

Resource: Reflection Questions to Help Create a Safe and Courageous Space to Talk about Suicide

1. Understanding Safe Spaces:

- What does a "safe space" mean to you, especially in the context of a faith community?
- How can faith leaders and members signal that their community is a safe space for vulnerable individuals?
- What are the key characteristics of a space where people feel comfortable sharing their struggles?

2. Practical Steps to Create Safe Spaces:

- What physical, emotional, and spiritual elements contribute to creating a safe environment?
 - Examples: private counseling areas, nonjudgmental attitudes, inclusive language.
- How can faith communities balance respecting confidentiality with the need to act when someone is in crisis?
- What specific faith-based practices (e.g., prayer, scripture, rituals) can be adapted to support those who feel vulnerable?

3. Barriers to Safe Spaces:

- What common barriers prevent individuals from feeling safe sharing their struggles in faith settings?
 - Examples: stigma, fear of judgment, lack of mental health awareness.
- How can we address and reduce these barriers within our communities?

4. Role of Leadership and Community:

- How can faith leaders model openness and vulnerability to encourage others to do the same?
- What role can community members play in supporting the creation of safe spaces beyond the leadership's efforts?

5. Inclusivity and Cultural Sensitivity:

- How can we ensure that our safe spaces include individuals from diverse cultural, social, and faith backgrounds?
- What steps can we take to make sure our language and actions are sensitive to the needs of marginalized groups (e.g., LGBTQ+ individuals, and racial minorities)?

6. Sustaining Safe Spaces

- How can a faith community regularly evaluate whether it maintains a safe space for its members?
- What ongoing training or resources might be necessary for leaders and members to sustain these efforts?

