ARMY
SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION PROGRAM

EVERY ONE MATTERS!
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.
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

CAUTION

SEEKING HELP IS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS
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
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