

I CaRe Steps

INQUIRE. CONNECT. REFER.

*Resolving their pain, solving their problem, giving them advice is not the goal.
Joining with the person by listening, and getting them to help is the goal.*

STEP ONE: INQUIRE

I HAVE NOTICED.... Emphasis is on using “I” language and what behavior you are noticing

- “I have noticed that suddenly you are _____ (happy, sad). What has changed?”
- “I’ve noticed you’re feeling upset. How are things going?”
- “I am concerned for you and how you are doing.”
- “I want to understand what has brought you to this decision.”

OTHER: _____

STEP TWO: CONNECT

ALIGN WITH THEM...continue to build trust with them by showing empathy and understanding.
At this juncture, you start to direct the conversation a little.

- “I care, and I want to help.”
- “I want to understand what is upsetting you.”
- “I can understand how (this) could make you feel anxious and more upset.”
- “I can hear how difficult this situation is”
- Be real and ask directly: “Have you had thoughts of taking your own life?”
- “I can understand how you might have thoughts of suicide or ending your life when you feel so trapped, or helpless, or hopeless, or misunderstood.”
- “Do you have a plan? How might you carry this out?” (Check for a plan, means, & intent.)

OTHER: _____

STEP THREE: REFER

REFER THEM, and/or TAKE THEM DIRECTLY TO HELP

- “What do you think might help?”
- “Have you considered talking to someone?”
- “I’m not comfortable without being sure you’re going to get some help.”
- “Will you let me help you get help?”
- “Will you go with me to get help?” and/or “Why don’t we go talk to someone together?”

OTHER: _____

There are several ways that your intervention could turn out:

- The person may not feel they are having any difficulty. Assess the person’s willingness to seek help and ask them to check back with you at a designated time to make sure they are connected with help.
- Offer to go with the person and walk with them to the counseling center, an emergency room, student health, or any police or fire department.
- Assess for safety and imminent danger, call 911 and then stay with the person.