Live Another Day

Suicide Prevention
Why do you need to know?

- The most likely person to be told about suicidality is a friend, boyfriend, girlfriend, or spouse.
- Suicide attempts have become very common at CCU:
  - 1-2/semester is typical
  - Spring 2009 – 8 hospitalizations for suicidality
  - Spring 2010 – at least 2 hospitalizations so far
- Most of all…It’s devastating to have someone you love kill themselves!
Today’s presentation:

• What to look for
• How to assess seriousness
• Thoughts on…Talking them out of it
• Other related information
WHAT TO LOOK FOR...
A “Suicidogenic” Situation

- Death of a loved one
- Divorce or break-up
- Loss of job, home, money, etc.
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Depression
Research Shows…

• 26,000 Students Surveyed in 70 Colleges or Universities
  o 25% return rate
  o random sample
  o web-based
Of college students who seriously considered suicide, the following events were experienced close in time to the suicide ideation.

1. Emotional or physical pain 65%
2. Romantic relationship problems 59%
3. Wanting to end life 49%
4. School problems 43%
5. Friend problems 43%
6. Family problems 43%
7. Financial problems 31%
8. Shared others external pain 30%
9. Punishing others 14%
10. Alcohol/drug problems 10%
11. Sexual assault 8%
12. Relationship violence 6%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sadness</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lonely/Isolated</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopeless</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpless</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxious/worried</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxious/panicked</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emotions to Look For

- Overwhelming pain
- Hopelessness
- Powerlessness
- Worthlessness, shame, guilt, self hatred
- Sad
- Withdrawn/isolated
- Apathetic, decline in interests
- Anxious
- Irritable
- Anger
Behaviors to Look For

• Neglect of personal welfare
• Deteriorating physical appearance
• Change in eating or sleeping patterns
• Previous suicide attempts
• Explicit or vague statements regarding death, life or self-harm
• Reckless behavior
• Making a will, settling debts, giving stuff away
• Inappropriately saying good-bye
Now that you suspect suicidality…

Ask the question…

- Are you thinking about hurting yourself?
- Are you thinking about killing yourself?
- Are you thinking about suicide?
HOW TO ASSESS SERIOUSNESS
What to do if someone is suicidal

1. Start with the “Good Neighbor Response”
2. Assess with the “SLAP” technique
3. Make a follow-up plan.
How to respond to suicidal thoughts

Good Neighbor Response

“Don’t Do It!”
How to Respond to Suicidal Thoughts

S: Specific Details
What are the specific details of the plan?
How to Respond to Suicidal Thoughts

L: Lethality

How quickly could they die if they do what they plan?
How to Respond to Suicidal Thoughts

A: Availability

Do they have the means to implement the plan?
How to Respond to Suicidal Thoughts

P: Proximity

How close are people who could help?
Make a follow-up plan

- Get Help Now
  - Specific details, high lethality and availability, low proximity
- Get Help Later
  - No plan, no details, low lethality/availability, high proximity
- Judgment Call
A Few Tips

• Don’t be afraid to ask.
• Don’t promise confidentiality.
• Don’t be afraid to tell someone else who can help.
• Use your SLAP information to decide whether to get help now or later.
THOUGHTS ON...
TALKING THEM OUT OF IT
Why students decide not to commit suicide

1. Don’t want to hurt family 77%
2. Don’t want to hurt friends 56%
3. Hope/plans for the future 40%
4. Want to finish school 40%
5. Support of friends 38%
6. Support of family 35%
7. Don’t want to hurt partner 34%
8. Religious/moral beliefs 28%
9. Support of partner 26%
10. Pets 19%
11. Relationship with mental health professional 10%
Rates of Suicide Nationally

- 55% of undergrads have thought about suicide
- 2% think about suicide on a regular basis
- 15% seriously considered attempting suicide
- .9% attempted suicide in the past 12 months
Rates of Suicide at CCU

- 7.6% of students admit to seriously considering suicide within the past 12 months (NCHA Survey)
- 3.2% of students admit to attempting suicide in the past 12 months (NCHA Survey)
- 4.2% of students admit to seriously thinking about suicide during the last year due to alcohol or drug use (CORE Survey)
- 1.9% of students admit to attempting suicide during the last year due to alcohol or drug use (CORE Survey)
Useful facts about suicide...

• Those who gather materials for a suicide attempt are twice as likely to attempt suicide.
• Those that begin to attempt suicide and then change their mind are 14 times more likely to attempt again.
• Most common means of those who attempt suicide are overdose (48%) and cutting (27%).
• Of those who seriously consider suicide, 54% tell someone. They are most likely to tell a friend (33%), or a romantic partner (30%). The majority felt that person was helpful to them.
• The period of intense suicidal thoughts is typically 1 day or less.
• 60-66% of those who attempt suicide die in their first known attempt.
Not Suicidal, but just cutting

- Cutting is a form of “nonsuicidal self-injury,” in which a person has the intention of inflicting harm upon him/herself, without the intent of suicide.
- Cutting is an unhealthy coping mechanism which may be done for many different reasons, including:
  - anxiety,
  - overwhelming sadness,
  - stress relief, and
  - emotional numbness.
- Done in a secretive manner, usually on body parts that can easily be covered.
- Cutting not usually meant as suicide, but it is not uncommon for those who cut to think about suicide.
- Cutting is less risky than suicide, but it is never safe to cause bodily harm.
- Help should be sought to replace this unhealthy coping technique with healthy ones.
QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION?