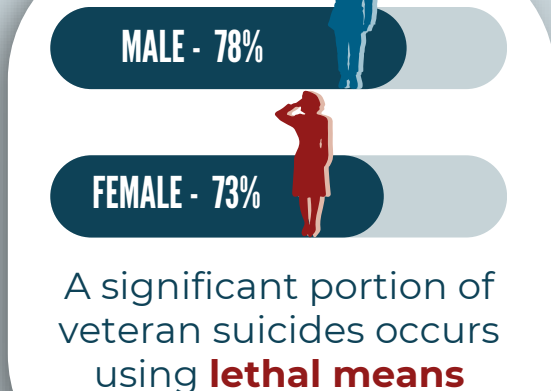


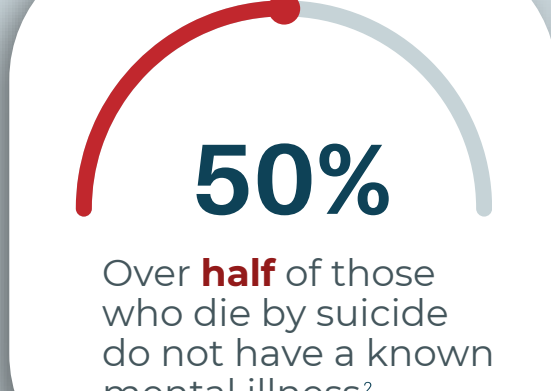
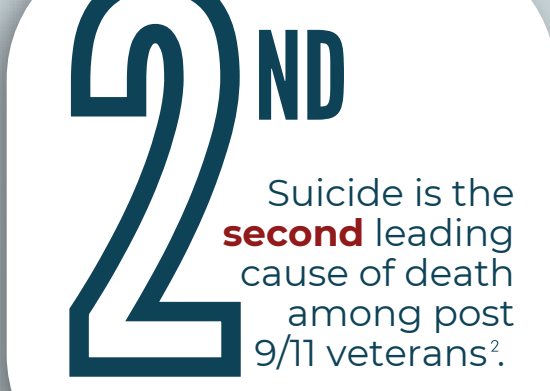


SUICIDE PREVENTION TOOLKIT

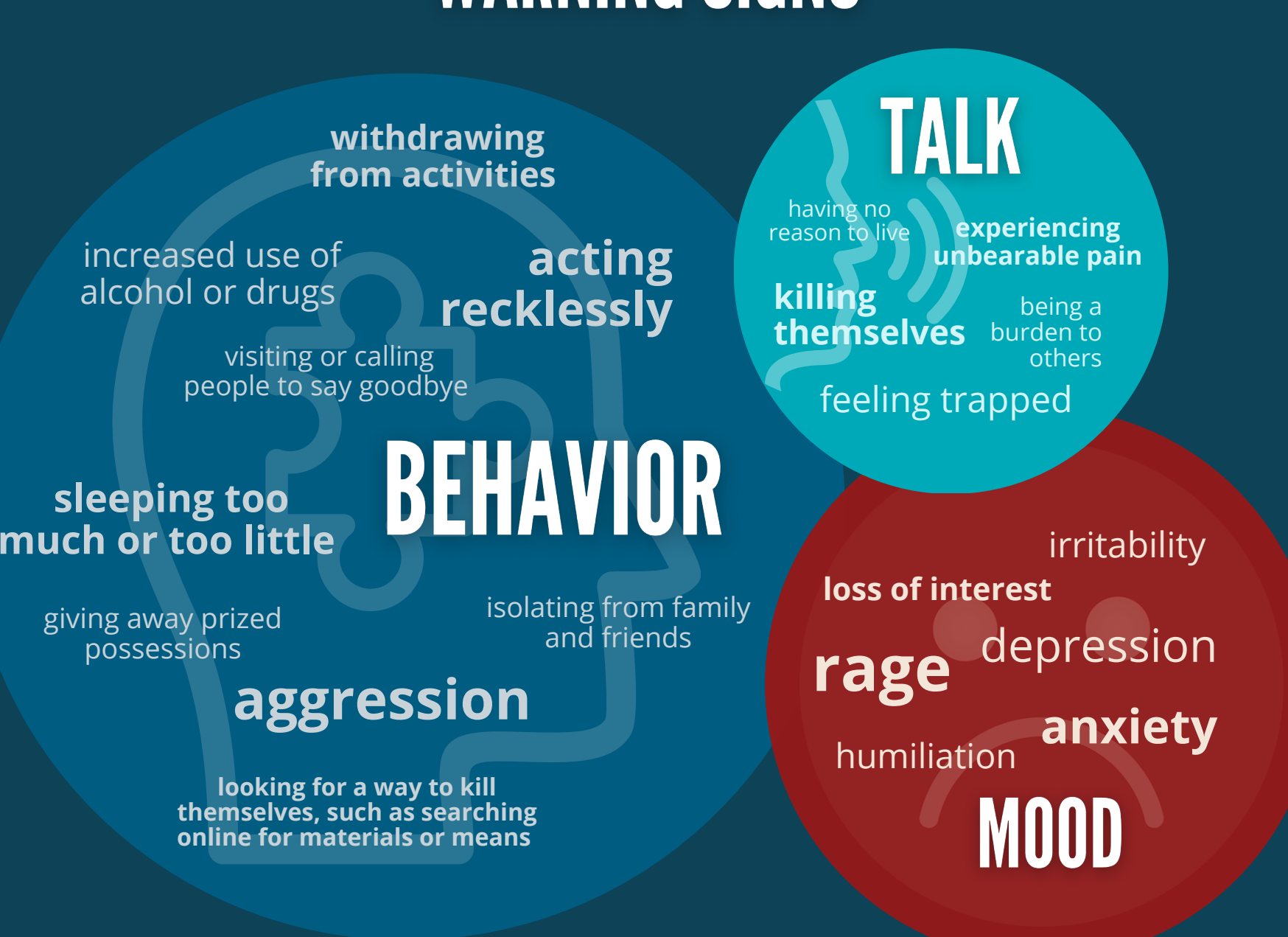
We can help prevent suicide together.



A significant portion of veteran suicides occurs using **lethal means** (firearms/medication)⁷.



WARNING SIGNS⁴

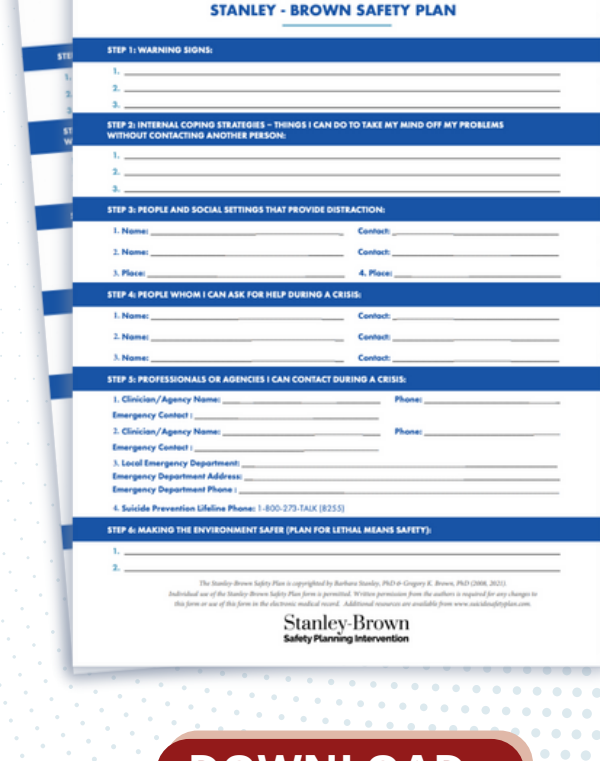


These signs may indicate that a person needs help.

TAKING ACTION!

SAFETY PLAN⁵

A **safety plan** is designed to guide you and the individual you're supporting through a crisis. Having a safety plan is vital for anyone who thinks about suicide. As you plan, consider and include warning signs, coping strategies, and people to ask for support.



DOWNLOAD

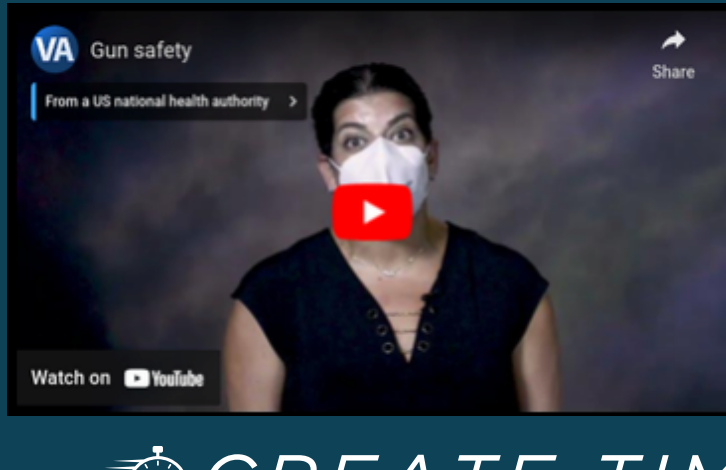
Ways to Support Someone at Risk

- Schedule time to talk and get together
- Encourage them to take a photo of the safety plan for easy access
- Add local resources and crisis lines as contacts on your phone
- Encourage them to reach out for support
- Brainstorm self-help and other supportive strategies

LETHAL MEANS SAFETY

Talk about lethal means...

It's crucial to reduce access to **lethal means** as it can save a life. Discuss options for out-of-home or more secure in-home storage of firearms and medications. Watch a brief overview video from the VA on firearm safety.



Safe Storage of Lethal Means¹

Firearms

- Off-site Storage**
- Friends or Relatives
 - Gun Range
 - Self Storage

*Check your state laws at [Worried About a Veteran](#)

- In-home Safe Storage**
- Store firearms locked
 - Unloaded in a safe
 - Trigger or cable lock
 - Secure locking device with trusted person

- Other Options**
- Remove essential component (e.g. firing pin)

Medication

- Safe Disposal**
- Drop off disposal locations
 - Pharmacy
 - Police Station
 - Out-of-date, unused, and excess medications including, over the counter

- Reduce Quantities**
- Use a lock box to secure lethal and additional medications
 - Use refill pill box

CREATE TIME & DISTANCE

ACTION STEPS

Initiating **action steps** involves evaluating the risk of suicide or harm to identify potential crises or immediate crisis situations. It's important to avoid pressuring or threatening individuals to disclose their emotions. Stay receptive until they are prepared to share and seek help.

Mental Health First Aid Action Plan: ALGEE³

- A** Approach, **1)** Assess for risk of suicide or harm.
- L** Listen nonjudgmentally
- G** Give reassurance and information.
- E** Encourage appropriate professional help.
- E** Encourage self-help and other support strategies.

Columbia Protocol (C-SSRS)⁶

Use the Columbia Protocol also known as Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) to help determine when someone is at risk for suicide and how to help.

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Always ask questions 1 and 2.	Four Months
1) Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?	Low Risk
2) Have you actually had any thoughts about killing yourself?	Low Risk
IF YES to 2, skip to question 6.	
3) Have you been thinking about how you might do this?	High Risk
4) Have you had these thoughts and had some intention of acting on them?	High Risk
5) Have you started to work out or worked out the details of how to kill yourself? Did you intend to carry out this plan?	High Risk
6) Have you done anything, started to do anything, or prepared to do anything to end your life?	High Risk

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

IF YES to 2 or 3, seek behavioral healthcare for further evaluation. IF the answer to 4, 5, or 6 is YES, get immediate help. Call or text 988, call 911 or go to the emergency room. **STAY WITH THEM** until they can be evaluated.

RESOURCES

WEBSITES

- **Worried About a Veteran** | [worriedaboutaveteran.org](#)
- **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** | [afsp.org](#)
- **Give an Hour** | [giveanhour.org/military](#)
- **PSYCH/ARMOR** | [https://psycharmor.org/standing-the-watch](#)
- **Suicide Prevention Research Center** | [sprc.org](#)
- **2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention** | [https://www.hhs.gov/](#)
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Homefront** | [www.nami.org/Support-Education/Mental-Health-Education/NAMI-Homefront](#)

CRISIS SUPPORT



APPS

Click to learn more

Got Your Back

Family Coach

Columbia Protocol App

Suicide Safe by SAMHSA

VA Safety Plan

Suicide Safety Plan

TRAINING & SUPPORT

Every month, the Veteran Spouse Network (VSN) offers suicide prevention training and support opportunities for our network. You can learn more about critical warning signs and equip yourself with tools to intervene and support someone in crisis. To learn more and view upcoming opportunities, visit the VSN [website](#).



The Invisible Wounds of War & Suicide Prevention

Peer support session from our V-SRG curriculum, addressing trauma experienced during service and the challenges of returning home. Providing tools for engaging with individuals who may be facing suicidal thoughts and behaviors.



Safety Planning Intervention Training

An essential training for those looking to effectively support individuals in crisis, equipping participants with the skills and knowledge needed to create personalized safety plans, essential for managing and reducing risk in difficult situations.



Conversations on Access to Lethal Means

90-minute suicide prevention training that provides individuals with the tools to have an important conversation about safety and reducing access to lethal means, such as firearms and medications.



Mental Health First Aid

Evidence-based and early intervention training program developed for adults to learn how to assist and support members of their community who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge.