



19th of June 2025

A Faithful Response to Suicide: Compassion, Connection, and Hope

Life is sacred - cherished across all faiths and traditions. When someone is burdened by deep emotional pain or despair, and begins to consider or act on suicidal thoughts, it is not a sign of weakness or failure, but often a silent cry for help - a reflection of suffering that needs to be met with compassion. We know that conversations about mental health are often avoided, especially by those who fear they will be judged in their professional and personal lives.

While no faith encourages the taking of one's own life, spiritual communities are moving away from judgment and silence, toward understanding and care. Suicide often stems from complex challenges - mental illness, trauma, addiction, financial crisis, burnout or loneliness - not moral failings. Recognising this, people of faith are embracing their role as sources of comfort and support in moments of crisis.

Today, ancient spiritual wisdom is finding common ground with modern mental health insights. Both affirm the deep human need for connection, meaning, and belonging, and recognise that vulnerability does not mean weakness. More and more, faith communities are setting aside outdated stigmas to walk gently with those in pain - offering prayer, presence, and hope instead of shame or silence.

Places of worship can be powerful sanctuaries for healing. Through rituals, teachings, and acts of service, they can foster a sense of purpose and remind people that their lives matter. By listening without judgment, offering safe spaces, and standing alongside those who struggle, spiritual leaders and communities can be lifelines of resilience and love.

Now is the time to deepen this work. By engaging in suicide prevention, faith communities become bridges to healing - reaching across difference with empathy and courage. With greater knowledge and culturally sensitive care, we can walk with those at risk, comfort the bereaved, and help ensure no one faces their darkest moments alone.

Promoting a Harmonious Multifaith Victoria

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The [Victorian Suicide Prevention and Response Strategy 2024–2034](#) outlines a 10-year, whole-of-community plan built on evidence, compassion, and collaboration. It responds to [Recommendation 26](#) of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System and calls all of us - governments, faith communities, and individuals - to act.

We stand in full support of this strategy and its resources, and we urge all Victorians to unite in the effort to reduce suicide and its devastating impact. For information and supports, please visit this [website](#).

As people of faith, let us affirm the sacred worth of every life. Let us draw on the strength of our traditions to be sources of light and love in the lives of those who suffer. Together, may we respond not with fear or judgment - but with hope, compassion, and unwavering care.

Faith Communities Council of Victoria is comprised of the following peak bodies:

Baha'i Community of Victoria, Brahma Kumaris Australia, Buddhist Council of Victoria, Hindu Community Council of Australia (Vic), Islamic Council of Victoria, Jain Council of Victoria, Jewish Community Council of Victoria, Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria and the Victorian Council of Churches.

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