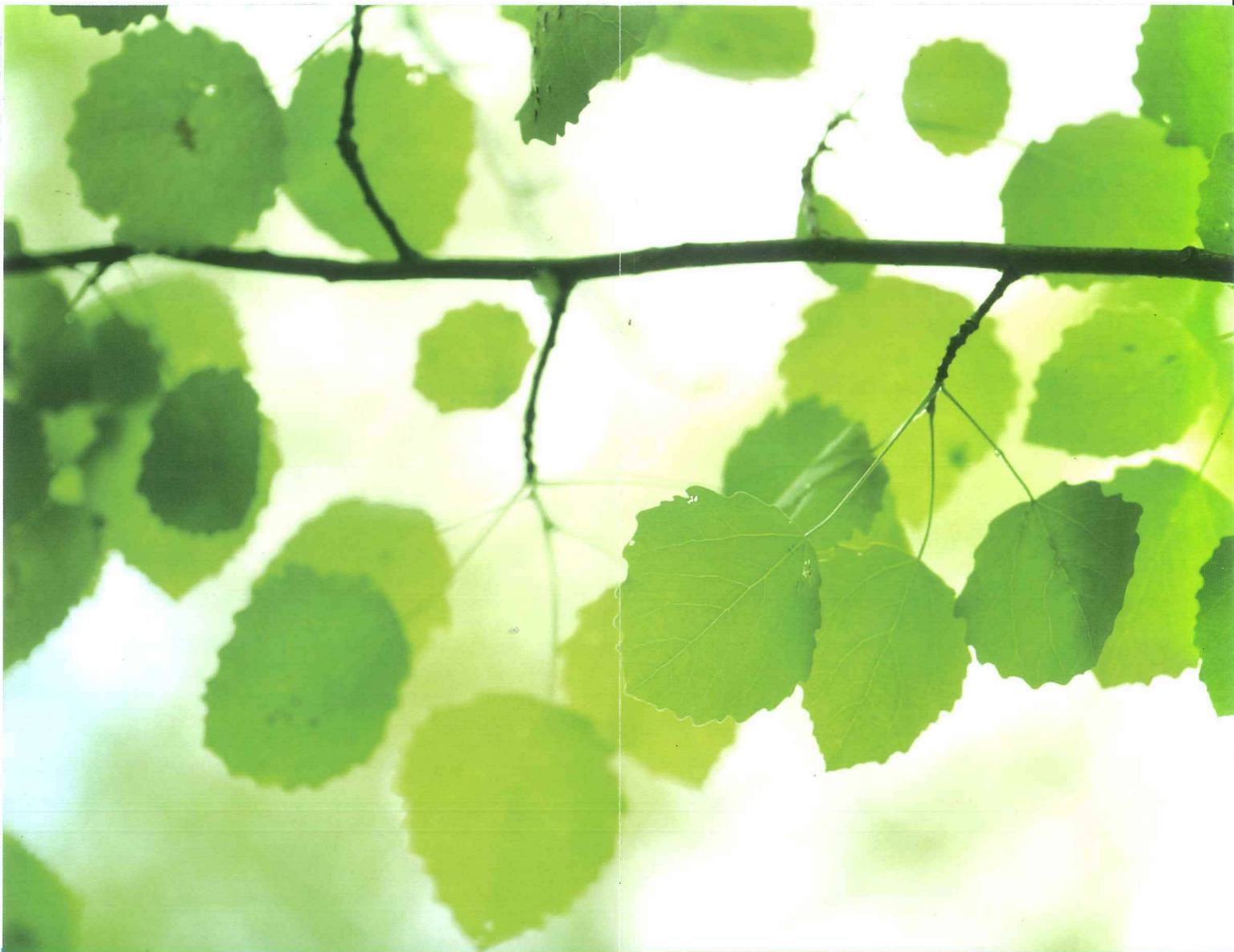


Suicide Prevention

re:  
MIND

DEPRESSION & BIPOLAR SUPPORT





**“I believe this  
group has  
saved my life.”**

**-Participant**



## Understanding Suicide

If depression or bipolar disorder affects you or someone you care about, it is important to know that mental disorders are treatable. Medication, psychotherapy, lifestyle changes and support from others can improve symptoms and help manage mental disorders.

The symptoms of depression and bipolar disorder may include feelings of intense sadness, hopelessness, quick changes in energy, drastic changes in appetite, changes in sleep patterns, inability to concentrate, decreased ability to perform one's usual tasks, loss of interest in activities, and thoughts of death or suicide.

- Mental disorders are not character flaws or signs of weakness.
- Mental disorders will not "go away" if a person has a "strong will" or "thinks positively."
- Mental disorders are medical conditions caused by changes in the chemistry of the brain.
- Mental disorders can be managed with counseling and/or medication provided by mental health professionals.

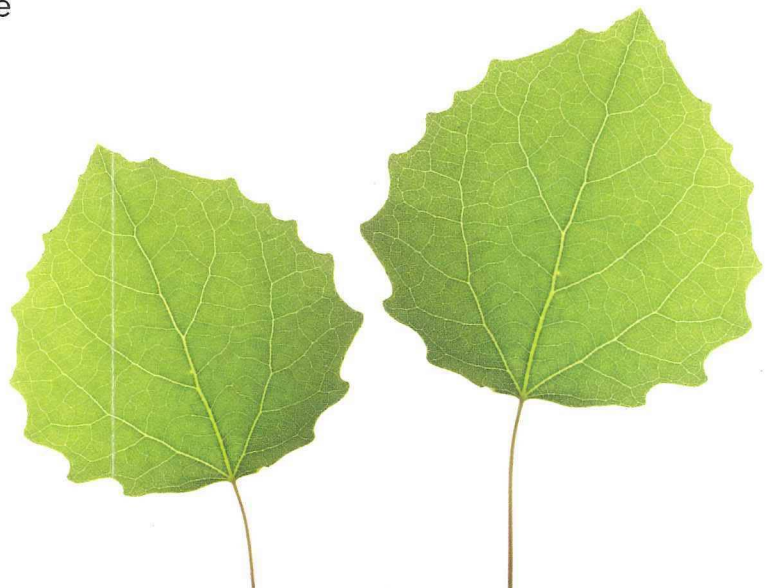
Suicide can be prevented with the right kind of treatment and support. The act of suicide is often a desperate attempt to control the symptoms of a mental disorder. During a severe depressive or manic episode, a person has little or no control over painful and disturbing thoughts and feelings.

## Facts about Treatment

There are many different medications and therapies available for successful treatment.

Finding the right treatment might take time. Different people respond differently to medication and therapy.

Medication usually takes 4-6 weeks to reduce symptoms. Always check with your doctor about any changes in treatment. Don't get discouraged if your symptoms come back. Talk to your doctor.



## Are You Feeling Suicidal?

Discuss with your doctor if you are having suicidal thoughts. It is important to recognize these thoughts for what they are – expressions of a treatable medical illness. These thoughts are temporary and they go away. Do not let fear, shame or embarrassment stand in the way of communication with your physician, therapist, family or friends. Tell someone right now!

- Tell a trusted family member, friend or other support person. Try not to be alone when you feel this way.
- Get help. Tell your doctor/therapist.
- Suicidal thinking can be treated. When suicidal thoughts occur, they are your signal that you need help.
- Know that you can get through this and learn to effectively manage your mental disorder.
- Promise yourself you will overcome these feelings for another day, hour or minute.

## Warning Signs of Suicide

- Unbearable feeling – extreme feelings of hopelessness, despair, self-doubt.
- Taking care of business – making end of life plans, preparing wills, giving away valued possessions.
- Rehearsing suicide – discussing suicide methods, purchasing weapons or acquiring large quantities of medication.
- Drug or alcohol use – can cause impulsive behaviors.
- Isolation – cutting off social connections with friends, family, quitting a job.
- Sudden sense of calm – a person who was recently feeling upset or hopeless suddenly seems very calm and settled. It might be a sign that he or she has decided on a plan to die by suicide.

## If you are currently feeling suicidal:

- Call 911
- Go to a hospital
- Call Harris Center Hotline - 713.970.7000

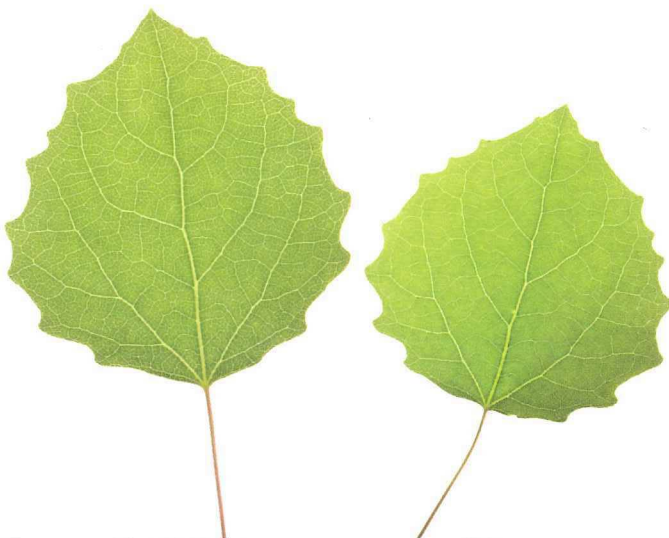


## Suicide Prevention Plan

- It's very helpful to have a safety plan ready before thoughts of suicide occur. Make a plan for life. Make a plan to stay alive and follow it—seek help!
- Stay in contact with your doctor. Always have your doctors' phone number with you, as well as a suicide hotline number, 1.800.273.8255.
- Stay in contact with trusted friends. Develop a list of phone numbers of those you trust and keep it with you.
- Recognize symptoms for what they are. Remember feelings are not facts. Suicidal feelings are not your fault, and they are only a symptom of your illness.
- Write down your thoughts. Spend time each day writing down things and people that you appreciate and bring you joy. Refer to this when you feel low, sad, or suicidal. A mood tracker is helpful.
- Connect with other people socially. When you are feeling suicidal, don't be alone for long periods of time. Seek trusted friends.
- Avoid drugs and alcohol. Consumption of drugs and alcohol can lead to actions that could be very dangerous.
- Know when it's best to go to the hospital. Ask for help if you need it!
- Understand your health coverage. If you have insurance, call the number on the back of your card for providers.
- Keep yourself safe. Make sure you don't have access to guns or weapons.
- Give yourself time to get better.

**Get the help you need!**  
**Your life is worth it.**

Suicidal thoughts are temporary. Suicide is permanent. Don't give in to suicidal thoughts – you can overcome them!



## Emergency Numbers

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
1.800.273.TALK (8255)

Harris Center Hotline  
713.970.7000

Crisis Outreach Team  
713.970.7520

Houston Police Department  
713.884.3131

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard Houston  
713.529.3211



## Mental Health Information Resources

Psychiatric Hospital-Public (Uninsured)  
Harris Center Neuropsychiatric Center  
Ben Taub Hospital  
713.970.7070  
Harris County Psychiatric Center  
713.741.5000

Psychiatric Hospital-Private (Insurance Only)  
West Oaks Hospital  
713.995.0909  
Methodist Hospital  
713.790.3599  
Cypress Creek Hospital  
281.586.7600

[www.remindsupport.org](http://www.remindsupport.org)  
713.600.1131

