

Alternatives to Suicide (Alt2Su) Info

Group Background and Values

Alternatives to Suicide (Alt2Su) groups were created by the [Wildflower Alliance](#). During groups, facilitators and group members practice the [VCVC approach to peer support conversation](#).

Key Alt2Su Values

- Group members can talk about anything, including wanting to die.
- Group members each get to make sense of our own experiences and do not label experiences for each other.
- Please do not give unsolicited advice or assessment of other peoples' experiences.
- Group members have the freedom to question social norms and systems such as gender, psychiatry, and capitalism.
- Groups are non-clinical and do not assume suicide is attached to a "mental illness"
- Privacy about what is shared is maintained outside of groups. This includes no calls to police or other involuntary interventions.
- Groups are meant to be free from bigotry, including harmful generalizations about people of certain identities.
- Participants respond to each other with [validation, questions, relating, and "I"-statements](#)
- Everyone in a group is invited to be a leader in holding and protecting these values.
- Observers are not welcome. This includes researchers, reporters, providers, students, and loved ones of someone struggling with suicide who does not have that experience themselves.
- Group times are for support only. They are not for addressing conflict that happened outside of that group or discussing the structure of the groups themselves. Those conversations are reserved for regular Alt2Su Community Meetings.

Group Practices and Guidelines

Facilitators

There are usually two facilitators from the Wildflower Alliance. Sometimes there will be only one facilitator, or a facilitator and a volunteer. Groups are facilitated by people with lived experience of thinking about and attempting suicide.

Facilitators' Roles include:

- Opening the group
- Doing time checks
- Making sure everyone has their access needs met
- Responding to breaches of values with reminders
- Supporting the group in navigating tension and conflict
- In rare cases, asking people causing disruptions to leave
- Being a regular member of the group

Privacy

- We do not ask for any identifying information from group members
- Our team does not take routine notes on what happens or what is shared in Alt2Su groups.
- In situations where these values and guidelines are being violated: Our team members may take personal notes for their own memory. The purpose of these notes are:
 - To share in co-reflection with a supervisor and/or co-worker to figure out together if and how to respond
 - To be able to accurately and confidently address whatever issue arose
- In the unlikely case of an active, physical medical emergency, or evidence that a vulnerable person is being harmed, our team may attempt to have a conversation around seeking life-saving intervention.

Guidelines for Participants

When & How to share

- People take turns sharing what's going on for them and receiving a few responses. Once one person is done, anyone else may share next.
- When you share you are welcome to let the group know if there's any specific kind of feedback you are or are not looking for, including if you don't want any responses at all.
- It can be helpful to say when you feel like you've gotten enough responses, so the group knows it's okay to move onto listening to the next person.

If you have a problem with something that happens in a group please reach out to the group facilitators if that feels possible at alt2su@upstreamprevention.org. If the issue is not resolved, or if your issue is with a facilitator themselves, please reach out to Upstream Prevention at info@upstreamprevention.org

Other Resources

Indiana Warm Line – Keys Consumer Organization

- Phone Number: [800-933-5397](tel:800-933-5397)

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

- Phone Number: 988
- [Crisis Text line](#): Text IN to 741741 for free, 24/7 crisis counseling. We're here for you.
- [Veterans Crisis Line](#) (for military service members, veterans, and family): Call 800-273-8255 and press 1
 - Text [838255](text:838255)
 - Support for deaf and hard of hearing: [800-799-4889](tel:800-799-4889)
 - [Homeless Veterans Chat](#)
- [Youthline](#)