

## ***Role-play between Resident Advisor and college student***

*To the person role-playing the suicidal student:*

This first section is information that the person being interviewed is relatively comfortable sharing and will quite easily volunteer. You may state any or all of the information in this section in the initial conversation without prodding from the interviewer.

**Suicide risk factors are underlined in the scenario and the suicide warning sign (indirect verbal statement of possible intent) is at the bottom.**

You are a 22-year-old single male who has just been arrested for driving Under the Influence (DUI or DWI). You are referred for a court ordered alcohol assessment, and to the college counseling center. On an athletic scholarship, you are recently separated from your girlfriend who you saw on a date with another member of your team last week. **(Relationship loss)** You've been drinking since age 16, but your drinking has increased since your girlfriend left you **(Alcohol/SA disorder)** to the point that now you have been stopped by the police. You are angry about being sent in for an assessment and anxious about what will happen with your scholarship and, perhaps your driver's license **(Potential job/financial loss)**. In addition to being angry about getting stopped by the police you are also **ashamed** because you have been very successful as a student athlete and many students look up to you. You feel that everything is coming down on you all at once and feel **hopeless** about your future and don't think you can handle it without drinking.

The day before your scheduled appointment at the counseling center you are talking with your resident hall advisor about being forced to keep the appointment. You say, "*Maybe I'll just skip the appointment. Sometimes I think everyone would be better off if I wasn't around.*"

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## ***Role-play between faculty members:***

*To the person role-playing the suicidal faculty member:*

This first section is information that the suicidal person is relatively comfortable sharing. You may state any or all of the information in this section in the initial conversation without prodding from the interviewer.

**Suicide risk factors are scattered throughout the scenario and the suicide warning sign (indirect verbal statement of possible intent) is at the bottom.**

You are a 42-year-old divorced Associate Professor of English and have just been denied tenure. After your divorce last year, this is another terrible setback. Lately you've drinking a great deal more, which was one of the reasons your spouse left you. In fact, you were recently asked to leave a local tavern after drinking too much. The word about your drinking has been out and now your department chair wants to talk with you a week from Monday, and has set up a formal and mandatory appointment – something she rarely does with any faculty member.

To make this worse, you're mother recently died and you were unable to attend the funeral, and now your family is upset with you. You also just learned that your ex wife/husband is seeing someone else and apparently very happy. You, who didn't want the divorce, remain depressed, irritable and not sleeping well. You realize the novel you were always going to write is joke and you are angry about having to see the department chair and fear for the worst. On the upside, your students like and respect you.

Three days before your scheduled appointment with the chair, you are talking with a colleague in the department about the upcoming meeting and say, "*Maybe I just won't show. I've been a no-show most of my life anyway. I mean, really, who'd miss me if I wasn't around anymore?*"

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## ***Role-play between physical therapist and student athlete***

*To the person role-playing the suicidal student:*

Most of the information below is relatively easy to reveal. You may state any or all of the information in this section in the initial conversation without prodding from the interviewer.

**Suicide risk factors are scattered throughout the scenario and the suicide warning sign (indirect verbal statement of possible intent) is at the bottom.**

You are a 19-year-old student athlete in your first year of college. You have just sustained a career-ending injury. The orthopedic surgeon has told you and your coach that while you can enjoy (pick one: volleyball, track, football, baseball, basketball, etc.), your competitive days are over. It took everything you had to make the team, and your scholarship was year-to-year. Your family has no way to support your staying in school. Since hearing the news less than a week ago, the coach has said you can continue through the year and get physical therapy, but beyond that there is nothing.

You have been preparing for your chosen sport since you were six years old, and have always dreamed of being a star. You were a local standout in junior high and high school, and everyone back home expects you to make it big, perhaps even at the professional level. You're academic strengths are limited.

You have been in a monogamous and close relationship with another student athlete (a boy, girl, same or opposite sex) and this relationship has been one of the best things that's ever happened to you. But when you told your lover about the injury, and that if you couldn't find some financial support somewhere you might have to withdraw from school, you noticed a distinct change in his/her attitude, a kind of pulling away. In fact, when you called your lover just yesterday he/she said he/she was busy and could you call back. This has never happened before. Suddenly you feel isolated and alone, and there is no one to talk to.

While no one knows about it, you've had ongoing problems with depression and often don't feel like eating at all. While you don't take them now, you used steroids in high school and now wonder if your whole life has been a fraud, since it's not likely you would have gotten a scholarship without using illegal drugs. And now you're thinking that suicide might be a solution. After all, one of your best friends in high school killed him/herself.

You are seeing the department's physical therapist to work on the injury. You've always liked this person and say, *"I guess it's all over for me now. I don't see any point in going on. Nothing's worth it anymore."*

*Role-play (college student)*

**Section 1**

*To the person role-playing the suicidal patient:*

This first section is information that the person being interviewed is relatively comfortable sharing and will quite easily volunteer. You may state any or all of the information in this section in the initial conversation without prodding from the interviewer.

**To the person being interviewed for suicide risk (risk factors are underlined):**

You are an 18-year-old single female who has just completed her first semester of college work. A straight-A student in high school, college work is much harder than you anticipated. In fact, you just received your grades (two C's and only one A). Your father is going to be very disappointed. Your high school sweetheart, who chose to attend a different university, has stopped taking your phone calls after he said, "I think we both need some time for ourselves." With an IQ of 135, you are no dummy and knows what this means (**relationship loss**). You've always been a worrywart and you are finding it hard to get to sleep. While you experimented with marijuana a few times in high school, one of your new friends has been supplying you with grass so that you can "get to sleep." You've noticed that if you have a tall beer late in the evening that seems to help, too (**potential SA disorder**). Your academic advisor has sent you to the counseling center to see if having someone to talk to might help. You agreed to go once, but basically don't trust mental health professionals, especially since they were not helpful for your mother. You can't remember feeling so pessimistic about things ever before and wonder what it would be like to just go to sleep and never wake up (**hopelessness**).

Early in the interview you say, "When I finally get to sleep some nights, I wonder if wouldn't be better to just never wake up."

**Section 2**

Do not reveal all of the risk factors below in your initial presentation. Do, however reveal this information if prompted by the interviewer to do so.

**What you also know that your interviewer doesn't:**

- Your mother was not only depressed and failed to respond to treatment, but killed herself with a massive overdose when you were 12 years old (**positive family history/role model**).
- You've researched the internet and learned what over-the-counter medications you could take with alcohol and, by putting a plastic bag (like the one in you closet) over your head after ingesting the pills and alcohol, you're quite sure you could end your life (**access to means**).
- Since you're father has chosen to get remarried, and if your grades don't improve, you're quite sure he will stop supporting you at school. If this happens, you could kill yourself on the anniversary of your mother's suicide, which was June 30<sup>th</sup>, right after spring term (**relational loss and contingent suicide plan**).
- After your mother's suicide, you took an overdose of aspirin. Your father was furious and scolded you all the way home from the hospital (**previous suicide attempt**).
- While on the internet last week, you found and took a depression screening test. You're score was off the chart, but you've not told anyone yet (**possible mental disorder**).

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