



ACC Bridge Chats – Wingman Intervention

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAMAnPRLMH8&feature=youtu.be>
Play the video link above prior to discussion (Time: 4:32 mins)

Facilitator Notes:

Contact your VPI for your Local Resource Handout, gun locks, and any additional support material.

1. **State:** Some of you might find this topic difficult to discuss, but thoughtful consideration for the significant value of this content, especially at this time of increased isolation, is so important! If you're struggling, please refer to your local resource handout to seek immediate help from professional helping agencies/resources.
2. Our goal is to normalize a proactive culture of prevention and resilience: To equip everyone with life-saving skills, develop confidence for wingmen to intervene when needed, and to create an environment where people view help-seeking as a source of strength. As you build personal connections, we hope others will see you as a source of help.
3. Give a personal introduction that conveys sincerity/enthusiasm for the positive impact of the discussion.
4. Ensure everyone has a copy of the Local Resource handout before facilitating.

Facilitator Talking Points:

In this time of physical distancing, it is more important than ever to stay socially connected. **Meaningful connection** with others is a critical factor in prevention. Airmen must be active in reaching out, both to others who may be in distress and to resources (for themselves and others). We all play a part in preventing interpersonal violence by intervening when needed. Suicide is currently our Airmen's leading cause of death, but it is preventable. The basic steps of our **Ask, Care, Escort** (ACE) model is more effective when crisis is identified early and action is taken immediately to connect one to helping resources. We need to find a way around our barriers to help. We need to equip ourselves with life-saving skills and to develop comfort with uncomfortable situations/conversations. Use points below to start a conversation with your group.

1. Key to protecting each other from harm is to be able to identify different risk factors and warning signs. Discuss risks and warning signs for sexual assault, suicide, child abuse, or domestic violence. How do you recognize signs virtually?
2. We all have barriers that may prevent us from stepping-in when others need us. What are some examples of personal, relationship, and organizational barriers that would make us hesitate to get involved?
3. There are different ways for us to take action if we can't directly confront a situation to prevent it from happening. Describe how you or someone else intervened using the direct, distract, and delegate approach.
4. Proactive behaviors are actions you can take NOW to create a healthy climate by preventing negative behaviors from even occurring. What are proactive behaviors you have seen or could use at work, at home, or anywhere within your sphere of influence? What proactive behaviors could you display outside of work or at home through conversations, social media, or your social life?

Discuss other proactive behaviors to do online:

- o Share articles on social media
- o Include information about prevention in your out-of-office email
- o Start group texts about safety and health
- o Post resources for survivors in online spaces
- o Encourage regular check-ins

Rules of Engagement: (1) Keep discussions professional and on topic. (2) Remember we're all on the same team. The goal of the conversation isn't for one person to be proven right or to "win" the argument. We're here to have conversations and learn from one another. **(3) Avoid making it personal.** Avoid name-calling, personal attacks, or questions like "How could you believe that?" Assume that everyone's intentions are good. **(4) Practice intellectual humility.** Respect everyone's viewpoints, and be open to changing your mind when necessary. **(5) Above all else... Demonstrate respect for human dignity!**

Quick Guide to Prevention/Intervention of Negative Behaviors:

1. Recognize warning signs
2. Understand barriers
3. Intervene using 3Ds (direct, distract, delegate) (For suicide, use ACE model)
4. Promote proactive behaviors

Immediately intervene when you see signs of suicide and apply the Ask, Care, Escort (ACE) steps

Step One: ASK

- **KEY POINT:** Stress is a normal part of our lives. Occasionally stressors overwhelm our ability to cope and may result in symptoms and trigger a state of distress.
- ASK: How do you know if you someone else is in distress?
KEY POINT: Common signs of distress include: Mood changes (depression or anxiety), irritability, agitation, or anger; difficulties with sleep (too little or too much); withdrawing from family, friends, others; lack of interest in activities that were previously enjoyed (hobbies, work, school, etc.)
- ASK: What are some coping skills to help with stress?
- **KEY POINT:** Exercise, mindfulness, meditation, recognizing and expressing gratitude, engaging in creative activities, practicing resilience skills, and connecting with friends, family, or nature.
- ASK: When and **how** would you ask someone if they are having thoughts of death, self-harm, or suicide?
- ACTIVITY: Have each participant **practice** asking, “Are you thinking of death, hurting yourself, or suicide?”
KEY POINT: Ask someone directly if they are having thoughts about suicide as soon as you notice signs of distress.

Step Two: CARE

- **KEY POINT:** When someone is in distress, you need to express that you (and others whom they value) care about them. Actively listen by paraphrasing, clarifying, eye contact, attentive posture. Communicate empathy and listen to what the person is saying and feeling. Give them as much time as they need to share.
- ASK: How do you express to others that you care about them when you ask about their well-being or if they are having thoughts of death, suicide, or self-harm?
- ASK: Who are your sources of strength and why?
- **KEY POINT:** It’s good to know who your participants value and view as someone they’d feel comfortable reaching out to in times of distress, and allows them to explore other sources to connect with for help.
- ACTIVITY: Have each participant **practice** expressing care and concern to someone in distress.
KEY POINT: Take time to **practice ACE skills**. It is critical to build a connection with the person in distress.
- ASK: What works well/doesn’t work well to communicate support, care, and concern?

Step Three: ESCORT

- **KEY POINT:** Most important is getting the person to **any** next level of professional care/resource. Do **not** leave a person in distress alone; do **not** hang up the phone or put the person on hold. Be sure to follow up in the days and weeks after a connection to help is made.
- ASK: If someone shared thoughts of death, self-harm, or suicide, where can you escort them to get help?
KEY POINT: Escorting a person who has expressed current thoughts of death, self-harm, or suicide to get professional help is an immediate step to prevent suicide and demonstrate you care. Empower, without overwhelming them, in this process by letting them choose from 2-4 suitable resources from the Local Resource handout.

SLO - Use Safes, Locks, or store the lethal means Outside of the home

- ACTIVITY: Watch Air Force SLO Campaign Video: <https://youtu.be/cumm8ks-Oiw> **“Time-Based Suicide Prevention” (Time: 1:52 mins)**
- **KEY POINT:** If someone demonstrates signs of distress, consider their access to LETHAL means including firearms, medications or other means of fatal methods.
- ASK: What role can you play in “SLOing” down for someone in distress?
- **KEY POINT:** Contact your installation VPI for free gun locks and distribute to all AF gun owners.
- **KEY POINT:** Emphasize that the resource handout identifies where AD, civilians, and dependents can get assistance
- Insert closing discussion or question based on participants/ discussion/ Command/ time.

SUICIDE PREVENTION & LOCAL RESOURCE HANDOUT

DAF RESILIENCE



PROMOTE RESILIENCE

Practice self-care such as regular exercise, sufficient sleep, and relaxation time. Invest in resilience skills like balance your thinking, mindfulness, and looking for the good to manage stress.

RECOGNIZE SIGNS OF DISTRESS

Mood changes, such as depression or anxiety
 Irritability, agitation, or anger
 Sleep difficulties
 Withdrawing from social activities, family, friends, or others
 Lack of interest in activities that were previously enjoyed (hobbies, work, etc.)

ASK

Directly ask the individual if they are having thoughts of death, self-harm, or suicide.

CARE

Care about their answer. If they hesitate, or seem uncertain, ask follow-up questions to convey that you care about their well-being.

ESCORT

If the individual is having thoughts of suicide or needs help, escort them to a qualified professional or leadership.

GO SLO

If someone demonstrates signs of distress, consider their access to LETHAL means including firearms, medications or other means of fatal methods. Airmen should remember to “go SLO” - use **S**afes, **L**ocks, or store means Outside the home.

SMALL STEPS SAVE LIVES.

www.resilience.af.mil

MILITARY CRISISLINE: 1 (800) 273-8255

HELPING RESOURCE:	COMMANDER/ SUPERVISOR	AIRMAN & FAMILY READINESS CENTER	MILITARY ONESOURCE/ MILITARY FAMILY LIFE COUNSELOR (MFLC)	CHAPLAIN	CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	MENTAL HEALTH (MH) CLINIC	EMERGENCY ROOM
Contact:							
CAN ASSIST:	All	All	Military and Family Members	All (full confidentiality)	Civ/NAF	Military	All
Suicidal Thoughts	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Relationship Problems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Loneliness / Isolation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Workplace Stress or Problems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Alcohol / Drugs	must report to ADAPT			✓	✓	✓	
Fatigue / Sleep	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Anxiety / Panic Depression	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Grief and Loss	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Deployment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Finances / Budget	✓	✓	✓ (OneSource)	✓	✓		
Retirement / Separation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	