

## RIGHTS OF SUICIDAL INDIVIDUALS

Adapted from source: Survivors of Loved Ones' Suicides, Inc. (SOLOS)

1. ***Suicidal individuals have the right to have any expression of intent taken very seriously by those to whom they have communicated.*** Those at risk often make a “cry for help.” This should be regarded as a sincere request for aid.
2. ***Suicidal individuals have the right to have their suicidal risk viewed as their most serious problem. There is not a problem more serious.*** Those at risk may have other problems, which may be related to their suicidality. However, once the potential for suicide is determined, it must take precedence until it is abated.
3. ***Suicidal individuals have the right to be seen as wanting to be helped. They want their pain to end. They do not want to die.*** Those at risk are often ambivalent about living or dying because they may equate living with pain and dying with freedom from pain. Intervene on the side of life.
4. ***Suicidal individuals have the right to have their condition brought to the attention of someone in their life who cares for them.*** Family members and friends are available and easily mobilized. Moreover they stand to be irrevocably harmed if a suicide occurs. Let them help.
5. ***Suicidal individuals have the right to know that they are experiencing a chemical deficiency in their bodies brought on by stress and/or mental illness.*** Those at risk have a deteriorating sense of self-esteem and control. They must know that they are not causing what is happening in their bodies.
6. ***Suicidal individuals have the right to know that medications are available which present viable means for stabilizing their situation.*** Those at risk must have early access to antidepressants and other drugs, which may take time to reach clinical effectiveness.
7. ***Suicidal individuals have the right to acknowledgment of their pain, which may be physical, psychological, or emotions in origin.*** Those at risk have severe stress and psychological pain. Ask about their pain, and help to ameliorate it.
8. ***Suicidal individuals have the right to meaningful intervention by those responsible for their care when they are manifesting critical symptoms.*** Those at risk cannot help themselves because of the process of debilitation that they are experiencing. At some point they can only be helped by others.
9. Finally, ***suicidal individuals have the right to pursue treatment for their illness without stigma and fear of financial hardship due to lack of parity between mental and physical health coverage.***