

I WAS shocked to learn that one of my friend's neighbour (a man aged 27 years) committed suicide by lying down on the railway tracks leaving his wife and one year old baby behind. What a ghastly way to die!

A weeks prior to that I learnt about my eighteen-year-old niece's classmate (only child of her parents) committed suicide by hanging herself.

Although I did not know either of them personally, I was disturbed. Reason being this reminded me of painful memories of my friend's daughter who too ended her life in a tragic way.

My friend used to often share the problems her daughter was having (more often than not because of her own terrible temperament) in her marital relationship.

Being a close family friend and a counsellor I gathered that the girl was not able to cope with the situation. I happened to meet her at different times and felt she really needed help to sort out her own issues.

As a genuine friend I tried telling my friend of seeking professional help for her daughter and the instantaneous response was, "She doesn't have any big problem. Its just that she is a 'little' adamant." One critical day she committed suicide.

Somehow knowing her problems I was not shocked, but of course I felt helpless. I realised the futility of all the people who are in helping profession. What do you do if someone doesn't

approach you? How will you help if someone just denies that any problem existed at all?

Although there are a small number of people who take such step impulsively, majority of the suicides are not impulsive. Suicide is a consequence of long drawn anger, frustration, agony and utter hopelessness. All this takes a long time to build up, then why is it that not even once the person thinks of taking help.

Even if we were to put aside people who take the extreme step of committing suicide, as a counsellor I have come across several people who 'need' help but they do not want to even admit they have any 'problem'. Everything is taken as a part of life. Agreed it is! Nevertheless one can unquestionably improve quality of life if he/she were to first accept that one needs help.

Asking for help doesn't come easily for many of us. We somehow deny our need to ask for help and delay it as much as possible. Why is it? Is it worth it? Isn't it better to seek help and lead a better quality of life than to suffer alone or take this extreme step and leave your loved ones bewildered? Well! It is a matter of making a choice, either be in the cocoon and suffer silently or take courage to struggle and experience the freedom from pain. Choice is yours!

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# ASKING FOR HELP

The background of the lower half of the page features a large, solid red silhouette of two people facing each other in conversation. The person on the left is gesturing with their right hand towards the person on the right. The title 'ASKING FOR HELP' is printed in large, bold, black capital letters across the center of this silhouette.