



Ambivalence in Suicide

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The Glendon Association

American Association of Suicidology 2013

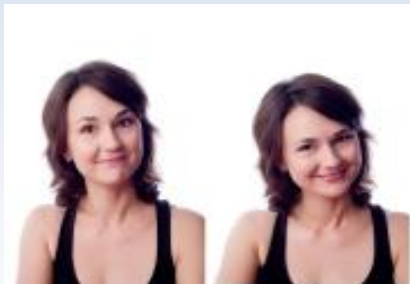


Our Approach to Suicide

Each person is divided:

- One part wants to live and is goal directed and life affirming.
- And one part is self-critical, self-hating and at its ultimate end, self-destructive. The nature and degree of this division varies for each individual.

Real Self - Positive



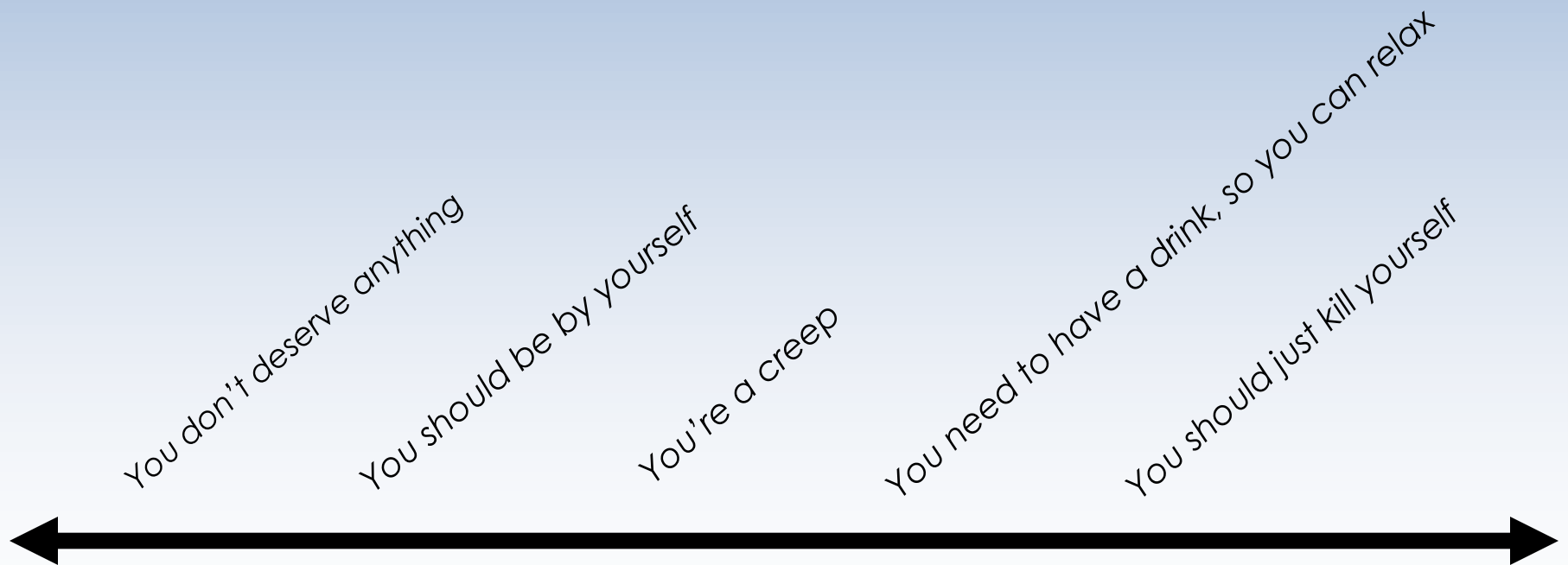
Anti-Self - Critical





Our Approach to Suicide

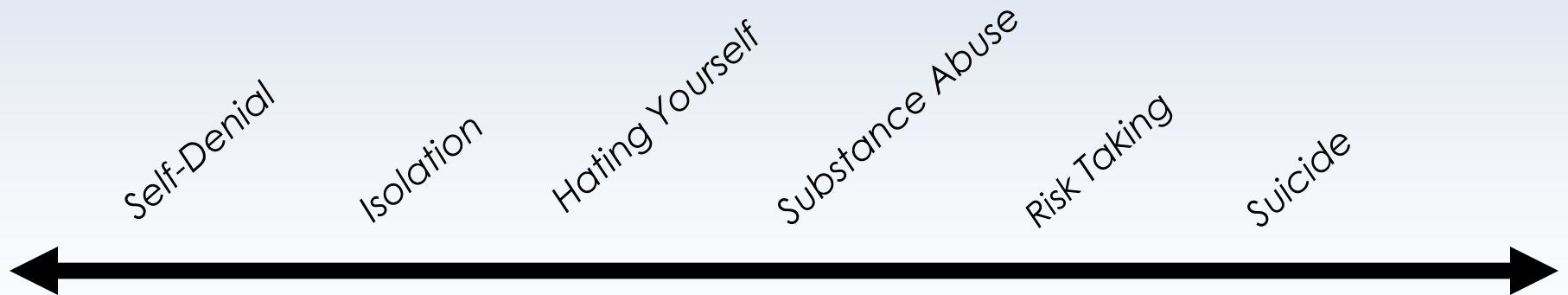
Negative thoughts exist on a continuum, from mild self-critical thoughts to extreme self-hatred to thoughts about suicide





Our Approach to Suicide

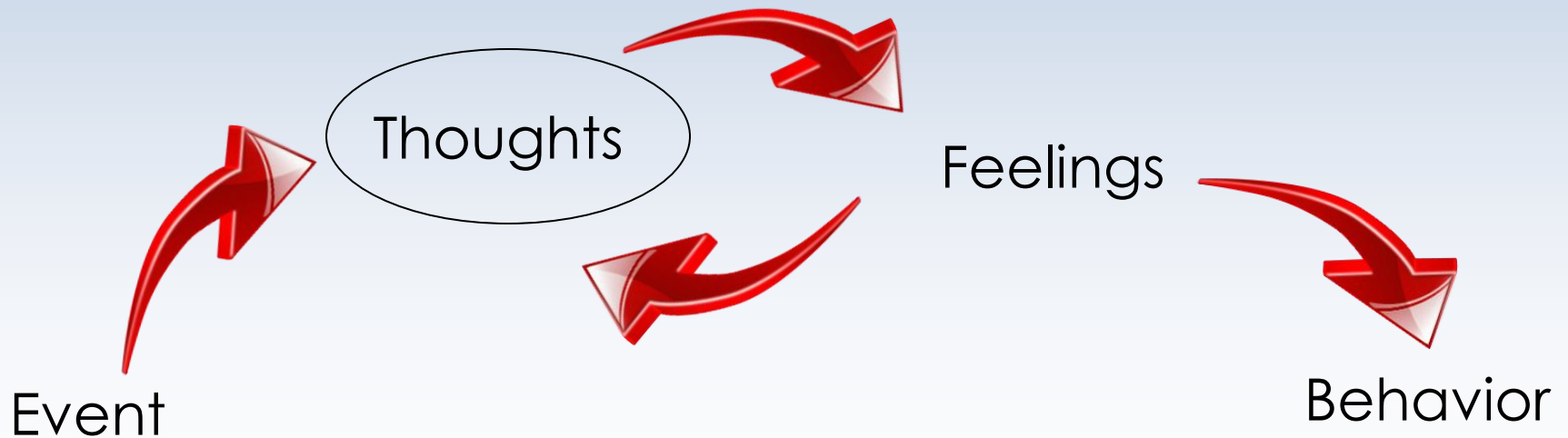
Self-destructive behaviors exist on a continuum from self-denial to substance abuse to actual suicide.



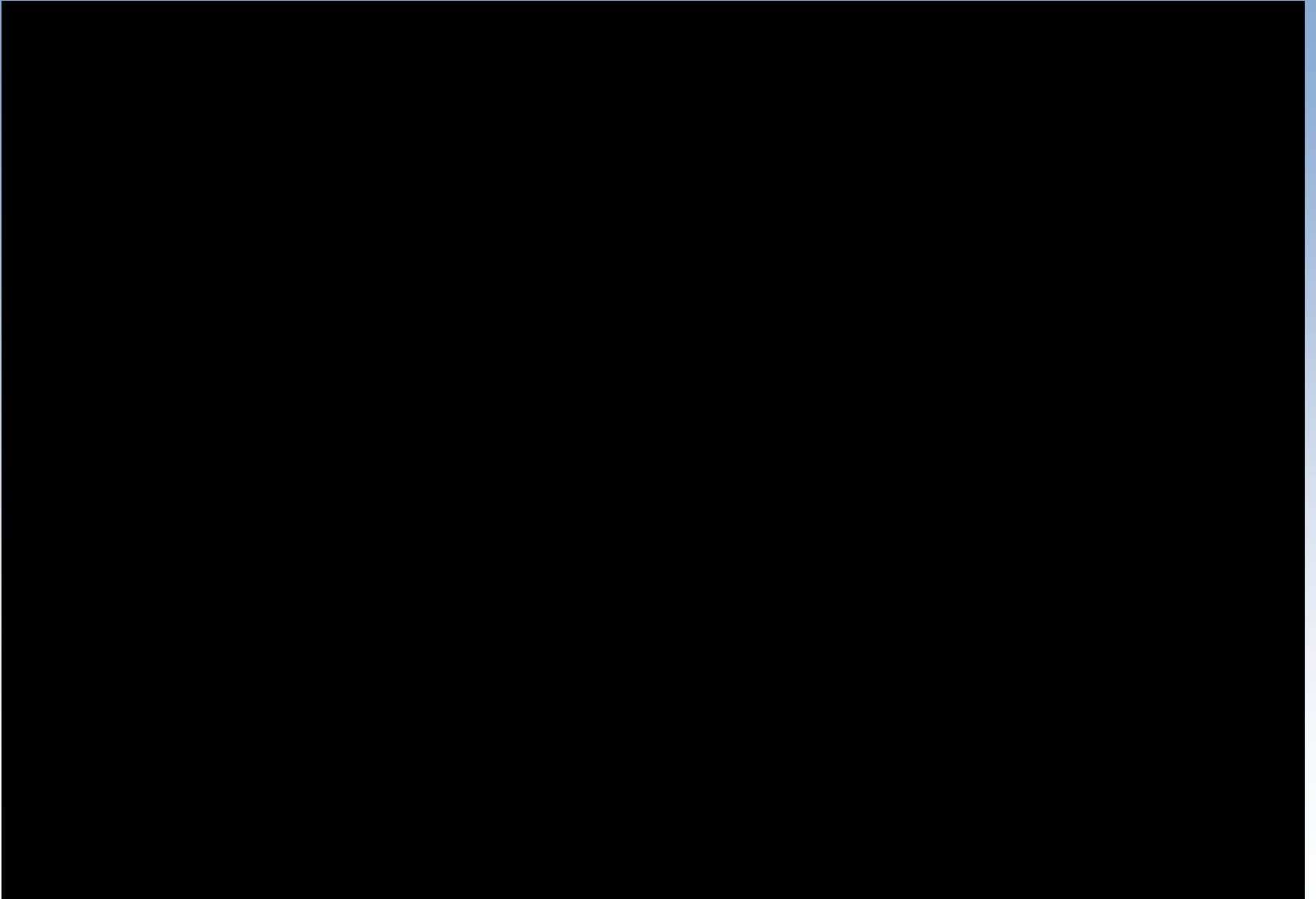


Our Approach to Suicide

There is a relationship between these two continuums. How a person is thinking is predictive of how he or she is likely to behave.



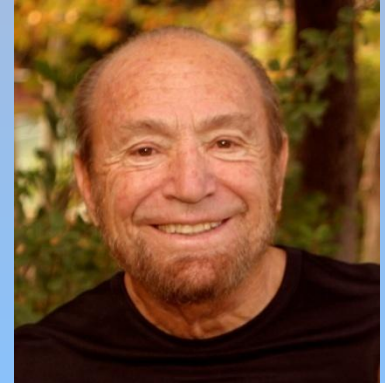
Ambivalence in Suicide, Clip 247, 7.39





Separation Theory

Robert W. Firestone, Ph.D.



- ❖ Integrates psychoanalytic and existential systems of thought
- ❖ Two kinds of emotional pain:
 - Interpersonal
 - Existential
- ❖ The core conflict
- ❖ Defended versus undefended lifestyles
- ❖ The concept of the **Fantasy Bond**
- ❖ The concept of the **Critical Inner Voice**



Definition of the Voice

The critical inner voice refers to a well-integrated pattern of destructive thoughts toward our selves and others. The “voices” that make up this internalized dialogue are at the root of much of our maladaptive behavior. This internal enemy fosters inwardness, distrust, self-criticism, self-denial, addictions and a retreat from goal-directed activities. The critical inner voice effects every aspect of our lives: our self-esteem and confidence, our personal and intimate relationships, and our performance and accomplishments at school and work.



Division of the Mind

Parental Ambivalence

Parents both love and hate themselves and extend both reactions to their productions, i.e., their children.

Parental Nurturance



Parental Rejection, Neglect, Hostility



Prenatal Influences

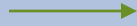
Disease Trauma



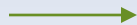
Substance Abuse/ Domestic Violence



Birth Trauma



Baby



Genetic
Structure
Temperament
Physicality
Sex



Self-System



- Unique make-up of the individual (genetic predisposition and temperament)
- Harmonious identification and incorporation of parent's positive attitudes and traits and parents positive behaviors (attunement, affection, control, nurturance)
- The effect of other nurturing experience and education on the maturing self-system resulting in a sense of self and a greater degree of differentiation from parents and early caretakers.

Personal Attitudes/Goals/Conscience

Realistic, Positive Attitudes Towards Self

Realistic evaluation of talents, abilities, etc...with generally positive/ compassionate attitude towards self and others.

Goals

Needs, wants, search for meaning in life

Moral Principles

Behavior

Ethical behavior towards self and others

Goal Directed Behavior

Acting with Integrity



Anti-Self System

Unique vulnerability: genetic predisposition and temperament

Destructive parental behavior: misattunement, lack of affection, rejection, neglect, hostility, over permissiveness

Other Factors: accidents, illnesses, traumatic separation, death anxiety



The Fantasy Bond (core defense) is a self-parenting process made up of two elements: the helpless, needy child, and the self-punishing, self-nurturing parent. Either aspect may be extended to relationships. The degree of defense is proportional to the amount of damage sustained while growing up.

Learn more [here](#)

Anti-Self System

Self-Punishing Voice Process

Voice Process

1. Critical thoughts toward self



2. Micro-suicidal injunctions



3. Suicidal injunctions -suicidal ideation



Behaviors

Verbal self-attacks - a generally negative attitude toward self and others predisposing alienation

Addictive patterns - self-punitive thoughts after indulging

Actions that jeopardize, such as carelessness with one's body, physical attacks on the self, and actual suicide

Anti-Self System

Self- Soothing Voice Process

Voice Process

1. Self-soothing attitudes

2. Aggrandizing thoughts toward self

3. Suspicious paranoid thoughts towards others

4. Micro-suicidal Injunctions

5. Overtly Violent thoughts

Behaviors

Self-limiting or self-protective lifestyles, Inwardness

Verbal build up toward self

Alienation from others, destructive behavior towards others

Addictive patterns. Thoughts luring the person into indulging

Aggressive actions, actual violence



Self



Anti-Self





The Therapeutic Process in Voice Therapy

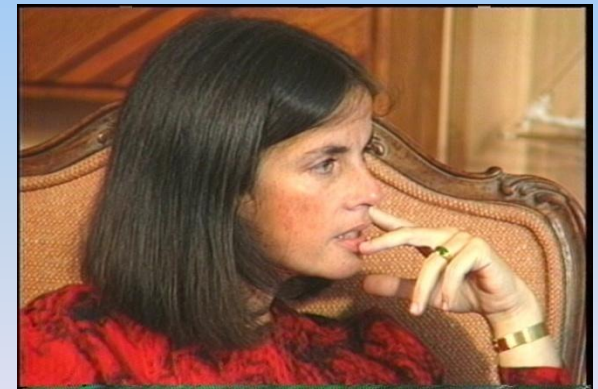
Step I

Identify the content of the person's negative thought process. The person is taught to articulate his or her self-attacks in the second person. The person is encouraged to say the attack as he or she hears it or experiences it. If the person is holding back feelings, he or she is encouraged to express them.



Step II

The person discusses insights and reactions to verbalizing the voice. The person attempts to understand the relationship between voice attacks and early life experience.





The Therapeutic Process in Voice Therapy

Step III

The person answers back to the voice attacks, which is often a cathartic experience. Afterwards, it is important for the person to make a rational statement about how he or she really is, how other people really are, what is true about his or her social world.

Step IV

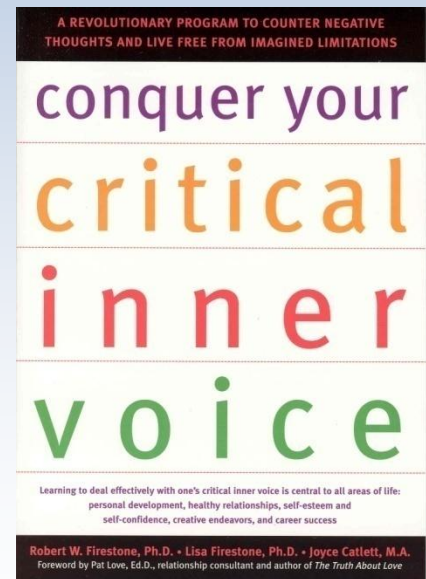
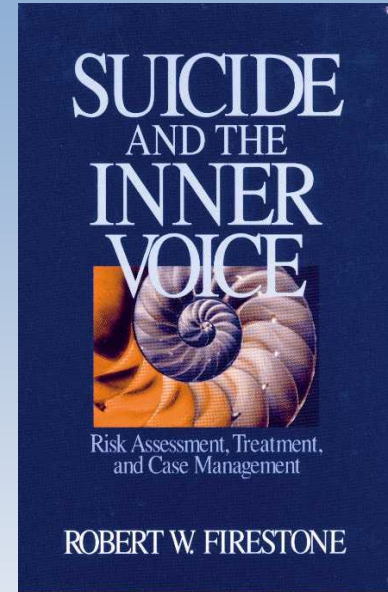
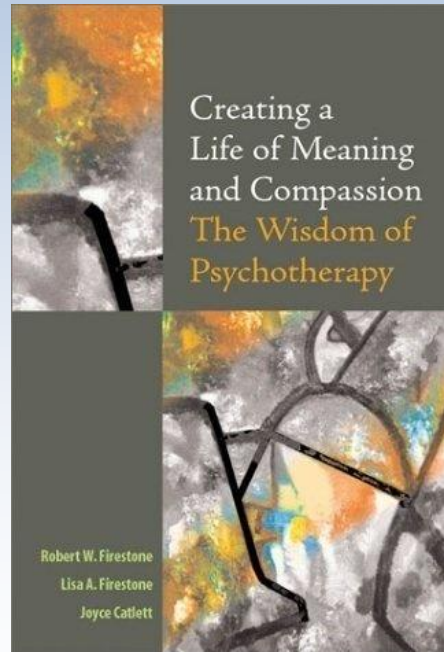
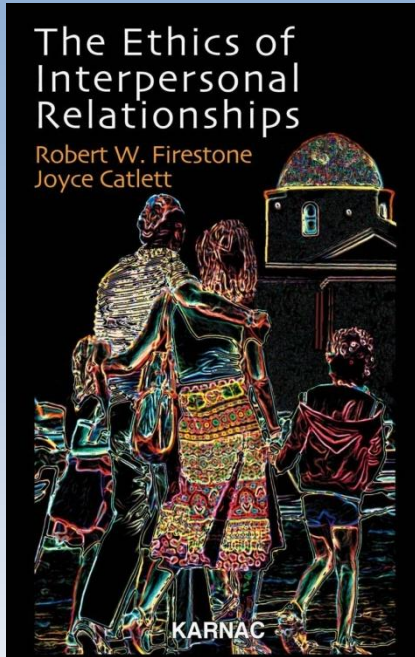
The person develops insight about how the voice attacks are influencing his or her present-day behaviors.

Step V

The person then collaborates with the therapist to plan changes in these behaviors. The person is encouraged to not engage in self-destructive behavior dictated by his or her negative thoughts and to also increase the positive behaviors these negative thoughts discourage.



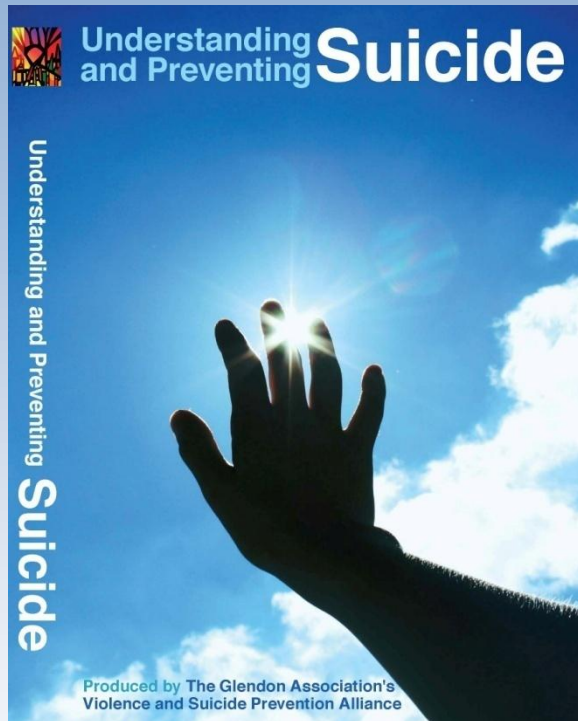
Resources: Books



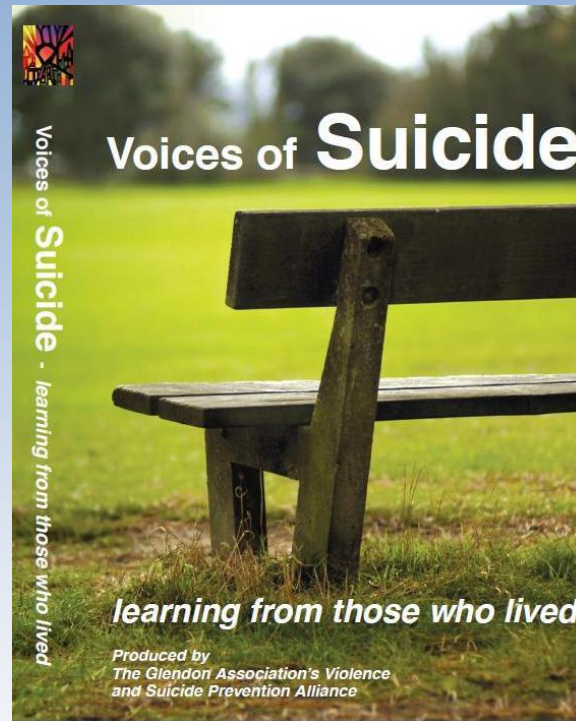
Visit www.psychalive.org for resource links



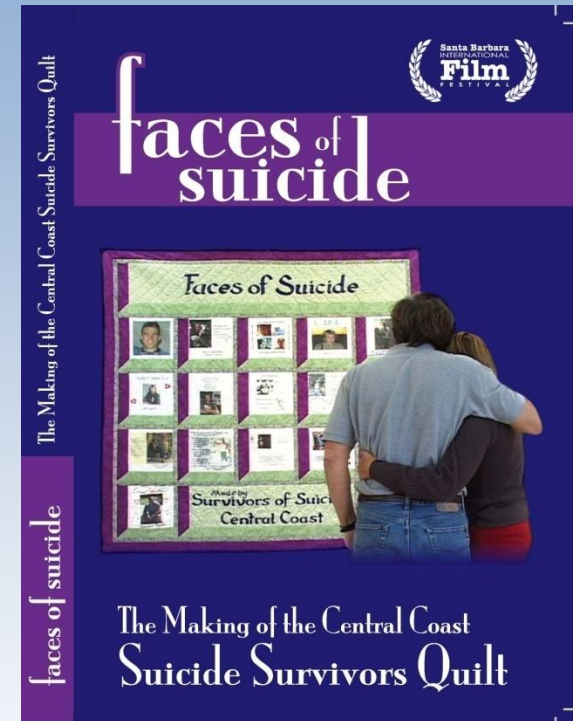
Resources: Films



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For Professionals



For Survivors

Visit www.psychalive.org for resource links

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May 7

Social Media and Marketing for Psychologists, Non-Profits and Mental Health Professionals

FREE Webinar

Presenter: Dr. Lisa Firestone and Lena Firestone

11am – 12pm PST



May 21

The Self Under Siege: A New Model of Differentiation

CE Webinar

Presenter: Dr. Lisa Firestone

4pm – 5:30pm PST

\$35, 3 CE's

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