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Thomas E. Joiner Jr., Kimberly A. Van Orden, Tracy K. Witte, and M. David Rudd. *The Interpersonal Theory of Suicide: Guidance for Working with Suicidal Clients*, American Psychological Association, Washington D.C., 2009

Thwarted Belongingness

Do you feel alone?

The absence of caring, meaningful connection to others
Absence of friends or relatives patient can call when upset
Recent losses through death or divorce

Assessment Questions/Statements

These days I am connected with people
These days I feel like an outsider in social situations (reverse score)
These days I often interact with people who care about me

Perceived Burdensomeness

Do you feel like a burden?

Statements that others would be better off if the patient were gone
Statements that the patient is a burden on others
Recent stressors involving a loss of self-competency (e.g. loss of job)

Assessment Questions/Statements

The people I care about would be better off if I were gone
I have failed the people in my life

Acquired Capability

Experiences of pain and provocation

Past suicide attempts (especially multiple attempter status)
Aborted suicide attempts
Self-injecting drug use
Self-Harm (i.e. non-suicidal self injury)
Frequent exposure to, or participation in, physical violence

Assessment Questions/Statements

Things that scare others do not scare me
I can tolerate a lot more pain than most people
I avoid certain situations because of the possibility of injury (reverse score)

Current indicators

High intent for suicide
Fearlessness about suicide
Long duration of ideation with preoccupation about suicide
Highly detailed and vivid plan for suicide
Specified time and place for suicide

Acute Risk Factors:Ribeiro, Jessica D., Bodell, Lindsay P., Hames, Jennifer L., Hagan, Christopher R. Joiner, Thomas E. An Empirical Based Approach to the Assessment and Management of Suicidal Behavior. *Journal of Psychology Integration*, 2013, Vol. 23, No. 3, 207-221

1. Social withdrawal

Less talkative/ withdrawn/ a significant interpersonal stressor two days before a suicide attempt

2. Over-arousal

Agitation and insomnia including nightmares before suicide attempt; “emotional unrest”; expression of mental anguish; fidgeting; handwringing/ pacing/severe anxiety

Adler, Lisa D., Slootsky, Veronica, Griffith, James L., Khin, Khin Eindra. Teaching the Fundamentals of the Risk Assessment to Clinicians. Psychiatric Annals. 2016;46(5): 293-297

Empathic interview to understand trigger events

What are your adversities right now?

How have they affecting you?

How are you coping? Do you feel trapped?

Listen for inability to cope with despair, helplessness, hopelessness and isolation

When things are at their worst does it ever feel life isn't worth living?

Have you ever wished not to live?

Have you ever thought about ending your life through suicide?

Were these just vague thoughts or did you think about specific methods of suicide?

How did you think through whether suicide would be the right thing to do?

How did you think through the best method for suicide?

Did you make a plan for suicide or implement any steps?

The Wish to Die vs Hope

On a day you when you sincerely wanted to die, what would lead you to choose to live instead?

Resilience Factors

Purpose of living:

What is important for you to accomplish in the days to come?

Accountability:

Who do you count on? Who counts on you?

Core identity in your heart:

Who do you know yourself to be?

Who is the person you want to become?

Emotional Regulation

When life feels unfair and you feel really upset, what do you do to get through hard times?

Have you had problems controlling your anger?

Have you engaged in any risky or reckless activities?

Normalization to reduce shame

Sometime people who experience the loss of a loved one like you have will have thought of killing themselves

Given the pain that you feel over the loss of your wife, have you been having thoughts of killing yourself?

To Reduce Minimization

How often do you have thoughts of killing yourself? 20%, 40% 60% etc

Lethal capability

Have you witnessed traumatic or violent acts?

Do you own a firearm? Have you ever shot a firearm?

Have you ever committed an act of self- harm? How many times? Which was the most serious?

Have you been looking on any websites about suicide? (BHF)

How much alcohol or drugs do you use?

