

Employee Assistance Unit

Suicide
Prevention



Depression

Many people at one point or another in their life feel depressed. Depression is evident by obvious sadness and is often expressed as a loss of pleasure, or a withdrawal from activities one found enjoyable. If this continues for an extended period of time, it's time to seek help. Over 60% of the people who die by suicide suffer from prolonged depression. While most depressed people are not suicidal, the majority of suicidal people suffer from severe depression, which greatly increases their risk of taking their lives.

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Recognizing Depression

If you have a combination of any of the following symptoms for at least two weeks, it could be a sign of severe depression.

- **Change in appetite or weight**
- **Speaking or moving with unusual speed or slowness**
- **Change in sleeping pattern**
- **Decrease in sexual desire**
- **Feeling of worthlessness, self reproach, or guilt**
- **Diminished ability to concentrate**
- **Slowed thinking or indecisiveness**
- **Feeling out of control**
- **Speaking of death or suicide**
- **Fatigue or loss of energy**
- **Constant worrying**
- **Feelings of hopelessness**
- **Isolation and withdrawal**

Support is available 24/7

Call Any Time
(646) 610-6730

Facts About Suicide

Talking about the causes, risk factors, and prevalence of suicide provide the best opportunity of prevention.

- **Law enforcement officers are twice as likely to die by their own hand than in the line of duty.**
- **On average, a police officer commits suicide every 22 hours in the United States.**
- **Relationships and marriage difficulties have, by far, been the major factor leading to suicide by members of the NYPD.**
- **From January, 2000 through December, 2007, the NYPD lost 40 Uniformed Members of the Service to suicide.**
- **Alcohol use is a factor in about 30% of all completed suicides.**

Suicide Risk Factors

- **Relationship difficulties**
- **Family problems**
- **Severe depression**
- **Financial problems**
- **Substance abuse**
- **Talk or hint of suicide**
- **Legal troubles**

This is not to say that any one of these factors is an automatic path to self destruction, but history has shown that these stressors combined with the availability of a firearm can be a cause for concern.

Helping a Suicidal Person

Even though you handle all sorts of stressful jobs throughout your career, addressing the needs of a fellow officer can be rather unnerving. Perhaps you don't want to say the wrong thing. Maybe you don't want to acknowledge the human side of a fellow member of the service (MOS) for fear of embarrassment. Or, possibly, it could stir up dark feelings for you. Whatever the fear, it's time to face it, and conquer it. You have no hesitation to run when you hear an "85" come over the radio. You need to be ready if a fellow MOS reaches out to you with an "emotional 85."

First and foremost: stop and listen. Your colleague has chosen to trust you. Don't change the subject just because it may be uncomfortable. Next, show that person you care by repeating what you have heard. Let them know you are tuned into what is happening. Take this talk seriously, and get the assistance of a trained professional to assess the condition. Don't play psychologist. Often, people promise to keep talk of suicide in the utmost confidence, so as not to hurt the friend's career. Well, think about that: you can get help, and have a buddy that is angry and alive; or you can keep quiet and possibly attend a funeral. Make the right call.



Employee Assistance Unit

The Employee Assistance Unit (EAU) was designed to assist members of the service that are experiencing personal problems. The early identification and resolution of these problems can minimize negative impact on their career or home life.

Referrals are accepted from fellow members of the service, unions and fraternal organizations, family and friends.

Our unit is **NOT** a disciplinary arm of the department. Communication between EAU personnel and members of the service remain confidential, **EXCEPT** in cases of serious misconduct and suicidal behavior.

The Unit's members are available weekdays from 0700-2100 hours. In emergency cases during non-business hours unit members will be contacted and will respond.

Employee Assistance Unit

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