

Stigmatizing Suicide Has Been a Disaster

I believe that part of the reason why suicide rates are increasing is because the subject of wanting to commit suicide has become so stigmatized. Individuals who experience such an impulse or desire aren't able to discuss it without risking condemnation, involuntary commitment, the loss of their guns and children, and all manner of intrusion into their lives.

Thus, rather than being able to "talk it out," they silently stew on the issue until they eventually attempt it.

Most people who fantasize about committing suicide won't be saved by crisis hotlines because they don't consider their desires to be a crisis. They won't discuss their impulses with a therapist because they (justifiably) fear being reported to and kidnapped by the state. They *might* however talk about what's going on to their friends or family *if* they weren't afraid of the repercussions of verbalizing their thoughts.

Stigmatizing suicide has (predictably) made things worse rather than better. Suicide isn't a crime or an 'unpardonable sin,' it's a natural inclination that a majority of people experience at one time or another. The best way to combat this impulse is to allow it to be openly discussed without fear of censure or intervention.