

# ***ARMY SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION PROGRAM***



## **EVERY ONE MATTERS!**

# Mission

Minimize Suicidal Behavior by  
encouraging  
**help-seeking behaviors**  
and  
providing  
**“Buddy Care”**.

# Learning Objectives

- ▶ **Identify**
  - ▶ common triggers
  - ▶ symptoms of depression
  - ▶ warning signs of suicide
  - ▶ appropriate action in response to an at-risk individual.

# Suicidal Behavior

- ▶ Serious suicidal thoughts or threats.
- ▶ Self destructive acts.
- ▶ Attempts to harm, but not kill oneself.
- ▶ Attempts to die by suicide.
- ▶ Completed suicide.

# WHY SUICIDE?

*There is no simple answer.*

*Usually, the emotional upset is so great that the person “just wants to stop the pain.” The suicidal person feels a tremendous sense of loneliness and isolation. They feel helpless, hopeless, and worthless.*



# Triggers for Suicidal Behavior

- The breakup of a close relationship
- Financial and Legal stressors
- Witnessing death
- A Bad Performance Evaluation
- Drug or Alcohol Abuse
- Reunion from a long field training or isolated tour
- Leaving old friends, family, and significant others
- Being alone with concerns about self or family
- New military assignments/deployments

# Triggers for Suicidal Behavior (cont .)

- Recent interpersonal losses
- Disciplinary or legal difficulty
- Loss of self-esteem / status
- Humiliation / Ridicule
- Rejection (e.g., job, promotion, boy/girlfriend)
- Exposure to suicide of friend or family member
- Discharge from treatment or from service
- Retirement

Not everyone goes through one of these events to become suicidal

# FEELINGS COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH SUICIDE ARE:

- > Hopelessness

  - Resources exhausted, death as only option

- > Helplessness

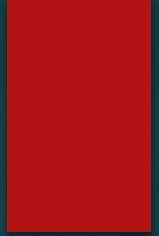
  - loss of control

- > Worthlessness

  - world better off without you, no one cares



# Depression



- ▶ Difficulty concentrating or remembering
- ▶ Loss of energy, or chronic fatigue, slow speech and muscle movement
- ▶ Loss of self-esteem
- ▶ Change in sleep habits; unable to sleep or wanting to sleep all the time
- ▶ Change in weight
- ▶ Anxiety

***BE ALERT FOR THESE SIGNALS...***

## ***DIRECT VERBAL CLUES...***

- > “I’m going to kill myself”***
- > “I’m going to commit suicide”***
- > “I want to end it all”***
- “I want to die”***

# *Indirect verbal clues...*

- > “I’m tired of life”
- > “Who cares if I’m dead anyway”
- > “I can’t go on anymore”
- “You’d be better off without me”
- *“I just want all to be over”*

# BEHAVIORAL CLUES...

- **Buying a firearm**
- **Stockpiling pills**
- **Putting affairs in order**
- **Sudden interest in wills, funerals, and life insurance**
- **Selling or giving away possessions**
- **Visits to sick call when not sick**
- **Frequent illness**
- **Excessive weight loss or gain**
- **Drug or alcohol abuse**

# WHAT NOT TO DO...

- Don't leave the person alone or send the person away
- Don't overact – don't be shocked by anything he (she) says.
  - You don't have to explore all of the details, get enough information to show you care, your concern, and willingness to listen non-judgmentally
- Don't rush-remember, you are just trying to establish contact and get the person to someone who can help; you are not trying to completely resolve the crisis
- Don't minimize the person's concerns: *"this is not worth killing yourself over."*
- Don't discount or make light of the suicidal threat: *"you don't really want to kill yourself."*
- Don't argue whether suicide is right or wrong.



# WHAT NOT TO DO...

- Don't challenge or get into a power struggle. You will do everything you can to get help right now, but ultimately he (she) has control over his decision
- Don't think the person just needs reassurance. You can reassure that you will get help
- Don't promise to keep the conversation confidential. There is limited confidentiality in life-threatening situations
- Remember that all persons who are at risk for suicide need help. It is always better to overreact (in terms of taking action) than to fail to take action.
- *Remember* it is better to have someone angry with you or embarrassed than dead.

# ***REMEMBER...***

- > BE A BUDDY**
- > KNOW YOUR PEOPLE**
- > RECALL THE CLUES**
- > CALL FOR HELP**

# WHAT TO DO...

- ▶ Stay calm and objective.
- ▶ Send someone for help.
- ▶ Do not leave person alone.
- ▶ “Buy time” (i.e., Identify stressor(s) and reasons for dying and living).

# Asking About Suicide



- ▶ Ask directly (i.e., Are you thinking about killing yourself?).
- ▶ Get help. Make a plan for safety.
- ▶ Convey concern.

# Stigmas to Help-Seeking Behavior





# REMINDER FOR ALL



- ▶ There are better days ahead – don't miss out on those days & good times
- ▶ Feelings of loneliness, guilt, shame...are all temporary – it may seem like it will last forever, but it won't



Summary . . .

Final Comments . . .

Questions . . .

# Crisis Contact Info:



- ▶ CH (MAJ) Bruce Duty
  - ▶ Gov Cell: 917-597-8934
  - ▶ NCOIC Gov Cell: 718-986-6163
- ▶ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
  - ▶ Phone: 1-800-273-8255
  - ▶ Text: 838255