



HOPE



Vision of the Future — 2016



SERVE



INCREASE



LEVERAGE



BUILD



# samaritans

*you are not alone*

*"To all the Samaritans—thank you so much for your kindness and compassion over the years."*

*"Thank you for providing the help that you do. I'm living my life joyfully and wanted to take a moment to let you know that your work has impacted me."*

*"Please know it means the world to families like mine who have suffered a terrible loss. Samaritans have truly made a difference to our family and so many others, and for that we are beyond grateful. Thank you for always going above and beyond, the world needs more people like you."*



## To the Samaritans Community,

I am pleased to present Samaritans, Inc.'s **Vision of the Future—2016**. Since publishing Samaritans' Strategic Vision in 2010, Samaritans has expanded its services and impact, and has accomplished important goals related to our mission. We have made great strides in delivering Samaritans life-saving services over the last five years:

**Intervention** – On Samaritans 24/7 Helpline, we have answered more than 577,000 calls and we have made over 2,050 contacts through online chat. We supported the national rollout of a text platform and launched text support on Samaritans Statewide Helpline in October 2015.

**Prevention** – Samaritans has delivered more than 1,350 community education and outreach workshops to more than 59,000 participants.

**Postvention** – Samaritans Grief Support Services program made over 4,600 contacts with survivors of suicide loss through our peer-to-peer support groups, supporting over 700 new participants.

Financially, we are building a sustainable future and have generated a modest but healthy increase in budget, which has provided the ability to expand services and increase community involvement. Our three signature fundraising events, the **5K Run/Walk for Suicide Prevention**, **Breakfast for Hope**, and **Boston Marathon team**, continue to grow. We have also introduced new fundraising opportunities, such as our **HopeRaisers** peer-to-peer fundraising tool, and the **Monica Dickens Legacy Society** to support planned giving. We are working to build collaborations with other nonprofits, government entities and corporate sponsors to strengthen our programs and increase outreach.

It was a great honor to be named as Samaritans Executive Director in January 2015, after eight years as a Samaritans Board Member, including two years as Chair of the Board. After losing my sister Kathy to suicide in 1986, my family was forever changed. We were fortunate several years later to learn of Samaritans. I personally experienced the life-altering services that Samaritans provide following Kathy's death, and became a phone volunteer. Given the personal impact of Samaritans on my life, I left the corporate world to start a new chapter in my life as Executive Director.

I am excited to be working with the Samaritans community to achieve our important and ambitious goals. We hope that you are motivated by Samaritans **Vision of the Future—2016** and will collaborate with us to achieve our goals.

With **HOPE** and best regards,

**Steve Mongeau**

Executive Director, Samaritans, Inc.





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## What can you do to help?

**Carry** wallet cards with the Samaritans Statewide Helpline number for calls and texts.

**Contact** us to set up a workshop on suicide prevention and risk factors in your community or place of work.

**Volunteer** with us on the crisis helplines, through grief support, or at a Samaritans event.

**Visit** [www.samaritanshope.org](http://www.samaritanshope.org) to learn more about our services.



*"I just wanted to let you know that I am doing much better. Each day gets better and that I am now very happy. I cannot thank Samaritans enough; my progress is because of your organization."*



The **Vision of the Future—2016** is the result of a strategic planning process by the Samaritans board and leadership to establish priorities that guide the organization for the next five years. Early in the process we validated the relevance of Samaritans four overarching goals that were established in 2003. This plan states Samaritans goals, outlines strategies for how we will achieve them, and describes how those in the Samaritans community can help.

## SERVE More People In Need

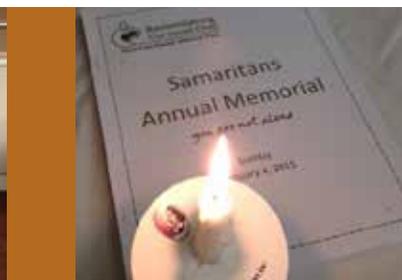
Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death for people of all ages in the United States, and the second leading cause of death for people ages 15-34 in Massachusetts. Unfortunately, the incidence of suicide in Massachusetts has remained too high, with nearly 600 suicides per year, which is 4.6 times the number of homicides.

Samaritans is dedicated to serving more people by expanding the accessibility of our life-saving services. We educate the public on preventative and protective measures, provide support to those in despair or crisis, and offer comfort and resources to individuals and families experiencing the complex grief that follows a loss to suicide.

Samaritans recognizes how digital technology is changing the way people communicate across all generations. We became the first Massachusetts-based organization to implement texting as a communications method for those seeking help for issues related to suicide.

Despite the strides in service delivery, there are still countless individuals who need compassionate and non-judgmental befriending. As the demand increases, we aim to expand our services to reach more people in need. Samaritans vision for the future is to:

- Expand text services and increase phone volunteers on Samaritans Statewide Helpline.
- Educate more gatekeepers—including teachers, guidance counselors, coaches, elder care-givers, medical and mental health professionals—on suicide warning signs and risk factors.
- Expand outreach and education within Greater Boston and MetroWest schools and introduce proactive strategies to help at-risk students.
- Increase prevention and postvention services through webinars and on-line educational content.
- Develop support systems for suicide attempt survivors and their families through peer-support groups and informational resources.





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What can you do to help?



**Volunteer** for Samaritans. It will be a life-changing experience where you will gain befriending skills and contribute to Samaritans impact.

**Raise awareness** with family and friends, and especially those interested in volunteering for Samaritans.

**Help us** make connections within educational institutions and community organizations that could benefit from Samaritans services, and provide human and financial resources.

*"You saved my life, just knowing you were there."*



# INCREASE Our Capacity

Samaritans volunteers provide life-saving befriending services via phone, text and chat, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Samaritans staff and volunteers also provide prevention services through community outreach and education, and postvention services to those who have lost a loved one to suicide. Unfortunately, given the acute need for compassionate, non-judgmental support, the demand for Samaritans services exceeds available resources. Too many callers were not answered in 2015, and more communities could benefit from Samaritans outreach and Grief Support Services.

We will work diligently to increase our number of volunteers to meet growing demands for services. Samaritans will leverage opportunities with public and private organizations to raise awareness of the need for volunteers, and promote the message through public relations opportunities as they present themselves.

To address the gap between demand for Samaritans services and supply of befriending resources, our vision for the future is to:

- Enable remote crisis line volunteers to increase shift coverage, flexibility and availability of volunteers.
- Increase prevention service capacity by leveraging additional resources.
- Increase number of postvention volunteers and geographic options for Grief Support Services and SafePlace meetings.
- Leverage technology across all services to scale service offerings, assist high-risk populations, and expand the impact of befriending.



*"The first time we attended the 5k Run/Walk, I was worried it would be a sad day, but I remember feeling so overwhelmed with inspiration as we watched my sister begin the race and then walked in Mark's memory."*



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Over **800,000** people die by suicide worldwide **each year**. On average, one person dies by suicide **every 40 seconds** somewhere in the world.

# 10<sup>th</sup>

Suicide is the **10<sup>th</sup>** leading cause of death in the US...

Suicide is the **2<sup>nd</sup>** leading cause of death for ages 15–34

# 15–34

...and **12<sup>th</sup>** in Massachusetts

# 12<sup>th</sup>

Based on most recent 2013 data from CDC, provided by American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

## Research From...



World Health Organization – 2014:

Fact: **“Heightened suicide risk is often short term and situation specific. While suicidal thoughts may return, they are not permanent and an individual with previously suicidal thoughts and attempts can go on to live a long life.”**

Trained Volunteers: **“Crisis helplines, in particular, have gained international recognition for their important contribution in supporting people during suicidal crises.”**

Helplines: **“...have been shown to be effective in... reducing suicide risk among callers during the call session and subsequent weeks.”**

Call or Text 1-877-870-HOPE (4673)

# In Massachusetts...

2011 2012 2013 2014 2015  
**2,920**

**584** people died by suicide on average each year for the last **5 years**

**1** person dies every **15** hours by suicide



Suicides by males exceeded females by **3 to 1**



There are **3 female attempts** for **each male attempt** in the U.S.

**45–54**

Middle aged men (ages 45–54) have the **highest rate** of suicide among all age groups, representing **25%** of all suicides

**4.6x**

Annually, the number of suicides is **4.6 times** the number of homicides

**11,000+**



Annually, over **11,000** hospital discharges and emergency room visits are for self-inflicted injuries



The 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey of high school students in Massachusetts indicates:

**12%** of high school students seriously considered suicide

**11%** made a suicide plan

**6%** attempted suicide

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention:

Self-Help Groups: “...caring for those affected by suicide and suicide attempts... [provides] supportive and rehabilitative services to persons affected...”

“The majority of people who make a suicide attempt, however, do not ultimately die by suicide. Studies that have followed suicide attempters identified in hospital emergency rooms have found that just 7–10% died by suicide over the next two decades.”

“...studies have demonstrated a significant positive effect of gatekeeper training on suicide prevention.”



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What can you do to help?

**Learn** about suicide prevention resources and encourage others to do the same.

**Join** your local, regional, or state suicide prevention coalition or ask us for more information about coalitions.

**Contact** your local state representative to advocate for additional suicide prevention funding.

**Help** us to make a connection to Massachusetts state government representatives who can advocate on behalf of Samaritans and suicide prevention.



*"The people at SafePlace inspire me with their strength and it makes me feel less alone."*



# LEVERAGE Our Impact Through Coalitions And Collaborations

The scope of our mission is larger than one organization and Samaritans is fortunate to have working collaborations that strengthen our programs and increase outreach. Through collaborations, Samaritans limits overlap in services and coordinates existing services with other mission-aligned agencies.

For example, Samaritans answers calls placed to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) originating in Massachusetts area codes. We are a longstanding, leading member of the Massachusetts Coalition for Suicide Prevention (MCSP). This relationship affords us opportunities to network with other agencies and individuals who are dedicated to preventing suicide in our community. In addition, we participate in regional coalitions that allow us to pool resources, share ideas and information, and gain a better understanding of others in the community.

With this in mind, Samaritans vision for the future is to:

- Increase public awareness of suicide and reduce stigma through collaboration with public and private organizations.
- Expand relationships with regional, national and international suicide prevention groups to share best practices, knowledge, and advancements.
- Answer a greater percentage of NSPL calls as the lead crisis center in Massachusetts.
- Renew accreditation in 2016 with the national suicide prevention accreditation organization, Contact USA.
- Identify key programs in the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health that align with our mission and establish relationships to promote collaborations.



*"I am highly thankful for you coming in and speaking to us. I feel as if I can help someone who is going through depression or having suicidal thoughts."*





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What can you do to help?



**Make an investment** in Samaritans or a specific service.

**Attend or host** a table at the Breakfast for Hope; become a team captain or participate in the 5K Run/Walk for Suicide Prevention.

**Organize** a peer fundraising effort through a sporting event, birthday, or other activity.

**Introduce** Samaritans to corporations and foundations where you are connected.

**Consider** a bequest for Samaritans in your will, designating Samaritans as a beneficiary on your life insurance or retirement vehicles, or other planned gifts.

*"Over the years I've gotten to know the organization much better... and I saw no better place to give my time and resources."*



Call or Text 1-877-870-HOPE (4673)

# BUILD A Strong Financial Foundation To Support Strategic Growth

Samaritans is committed to further strengthening our financial position to support the growth and availability of our services in the community.

Half of Samaritans revenue comes from individuals, primarily through our events – the Breakfast for Hope, the 5K Run/Walk for Suicide Prevention, and the Boston Marathon team. Moving forward, we will focus on securing major gifts and engaging donors to partner with Samaritans to invest in suicide prevention. We will host our key events as both fundraisers and community healing events, grow donor-run peer-to-peer fundraising efforts through the “HopeRaiser” platform, and broaden corporate and foundation relationships as a source of sustainable funding. The Monica Dickens Legacy Society, named for our founder, will cultivate supporters interested in legacy bequests and planned gifts while building a healthy reserve/endowment.

Samaritans vision for the future is to:

- Grow fundraising capacity and sources of income each year to support expanded services.
- Engage donors in contributing significant gifts to support Samaritans strategic goals.
- Expand corporate and foundation relationships as a larger source of sustainable funding.
- Implement planned giving as a foundation for reserves and endowment.
- Encourage members of the Samaritans community to participate in peer-to-peer fundraising through the HopeRaiser tool.
- Raise awareness and participation in The Monica Dickens Legacy Society to sustain future financial growth.

*"We are so proud to be able to volunteer and [financially] support at Samaritans. The work that this organization does and the people that work and volunteer at Samaritans are making such a difference in people's lives."*





## To the Samaritans Community,

Thank you very much for your interest in **Samaritans Vision of the Future – 2016**.

It can be hard to feel hopeful when discussing suicide – but Samaritans is here to provide help and hope, and to befriend people through non-judgmental, compassionate listening. Whether you're calling in the middle of the night to talk to a Helpline volunteer, attending an educational seminar, or attending a SafePlace meeting after a loss to suicide, Samaritans staff, volunteers and community members are here to provide hope during life's most difficult moments. We know suicide is preventable, and when people learn about Samaritans services we can truly help save lives.

While we continue to make progress, we have more work to do. We need to raise awareness about suicide as a public health issue, and educate people about the warning signs of suicide. We need to close the gap between demand for Samaritans services and the supply of resources to deliver services. We need to build a sustainable financial foundation to support our work, now and in the future. As the first crisis center in the Boston area, and now the first to launch crisis services via text, we want to leverage advancements and expand services to help more people.

There is no better time to become part of the Samaritans community. Our documentary film, "Samaritans: You are Not Alone," is raising awareness about mental health and suicide prevention, and providing a forum for discussing these issues, as well as educating people about befriending services offered by Samaritans.

Thank you in advance for your support and collaboration in achieving the **Vision of the Future – 2016**. We look forward to working with you to deliver our life-saving services, now and in the future.



With **HOPE** and warm regards,

**Terrie Perella**

Chair of the Board of Directors, Samaritans, Inc.



*"...It is such a privilege to be a part of something that so clearly makes such a huge impact on people's lives. Volunteering here has made me realize what a huge difference the simple act of active listening can make..."*

## Mission, Vision, Values

**Samaritans' mission** is to reduce the incidence of suicide by alleviating despair, isolation, distress and suicidal feelings among individuals in our community, 24 hours a day; to educate the public about suicide prevention; to help those who have lost a loved one to suicide; and to reduce the stigma associated with suicide. We accomplish this through services that emphasize confidential, nonjudgmental, and compassionate listening.

We envision a society in which fewer people die by suicide. **Samaritans' vision** is to be recognized as the organization that alleviates despair, distress, isolation and suicidal feelings through compassionate listening. We are easily accessible and widely used by at-risk populations, particularly those who are young, elderly and/or addicted. We collaborate with and leverage the strengths of many organizations and individuals in multiple communities to increase our impact. We provide excellent services and will be known as an outstanding place to work and volunteer.

**Samaritans' values** represent how we interact with all members of our community: We value direct, honest communication. We value compassion and passion in all our endeavors. We create a safe, nonjudgmental environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. We allow time to explore difficult feelings. We show concern for the individual but commitment to the mission.



*"I am going to stop texting now. Thank you so much, you don't know how much this meant to me. Just knowing I'll make it another nite has been a life saver, thanks to you I can make it another day."*



**Call or Text 1-877-870-HOPE (4673)**

*"You changed  
my life forever."*

**hope** (noun): a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen; grounds for believing that something good may happen.

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