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AUG 17 2010

POLICY LETTER 6-10

From: Commanding General
To: All Hands

Subj: SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

Suicide is a tragedy that is preventable if a person is able and willing to seek help and if their leadership, peers, and family are aware of common warning signs and educated on basic intervention methods. This policy is not a comprehensive suicide prevention guide, but rather it is a reminder that fighting suicide in the Marine Corps is a leadership responsibility and a battle that we must win.

Various circumstances that increase stress may occur from time-to-time and make someone more likely to contemplate suicide. These circumstances include turmoil or change in a personal relationship, potentially adverse disciplinary actions, alcoholism and drug abuse, financial hardship, or medical problems. Combined, these circumstances only increase the likelihood they will contemplate suicide.

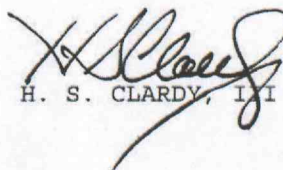
Engaging in two-way, eyeball-to-eyeball conversation with people is the best method to observe signs they are contemplating suicide. These signs include:

Depression	Substance abuse to include alcohol
Isolation or withdrawal	Previous suicide attempts
Impulsive anger or behavior	Legal or financial troubles
Giving away possessions	Performance declines
Discussing suicide intent	Preoccupation with death
Changes to a relationship	

If you identify these signs, you must demonstrate an extraordinary degree of concern for the person involved. This concern must be more than a passing comment and must get to the heart of their needs. This obligation reaches beyond our concern for suicide; our ethos demands we treat each other's issues as our own. As leaders and Marines, we must be approachable, engaged, ready to listen, and eager to assist those in need. When someone exhibits signs that they may be contemplating suicide; act fast, ask the tough questions, and always treat the Marine seriously and fairly. Simply asking "have you contemplated harming or killing yourself?" may prompt a discussion that allows help to be provided.

In finding a Marine help, remember the chain of command, the chaplain, and trained medical professionals. For immediate, 24-hour support, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at 1-800-273-TALK.

Our heritage as Marines is one of brotherhood and self-sacrifice - we take care of our own. Let this mindset guide us as we establish a command climate that prevents suicide by ensuring trust and confidence in the chain of command's ability to take care of our own.


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