

June 2023

FACILITATOR NOTES

1. The objective of AFMC Connect is to provide an opportunity for meaningful conversations to occur within our units. One month each quarter (Mar, June, Sep, Dec) we build in the required annual Suicide Prevention Training content to one of our discussions tools. This offers an additional opportunity for increased connection on an important topic to each of us. Connection is a critical protective factors associated with preventing suicide.
2. Facilitator training is offered on a regular basis to provide overall AFMC Connect intent and expanded knowledge in Suicide Prevention annual training requirements (see item #5 for how to access your local POC).
3. Facilitators have the flexibility in conducting these discussions in already existing forums. It is important to introduce the monthly discussion in your own words in a way that meets the needs of your personnel.
4. **Please provide the following disclaimer prior to beginning Suicide Prevention training content:** This topic may be difficult to discuss and for those of you that have had a personal experience with suicide; feel free at any time to step away.
5. For additional information on facilitating discussions and local points of contact, you can find the full implementation guidance here:

<https://www.afmc.af.mil/connect>

FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

Establishing an opportunity to equip your team with the necessary knowledge and awareness of resources to assist themselves and those around them is critical. Signs of distress may or may not be visible to everyone, while warning signs are often accompanied by sudden and unexplained changes in mood or behavior. Often, small interactions like “good morning” or “how are you” can be the most important opportunity to reinforce to someone that they are not alone. In taking the time to interact with your team during everyday moments, you have opened an opportunity for meaningful engagement that can make a difference in a crisis. Our family members are usually the most aware of what everyday stressors may be present. Ensure you offer opportunities to connect with your personnel's family so they know we are here to support them as well.

SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING

Required Discussion Items

1. Knowledge Share

- *Stress* is a human response to an external or psychological stressor. *Distress* is the emotional state a person encounters when they fail to adapt to stress.

Discussion

- When do you think stress can turn to distress?
- What are some healthy coping strategies to deal with stress so it doesn't turn into distress?

2. Knowledge Share

- *Risk factors* are characteristics or conditions that increase the chance a person may begin exhibiting signs of distress (ex. Relationship problems, financial challenges, increased alcohol use, workplace issues, etc.). *Warning signs* are usually visible behaviors that indicate someone is in distress and needs someone to check in with them (ex. Withdrawal, mood swings, misuse of alcohol, talking about dying, etc.)

Discussion

- How can we support our team and/or family members who are experiencing stress or showing signs of distress?
- Have you experienced a time in your life when added stressors made it difficult to focus?

We welcome your feedback on how we can make these products more effective. Please utilize the following link or QR Code:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CY23CONNECT>.

