Best Practices
for conversations about suicide and self harm

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Remember who you are and who you are not.

You ARE - a leader, a servant, a mentor, disciple maker, friend, listener, or facilitator. You are in a position of influence. God is working in and through you as you lead here at Traders Point!

You are NOT – a trained and licensed therapist. (Well, some of you might be.) But none of you are meant to be THE problem solver or savior.

As difficult conversations arise, release yourself of any pressure to have all of the answers and fix all of the problems.

Instead, use these steps to offer hope and encouragement.

Q QUESTION

While asking the suicide question can feel uncomfortable or difficult, having the courage to ask can save a life.

Direct Approach
- "Are you having thoughts of suicide?"
- "Have you ever thought about not living?

Indirect Approach
- "Do you want to die, or do you want the feelings to die?"

P PERSUADE

After giving your full attention, persuade the individual to agree to get help.
- "Will you let me help you make an appointment?" (with a counselor, pastor, etc,)

R REFER

Connect the individual to a competent, local mental health professional. Refer to the TPCC Care page as needed. Offer hope in any form and be sure to follow up and check in on them again.

COMMON WARNING SIGNS

Direct Verbal Clues
- "I wish I were dead."
- "I am going to end it all."
- "If ____ doesn't happen, I'll kill myself."

Indirect Verbal Clues
- "I'm tired of life."
- "You all would be better off without me."
- "Soon you won't have to worry about me."

Behavioral Clues
- Putting personal affairs in order
- Sudden, drastic changes in behavior
- Unwanted change (divorce, death of a loved one, a big move, loss of job, etc.)

A NOTE ON SELF HARM
While self-harm can be a suicide warning sign, not all people who self-harm want to die. Sometimes, people engage in self-harm because they **don't** want to die. It is important to refer someone who is self harming regardless of suicidal intent.

📞 SUICIDE HOTLINE: 988   🌐 www.tpcc.org/care