thinking of ending it all?
If you have been thinking about taking your own life or have already tried to do it, this booklet should help you on the road to feeling better.

Why do you feel like this?

Lots of young people feel suicidal at some point in their lives. Thousands go into hospital each year having tried to harm themselves. Many more try to take their own lives — and nobody ever gets to know about it.

Most of them recover and never try again. A small number, however, do succeed in killing themselves. This is why feeling suicidal can be dangerous and needs to be talked about.
Suicidal thoughts can come into your head ... 

... for no reason at all. This is very frightening and sometimes happens because some of the chemicals in your brain are not working properly. You may have an illness called depression which you will need to talk to your doctor about:

... because something has happened to you which has upset you a great deal.

Like for example:
- splitting up with a boyfriend or girlfriend
- being bullied
- feeling ashamed of something you've done
- feeling ashamed of something that was not your fault
- someone close to you has died
- not getting the exam results you wanted
- feeling confused about your sexuality
- feeling you can't live up to other people's expectations
- problems at home

... when someone close to you has attempted or actually committed suicide

... because you have been using drugs or drinking heavily

or ... because of a combination of these things.
What kind of person feels like this?

It can happen to anybody.

It's very hard to generalise about this, but many young people who think about taking their own lives...

- are very sensitive to failure or criticism
- set themselves targets which are difficult to achieve
- cannot cope well with disappointment
- find it difficult to admit to having problems and don’t know how to solve them
- find it hard to tell others how they are feeling

They often feel worthless, feel hopeless about the future, or believe that no one cares about them, even that the world would be a better place without them.
Friends and family may be seeing someone who on the outside...

- is angry and hostile
- has become quiet and withdrawn
- is the life and soul of the party
- seems no different from usual

... but they have no idea how you are feeling inside.

Many young people don't actually want to die, but are looking for an answer to their problems, an end to their pain and despair - and suicide can seem to be the only way out.

When this state of mind has been reached, it is impossible to think straight (although you will believe that you are thinking clearly) and things can get totally out of proportion.
How do you know if you've got depression?

Just like physical illness, mental health problems can vary from mild to serious. Most people who suffer a bout of psychological illness will go on to make a complete recovery.

Anxiety and depression are very common and both can be successfully treated. Depression, however, can kill – if suicidal thoughts get the better of you.

You may be feeling

- tired all the time
- anxious
- sad and miserable
- tearful
- can’t be bothered to do things
- inadequate
- like shit!
- panicky
- scared people will laugh at you
- agitated
- that you’re going mad

Perhaps you’ve

- lost interest in food
- found it difficult to concentrate
- lost your confidence
- lost interest in other things too – hobbies, sports, your appearance
- stopped going out with friends

You MUST go to see your doctor who will be able to tell you if you are depressed, and will know what to do to help you get back to normal.
What happens if you go ahead?

Sometimes the person who attempts suicide does not die but damages their body so badly that full recovery is impossible.

If you take your own life, there is no turning back, no second chance. Death is final.

You won't be around to help other people who may be feeling just as bad as you have felt.

It can be extremely traumatic for the person who finds your body. Something they will never forget.

The effect of suicide on family and friends can be overwhelming. Of all the different ways of dying, suicide is the most difficult for those who are left behind to cope with – whether they are parents, children, partners, friends or even acquaintances.

You have prevented other people from helping you – forever.