

What Every Parent Needs to Know About Suicide, Part 2

(This is Part 2 of a two-part series. Find Part 1 [here](#).)

Have you ever thought a loved one, maybe your child, was in danger of suicide? Were you terrified to ask, afraid if you did, your question could encourage them to follow through and end their life?

Many people struggle with this.

You're not alone.

I have some encouraging news. There is an easy-to-learn strategy that could save their life. It's called QPR, developed by Dr. Paul Quinnett.

In my last post, I shared the warning signs of suicide. Today, I'll give you more detailed clues to watch for, two common myths and a brief outline of QPR.

Clues of Suicide

Direct verbal clues: "I've decided to kill myself." "I wish I were dead." "I'm going to commit suicide." "I'm going to end it all." "If (such and such) doesn't happen, I'll kill myself." Lots of people talk like this these days (especially emotional teenagers) so we tend not to take their words to heart. But any statements like these should be taken seriously.

Indirect or coded verbal clues: "I'm tired of life." "What's the point of going on?" "I'm done." "I can't do this anymore." "I wish I was never born." "You would be better off without me." "Who cared if I'm dead anyway?" "I just want out." "Soon I won't be around anymore." "Soon you won't have to worry about me any longer." Subtle statements hint at suicidal

ideation.

Behavioral clues: Putting personal affairs in order. Giving away money or prized personal possessions. Changes in behavior, especially episodes of screaming or hitting, throwing things or failure to get along with family or friends. Suspicious behavior like waving or kissing goodbye if it isn't characteristic; behaving nicer than usual (for example, being kind to a sibling they always fight with). A sudden interest in church or religion. Relapse into drug or alcohol use after a period of recovery (a lot of shame; don't want to start over again). A previous suicide attempt increases their risk for another one.

Situational Clues: Any significant loss rejection by a loved one (girlfriend, boyfriend or peer), or an unwanted separation or divorce. Death of a friend, spouse or child (especially if by suicide). Diagnosis of terminal illness or life-altering disease/physical impairment. Flare up with friends or relatives for no apparent reason. Sudden unexpected loss of freedom (for example, about to be arrested; receiving a long jail sentence). Loss of cherished counselor or therapist. Anticipated loss of financial security fired, loss of a job. Expelled from school. Fear of becoming a burden to others. Anything that causes a feeling of powerlessness.

Fear and denial often blind us to these clues. Be easy on yourself. Denial is how we cope with things that are too terrible to contemplate.

Ask God to help you accept what you saw or heard so you can follow the steps of QPR. But first, let's address two common myths.

2 Suicide Myths

1. Asking "the question" (for example, are you thinking of ending your life?) will cause the person to make an attempt.

2. People who talk about suicide don't do it, they're only seeking attention.

The facts are, people who talk about or threaten to end their lives often *do* go on to attempt or complete suicide. And asking them about it *will not* make them do it. They were *already* having those thoughts.

To prevent a suicide, we must overcome denial and find the courage to apply Dr. Quinnett's strategy.

A Brief Outline of QPR:

Think CPR. You aren't the expert who saves a life, but doing these steps can keep someone alive *until* they receive life-saving help from an expert.

Question – Ask the person if they are considering ending their lives.

Persuade – Convince the person to agree not to do anything until they get professional help.

Refer – Get help or take the person where they can receive professional help.

When you need immediate assistance, call 911, or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255 (24/7 including holidays).

This Scripture encourages me in tough times:

I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip; He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who guards Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your guardian; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not harm you during the day, nor the moon during the night. The Lord shall protect you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. The Lord

shall preserve your going out and your coming in from now and for evermore (Ps. 121:1-5).

Recommended book:

Night Falls Fast: Understanding Suicide by Kay Redfield Jamison (renowned expert on suicide); her personal story

*** The information in this blog is from .**

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