

Why the language we use to talk about suicide matters

Suicide has historically been surrounded by stigma and misunderstanding, which can cause further harm to people who are already in emotional pain. The words we use to talk about suicide can either reinforce shame and silence, or help create space for openness and support.

At Rula, we choose words that are:

- ✓ Respectful of people’s lived experiences
- ✓ Free of judgment or blame
- ✓ Supportive of healing and connection

What inclusive language looks like:

Instead of...	→	Try saying
“Committed suicide”	→	“Died by suicide” or “lost their life to suicide”
“Successful/failed attempt”	→	“Survived a suicide attempt” or “attempted suicide”
“Suicidal person”	→	“Person experiencing suicidal thoughts”
“At risk of killing themselves”	→	“At risk for suicide” or “navigating suicidal thoughts”



A final note

Suicide prevention starts with compassion, and that includes the language we use. By carefully choosing our affirming words, we foster a culture where people feel safe to speak, supported in seeking care, and respected in their experiences.