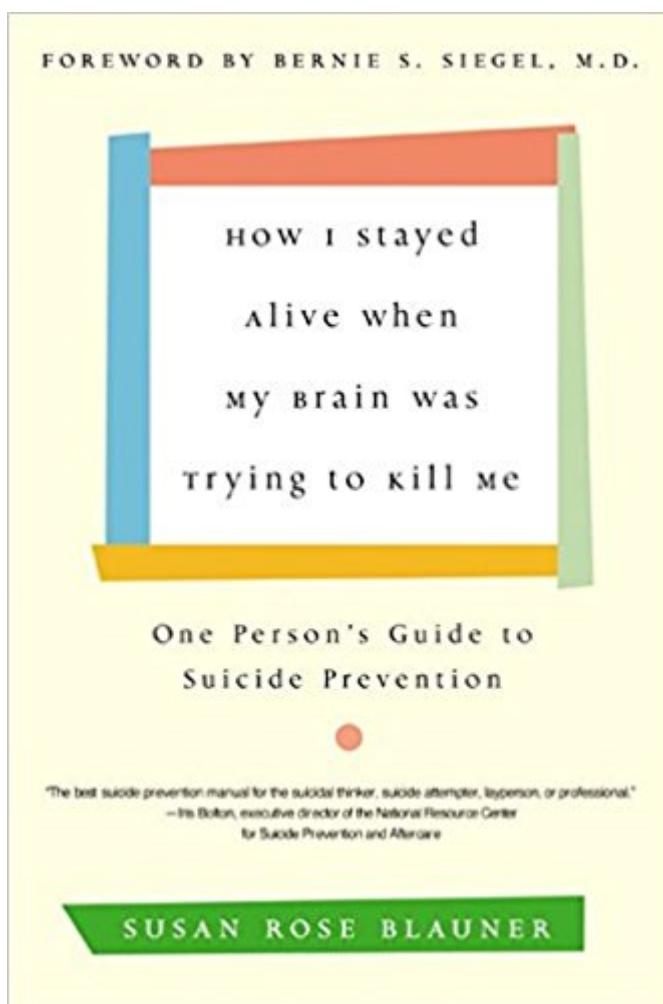


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# How I Stayed Alive When My Brain Was Trying To Kill Me: One Person's Guide To Suicide Prevention



## **Synopsis**

The statistics on suicide are staggering. According to the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention, in 1997 in the USA more teenagers and young adults died from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza and chronic lung disease combined. It is also an international epidemic. Susan Blauner is the perfect emissary for a message of hope and a program of action for these millions of people. She's been through it, and speaks and writes eloquently about feelings and fantasies surrounding suicide.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

For 18 years, Blauner survived obsessive suicidal thoughts with the help of three psychiatric hospitalizations, an excellent therapist, 12-step support groups, "spiritual exploration," Prozac and a network of family and friends. This personal account of what worked for her offers excellent practical advice to "teach you how to get through those excruciating moments when every cell in your brain and body is screaming, 'I want to die!'" Approaching "suicidal thoughts" as an addiction, Blauner clearly explains how some people's "brain style" responds to environmental stresses or "triggers" with obsessive suicidal thoughts rather than cravings for alcohol or other drugs. Strongly influenced by the very successful 12-step model, she fashions a patchwork of strategies for understanding, preventing and treating suicidal "gestures," which she asserts are not actually attempts to die but efforts to stop unbearable psychological pain. Childhood sexual abuse and the death of her mother when she was 14 contributed to Blauner's long struggle, but she herself had to make the decision and effort to begin therapy at age 19, before her problem was even recognized or treated. Now

Blauner provides others like herself with "Tricks of the Trade" that can literally save lives. With neither hollow platitudes nor medical doublespeak, she covers brain function, antidepressants, finding a good therapist, identifying triggers, creating a "Crisis Plan" for critical moments and heading off suicidal thoughts by coping with hunger, anger, loneliness and fatigue. Blauner provides an extremely valuable and much-needed tool for both suicidal thinkers and their loved ones. B&W illus. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, suicide is the eighth leading cause of death for all Americans and the third leading cause of death for those ages 15 to 24. Yet as Blauner points out, suicide is rarely talked about openly. In her heartfelt and important book, Blauner, who has survived multiple suicide attempts and developed a statewide suicide prevention program for teens in Massachusetts, offers guidance and hope for those contemplating ending their lives. The story of her 18-year struggle with suicidal impulses is followed by a concise explanation of the biochemical process inside the brain of a suicidal thinker. The bulk of the book consists of her 25 personal "tricks of the trade," practical, safe alternative activities any suicidal thinker can employ to "outthink" his or her brain and stay alive. These include asking for help, keeping emergency contact information handy, creating a crisis plan, keeping a journal, practicing meditation, and attending support groups, to name just a few. The chapter on helping others will be useful for mental health professionals. A resource list includes numerous crisis hotline telephone numbers, web sites, and contact information for support organizations. This vital resource is recommended for all public libraries. Dale Farris, Groves, TX Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Thought this would be more of a "memoir" than a how-to book. It also seems to be faith-based, and I am anti-theist, so any references toward "god" or religion are an immediate turn-off. Haven't picked up the book since I noticed that and won't likely finish it.

one of the best books on suicide I've read, and I've read a few! This book works with giving a PLAN on how to deal with suicidal thoughts, from the first moment they enter your mind, and there is a way to make up what to do next, until advice is given on what to do when it is very bad, enough that one might follow through. I learned a lot from this book. very down to earth, great guide

Wow! This is a fantastic book with many lists, charts, and ideas for people suffering from borderline personality disorder and depression that results in suicidal ideation! My therapist agrees with me that this book is a must-have for anyone searching for tools and coping mechanisms to deal with constant suicidal and self injurious thoughts. The author even writes that the reader needs to set goals when reading this book (number of pages or minutes to read-15 minutes is recommended) and once the goal is accomplished, the reader is suggested to stop reading and reward themselves with "me time" such as take a walk, talk to a friend, take a bubble bath, get a massage, eat something delicious and comforting, and/or do something else that you consider special for yourself. I skipped around the book and read the parts that focus on my specific issues, and now, I am going to re-read the entire book straight through, reading for 15 minutes and then taking a break each time. This book has helped me extremely, but I do recommend that whoever reads this book not to use the book as a replacement for therapy- the book is a nice companion and supplement with therapy. It has helped me deal with and change my "bad" thinking patterns. I am so grateful that I found and purchased this book!

Good

I am a psychologist dealing with suicidal patients every day and I am always looking for ways to get through to them. I liked this book so much that I bought a copy to loan out to my patients. As you can tell from the title, the author has a good sense of humor, but she deals seriously with the challenges that she faced and other suicidal individuals face. She shows that she's been there and she is not handing out easy answers. She really knows how suicidal individuals think and function. I found her story uplifting because she was sick for so long that one would be tempted to give up hope for her, and yet she clearly has come out the other side. I also liked that she explains that it was a long process, no overnight flash of insight, and that she still needs to keep vigilant for slipping back into old habits. She's not promising that one day life will be a bed of roses. The advice she gives is practical and sensible from my 30 years of experience in mental health.

I would recommend this book to anyone with suicidal issues. The first chapter hit home so hard and fast I busted out crying but in a good way! I found that I actually do want to live and I am trying my best to get back into life. Still a very slow process but this book was a great beginning for me. Very easy to read and not a bunch of medical jargon you cant understand. Direct and to the point, we are not alone out there! Love it. Great author and I will read more of her books.

I really liked this book. The author makes you feel that you are not alone in your sufferings. She also offers helpful tips and contact information on helpful places to call if you are in crisis. Overall this book is amazing and a life saver!

We took a 12-week course sponsored by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) called "Family-to-Family". It was a great course to help family members and care givers learn about mental illness and all of its accompanying challenges. This book seemed like a condensation of most of the things we learned in the class. I was very impressed with how much fantastic information was presented within its pages. I would highly recommend it to anyone who is concerned about the illness of a loved one. It will help you in so many ways.

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