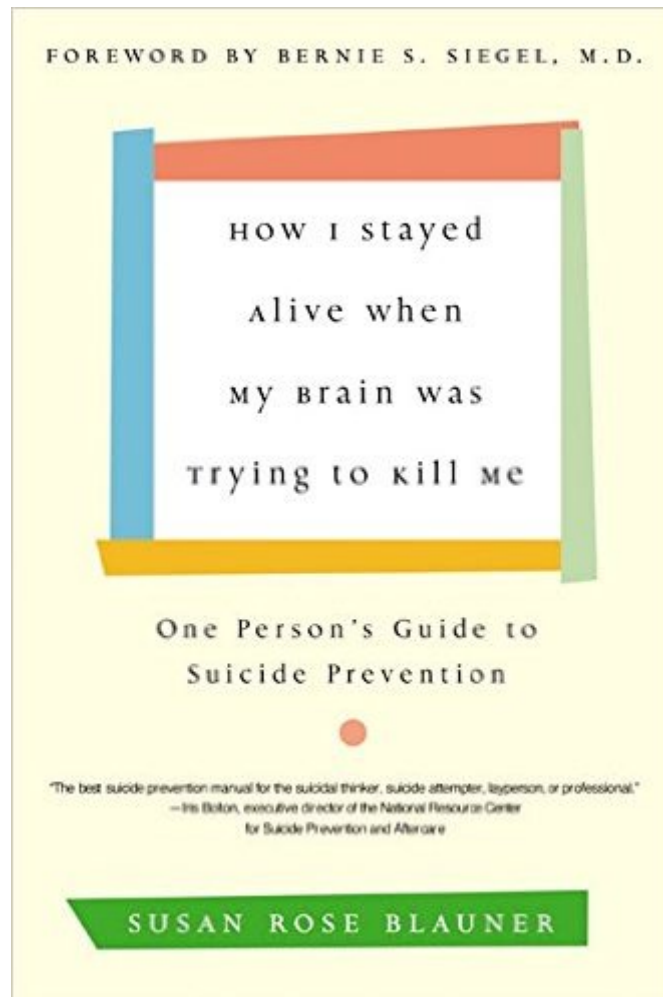


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# How I Stayed Alive When My Brain Was Trying To Kill Me: One Person's Guide To Suicide Prevention



## 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

I wish I'd had a copy of this book when I was suicidal. It's full of simple, practical ideas for keeping yourself safe and beginning to feel better. The crisis plan is especially good, and easy to follow even when you find it hard to think straight. The only reason I gave this book four stars rather than five is that I came across it after I'd recovered, and haven't tried out all of its techniques myself - but from my experience of what did help me, they're all excellent. "How I Stayed Alive..." would also be a useful self-help book for people who self-injure, even if they don't feel suicidal. Most of the suggestions work just as well for getting through the urge to self-harm. I've heard two main criticisms of this book. The first is that the author wasn't "really" suicidal, but just attention-seeking. I disagree. All suicide attempts should be taken seriously, even if the person's done it many times before, or chooses to get help afterwards. In fact, the more unsuccessful suicide attempts a person has made, the more likely they are statistically to die by their own hand. And seeking medical help after one has taken an overdose can, tragically, be too late. That's why books such as this one are so important, because they help prevent the suicide attempts in the first place. Admittedly, this book is

aimed mainly at people whose suicidal thoughts and feelings come and go, and who need help in getting through those difficult times without harming themselves. Someone who is unrelentingly suicidal and not interested in alternative courses of action probably needs to be in hospital, not reading a self-help book. The other criticism I've heard is that not all the book's suggestions can be used by everyone. That's true.

If you need to change a fan belt on a 1994 Fiat, you buy a Chilton's manual, and not a treatise on the joys of high-speed touring. If you need to make a lemon meringue pie, you get a cookbook, and not a memoir on the joys of great French cuisine. Car manuals and recipes are not always great literature by any means, but they are often necessary in helping to get a job done. Susan Rose Blauner's *HOW I STAYED ALIVE WHEN MY BRAIN WAS TRYING TO KILL ME* is nobody's idea of great, or even good, literature. From a purely literary standpoint, the book is chatty, tiresome and irritating, filled with sentimentality, New Age nonsense, and ghastly psychological claptrap. It has been edited with an over-gentle hand, preserving every little cliché and every annoying scrap of poetry and personal reflection. It is a book that very few people will pick up for pleasurable reading, and rightly so. And yet, it will undoubtedly save lives. *HOW I STAYED ALIVE WHEN MY BRAIN WAS TRYING TO KILL ME* is not, as you might think, merely a personal tale of survival from mental illness. It is primarily a manual, a reference book, a resource for people who have suicidal thoughts. Although the book is guided by the author's own experiences with mental illness and suicide attempts, it is written not to chronicle her life but to provide direction and guidance for others in the same situation. And as such, it is an undeniable success. Blauner's book is guided by several hard-won insights. Suicide begins as a thought, driven by negative feelings, and such feelings are temporary and changeable. "Suicidal," Blauner tells us, "is not a feeling." Suicidal thoughts are paired with feelings of anger, guilt, loneliness, and desperation, and it is necessary to separate those feelings from thoughts of suicide.

This book saved my life today. Here, as I write this review on 7/8/2012. Without the words and comfort offered by the author of this book, I would have been dead on this day at about 11:00 AM, from a shotgun blast to the head. IF YOU ARE HERE READING THIS RIGHT NOW, CALL Call 1-800-SUICIDE / 1-800-784-2433 or 1-800-273-8255. DO NOT WAIT ANOTHER MOMENT. THE FACT THAT YOU ARE HERE READING THIS MEANS THAT YOUR SITUATION IS SERIOUS, NO MATTER WHAT YOUR BRAIN TELLS YOU, THIS IS VERY, VERY SERIOUS. DO NOT SHRUG IT OFF. \*\*\*PLEASE\*\*\*\* PICK UP THE PHONE, RIGHT NOW AND CALL Call 1-800-SUICIDE /

1-800-784-2433 or 1-800-273-8255 (The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline). I am telling you this because I know how bad you are feeling, and even though you don't know me, I love you because I know what you are feeling and have felt it myself, and want to help you. The way I can help you is if you make the call. I care about you, and so do the people at that telephone number...it is true, they do not know you, but they are there because they know what you are going through, and are waiting for your call because they love you. It's OK, go ahead, pick up the phone and call Call 1-800-SUICIDE / 1-800-784-2433 or 1-800-273-8255. Do not be afraid, the people there are caring people, and want to help you. Please pick up the phone and call, do it now. And then continue reading this after you have finished the phone call.If, after you have made that call, you are still feeling bad, drive yourself or have someone drive you to a hospital as soon as possible and tell the hospital staff that you are feeling suicidal. No one will judge you. They understand, and are there to help you. Even though they do not know you, they also love you, as I do.

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