



# **Suicide & Crisis**

**San Jose Police Communications  
Basic Academy**

# Objectives:

- What Is Suicide?
- What is a Crisis?
- Risk Factors
- Features of Suicide Risk
- Screening / Assessment for Suicide
- Suicide Intervention / Practice Exercise

# What is Suicide ???

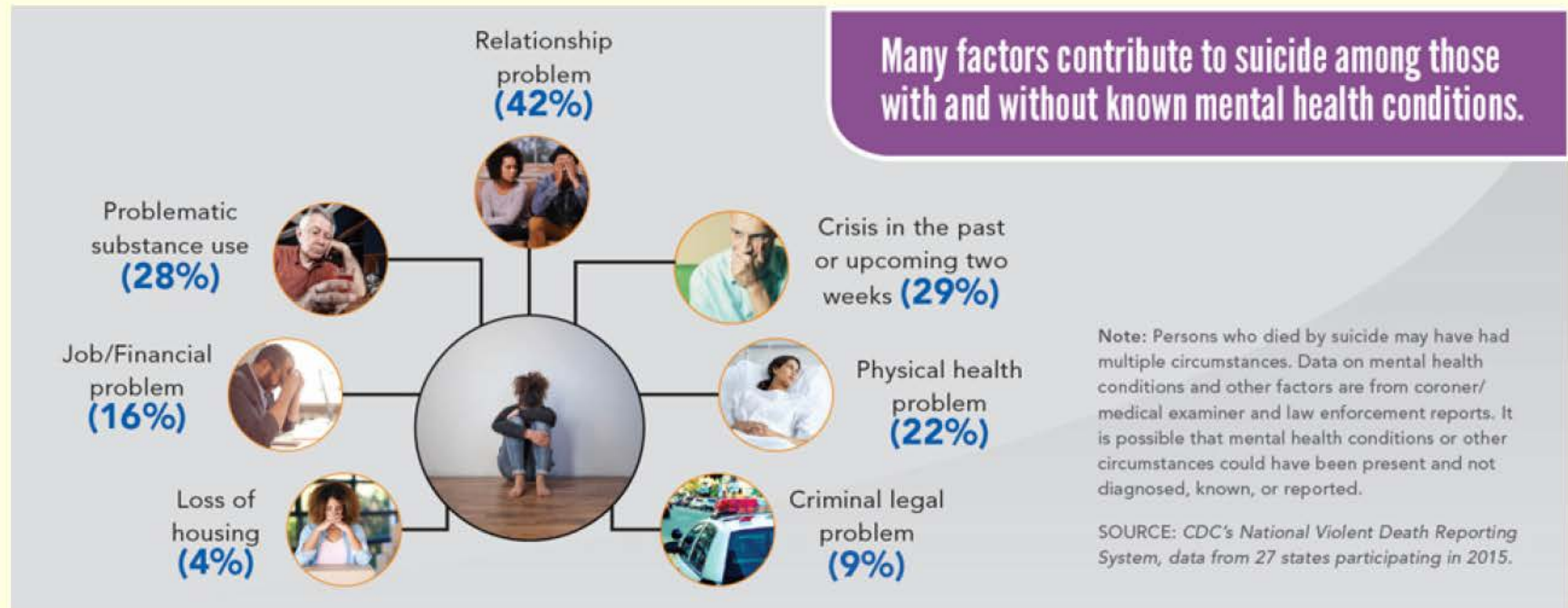
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- Suicide is the act of intentionally causing one's own death.
- It is sometimes a way for people to escape pain or suffering.

# Causes:

## Stressors.....

What kind of things would cause someone to think of killing themselves?



# Nationwide Statistics

2018 data

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- 10th ranking cause of death in the US
- Every day, approximately 123 Americans die by suicide
- There is one death by suicide in the US every 12 minutes
- Each year 44,965 Americans die by suicide
- Firearms account for 50% of all suicides
- Alcoholism is a factor in 30% of completed suicides

# Risk Factors

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- Family history of suicide
- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- History of mental disorders, particularly clinical depression
- History of alcohol and substance abuse
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Impulsive or aggressive tendencies
- Cultural and religious beliefs
- Local epidemics of suicide
- Isolation, a feeling of being cut off from other people
- Barriers to accessing mental health treatment
- Loss (relational, social, work, or financial)
- Physical illness
- Easy access to lethal methods
- Unwillingness to seek help because of the stigma attached to mental health and substance abuse disorders or to suicidal thoughts

# Factors which can Increase the Risk of Suicide



- Affective Disorders
- Bipolar
- Major Depression
- Substance Abuse
- Alcohol
- Schizophrenia
- Personality Disorders

# Common Misconceptions

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- People who talk about suicide won't really do it.
- If a person is determined to kill him/herself, nothing is going to stop them.
- People who commit suicide are unwilling to seek help.
- Talking about suicide may give someone the idea.
- Only crazy people commit suicide.



# Emotions

- Sad, despondent
  - Hopeless
  - Helpless
  - Worthless
  - Lonely
  - Extreme mood changes
  - Apathy
  - Guilt
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- A photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a white, flowing, tulle-like dress, sitting on a bed. She is looking down and to the side with a sad and despondent expression. Her right hand is resting on her knee, and her left hand is near her face. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# Behaviors:

- Inactivity
- Giving away possessions
- Loss of interest
- Withdrawal from family, friends, work/school
- Reckless behavior
- Substance abuse (alcohol / drugs)
- Sudden changes in behavior
- Impulsivity

# Expressed Thoughts:

- "I wish I were dead."
- "All of my problems will end soon."
- "I'm a loser."
- "I can't do anything right."
- "I won't be needing these things anymore."
- "Everyone will be better off without me."
- "I just can't keep my thoughts straight anymore."



# Changes can be Physical and/or Physiological:



Lack of interest in appearance

Change/loss of interest in sex

Change in sleep pattern

Change in appetite or weight

Physical health complaints



**Are you thinking  
of killing yourself?**

JuVENTINA

# Different Types Of Suicide Calls



- Shooting
- Hanging
- Overdose
- Jumper
- Stabbing or Cutting
- Putting themselves in harms way – running into traffic or in front of a train

# SUICIDE BY COP

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**Police Use of**



**Deadly Force**

# Different Ways Calls Are Received

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- The actual suicidal caller themselves
- The person who finds the body
- The family or friend who is concerned about a loved one who they feel is suicidal
- A witness or passerby
- Posted on social media





# What is your plan?

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- How?
- How prepared? Do they have the means?
- How soon? When?

# What is a Crisis ???

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- A persons reaction to an event.
  - 1 person might be deeply affected by an event....while another individual suffers little or no effects.

# The Crisis Process

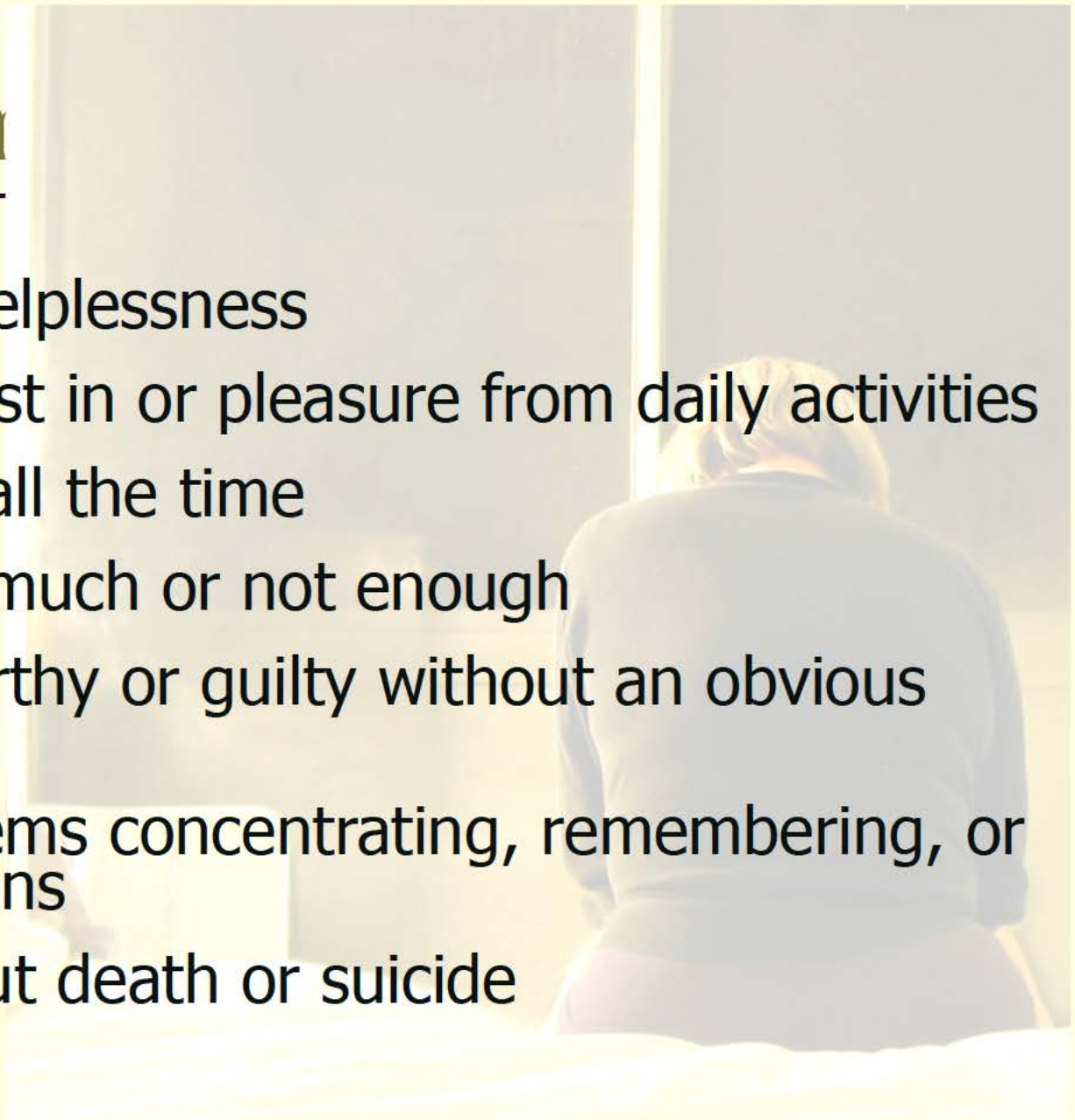
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- Recognition
- Attempted Resolution
- Emotional Blockage

# Sympton

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- Sadness or Helplessness
- Loss of interest in or pleasure from daily activities
- Feeling tired all the time
- Sleeping too much or not enough
- Feeling unworthy or guilty without an obvious reason
- Having problems concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Thinking about death or suicide



# What is Emotional Trauma?

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Emotional and psychological trauma is the result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter your sense of security, making you feel helpless and vulnerable in a dangerous world.

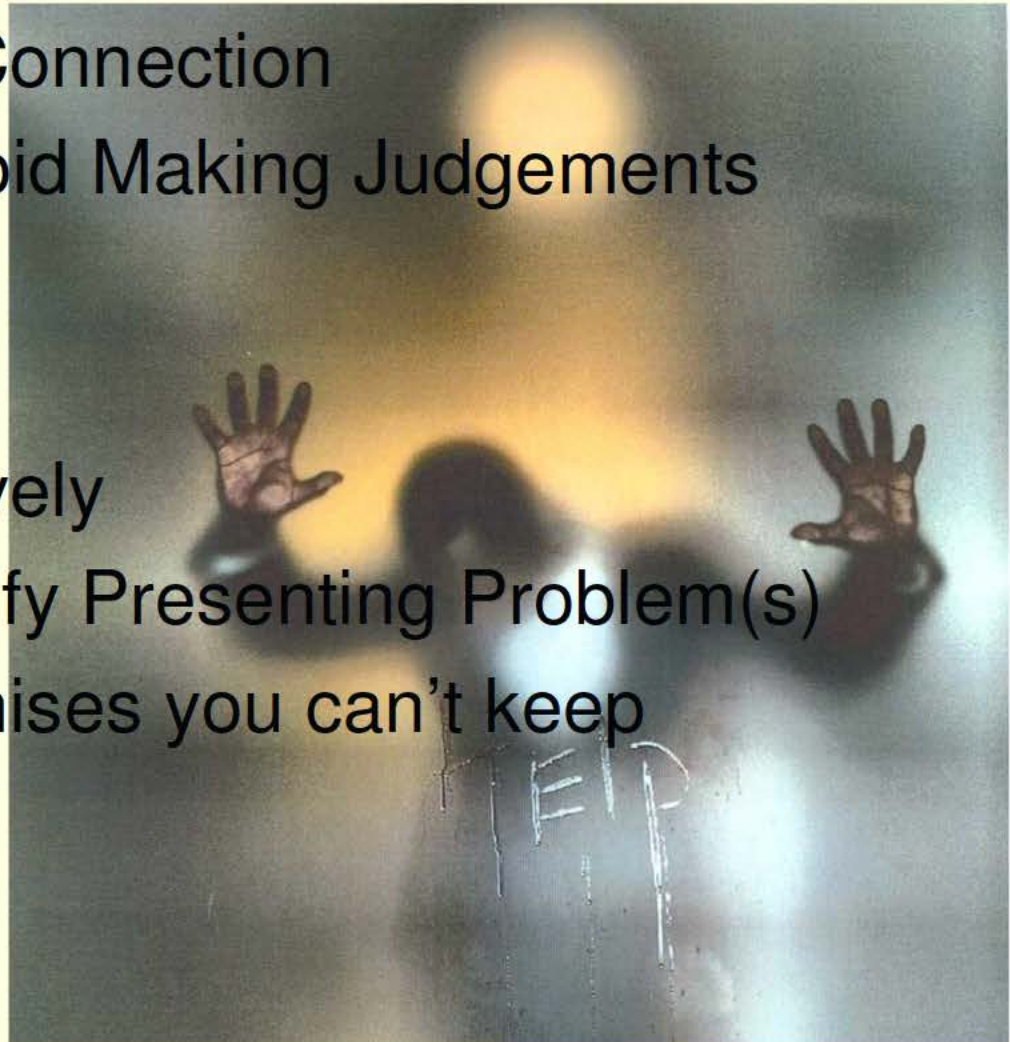
# Resources

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- Internal
- External

# Intervention Techniques

- Build Rapport / Connection
- Acceptance / Avoid Making Judgements
- Elicit Feelings
- Empathize
- Listen Responsively
- Identify and Clarify Presenting Problem(s)
- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Be honest



# Protective Factors:

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Protective factors buffer individuals from suicidal thoughts and behavior:

- Effective clinical care for mental, physical, and substance abuse disorders
- Easy access to a variety of clinical interventions and support for help seeking
- Family and community support (connectedness)
- Support from ongoing medical and mental health care relationships
- Skills in problem solving, conflict resolution, and nonviolent ways of handling disputes
- Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support instincts for self-preservation



# Associated Communication Policies

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- A 2511 Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)
- C 1660 Attempted Suicide 1056A
- C 1689 Mentally Disturbed Person 5150
- C 1737 Welfare Check
- R 1217 Crisis Intervention Team – CIT Response

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# ■ Any Questions

