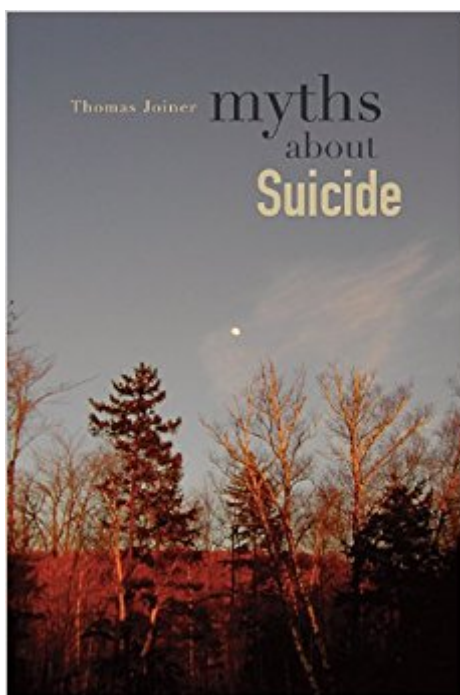


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# Myths About Suicide



## Synopsis

Around the world, more than a million people die by suicide each year. Yet many of us know very little about a tragedy that may strike our own loved ones—and much of what we think we know is wrong. This clear and powerful book dismantles myth after myth to bring compassionate and accurate understanding of a massive international killer. Drawing on a fascinating array of clinical cases, media reports, literary works, and scientific studies, Thomas Joiner demolishes both moralistic and psychotherapeutic clichés. He shows that suicide is not easy, cowardly, vengeful, or selfish. It is not a manifestation of "suppressed rage" or a side effect of medication. Threats of suicide, far from being idle, are often followed by serious attempts. People who are prevented once from killing themselves will not necessarily try again. The risk for suicide, Joiner argues, is partly genetic and is influenced by often agonizing mental disorders. Vulnerability to suicide may be anticipated and treated. Most important, suicide can be prevented. An eminent expert whose own father's death by suicide changed his life, Joiner is relentless in his pursuit of the truth about suicide and deeply sympathetic to such tragic waste of life and the pain it causes those left behind.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Every one of the million or so people who commit suicide yearly leaves behind not just life but a tangled skein of unanswered questions and myths, to say nothing of loved ones who suffer collateral damage. With the assertion that people who commit suicide hold two psychological mindsets—the perceptions that one is a burden and that one does not belong—psychology professor and suicidologist Joiner tackles many commonly held beliefs and debunks them. For the

most part, he builds his arguments on solid ground. For instance, he addresses the popular yet apparently groundless notion that women who have breast-augmentation surgery are at greater risk for suicide. When he is armed with solid logic, facts, and credible statistics, his arguments are potent. When it comes to interpreting motivations, however, even a professional like Joiner has to qualify many assertions with such phrases as I believe and in my view. Give him points for attempting to clear up this mystifying behavior. --Donna Chavez --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Myths about Suicide seeks to debunk the myriad ways that suicide is stigmatized by ignorance, disgust, contempt, and callousness. (Peter Monaghan Chronicle of Higher Education 2010-04-25) In this very readable book, Joiner's wide ranging knowledge of the subject leads to deeply penetrating thoughts on the psychology of suicide. He attacks myths from multiple perspectives, drawing on materials from biblical times to the present, scientific research studies and clinical case studies, animal studies, literature, popular culture, and film. The book also advances Joiner's own theory of suicide: people who kill themselves feel that they are a burden to their socially significant others and feel alienated from society. Whether readers are beginning students or advanced researchers, they will find an abundance of stimulating thought and data here. (W. Feigelman Choice 2010-11-01) When people kill themselves and those left behind are interviewed, they often respond with timeworn phrases, understandably. But such cliches often only spread myths...Joiner doesn't discuss the morality of killing oneself, nor how suicide can sometimes be a reasonable option. Rather, he seeks to spread the truth about suicide while "leaving a healthy fear of it intact." In that way, many lives may be saved and much anguish averted. Joiner's theory is that people desire suicide when they simultaneously hold these two psychological states in their minds for long enough: the perception that one is a burden and the sense that one does not belong. Only a more widespread and accurate understanding of suicide, he insists, can help counteract such states and prevent unnecessary deaths. (Susan K. Perry Psychology Today 2011-07-15)

This is the best academic/professional book about suicide I have read. It's pairs compassion with science and thoroughly educates on how to converse about suicide without being hard to read. I wouldn't recommend for early in a grief journey, as I had limited focus and would not have been able to comprehend the messages. It's a bit lengthier, but it comes across as safe and embracing--I am sure I will return to this book time and again. If you love someone who lost someone to suicide or you are in any professional capacity dealing with suicide survivors, you should read this book. It's

tone is compassionate and caring, while being honest and straight to the point. I would prefer speaking about suicide in the vocabulary and tone of this book, and I would seriously appreciate any of my loved ones taking the time to digest it and respect its messages.

The author manages to take an intensely human and interesting topic, and render it dull as dishwater, through an arms-length, academic, almost "list-making" recounting of theory and facts. I have read programming books that were more gripping. This could have been so much more. What a shame.

Dr. Joiner has given us another opportunity for deep reflections on the myths related to suicide. If you are sincerely interested in the theory of Dr. Joiner and want to appreciate this book even more, then I suggest reading first his previous book (*Why People Die by Suicide*, 2007.) There are many myths related to suicide and the merit of Dr. Joiner is not only "to collect" them in one book, but mostly "to explain" why these myths are still perceived as "the truth" and "to present" the "anti-myths" by supporting them with reliable research. In addition, Dr. Joiner builds his counterarguments using his theory and what strikes the readers' attention is the "simplicity" with which he explains his view. His writing is simple and direct; he is able to connect myths, false beliefs, research and antimyths as my grandmother was able to mix together all the ingredients for the perfect Sunday sauce.....it looked simple but almost impossible to replicate. I highly recommend this book if you are interested in accurate information about suicide delivered to you by one of the best suicidologist in the world. PS: I am Italian so I can certify that Bellagio is located in Italy and "not only" in Las Vegas (see pag.281.) If you still do not believe me visit [...].

Really excellent book on understanding suicide. This is the man to read to understand why someone would choose that route. Addresses myths such as suicide being a cowards way out, or being a cry for help. Very readable, and lots of research behind it.

helpful and interesting

This is a book you want to read if you are a counselor or do therapy. The author is the foremost expert on suicide. The book is a great summary of the most common myths about hypnosis, backed by research and written in an occassionally humorous style. I recommend this book to all counselors and psychotherapists as a must-have book.

For those who need to know "how could this happen?" This book explains why commonly held notions are generally not true.

Dr. Joiner does an excellent job of de-mything the many troubling aspects of Suicide. Physicians are not always attuned to the newer research and prevention methods. Society needs to take a more proactive stance for the Real Advances in Suicide Prevention. Some of the chapters start out debunking one myth but then Dr. Joiner lends some credence to the myth by his examples. Good Start, every physician should read this book.

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