

## SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

*The following characteristics have been found to correlate with suicide:*

- 1) A family history of suicide or depression, or the recent suicide of a friend, relative, or close associate.
- 2) A prior suicide attempt.
- 3) Lack of strong affiliation bonds to another person or group of persons--feelings of not belonging to anyone or to any group.
- 4) Social isolation: lack of a support system or inability to use available supports.
- 5) Alcohol and/or drug use.
- 6) Reckless behavior.
- 7) Frequent and severe conflicts with authority.
- 8) Depression possibly combined with irritability and/or agitation.
- 9) Feelings of being trapped, stuck, or sinful.
- 10) Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness, or humiliation.
- 11) Suppressed rage and/or free-floating hostility.
- 12) Negative thinking: a negative view of past, present, and future; black-or-white thinking; irrational beliefs.

*Be responsive to:*

- ◇ Announcements of suicidal thoughts or intentions ("I'm going to kill myself if..." "I won't be here for Christmas." "This might be the last time you see me." "This is the last day I'll ever have to feel so bad.")
- ◇ Suicidal writings or drawings; notes written that are intended to be read after the person's death.
- ◇ Giving away prized possessions, writing a will, cleaning up unfinished business, saying goodbye to friends and relatives, shopping for a cemetery, writing a eulogy, purchasing a one-way ticket.
- ◇ Noticeable withdrawal from family and/or friends and/or from previously attended therapy.
- ◇ Any dramatic change in mood or emotional state.
- ◇ Sudden, significant weight gain or loss.
- ◇ Changes in sleep habits.
- ◇ Loss of interest in friends, sex, music, books, sports, etc.
- ◇ Difficulties in concentrating.
- ◇ Recent loss of a loved one or rejection by a loved one.
- ◇ Increased abuse of alcohol, food, or drugs.
- ◇ Impaired functioning at school or work.
- ◇ Outbursts of violent or rebellious behavior (particularly if this is out of character.)
- ◇ Preoccupation with fanatical or cultist ideas.
- ◇ Uncharacteristically slumped posture, slow movements, repetitive behavior or statements.
- ◇ Any evidence of being out of touch with reality.
- ◇ The expression of excessive or inappropriate guilt.