



Stop the Stigma. **Start** the Conversation.

September 2025



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Stop the Stigma. **Start** the Conversation.

About the SPARK Guide



Suicide Prevention Awareness Resource Kit (SPARK) Guide: A Guide for Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Education

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. It is time to come together as individuals, families, educators, and communities to learn, listen, and support one another. It's a month dedicated to raising awareness, reducing stigma, and reminding people that they are not alone.

Mental health is just as important as physical health, yet many people struggle in silence, unsure how to seek or offer help. Talking about mental health and suicide can be uncomfortable, but open, honest conversations can save lives.

The SPARK Guide is designed to provide helpful information, practical tips, and trusted resources to support mental wellness and suicide prevention. Whether you're here as a parent, caregiver, educator, friend, or someone who simply cares about yourself and others, this guide is here to help you learn how to recognize warning signs, start meaningful conversations, and connect yourself or others to support. Together, we can help spark hope, healing, and connection.







Let's Talk About Mental Health and Suicide Prevention





We often hear the terms **mental health** and **mental illness** used as if they mean the same thing, but they don't. While 1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness in their lifetime, 5 out of 5 of us have a brain. That means 5 out of 5 humans have mental health.

At 1N5, we often call mental health **brain health**, because everyone has a brain - and we all benefit from taking care of it!

Mental health affects how we think, feel, and act. It plays a big role in how we handle stress, relate to others, and make decisions. Talking about it helps reduce shame and makes it easier to ask for help when we need it.

Just like we care for our physical health by eating nutritious foods, drinking water, getting checkups, or going to the dentist, we can care for our mental health, too. Mental wellness can look like spending time with people we trust, practicing gratitude, doing things that bring us joy, helping others, journaling, or talking with a counselor or therapist.

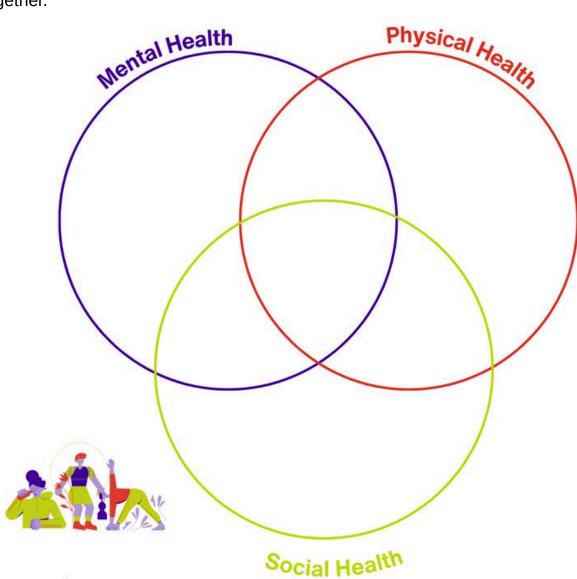




Physical, Mental, & Social Health



Our physical, mental, and social health are deeply connected. Just like our bodies feel better when we move, rest, and eat well, our brains feel better when we care for our emotions, thoughts, and relationships. Taking care of one can support the others because when we feel good physically, we often feel better mentally, too. Use the space below to reflect on how you care for your body, mind, & relationships, and how those habits might work together.



Instructions:

- Identify Your Self-Care Practices: Reflect on the activities, strengths, or strategies you use to support your overall well-being and relationships. Consider what helps you feel mentally strong, physically healthy, emotionally or spiritually balanced, and connected to the people around you.
- Sort Your Self-Care Practices into the Circles
- Find Overlapping Areas: If an activity benefits more than one area, write it in the overlapping
 sections of the circles. For example, yoga might go between Physical, Mental, & Social Health, as
 it helps the body & the mind, and when done with others, belonging & connection.
- Reflect on Your Self-Care Routine: Look at your completed diagram. Are there areas where you
 are strong? Which area of self-care do you prioritize the most, and why? Are there areas that need
 more attention?





Recognizing the signs that someone may be struggling can help save a life. While we can't always see what someone is going through, there are risk factors and warning signs that may signal when a person is in emotional pain or thinking about suicide. Knowing what to look for and how to respond can help you support someone before a crisis becomes an emergency.

















Talking about suicide



Reach Out App



An at-your-fingertips safety and education tool



1N5's goal in creating the app is that everyone, youth and adults, will take advantage of this "at your fingertips" safety and educational tool. Its easy-to-navigate features enabling fast access to help in a crisis is what makes it so unique. One of the most important features of Reach Out is the ability to direct dial or text (with just one button) local emergency services and lifelines, including the national 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. The app also offers information for those who may be struggling (Help Me) and for those who may be supporting someone in crisis (Help a Friend). There is a wealth of information about mental health including conditions, safety steps, risk factors, and tools for coping. Another key component is the option to enter the names and contact numbers for people in your support network, making them immediately accessible in the event of a mental health crisis.

Scan the QR codes above or visit the app store to download today.



Reach Out App



Scavenger Hunt Activity

After downloading the Reach Out App, take some time to explore! This Scavenger Hunt Activity will help you learn the basics and get familiar with all of the features for accessing information and help.

OUT >>> SCAVENGER HUNT	
Download the <i>Reach Out</i> App from the Apple or Android store	
What are the Three Categories at the bottom?	
When you click on Help Me and then Tools For Coping, what are the 12 main categories listed? Hint (self-care is the first one)	
What is one direct verbal clue, one indirect verbal clue, and one behavioral clue that someone might be suicidal the App lists? Direct: Indirect:	
Behavioral:	
Based on information from the app, what are two DO's for helping a friend or loved one in mental distress or experiencing suicidal thoughts? 1 2	
Based on information from the app, what are two DON'Ts for helping a friend or loved one in ment distress or experiencing suicidal thoughts? 1 2	
What are three different pathways a person can use to find the crisis hotline numbers? 1 2 3	
What are the two pathways to find the "Community Resources" tab?	

Mental Health Emergency vs. Crisis

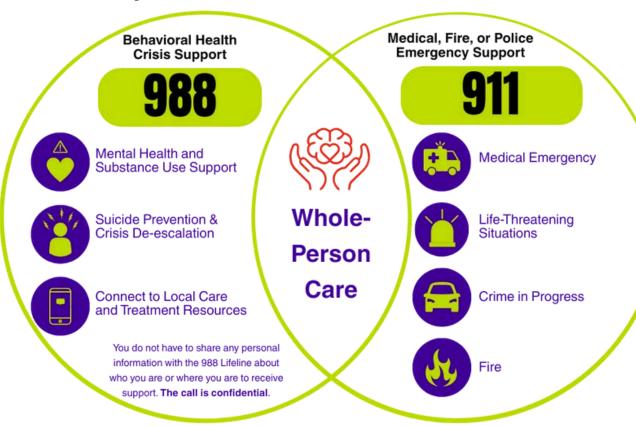


When someone is struggling with their mental health, knowing where to turn can make all the difference. It's important to understand the difference between a mental health *crisis* and an *emergency* - and which number to call. If someone is in immediate danger or needs urgent medical attention, call 911. But if you or someone you know is overwhelmed, in emotional distress, or needs support for suicidal thoughts, call or text 988, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

Help is available 24/7 at 988. Call. Text. Chat online.

You won't be judged, and you don't have to be in a life-or-death situation to reach out. Reach out any time. That's exactly what the 988 Lifeline is here for to listen, support, and connect you to help.

To help your family stay prepared, the next page (p. 08) includes an Emergency Resources sheet that you can print, fill out, and hang on your refrigerator or keep in a visible place at home. **Having this information easily accessible can make a big difference in moments of stress or crisis.**



To learn more visit: https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/988

Emergency Resources



Our Home Address:

Emergencies



Mental Health Support



Trusted Adult to Call: (Name & Phone Number)

Other Emergency Contacts: (Family, Neighbors, Friends)

Preferred Hospital or Urgent Care Location:

What Helps Us Feel Safe or Calm (e.g., music, breathing, walking):

Healthy Coping Skills



When life feels overwhelming, simple coping strategies can help us feel more calm, present, and in control. Techniques like deep breathing, grounding exercises, and mindful movement can support our mental health, especially during stressful moments. In the space below, reflect on ways that you currently cope with stress. In the pages that follow, consider which skills and strategies you may like to try in the future.

Think of a time that you were up against adversity. How did you move throwhat did you do?	ough it?
	ľ
What thoughts filled your mind? What did you feel in your body?	
In which ways might you be able to improve upon your current coping skills strategies? Do you need more time? Resources?	s or

Breathing Skills

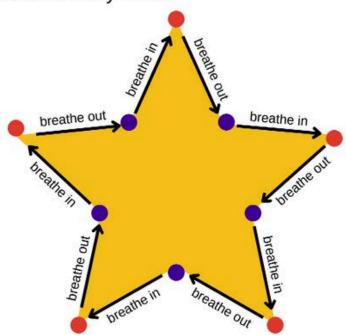


When we feel overwhelmed, anxious, or disconnected, focusing on our breath can help bring us back to the present. Deep, intentional breathing activates the body's natural calming response, helping to slow our heart rate, reduce stress, and regulate emotions. For those experiencing emotional distress or suicidal thoughts, breathing exercises can offer a simple, immediate way to feel more grounded and in control.

Star Breathing:

Breathing exercises can help **calm our mind and body**.

Taking **deep breaths** with star breathing can help **calm our brain** when it's filled with fear, anger, or worry. Follow the directions below and try it out!



- 1. Place your finger on any purple dot.
- 2. Follow the arrow while you breathe in.
- 3. Hold your breath at the red dot for 3 seconds.
- 4. Follow the arrow while you breathe out.
- 5. Come back to a purple dot and start star breathing again.
- Keep going until you've traced the whole star and have taken a total of 5 deep breaths.

Breathing Skills



Birthday Cake Breathing:

Just like star breathing, birthday cake breathing can help us **feel calm** when we are **feeling big emotions**. Try it out

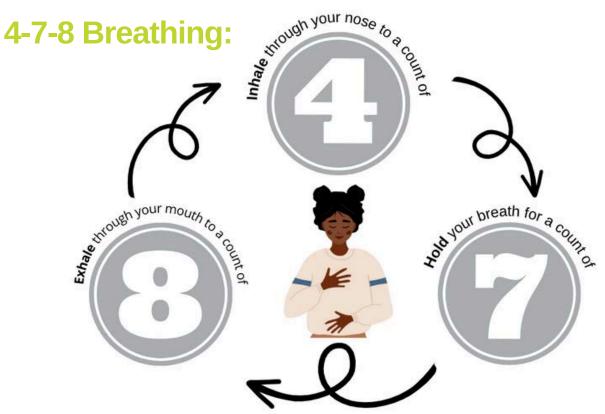




- Imagine your FAVORITE birthday cake is put in front of you. Hold up one hand in front of you with all your fingers straight and pretend they are candles on your favorite cake.
- Take a deep breath in through your nose, like you are smelling your birthday cake.
- Breathe out through your mouth, blowing out one candle and putting down one finger.
- 4. Keep doing birthday cake breaths until all your candles are blown out and all fingers are down, forming a fist.

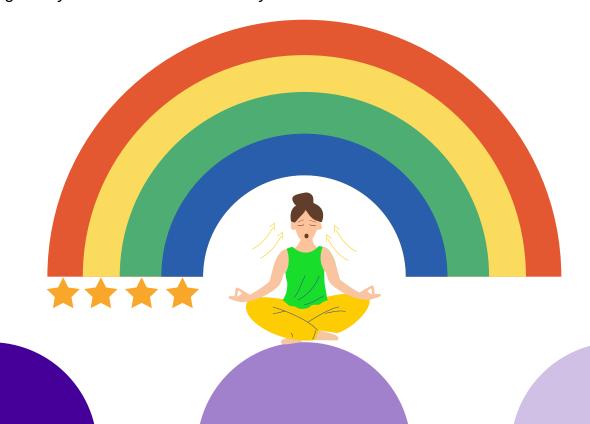
Breathing Skills





Rainbow Breathing:

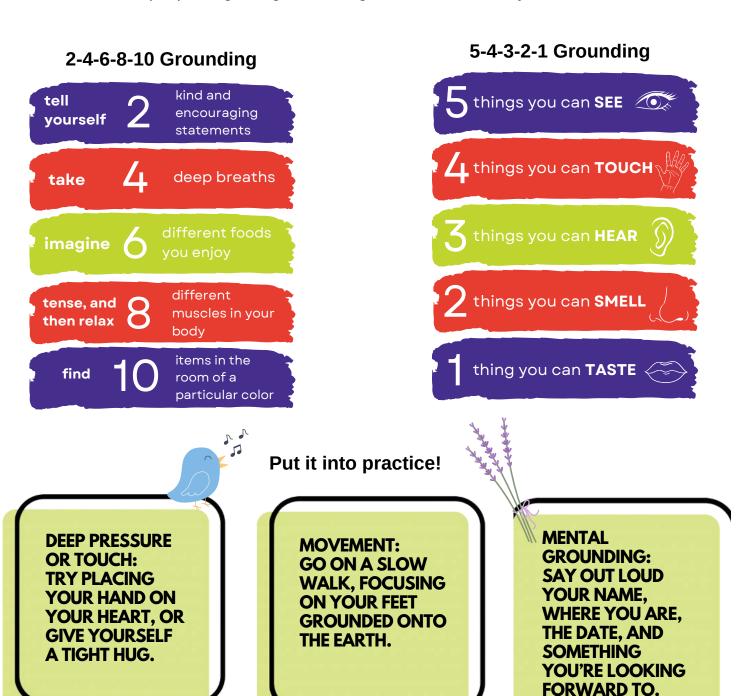
Place your **finger** on the **star**. **Trace** along each **rainbow colors** with your finger as you **breathe** in and out. Try it out below!



Grounding Skills



Grounding techniques are powerful tools that help anchor us in the "here and now," especially during moments of emotional overwhelm, panic, or dissociation. By using our senses to reconnect with the present - what we see, hear, feel, and smell - we can shift our focus away from distressing thoughts. Grounding can be a lifesaving skill by helping individuals interrupt spiraling thoughts and regain a sense of safety and calm.



Mindfulness Skills

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present in the moment—aware of your body, thoughts, and feelings without judgment. It helps us recognize when our emotions are becoming overwhelming and gives us tools to pause, breathe, and respond with intention. By reducing stress and anxiety, building emotional regulation, and nurturing gratitude, mindfulness becomes a powerful support for mental wellness and suicide prevention. It teaches us to slow down, check in with ourselves, and find calm even in difficult moments.

Focus on Breathing



- Use one of your favorite breathing exercises
- · Try a meditation

Practice gratitude



- Journal your thoughts
- Write down 3 things every day that you are grateful for

Mindful Movements



- · Go on a walk
- · Dance/shake it out
- Squeeze your hands
- Tap your feet

Taking care of your body



- Get enough sleep
- Drinking the correct amount of water
- Have a consistent morning/evening routine

Just as we all can respond differently to stressful situations, we all may have different ways of practicing how to decrease our stress. On your own "Mindful Me" page, draw your favorite ways to practice mindfulness to help you destress and be more in tune with your body.



Mindful Me



Mindfulness means being fully present in the moment—aware of your thoughts, feelings, and body without judgment. Practicing mindfulness helps us slow down, manage stress, and feel more connected to ourselves. Everyone has different ways of calming down and finding peace—and that's okay!

Use the space below to draw your favorite ways to practice mindfulness. What helps you feel calm, safe, or focused? Maybe it's deep breathing, taking a walk, listening to music, journaling, stretching, or spending time in nature. Create your own "Mindful Me" picture that shows how you take care of your mind and body.

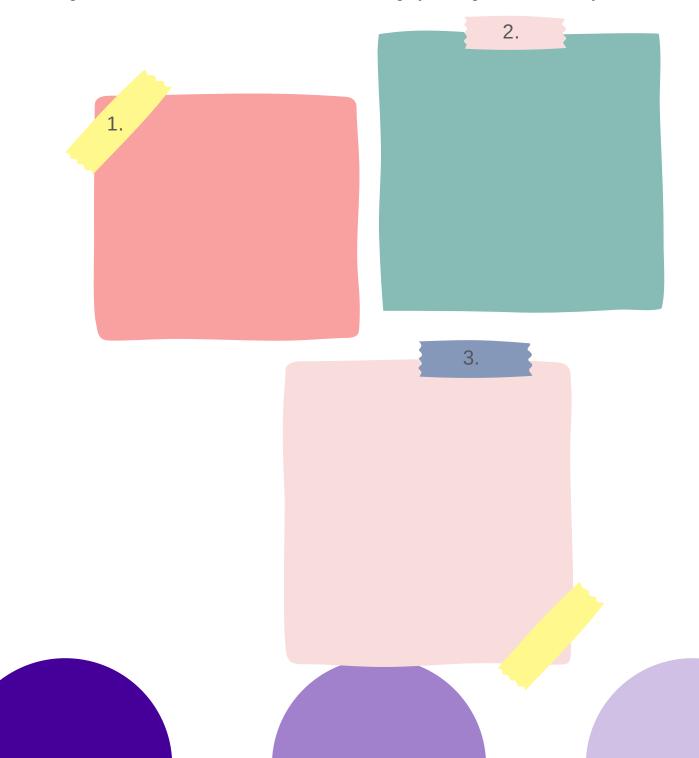


Gratitude Break



Gratitude is the practice of noticing and appreciating the good things in our lives—both big and small. When we focus on what we're thankful for, it can shift our mindset, boost our mood, and remind us that moments of joy and connection still exist, even in hard times. Practicing gratitude regularly can help build emotional resilience, reduce feelings of hopelessness, and support overall mental wellness—making it a powerful tool in suicide prevention and healing.

Let's get started... Take a moment to write 3 things you're grateful for today.



21 Day Gratitude Challenge



Gratitude is the practice of noticing and appreciating the good things in our lives—both big and small. When we focus on what we're thankful for, it can shift our mindset, boost our mood, and remind us that moments of joy and connection still exist, even in hard times. Practicing gratitude regularly can help build emotional resilience, reduce feelings of hopelessness, and support overall mental wellness—making it a powerful tool in healing.

The 21 day Gratitude Challenge can be a fun way to practice finding the good around you. Why 21 days? Because some experts believe that's what it takes to establish a new habit. Use a piece of paper, or this page of your kit, to write down 3 things for which you are grateful. Continue for 21 days without repeating. It can be anything! We often think of the big things in life, but it is also the small things that bring us joy. A good memory, a sunny day, a yummy treat, a text from a friend... Let's get started. Take a moment to write 3 things you're grateful for today.



Emotional Check-in



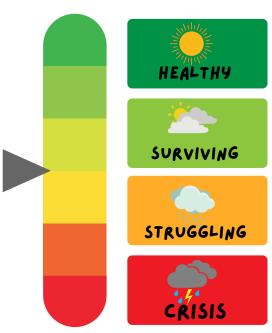
It's important to check in with yourself - especially when you're feeling big emotions.

Taking a moment to notice how you're doing can help you better understand your feelings, name what you need, and decide how to care for your mental health. Whether you use emojis, a mood thermometer, or a battery meter to rate your energy, these tools can help you tune into your emotional state and respond with compassion. Your feelings are valid, and checking in is the first step toward feeling supported and balanced.

Emotional Battery







1-5 Scale Check-in



I don't even know (& that's okay!)



Tired/ Bored



Meh/ Just Chillen



Excited/ Full of Energy



Feelin' Good/ Happy

Emotions Scale

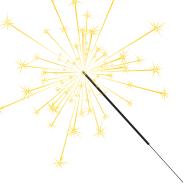












Let's Spark Conversation



Starting a conversation about mental health may feel uncomfortable for some people. Whether you're checking in with a friend, a student, a family member or a loved one, a simple question or kind word can open the door to connection and support. Use these conversation starters to spark honest, compassionate dialogue and show someone they're not alone.







Click here for 1N5's
Conversation Card Deck
and keep the chatter
going!



- Who is a positive friend in your life?
- What do you appreciate about this person?
- What does family support looks like for you?
- Tell me about a person in your family who supports you (immediate, extended, or chosen family), or a way that your family supports you.
- How has physical health been a strength for you?
- · What's your favorite way to be active?
- Who is someone you consider a mentor? What do you appreciate about them? What have you learned from them?
- When you feel overwhelmed with stress and big emotions, how do you like to be supported?
- What helps you manage stress?
- Share about a time that you experienced generosity from someone else or a time when you were generous towards others. How did that make you feel?
- · What sparks joy for you?
- When you are at your most peaceful and feel the most safe, what does that look like? Feel like? Sound like?





Let's Spark Thoughts about Joy



Joy doesn't always come from big moments—sometimes it's the small things that make our days feel brighter. This page invites you to reflect on what sparks happiness, peace, or contentment in your life. When we take time to notice what brings us joy, we're better able to protect and nurture our mental well-being. Use this space to name, celebrate, and reconnect with the things that light you up inside.

Click here for 1N5's
Conversation Card Deck
and keep the chatter
going!

What small things in your day bring you joy or peace?



Who or what in your life lights you up inside?

When was the last time you laughed or felt deeply content? What sparked it?



Let's Spark Thoughts about Mental Health & Awareness



Understanding your mental health is one of the most empowering steps you can take toward wellness. This page gives you space to reflect on how you're really feeling, what your mental health needs are, and how you can care for yourself. Recognizing your emotions, stressors, and strengths can help you respond with compassion and take proactive steps toward balance and healing.

What are the warning signs that your mental health might need extra care?

Click here for 1N5's
Conversation Card Deck
and keep the chatter
going!



What helps you recharge when you're mentally drained?

Who can you talk to when your thoughts feel heavy?

What's one healthy habit that sparks emotional balance for you?



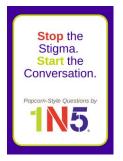
Let's Spark Thoughts about Healing



Healing isn't always linear, and it doesn't look the same for everyone. Whether you're processing pain, grief, or big emotions, this space is for you to explore what healing means in your life. Think about what helps you feel safe, grounded, or supported during difficult times. This is your space to honor your journey and the strength it takes to grow through what you've been through.

When you're hurting, what helps you find light or relief?

Click here for 1N5's
Conversation Card Deck
and keep the chatter
going!



What do you do when pain sparks anger, sadness, or anxiety?

Has pain ever sparked growth or deeper self-understanding?

How can you respond with kindness to yourself when you're struggling?



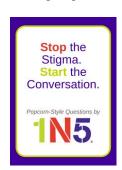
Let's Spark Thoughts about Connection & Prevention



We all need people we can count on. Connection is one of the most protective factors for mental health and suicide prevention. This page invites you to think about who helps you feel seen and supported—and how you might offer that same care to others. Reflect on what sparks hope, trust, or a sense of belonging in your relationships and community.

What words or actions spark hope in others? How do you know when someone might need support, even if they don't say it? What can you say to someone who seems down or withdrawn? Who sparks safety and trust in your life?

Click here for 1N5's
Conversation Card Deck
and keep the chatter
going!





Let's Spark Thoughts about Looking Ahead



When things feel uncertain or heavy, it can help to reconnect with what gives us purpose. This space encourages you to think about your goals, dreams, and the kind of future that excites you. Reflecting on what motivates you - even in small ways - can help you build resilience and stay grounded in hope. You have the power to shape what's ahead.

Click here for 1N5's
Conversation Card Deck
and keep the chatter
going!

What kind of future sparks excitement for you?



What goals or dreams spark motivation in you, even on tough days?

How can you be a spark of hope for someone else?



Let's Spark Thoughts about Inner Strength



Even in the toughest moments, there is strength within you. This page gives you space to reflect on the resilience, courage, and wisdom you carry - especially the kind you've gained through experience. Think about what helps you keep going, who inspires you, and how you show up for yourself when life feels hard. You are stronger than you realize.

Click here for 1N5's
Conversation Card Deck
and keep the chatter
going!

What inner strength has helped you through hard times?



What sparks resilience in you?

When you feel stuck, what helps reignite your energy or perspective?





QPR GATEKEEPER TRAINING

Want to learn more about specific ways to support others? Consider QPR training.

QPR stands for Question, Persuade, Refer - three simple steps anyone can learn to help prevent suicide. QPR is an evidence-based, emergency response tool that can save lives by teaching people how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to respond. It's a powerful tool to have in your mental health toolbox, whether you're a parent, educator, friend, or community member.

1N5 regularly offers *free*, virtual QPR trainings - and is happy to schedule in-person trainings for groups in the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky region.

Visit 1N5.org to learn more or schedule a training for your group.



Key components of QPR training include:

- Recognizing warning signs: Learning to identify both overt and subtle signs that someone may be contemplating suicide.
- Questioning: Developing the skills to ask direct, compassionate questions about suicidal thoughts and feelings.
- Persuading: Encouraging the person to seek help and stay safe.
- Referring: Knowing how to connect the individual with appropriate resources like mental health professionals or crisis hotlines.

Who can benefit from QPR training?

Anyone can be a QPR gatekeeper and benefit from this training. It's particularly useful for those in positions where they interact regularly with others, such as:

- Community leaders
- Doctors and nurses
- Faith Leaders
- First responders (police, EMTs, firefighters)
- Mangers and leaders
- · Parents and friends
- Teachers and school staff
- Those in helping professions
- Youth-supporting adults





Additional Resources

We hope the 1N5 SPARK Guide has been a helpful starting point in understanding mental health and suicide prevention. This work doesn't end in one week or one conversation - it's ongoing and something we must bravely do together. There are many trusted organizations doing important work in this space. Below are some helpful resources where you can keep learning, find support, and stay connected throughout the year.

Ohio & Northern Kentucky Support Lines:

One Control of the Co



Butler County: 844-427-4747

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

1N5 Resources Page

Clermont County:

513-528-SAVE (7283)

Clinton County: 877-695-NEED (6333)

Hamilton County: 513-281-CARE (2273)

Hamilton County Text Line: 839863 and text 4hope

Northern Kentucky: 859-331-3292

Warren County: 877-695-NEED (6333)

Cincinnati Children's Hospital Psychiatric Intake ResponseCenter: 513-636-4124

Ohio CareLine:

1-800-720-9616
24/7 Emotional support provided by behavioral health professionals from anything related to personal or family crisis, mental health or drug and alcohol related concerns.



American Foundation for Suicide Prevention



Mental Health America



Mind Peace



National Institute of Mental Health



Suicide Prevention Resource Center



The Trevor Project

Mindful Coloring



Creative activities like coloring and doodling can be powerful tools for mental wellness. They help calm the mind, reduce stress, and give us a healthy way to express our thoughts and emotions—especially when words are hard to find. Taking time to color can also encourage mindfulness by helping us stay focused on the present moment. Whether you're filling in patterns or adding your own designs, use this space to slow down, breathe, and reconnect with yourself. Every mark is a reminder that caring for your mental health can be both healing and creative.

Use this space to doodle something that makes you happy or brings you peace—whatever helps you feel like you.

After this page, you'll find a collection of fun, calming coloring pages to choose from.

These designs are here for you to enjoy at your own pace—no rules, no pressure, just a creative way to care for your mind and spark a little joy.



Each day you do a self care activity, shade in that day's number in the word September. You can match the colors to the self care activities listed or choose your own!

ourself gift

learn a new skil

go to a museur

read a book

create a vision board

for the month

relationships

fildəəp

nurture your

sleep in

exercise

try a new

digital detox time

meditate

reorganize your

spend some time with nature

space

dance freelu

hug someone

eat mindfully and drink ice water

cozy corner createa op

go out for acoffee

takea

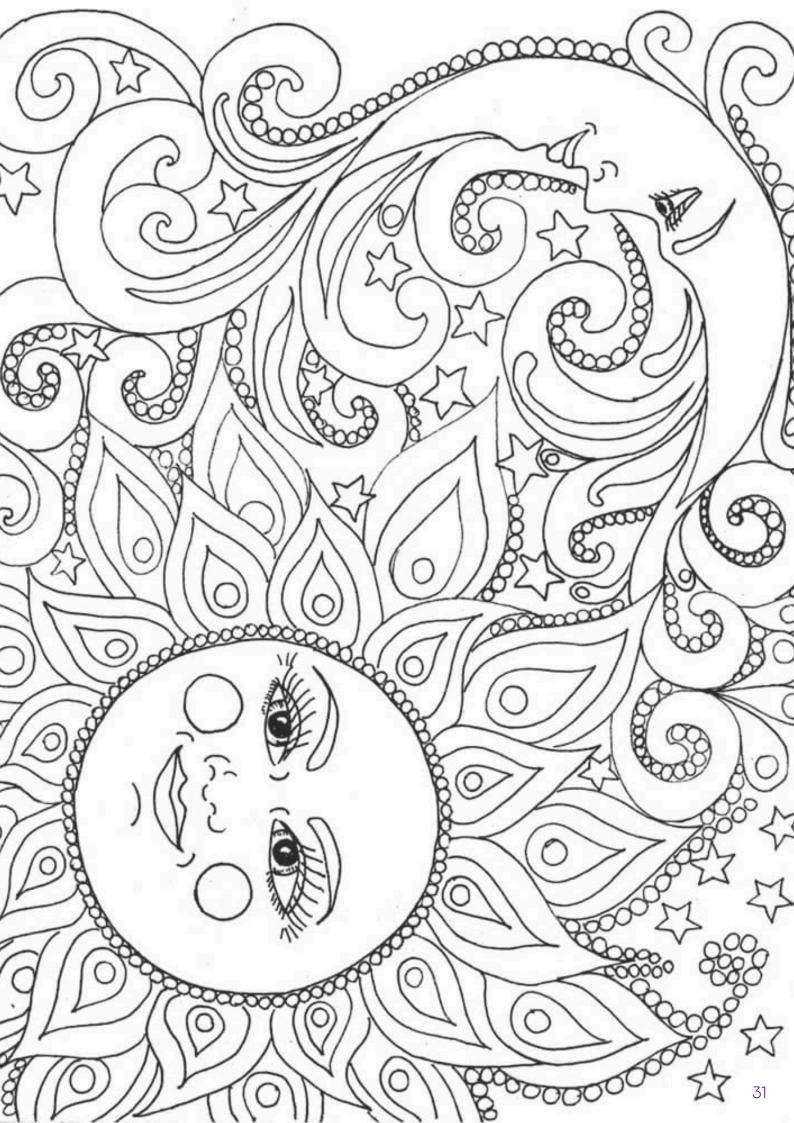
takea bath nods power nap

establish boundaries try a new recipe

ractice self compassion

do skincare











Contact Us







BRING 1N5 TO YOUR WORKPLACE, COMMUNITY, OR SCHOOL.

LET'S START THE CONVERSATION!



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