

# Navigating A Mental Health Crisis

June 8, 2018

It has been a very tough and tragic week, with the passing of Kate Spade and Anthony Bourdain. Because of this, along with the release of a [new CDC report](#), we are seeing an increase in media calls and needs from the community around suicide. I thought it would be helpful to share with you some messaging that we are pushing out through our social media channels as something you all can post too, or use as talking points should you be called for media interviews.

This is also a key time, when you are working with media, to remind them of the [safe reporting guidelines](#) on suicide. I have seen many reputable publications this week not following these, which is upsetting, so any opportunity we have to engage with media to reiterate the importance of these is valuable.

Suggested messaging:

- If you or anyone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide, please reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline @800273TALK (8255). Help is available. You are not alone.
  - We know how hard it can be to ask for help. Calling a number and being connected to a stranger can seem a bit impersonal. But we want to remind you: the people on the other end of the line care. Talk to someone. Call the Lifeline. You are important to us.
  - The Lifeline can also be a resource and support for family and friends worried about someone who may be at risk or people who have lost a loved one to suicide.
  - People can also reach out to the Crisis Text Line – the free, 24/7, confidential text message service for people in crisis. Text HOME to 741741 in the United States.
- It's also important to know warning signs and risk factors for suicide, that way you can better support others. Be sure to review these so you know what to look out for if you ever need to encourage someone to seek help. <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Conditions/Related-Conditions/Risk-of-Suicide>
- Crisis episodes related to #mentalhealth conditions can feel incredibly overwhelming. There's the initial shock, followed by a flood of questions—the most prominent of which is: “What can we do?” Start by downloading our free crisis guide: <https://www.nami.org/crisisguide>
  - In the pages of our guide, you'll find:
    - Understanding mental health crises
    - Preparing for a crisis
    - What to do during a crisis
    - What to do following a crisis
    - A sample crisis plan
- Our hearts are with the friends and family of Kate Spade and Anthony Bordain. As we learn more, remember to talk about suicide in a safe way:
  - say “died by suicide” or “took his/her life”, not “committed suicide”
  - exclude details of method used

- exclude depictions, location of death and notes left behind
- Our friends at [@afspnational](#) have some important resources for those reporting on suicide. If you are a journalist or work in media, please learn more on helpful tips and recommendations for safe reporting <https://afsp.org/about-suicide/for-journalists/>
  - Start any contact with media by directing them to the link to reporting guidelines: <http://reportingonsuicide.org/>

Media tip: We can try to use our NAMI voice to give messages of hope – although that can be difficult during a week like this. Consider identifying in advance for media stories a few people who have attempted suicide who can talk directly about their recovery journey – research indicates that may be more powerful in reducing risk for suicide than interviews with experts, data etc.

As always, we are here to help, so please reach out if you have any questions or needs.

Thank you,  
Lauren

Lauren Gleason  
Director, Public Relations & Media