

# SUICIDE PREVENTION:

Responses & Prevention Resources  
for the Faith Community

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# PAUL VANVALIN

Preacher's Kid

Married since 1977

Three adult sons

Former Army Psychologist

Founded Eden Counseling 1995

# EDEN COUNSELING

- ▶ Founded 1995
- ▶ 30 Providers serving All Ages
- ▶ Over 70,000 patients
- ▶ 4 suicides, one overdose

# DEFINITION & WARNING

- ▶ Suicide Defined: The intentional taking of one's own life.
- ▶ Warning: Can stir up strong emotions.


# SUICIDE IS HARD

- ▶ Personal
  - ▶ Political/Ethical
  - ▶ Religious/Spiritual
  - ▶ Psycho/Social
  - ▶ Physical
- 

# PERSONAL

- ▶ Emotions
  - ▶ Finances
  - ▶ Life Style
  - ▶ Hopes and Dreams
  - ▶ Identity
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# POLITICAL & ETHICAL

- ▶ Assisted Suicide
  - ▶ Public Resources for Response and Prevention
  - ▶ Public Education/Quality of Life
  - ▶ Affects Society
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# RELIGIOUS & SPIRITUAL

- ▶ Morals and values about life
- ▶ After life
- ▶ Meaning of life and death
- ▶ Meaning of commitment, vows and roles



# PSYCHO/SOCIAL

- ▶ Individual Psychology
- ▶ Family and Social Psychology
- ▶ Leads to research and theories
- ▶ Cultural norms and expectations

# PHYSICAL

- ▶ The science of life and death
- ▶ The act of suicide
- ▶ The aftermath – cleanup etc.

# HARD QUESTIONS

- ▶ Who?
- ▶ Why?
- ▶ When?
- ▶ How?
- ▶ Really cannot predict

# WHO? INCIDENCE

- ▶ Older white males
- ▶ Teens, especially Dual Diagnosis
- ▶ Native Americans
- ▶ Income not a factor, but loss or anticipated loss may

# WHY?

- ▶ To end “Pain”
- ▶ To Punish/Cause Suffering
- ▶ Loss of Identity – Annihilation
- ▶ Death will cause “good”

# WHEN?

- ▶ Fear of Death is gone
- ▶ Overwhelming Loss
- ▶ Romantic Ideal
- ▶ Impulsive/Substance Related
- ▶ When Others do it - Contagious

# HOW? MEN

- ▶ More firearms
- ▶ Fewer attempts
- ▶ Less talking before attempt
- ▶ Older men well planned

# PREVENTION

- ▶ Treatment of mental disorders
- ▶ Sufficient social support and resources
- ▶ Identify risk factors and intervene



# CONTEXTUAL ?'S

- ▶ How often...?
- ▶ How? (Plan)
- ▶ Access? (Means)
- ▶ Intention/Motivation?
- ▶ Imminent?

# TAKE ACTION

- ▶ No Secrets – (Train Teens)
- ▶ Rally Resources - Get Help
  - ▶ Clergy, Teacher
  - ▶ Friends and Family

# SURVIVORS' GRIEF

- ▶ Shock and Denial
- ▶ Sorrow and Depression
- ▶ Anger
- ▶ Bargaining – If only I had...
- ▶ Acceptance
- ▶ Complicated by Abandonment

# GRIEF SUPPORT

- ▶ Individual course – no Judgment
- ▶ Listen More than Speak: E.V.E.
- ▶ See Brene Brown YouTube on Empathy

# PREVENTION TRAINING

- ▶ Advanced training for Law Enforcement Specialists, Strategic Teams in the Community
- ▶ General Training for all
  - ▶ Law Enforcement
  - ▶ Educational
  - ▶ Medical Personnel
  - ▶ Parents
  - ▶ Teenagers

# FAITH COMMUNITIES

- ▶ Training Centers and Task Forces
- ▶ Support for families where someone may be suicidal
- ▶ Support and resources for suicidal persons
- ▶ Support for suicide survivors, especially children
- ▶ Congregational Support – Intact group support

# POLITICAL ACTION

- ▶ In Virginia, should laws be changed to increase detention and hospitalization?
- ▶ Increase funding for training and resources

# PROFESSIONAL HELP

- ▶ Grief may take a while
- ▶ Adjustment Disorder Common
- ▶ Can have Major Depression and Bereavement – New
- ▶ [www.edencounseling.com](http://www.edencounseling.com)