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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Segment One: Sources of Distress and Warning Signs

1. What seems to be the major source of distress for the Snyder Family in the video?
Can you relate?
2. How well equipped do you think you are to recognize sources of distress in your Airman's life? What would help you to be better equipped?

Key information: Sources of distress can become risk factors for suicide. Some risk factors may be reduced by intervention while others can be difficult to change or manage. Common risk factors for suicide include:

- Relationship problems
- Loss of a loved one
- Lack of social support
- Legal problems
- Financial difficulties or challenges
- Health concerns or chronic pain
- Severe, prolonged, or unmanageable stress
- Work difficulties
- Setbacks or failures
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Alcoholism or drug misuse
- Depression or anxiety

The common theme for warning signs is change, and they should be responded to as soon as detected. Common warning signs for suicide include:

- Significant mood changes, such as depression or anxiety
- Irritability, agitation, or anger
- Expressed feelings of hopelessness or helplessness
- Feeling like a burden to others; Isolating from friends, family, or coworkers
- Significantly diminished or changed job performance
- Acting recklessly or impulsively or a lack of impulse-control
- Unexpected changes in behavior
- Changes in sleep patterns (too little or too much)



- Changes in alcohol use or the abuse of drugs



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Segment Two: Intervention

1. In the Snyder Family's story, what warning sign(s) has Matt's Dad noticed, and how is he choosing to intervene?
2. Which option for intervention seems most doable for you? Which option would be the most difficult?

Key information: The Ask, Care, and Escort, or ACE, Model is a framework to engage someone in a supportive manner, particularly if that person is having difficulty. This model may be used at any time (nonemergency and emergency) across multiple situations and settings.

There are three components to ACE:

The first component is Ask. Asking direct questions helps you find out what is going on. When beginning a conversation, take your time and do not rush the conversation unless the situation is an emergency. Rushing through conversations can cause individuals to shut down. To get started, it may be helpful to discuss the changes you have seen. Make sure to Ask directly about thoughts of suicide in your conversation. Take all reports of suicidal thoughts very seriously. Never ignore remarks about suicide or promise secrecy.

The second component is Care. Calmly express concern and listen carefully to what you are being told. Make sure you understand the full picture of what's going on by summarizing what you have heard and asking for clarification. Don't be judgmental or promise secrecy. Use the information you have gathered to determine the appropriate resources to help this person.

The third component is to Escort the person to the right resource. While many people simply need help problem solving, some may need immediate intervention and should not be left alone for any reason. Always ensure the person in distress gets connected to the appropriate helping resource. In the case of those expressing suicidal thoughts, this must occur immediately. Services may include a Chaplain, mental health provider, First Sergeant, or local emergency room.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Segment Three: Time-Based Prevention

1. How might time-based prevention strategies be helpful for the Snyder Family?
2. What are some things you could do in your home to put time and space between persons in distress and access to lethal means, known in the Air Force as "time-based prevention"?

Key information: The decision to act on a suicidal thought can be impulsive. Most people who do not have immediate access to their preferred means of a suicide WILL NOT try another method. Delaying a person's ability to attempt suicide by even five minutes can save their life. For this reason, properly storing firearms and other lethal means is extremely important in preventing suicides. Remember to GO SLO:

- Safes
- Locks
- Outside the home

Going SLO with lethal means is good safety practice regardless of suicide risk. Properly stored firearms, sharp objects, ligatures, medications, and toxic chemicals can prevent accidents and/or theft.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Segment Four: Resources and Follow-Up

1. In the Snyder Family's story, what resources does Rebecca suggest to Matt?

2. What resources have you used before? How helpful were they?

Key Information: Knowing what helping agencies and resources are available allows Airmen and their family members to get help when they need it. A full list of resources at your location can be found in Appendix C.

Following up regularly with a distressed family member until the problem is adequately resolved is critical. It supports the individual and helps resolve any additional problems or complications that may occur.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Segment Five: Being Proactive

1. What examples of protective factors did you notice in the Snyder Family?
2. How can you be proactive to help strengthen protective factors in your family?

Key Information: Protective factors are a critical element of suicide prevention. Two of the most important protective factors are connectedness and a sense of purpose. Other protective factors include:

- Optimism about the future
- Strong social support from family, friends, and coworkers
- Help seeking
- Talking about problems
- Effective coping and problem-solving skills
- A culture that encourages seeking help early and often



APPENDIX

Protective Factors, Risk Factors and Warning Signs

Protective Factors are an element of Resilience and Suicide Prevention. These factors can help protect an Airman against distress. They include:

Positive relationships

- Family, friends, coworkers, and Wingmen
- Sense of belonging

Coping Skills

- Effective problem solving
- Seeking help, consultation, or mentorship early

Positive thoughts/beliefs

- Focus on the future
- Feeling that you have control of that future
- Belief that things will get better when they are going wrong
- Religious/spiritual beliefs

Risk Factors, or sources of distress, can be internal or external events, situations, and behaviors that may increase the risk for suicide. Sources of distress may or may not be visible to others and are associated with things that are going on with the person. Some of the most common Risk Factors for suicide are:

- Relationship problems
- Loss of a loved one
- Lack of social support
- Legal problems
- Financial difficulties or challenges
- Health concerns or chronic pain
- Severe, prolonged, or unmanageable stress
- Work difficulties
- Setbacks or failures
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Alcoholism or drug misuse
- Depression or anxiety

Warning Signs are often accompanied by sudden and unexplained changes in mood or



behavior. These signs of distress can vary significantly from person to person. Some of the most common Warning Signs for suicide are:

- Significant mood changes, such as depression or anxiety
- Irritability, agitation, or anger
- Expressed feelings of hopelessness or helplessness
- Feeling like a burden to others
- Isolating from friends, family, or coworkers
- Lack of interest in activities that were previously enjoyed
- Significantly diminished or changed job performance
- Acting recklessly or impulsively or a lack of impulse-control
- Unexpected changes in behavior
- Changes in sleep patterns (too little or too much)
- Changes in alcohol use or the abuse of drugs



APPENDIX

Resources

Unit and Local Resources	
Resource	Telephone Number
Commander	
Supervisor	
1st Sergeant	
Mental Health Clinic	
Chaplain Service	
Military Family Life Counselor	
Sexual Assault Response Program	
Airman and Family Readiness Centers	
Primary Care Clinics	
Family Advocacy	
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program	
Health and Wellness Center	
Air Force Survivor Assistance Program	
Air Force Wounded Warrior Program	
Child and Youth Services ? Family Member Services	
Area Defense Counsel	
Behavioral Health Optimization Program	
Equal Opportunity	
Exceptional Family Member Program	
Inspector General	
Installation Legal Office	
Installation Safety Office	



Unit and Local Resources	
Resource	Telephone Number
Military Crisis Line	
American Red Cross	
Military OneSource	