

# RESPONSE CHECKLIST

## RECOGNIZE THE SIGNALS OF SUICIDE:

- (1) **alterations** (changes for the worse—sudden or negative trend);
- (2) **alarm** (references to suicide or to being dead);
- (3) **attempt** or act of self-harm (in recent past or just disclosed);
- (4) **arrangements** (saying goodbye, writing a will, funeral planning, etc.).

**ASK:** directly (*“I’m worried about you and I want to know, have you been thinking about suicide?”*)

**assess** their current suicide risk (use chart below as a guide)

PRELIMINARY RISK ASSESSMENT		
Assess	CRISIS	EMERGENCY
<b>Pain</b>	Able to release their pain and control their suicidal thoughts	Unable to release their pain and control their suicidal thoughts
<b>Plan</b>	No immediate and/or deadly suicide plan and uncertain they want to die	Immediate and/or deadly suicide plan and certain they want to die
<b>Provoking Factors</b>	Able to maintain sobriety and commit to see a clinician for assessment	Unable to maintain sobriety and commit to see a clinician for assessment
<b>Protection</b>	They have someone that can talk to about their problems and suicidal thoughts/feelings and they have reasons to stay alive	They do not have someone that can talk to about their problems and suicidal thoughts/feelings and/or they do not have reasons to stay alive

(Note: always err on the side of caution and consult!)

**LISTEN** (to their pain, their perspective, their options)

- **match them**
  - one step closer to calm/neutral

**HELP** (assist them to identify and connect to the resources they need and to stay safe)

- **validate**
  - *instill hope by focussing on their strengths and personal resources*
- **“safety and wellness plan” and risk-specific responses:**

<b>CRISIS</b>	<b>EMERGENCY</b>
Assist them to fulfil their Safety & Wellness Plan	Take them to the Hospital or set up a 24 Hour Watch
<b>SAFETY AND WELLNESS PLAN</b>	
<b>Safety:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Remove methods</li> <li>(2) Keep safe. As needed:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• go to family/friends, or</li> <li>• to hospital/24 watch (depending on suicide risk)</li> </ul> </li> <li>(3) Meet with clinician (to assess mental health/suicide risk)</li> <li>(4) Stay sober (if risk of alcohol/drug use)</li> </ul>
<b>Wellness:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with counsellor to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(5) Talk out feelings</li> <li>(6) Learn to fight suicide self-talk</li> </ul> </li> <li>(7) Spend positive time with family and/or friends</li> <li>(8) Pursue reasons to live and positive/soothing activities</li> </ul>

(Note: always err on the side of caution and consult!)

- **Consult (with Supervisor) and Document**
- **Inform Appropriate Family Members**
  - *offer information and discuss resources*
- **Follow-up with Longer Term Resources**
  - *build their self esteem--develop their connections and sense of empowerment--and support their search for a positive identity and transformation*
- **Care for Yourself!**

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**Remember:** *it is not your task to fix their life, only to offer them a caring connection and respectful opportunities for empowerment, so that they can build their self esteem.*