



THE GLENDON
ASSOCIATION

& PSYCHALIVE

Help Save a Life:

Understanding and Preventing Suicide



Lisa Firestone & Kevin Hines

About Lisa:



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**THE GLENDON
ASSOCIATION**

**(For Professionals)
www.glendon.org**



**(For the Public)
www.psychalive.org**

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About Kevin:



Kevin Hines

San Francisco

Bipolar Disorder (17)

Chronic Suicidality

Near-Diabetic

Weight issues

Facts About Suicide

- According to the World Health Organization, every 40 seconds a life is lost to suicide, which means that each year we lose nearly 1 million people to suicide.
- For every one person who dies by suicide, 20 or more attempt to end their lives.
- Worldwide, more people die by suicide (800,000) than from all homicides (475,000) and wars combined.



Sep. 10 – World Suicide Prevention Day

How can we all help
save a life?



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

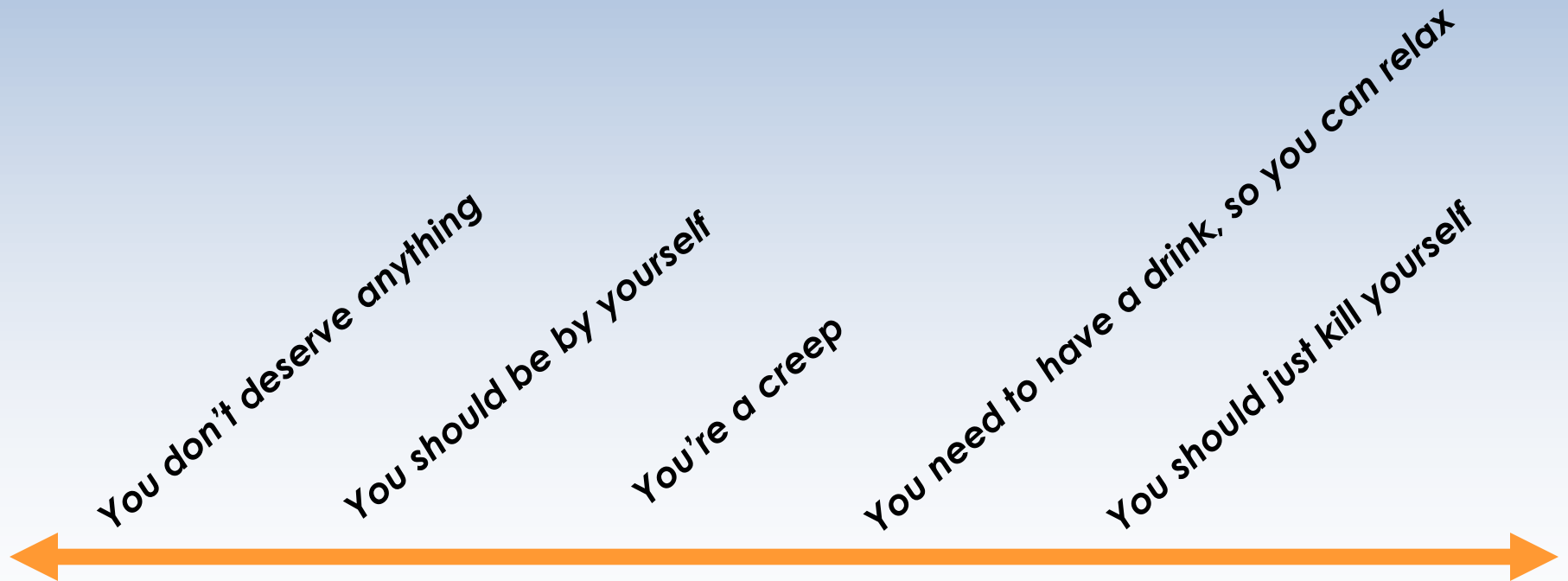


Anti-Self - Critical



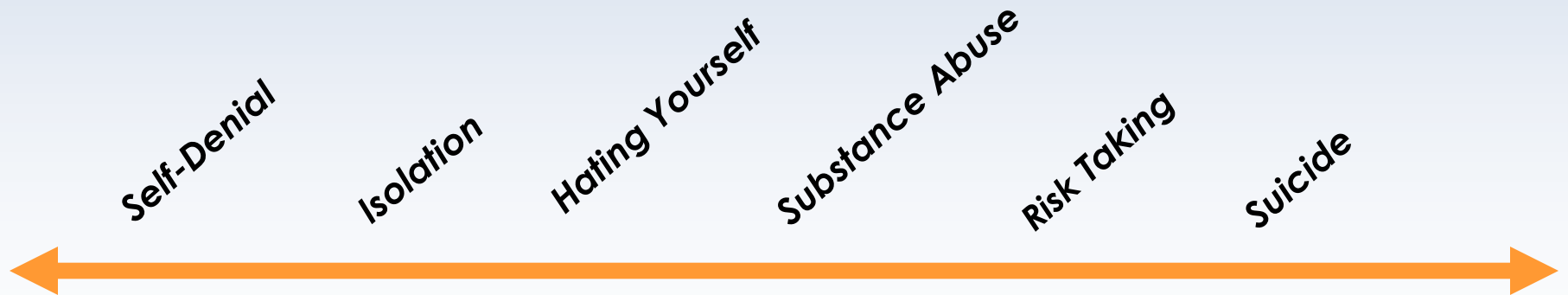
Our Approach to Suicide

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



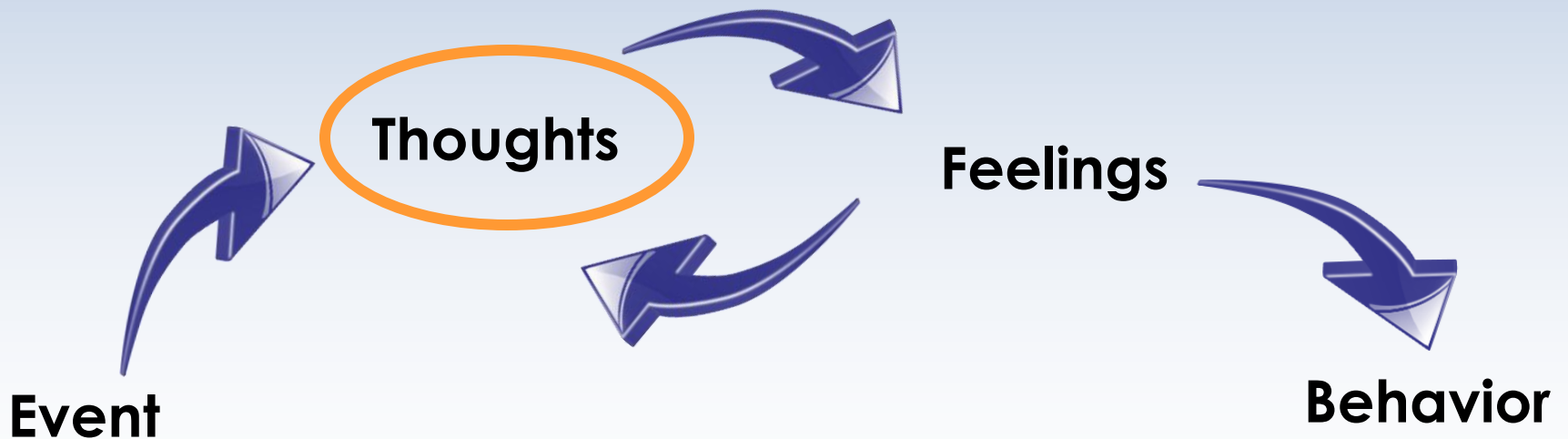
Our Approach to Suicide

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.



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, ESPECIALLY self-destructive behavior.



How does a Suicide Occur?

Underlying Vulnerability

e.g.: Mood Disorder / Substance Abuse / Aggression / Anxiety / Impulsivity/ Sexual Orientation/ Abnormal Serotonin Metabolism/ Family Characteristics, including history of suicidality/ Sexual Abuse/Physical Abuse/Social adversity

Stress Event

(often caused by underlying condition)

e.g.: In Trouble With Law or School / Loss/ **Bullied**

Acute Mood Change

Anxiety/Dread/Hopelessness/Anger

Inhibition

e.g.: Family cohesion/Religiosity / Available Support/ **Internet/ Help-seeking attitudes**

Survival

Facilitation

e.g.: Method/Weapon available / Recent example / Media displays/ **Internet**

Suicide

Gould, 2012

Warning Signs for Suicide

If you see signs of:

- Not sleeping
- Hopelessness
- Rage, anger, seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking
- Feeling trapped-like there's no way out
- Someone talking or writing about death, dying or suicide
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawal from friends, family or society
- Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep, or sleeping all the time
- Dramatic mood changes
- No reason for living; no sense of purpose in life

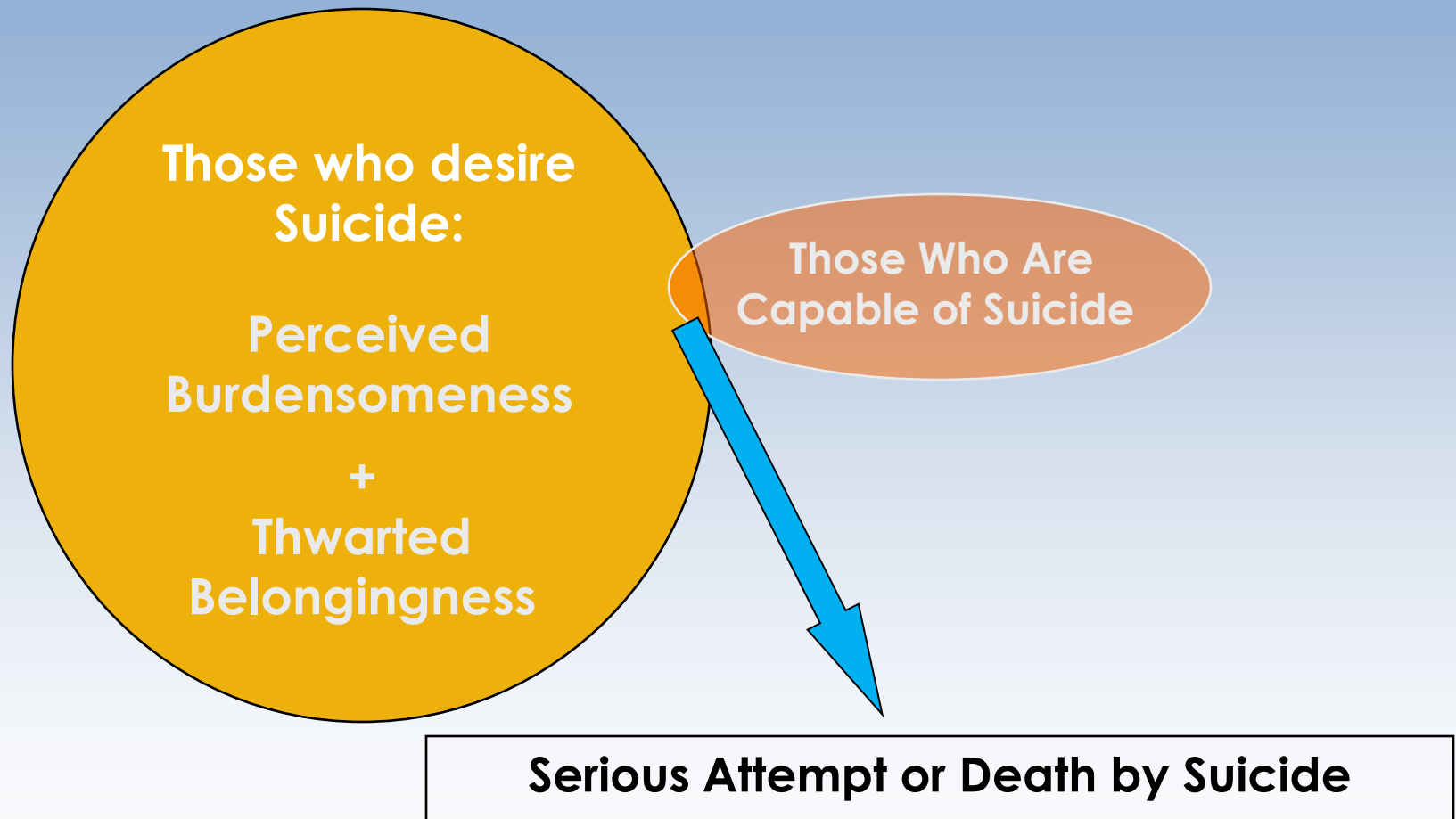
Seek help by contacting a mental health professional or calling **1-800-273-TALK**

Protective Factors

- Family and community connections/ support
- Clinical Care (availability and accessibility)
- Resilience
- Coping Skills
- Frustration tolerance and emotion regulation
- Cultural and religious beliefs; spirituality



Those Who Desire Suicide



Joiner, Thomas. *Why People Die By Suicide*. "The Three Components of Completed Suicide." Harvard University Press, 2005.

- Self



- Anti-Self



Helper Tasks

- **Engage** - Engage the person at risk in a personable way, use eye contact, give your full attention, don't act distracted.
- **Explore** - Explore their situation from his or her point of view by encouraging the open expression of their personal concerns. Show that you want to understand their feelings.
- **Identify** - Identify whether or not the person is currently thinking about suicide. As you learn more about the persons thoughts and feelings, you may get more clues that he or she is considering suicide. Be direct, ask questions: "Are you thinking about suicide?" This can give the person at-risk permission to talk about his or her suicidal thoughts and possible plans.

Helper Tasks

- **Inquire** – If the person is indeed contemplating suicide, you need to inquire into the reasons why these events and feelings are leading to a consideration of suicide at this time. Why now? Having developed a deeper understanding of the persons at-risk reasons, you can then work together to find other ways out of the situation than suicide.
- **Assess** – Use closed questions that require a yes/no answer. Be specific. The questions you ask at this point address the persons plan for suicide and information about prior suicidal behavior. Your assessment is a combination of gut feelings and an assessment of risk factors you have learned about. In a situation where a person's life is at stake, it is better to do too much than not enough.

Help identify the personal strengths and opportunities that might orient him or her toward life. How did he or she solve serious problems previously? Be ready to speak for the life side! The sensitive introduction of commitment to life allows both sides of ambivalence to be experienced by the person at-risk.

Develop an Action Plan

- **Be specific** – Details about what's to be done must be clearly understood. Being specific is very important. Leaving things vague and non-specific can be dangerous.
- **Limit objectives** – Remember that your job is to help until the immediate danger, or threat of suicide, has passed. The action plan is not meant to be a total solution for all the person's problems. Be realistic. Do not make false promises or resort to phony statements (For example: "It will be alright.")
- **Work together** – Both you and the person at-risk are committing to fulfilling your responsibilities according to the plan. You are mutually agreeing to a commitment to life.



Develop an Action Plan

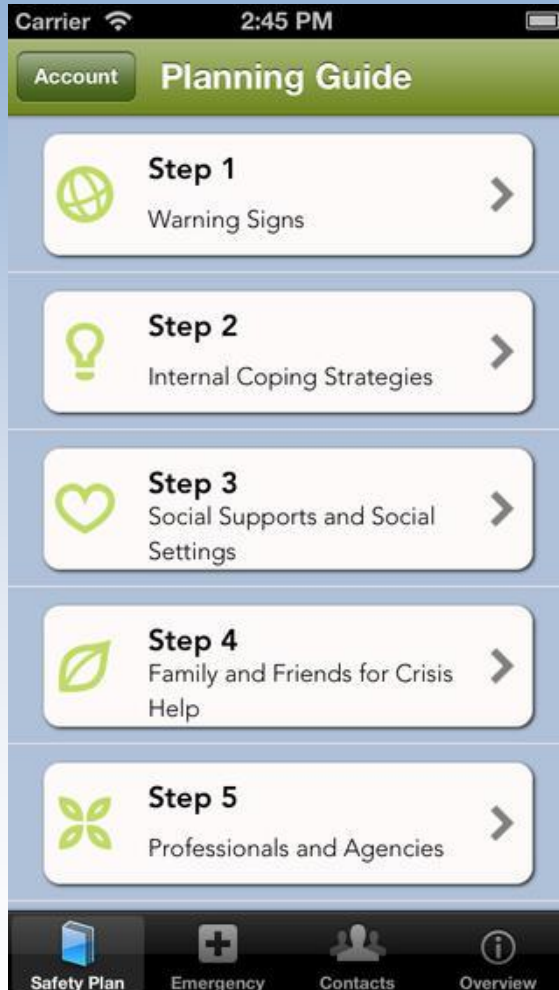
- **Confirm the commitment** – The person at-risk agrees not to engage in any self-harming behavior for an agreed upon time. Ask the person to repeat the agreement out loud; both of you will experience a feeling of relief.
- **Develop crisis control** – Build in some arrangement for emergency support if the steps of your plan for action cannot be carried out or if the commitment cannot be maintained until the set follow-up time. (For example, have the person call the local suicide hotline or national suicide hotline **1-800-273-TALK.**)
- **Spell out the follow-up** - Set the date and time for another meeting between you and the person at-risk, or between the person at risk and whatever follow-up resources you have agreed to (such as meeting with the school counselor.)



Coping Suggestions for the Suicidal Person: A Safety Plan

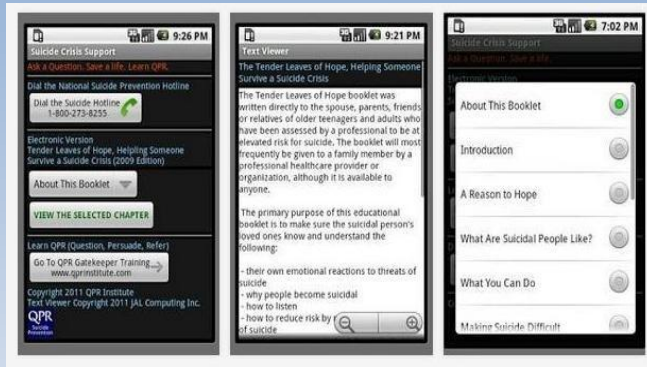
- Recognize specific actions that you will take when you start to feel bad. These will help interfere with two behaviors that fuel a suicidal state: passivity and isolation.
- What activity are you going to do to make yourself feel better? (ie: take a walk, play with your dog, bake brownies, meditate, watch a funny movie)
- Where are you going to go to be with people and take your mind off your negative thoughts? (ie: to the mall, to the park, to an athletic event)
- Who are you going call to talk to? (ie: a specific friend, relative, minister) Make sure that you have that person's phone number
- Reduce the potential use of lethal means
- And finally, make sure that you have the Suicide Hotline Number – **1-800-273-TALK (8255)** – in your phone

Safety Plan App

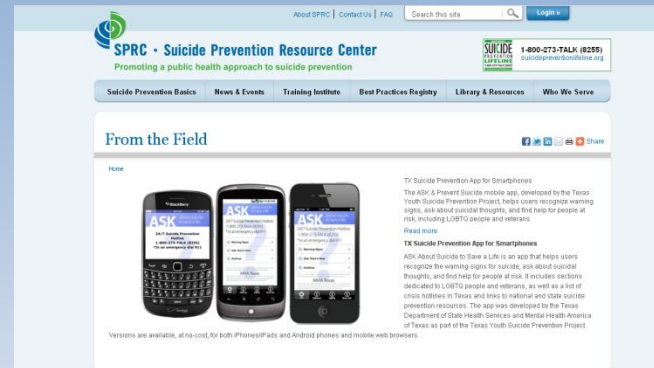


Apps

QPR Suicide Prevention App



ASK



SAMHSA's Suicide Safe for Health Care Providers



10 Steps

Therapy

I participate in:

- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Talk therapy
- Music therapy
- Blue wave light box therapy
- Breath therapy

Not talking about your problems
keeping it all pent up inside can lead
to adverse reactions.

The following therapies may help:

- Music
- Cognitive behavioral
- Mindfulness

The following will hurt:

- Lying in therapy
- Self harm
- Lack of goal setting

Meditation

I participate in:

Transcendental meditation

- www.TM.org
- The only form of meditation scientifically proven to improve:
 - Somatic
 - Mental wellness
 - Sleep patterns
 - Decrease stress levels

Meditation may help:

- Clear your mind
- De stress
- Live more well rounded

Elements that hinder the positive effects of meditation:

- Negative attitudes
- Rage
- Inner critical thoughts

Exercise

My exercise routine includes the following:

- Cardiovascular
- Aerobic
- Isometric
- Plyometric
- Total duration of 23 minutes of nonstop exercise three to five days a week twice a day, which leads to 24 hours of better mood

The reasons exercise & physical activity help:

- Increases levels of serotonin
- Releases endorphins
- Improves your mood

If you don't exercise the following will may happen:

- Lack of energy
- Negatively impact physical & mental wellbeing
- Risk for high blood pressure

Sleep

I control my circadian rhythm (sleep pattern) by:

- Get 7-8 hours of sleep
- Stop caffeine at 2:00pm
- Meditate
- Listen to calm & soothing music 20 minutes before sleeping
- Maintain a consistent bedtime
- Eat healthy & nutritious meals daily

This may improve sleep:

- Some doctors recommend taking the natural hormone melatonin at bed time
- Develop a healthy bedtime routine
- Incorporate daily exercise

The following may hinder sleep:

- Going to bed too hungry or too full
- Drinking caffeine
- Too many daytime naps
- Excessive stress

Eating Healthy

Since I maintain a healthy diet I experience the following benefits:

- High energy
- Good mood
- Clear thinking

This life change can help keep your mind & body in great shape.

Eating the following types of food may help:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Natural & healthy fats & sugars
- Omega-3 rich foods

Eating unhealthily will have negative repercussions:

- Lack of energy
- Prevents brain from functioning efficiently
- Having long-term health problems

Education

I keep myself educated on the following topics:

- Mental health
- My personal condition/disorder
- Wellness
- Treatments

I educate my friends, my family, & those closest to me on the following topics:

- Signs & symptoms of my personal struggle & condition

These are topics to be educated on:

- The importance of mental health
- Helpful coping skills
- Activities that help relieve mental struggles & stress

Reasons lack of mental health education may have a negative impact:

- Unaware of methods to stay mentally well
- Unaware of important warning signs &/or triggers
- May unknowingly discriminate those suffering

Coping

Mechanisms

I utilize the following coping mechanisms:

- Developing strong interpersonal relationships
- Giving back to my community & others
- Helping caregivers care

Healthy coping mechanisms:

- Socializing with friends
- Spending time with a pet
- Participating in positive hobbies

Without healthy coping mechanisms:

- Increased stress level & anxiety
- Resistance to wellness
- Weakened immune system
- Isolation

Things

2 Consider

I refrain from drugs & alcohol:

- Further weakens your brain's ability to function properly
- Inhibits the ability to make good decisions
- May lead to an unhealthy life style
- Family dysfunction
- Personal despair

If you happen to be on psychiatric medications, it is important to note that taking meds while drinking or using drugs can lead to imminent danger, self harm, or death.

Medication

I do the following when taking my medication:

- 100% accuracy
- Same time everyday
- If I feel affected negatively by my medications, I immediately contact my doctor & schedule an appointment

Medication may help:

- Note that Medication isn't for everyone
- Ask a doctor if medication is the best option for you
 - For those that do need it it could change their lives for the better

While prescribed medication the following will have a negative impact:

- Taking medication with substances
- Stopping medication intake abruptly
- Drastically going off a medication without a doctors permission

The Plan

Years ago I created an **emergency mental health binder**.

- Back then it was a physical binder that I handed the people closest to me, today it is an e-file that I can share with anyone.
- Everyone has mental health, & everyone with a mental health condition should have the plan.

“The Plan” will help in the following ways:

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle
- Gain a positive perspective
- Help stay mentally, emotionally, & physically well

Reasons “The Plan” has benefited me by:

- Keeping me safe
- Keeping my personal protectors informed
- Keeping me self aware
- Keeping me hopeful in the darkest of times

Suicide Prevention: Making a Difference



Be Aware of the Do's...

- Be aware. Learn the warning signs.
- Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- Ask if she or he is thinking about suicide.
- Be direct. Talk openly and freely about suicide.
- Be willing to listen. Allow expressions of feelings. Accept the feelings.
- Be non-judgmental. Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or feelings are good or bad. Don't lecture on the value of life.
- Offer hope that alternatives are available and Take Action.

Suicide Prevention: Making a Difference



...and the Don'ts...

- Don't dare him or her to do it.
- Don't ask why. This encourages defensiveness.
- Offer empathy, not sympathy.
- Don't act shocked. This will put distance between you.
- Don't be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1(800)273-8255

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

[Home](#)[Get Help](#)[Get Involved](#)[Learn More](#)[Crisis Centers](#)[About](#)

Get Help For Someone Online

It can be scary when someone in your social media network mentions suicide. Bookmark these links so you can help a friend find hope.

[Why call?](#)[Who should call?](#)[What happens when I call?](#)

No matter what problems you are dealing with, we want to help you find a reason to keep living. By calling **1-800-273-TALK** (8255) you'll be connected to a

Call 24/7
1-800-273-8255



Are you in crisis?

[Click to Chat](#)

Follow us



More help for

[Veterans](#)[Young Adults](#)

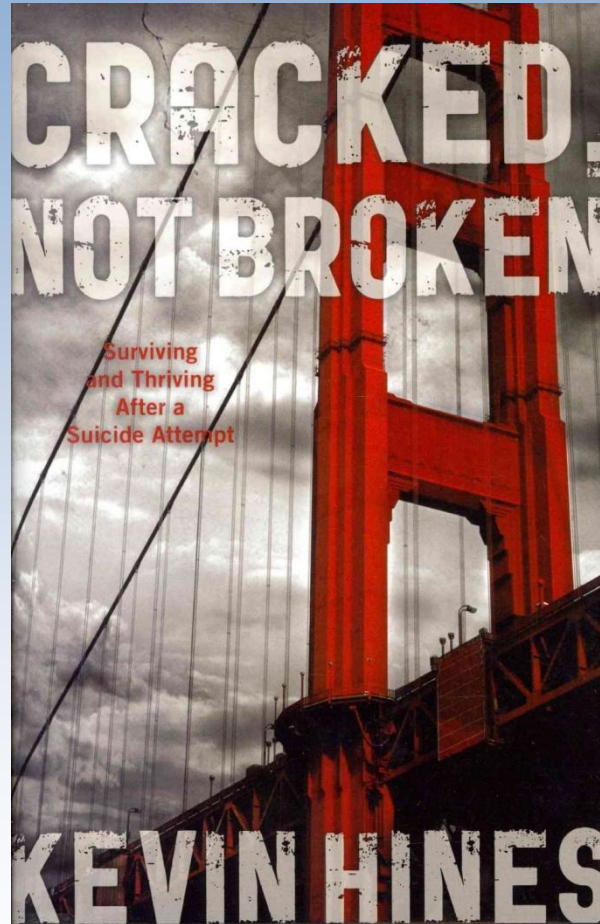
For Help in Immediate Crisis

IF:

- Someone is threatening to hurt or kill themselves
- Someone is looking for ways to kill themselves: seeking access to pills, weapons or other means

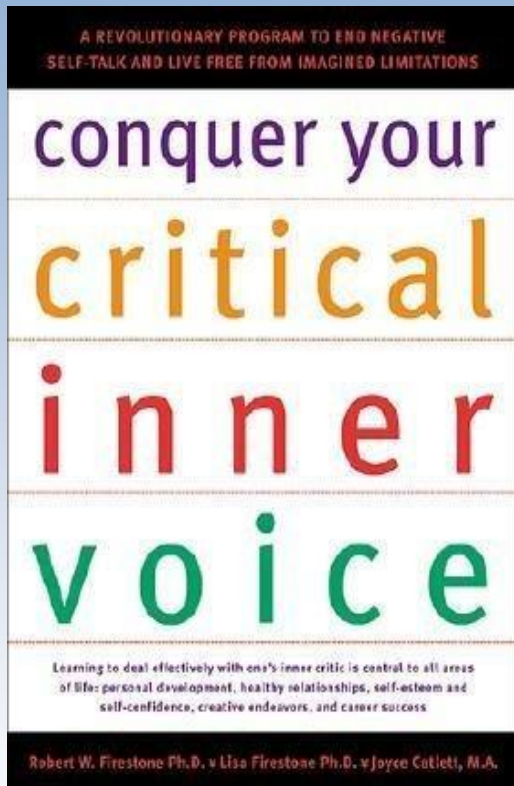
Call 911 or seek immediate help

Resources: Books

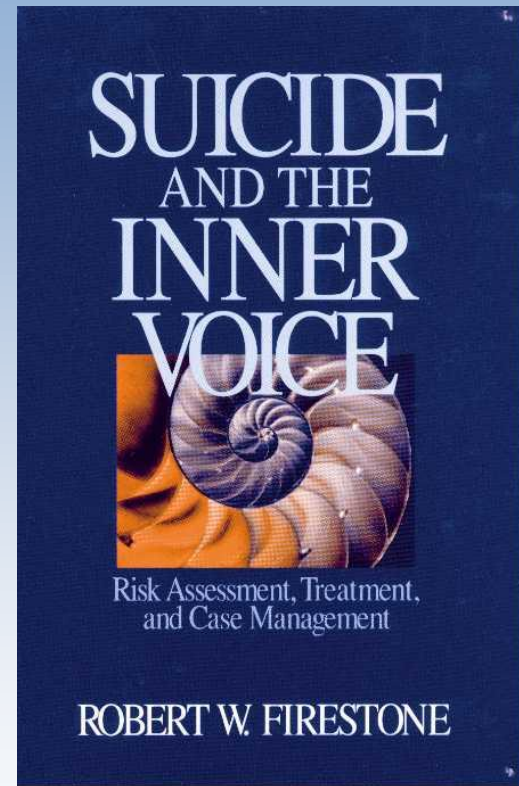


Visit www.psychalive.org for resource links

Resources: Books



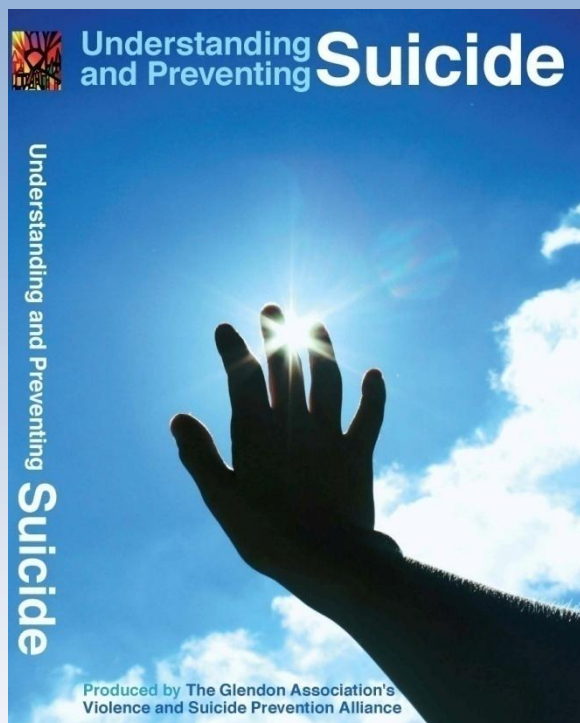
For Public and Professionals



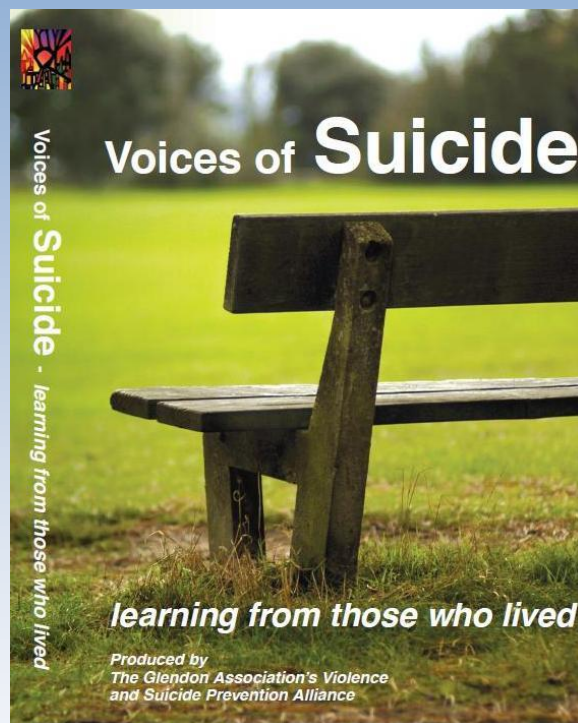
For Professionals

Visit www.psychalive.org for resource links

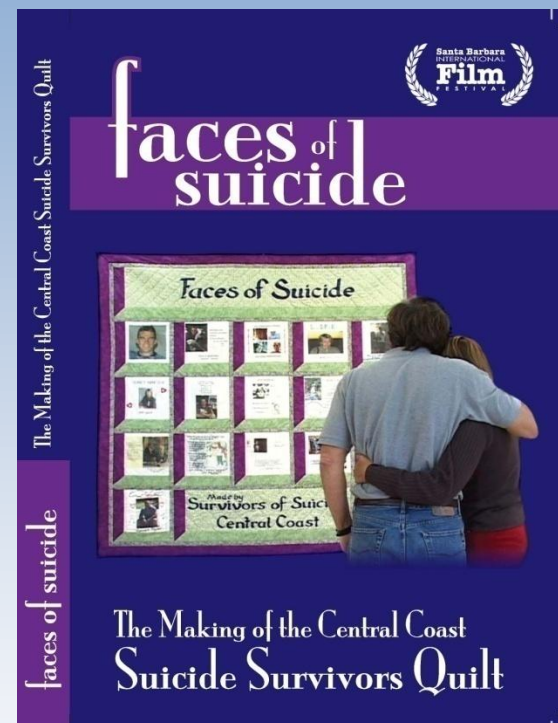
Resources: Films



For the Public



For Professionals



For Survivors

Visit www.psychalive.org for resource links

Upcoming Webinars



Oct. 13 – Free Webinar
Effective Ways to Fight Depression



Nov. 17 – CE Webinar
A Way Out of Loneliness: How to Feel Less Isolated and Alone



Dec. 1 – CE Webinar
Live Your Life to the Fullest

See full list of Webinar at PsychAlive.org

Useful Websites:

PSYCHALIVE.ORG – Suicide Prevention Advice Page

<http://www.psychalive.org/2011/09/suicide-prevention-advice-2/>

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention

<http://actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/>

American Association of Suicidology's Survivors' Support Group Directory

<http://www.suicidology.org/web/guest/support-group-directory>

IASP Suicide Survivor Organizations (listed by country) -

http://www.iasp.info/resources/Postvention/National_Suicide_Survivor_Organizations/

Contact Kevin Hines

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- [livingmentallywithkevinhines](#)





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