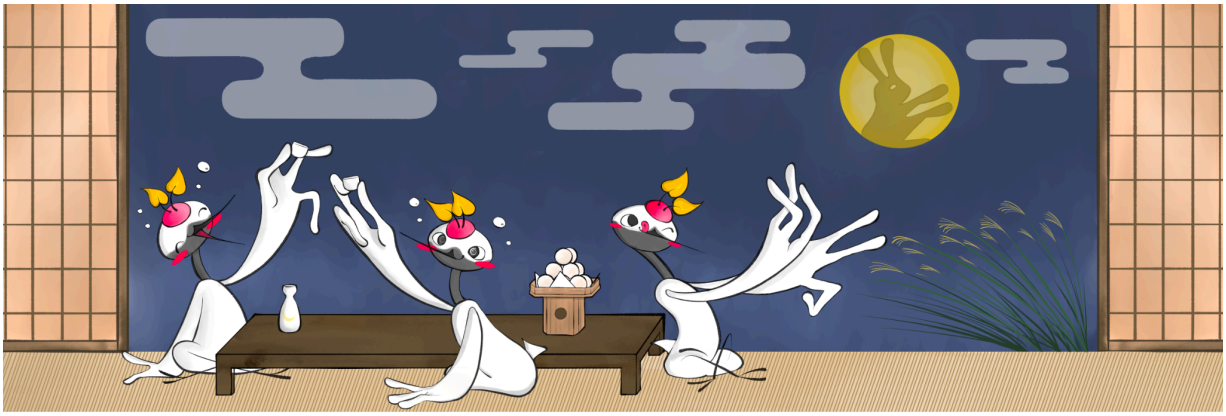
Peer Support Group



September 2026 Mail

We have a very insightful and important edition of the monthly mail! Please enjoy!

Special Spotlight: Suicide Prevention Awareness

⚠️ **Content Warning: This month's spotlight will be discussing the topic of suicide & self harm. Click here to view suicide specific resources. You are not alone.**

What are suicidal thoughts?

When someone experiences so much emotional pain that they feel their life circumstances are hopeless, they may have thoughts about not wanting to live anymore; these are suicidal thoughts. Suicidal thoughts can range from passing thoughts about what it would be like to die, to specific plans to take one's own life. Regardless of the severity, these thoughts should be taken seriously. A hopeless situation is always temporary, and suicidal thoughts can be overcome with help from trained professionals, and support from family and friends.

What are the warning signs of someone who's suicidal?

Here are some common signs that someone may be having suicidal thoughts:

- Talking very openly about death or feeling hopeless in life
- Withdrawing from friends, family, social events, work, etc.
- Dependency on alcohol and substances for coping
- Neglecting personal hygiene or responsibilities
- Acting recklessly or displaying erratic behavior

- Sleeping or eating much more or much less than usual

What can I do for myself?

For those who are suffering from suicidal thoughts, the first step is to reach out for help. It's really difficult to open up about having suicidal thoughts, but reaching out will make a difference. Here are some things to consider while reaching out for help:

- **Decide on who you want to reach out to.** This can include family, friends, or other trustworthy people such as coworkers, teachers, therapists, etc. Consider someone who is a good listener and will be supportive.
- **Reach out to that person**. Let them know that you have something important you want to talk to them about. Use phrases such as "I need to talk to you about something in private", or "Can you make time to talk later? I really need someone to talk to."
- **Prepare to answer questions.** Once you've told the other person how you've been feeling, they will likely follow up with questions such as "How long have you felt like this?" "Are you worried that you might act on these thoughts?" "What do you need to feel safe"? Be prepared for these questions by thinking about how you'd respond.
- **Be clear and specific about how you're feeling**. Don't beat around the bush. Be sure to name emotions, but take your time in explaining how you feel.
- **Ask them to assist you with contacting help.** They can help you look into resources such as helplines, counselors, etc.
- **Create a safety plan together.** Learn more about this in the Safety Plan section down below.

I'm worried someone I know might be suicidal. How do I start the conversation?

If you're worried that someone you know may have suicidal thoughts and would like to help, please remember that suicide prevention can sometimes be as simple as asking questions, listening, and being supportive as they seek out help. Research shows that talking to someone about suicide does not increase the risk of them taking their own life. So let's learn how to start a conversation with someone you worry might be having thoughts of suicide.

- **Start off by telling them you've noticed things are different.**
    - "I've noticed you've been really down lately. Is there something bothering you?"
    - "I see you're really upset. I really care about you, so I want to help. What can I do for you?"
- **If you feel comfortable doing so, you can ask them directly if they are feeling suicidal.**
    - "Are you feeling suicidal?"
    - "Have you had suicidal thoughts?"
- **Take them seriously.** If a friend or loved one expresses that they are suicidal, try your best to listen intently and validate them without judgement.
- **If they do not agree to talk to you, let them know that you will be available to talk when they are ready.** To ensure their safety, ask if it's okay to check-in again later. If you feel that this person is in immediate danger, please contact emergency services immediately.
- **Do not promise to keep it a secret.** This could further discourage them from seeking the help they need. Instead, refer them to resources such as lifelines, counselors, or other trusted professionals. If you feel comfortable, be there with them as they call a helpline or schedule an appointment.

- **Ensure their immediate safety.** If necessary, help remove dangerous weapons or substances from the person's reach.
- **After the conversation, be sure to check-in with the person**. Remind them that you are there for them if they need more help.

How to make a Safety Plan

A safety plan is a tool that can help someone when they start having thoughts of suicide. Although it's helpful to have a safety plan in place before suicidal thoughts occurs, it's never too late to sit down and make one, even when someone is actively experiencing thoughts of suicide.

Mysafetyplan.org provides an easy online tool for putting together a safety plan; simply answer a few questions, and it will automatically create the plan for you.

If you decide to forgo an online tool by writing your own safety plan, these are some ideas of items you want to include on your list:

- Reasons to live (hobbies, goals, people, etc.)
- Names of friends, family, etc. you can connect with
- Resources (Hotlines, clinics, emergency contacts, etc.)
- Coping strategies (self-care,
- List of dangerous items/environments

More tips and information on safety plans are available in the information resources at the end of this article.

Helpline Contact Information:

⚠️ **Note:** If you or someone else is in immediate danger of taking their own life or have taken steps to do so, please call **119** for the ambulance, or **110** for the police. ☎️

TELL Lifeline (telljp.com) | 0800-300-8355 | Check website for hours

For over 50 years, TELL has been the premier English speaking lifeline for those living in Japan. You don't have to be suicidal to call, but TELL volunteers are well equipped to support anyone in emotional/mental distress. Chat function is also available for those who prefer not to talk over the phone.

AJET Peer Support Group Helpline (ajetpsg.com) | 'AJET Peer Support Group' on Microsoft Teams | Every night, 20:00 - 01:00 JST

PSG volunteers are trained in helping callers who may have thoughts of suicide. We are available during hours in which TELL is sometimes offline. If you need someone to talk to, please don't hesitate at all to call us.

Yorisoi Helpline (for Foreigners) (https://www.since2011.net/yorisoi/en/) | 0120-279-338 | Everyday, 10:00 - 22:00 JST

The Yorisoi helpline has a separate line for foreigners in multiple languages! Although this line specializes more specifically in everyday matters, please don't hesitate to call this line if you need to talk to someone. Please press 2 after being prompted by the answering machine.

Online Resources/Organizations:

Here is a list organizations dedicated to suicide prevention; their websites host lots of information and resources on suicide prevention:

International Association for Suicide Prevention:
https://www.iasp.info/

TELL's Resources on Suicide:
https://telljp.com/i-am-feeling-suicidal/

Befrienders Worldwide: https://befrienders.org/

JED Foundation (Suicidal Thoughts Resource Page):
https://jedfoundation.org/im-experiencing/suicidal-thoughts/

Counseling/Therapy:

Check out PSG's Mental Health Counseling Page for further information on mental health counseling. We also covered mental health counseling in the June edition of the monthly mail!

PSG Mental Health Counseling Page:
https://www.ajetpsg.com/mental-health/counselling

Monthly Mail Archive: https://www.ajetpsg.com/newsletter-archive



See you next issue!



Peer Support Group

PSG is a free, confidential listening and referral service for JET Programme participants.

Available every night 20:00 - 01:00

https://www.ajetpsg.com/

Call via Microsoft Teams: 'AJET Peer Support Group'

(Search on Teams: 'ajetpsg@gmail.com')"

Keep up with our newsletter: https://www.ajetpsg.com/newsletter