

THE 45

Awareness grants choice. Choice grants options. Options save lives.

SIDE A

If you are alone

You had a thought. The thought is not you.

You picked this up because something hurts right now. Read slowly. Do the steps in order. Stay with it. There is no wrong way to do this.

I can teach this because I have lived it. I came close enough to losing my own life to know exactly how the thoughts in the example below sound from the inside. The reframe at the bottom is what I gave myself once I learned how. It is what I am giving you now.

FIRST. BREATHE.

Before anything else. Four breaths. In through the nose for four counts. Hold for four. Out through the mouth for four. Hold for four. The hold is the part most people forget. Don't skip it.

Do that three times. In nose, out mouth. Three rounds. The hold every time.

After three breaths, let your breathing go back to its own rhythm. In through the nose, out through the nose. Slow. Just breathe at whatever pace feels natural now. Let your body take over.

When you feel ready.....start.

NOT

A thought just arrived. Catch it. Watch it land.

It is NOT you. It is a thing that happened in your head.

One of the thoughts in there might be about giving up right now.....or even about ending your life. Whatever shape it takes for you.....maybe “I can’t do this anymore,” maybe “I don’t want to live,” maybe “I may as well kill myself”.....that thought is in the room. You don’t have to pretend it isn’t.

That thought is normal in extreme pain. Your system is overloaded and the thought is your system trying to do its job the only way it knows how. You cannot disappear it.

You can answer it. **Thanks for sharing. We will call that Plan Z.** We have other plans to try first.

Then keep going.

NEAR

Get near the feeling.

That thought put a feeling somewhere in your body. Find it. Maybe it is in your chest. Maybe your throat. Maybe your stomach. Maybe your shoulders. Wherever it is.

Put your hand NEAR that spot. Gently. Stay there.

Breathe slowly into that spot. Long breaths. If you need the box back.....four in, hold four, four out, hold four.....go there. Stay as long as you need.

When you are ready.....breathe the feeling out. Imagine it moving from that spot, into your hand, up to your mouth,

and gone on the exhale. Blow it away.

The body is speaking. You are listening. That is the whole job.

When you are ready.....move on.

NEED

Ask the feeling what it needs to hear.

What hurts the most right now? What is the pain underneath the thought?

What do you NEED to hear right now to feel healed or repaired?

Wait for the answer. It will come. It comes from inside you, not from anywhere else. You already know what it is.

NOW

Take the answer your body just gave you. The thing you needed to hear. Give it to yourself NOW.

At least two ways. Pick from these:

Say it out loud.

Write it down.

Hear it firmly in your own head, in your own voice.

Try to make one of them out loud. If you are still hurting after this, you will have something to say when you pick up the phone.

That is the JHOLT. You just did it.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Here is what it sounded like for me.

The thoughts.....I felt abandoned. Helpless. I am not okay. Broken trust. I can't trust anyone. I may as well kill myself. Nobody wants me. I always screw everything up. I can't take it anymore.

The body.....Right in my chest. Pounding. Felt like an elephant was sitting on me.

What I needed to hear.....You will be okay. You do have people you can trust. There are people in your world who care about you, who love you. Who might you reach out to?

What I gave myself.....I will be okay. I can trust myself. I belong in my world.

You can do this again tomorrow. And the day after. The more you do it, the faster the second thought arrives. Save this on your phone and use when needed. Just know you are never alone.

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If you are still struggling, reach out. You have something to say now.

Canada and US: 988 (Suicide Crisis Helpline).....call or text. UK: 116 123 (Samaritans). International: findahelpline.com

Peer-to-peer resource developed by Jhöl Unger. Not a substitute for professional care.