



Let me just start off by telling you this is going to be a serious message. I'm not saying that I won't be funny at all, because I couldn't help that if I tried. But what I want you to know is that if there's ever a message where you should remove your distractions and lean in, it's probably this one. Maybe this isn't for you, but for someone else who needs to hear it. It's important for you to not distract others during our time.

How about this. Everyone take a deep breath.

Now make awkward eye contact with someone sitting around you. Okay, let's dive in.

[TEACHERS NOTE: Open with a story about someone who thought about taking their own life but didn't actually do it. It could be a personal story, or you could use the illustration below.]

Buzz Aldrin went to the moon, He returned to Earth and found that he couldn't cope with the life to which he returned. He went into serious depression and eventually shared his experience on talk shows and newspapers, because he wanted others to know about his struggle.

Winston Churchill, one of the great leaders in human history suffered terribly from depression. He said it followed him like a black dog.

Ernest Hemingway, the tougher than nails author of best sellers like *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *The Old Man and the Sea*, had such a problem in this area that he eventually took his own life.

Abraham Lincoln, whose *House Divided Against Itself* speech helped to win him the presidency, knew awful divisive doubt and depression in his own life.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers of all time, who was known for his sparkling wit and quick humor, nevertheless had a lifetime battle with depression which was caused by gout, the disease which led to his death at the age of 58.

Depression is not a new phenomenon. King David, Elijah, Job, Jeremiah, Judas, and Paul also endured the pain of depression. Depression affects everyone; men and women, young and old, rich and poor.

Maybe you've been there. Maybe you've been close to that place, in that darkness. Maybe you know someone who has thought about taking their own life or someone who committed suicide.

Let's watch this video, which is a song you may have heard but never realized what it was all about.

[TEACHERS NOTE: Play the song "Before You Go" by Lewis Capaldi. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jtauh8GcxBY> or read the lyrics aloud.]

Lewis Capaldi grew up on Scotland and has been performing ever since he was young. His song *Before You Go* was written about suicide. Speaking about the song, Capaldi said this: *"It's about suicide...not necessarily the act of it, but, like, after it happens, the aftermath of it. And...people kind of blaming themselves or starting to think, you know, 'What could I have done to kinda help that person?' or whatever."*

Capaldi wrote the song based on events that happened in his own family. He said;

*"When I was five or six...my aunt committed suicide and I just remember recently speaking to my mom about her feelings, about going through that sort of thinking in your head, you know, 'What could I have done here? Could I have done anything?'"*

[TEACHERS NOTE: Source link to above quotes: <https://www.live955.com/before-you-go-the-family-tragedy-that-inspired-lewis-capaldis-new-single/> ]

It's a powerful song and "What could I have done?" is a fair question to ask when dealing with suicide. During our time tonight, here's what I want you to know more than anything:

Even when we wrestle with dark thoughts, we have hope in a loving God who is good to us. I've learned this in my own life and seen it in so many others. We called this message *Under the Surface* because we are going



## THE BIG IDEA

Even when we wrestle with dark thoughts, we have hope in a loving God who has been good to us.

## GOAL OF SMALL GROUP TIME

To have an authentic conversation with students about suicide and how it has impacted their lives and others around them.

Invite them to put the suicide prevention hotline in their phones, 1-800-273-8255

## GET THINGS STARTED

1. What stood out to you from the song, *Before You Go*?
2. Why do you think suicide can be such a difficult topic to talk about?

## IN THE WORD

1. Read Psalm 13 together as a group. Share observations from the passage.
2. What do you think David was feeling when he wrote, “*how long will you hide your face from me?*”
3. Look at the difference between what David wrote in verse one and verse six. Why do you think both of those verses can describe David’s perspective at the same time?

## MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. What has your experience been with suicide, either in your own life or in the lives of those you know? [Leader Note: under no circumstances should you promise confidentiality, but assure your group this is a safe place.]

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