

THE 45

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

SIDE B

For someone trying to help

Someone you love is hurting right now. You picked this up because you want to do something. You can.

You don't have to fix them. You don't have to know what to say. Your job is to walk them through this and listen.

Before you do anything else, say something like this:

"I don't really know what to say or do here. I just want you to know that I'm here and I'm not going anywhere. I care about you. I have a tool I'd like to walk you through. It's going to ask you some questions and I'm going to listen to every answer. We're just going to go through it together, one step at a time. Would that be okay?"

If they say yes, keep going. The tool leads. You listen.

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. What I am giving you now is what kept me here.

FIRST. BREATHE WITH THEM.

Before anything else. Slow their breathing by slowing yours.

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 three rounds with them. In nose, out mouth. The hold every time.

After three, let their breathing go back to its own rhythm. In through the nose, out through the nose. Slow. You match them. They will match you back. This is a vagus nerve reset. It works.

When they feel ready.....start. Ask them and wait for permission. Speak softly.

NOT

Tell them: a thought just arrived. It is NOT them. It is a thing that happened in their head.

Ask them gently: what is the thought?

They might be thinking about giving up right now.....or even about ending their life. They might not say it directly. They might say “I can’t do this anymore” or “I don’t want to be here” or “I may as well kill myself.” Whatever shape it takes.....that thought is probably in the room. You don’t have to pretend it isn’t.

Tell them: that thought is normal in extreme pain. Their system is overloaded and the thought is their system trying to do its job. They cannot disappear it.

They can answer it. Together: **Thanks for sharing. We are going to call that Plan Z.** We have other plans to try first.

Then keep going.

NEAR

Ask them: where do you feel that in your body right now?

Maybe their chest. Maybe their throat. Maybe their stomach.

Tell them: put your hand NEAR that spot. Gently. Stay there.

Breathe slowly into that spot together. Long breaths. If they need the box image back.....four in, hold four, four out, hold four.....go there with them. Stay as long as they need.

When they are ready.....tell them to breathe the feeling out. Imagine it moving from that spot, into their hand, up to their mouth, and gone on the exhale. Blow it away.

Their body is speaking. You are both listening. That is the whole job.

When they are ready.....move on.

NEED

Ask them softly:

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

Wait for their answer. It will come. It comes from inside them. Don't fill the silence. Let them find it. Do not help. Encourage or invite. Ask the question again slowly if needed.

NOW

When they find the words.....catch them. Hold them.

NOW reflect them back. Say: "Now give that to yourself. Say it out loud."

Mirror their words back to them. You are the witness. The healing is theirs. Your job is to make sure they hear themselves say it. Ensure they really feel it by asking them slowly and softly how does it feel to give that to yourself. There is no wrong reaction. The key is they feel connected to the words.

That is the JHOLT. You just walked them through it.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Here is what it sounded like the night I did this myself.

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.

That was the JHOLT. Before it had a name. The person in front of you can find their version of those words. You are there to make sure they hear them.

You did the right thing by being here. You don't have to be perfect. You have to be present.

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If they are still struggling, help them reach out. They have something to say now.

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

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