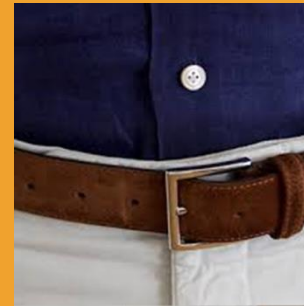


Delaware County
Suicide Prevention
& Awareness
Task Force

SUICIDE PREVENTION STRESS MAINTENANCE



FOR

FIRST RESPONDER'S

READ THIS SENTENCE:

**FINISHED FILES ARE THE RE-
SULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIF-
IC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE
EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.**

Now count aloud the F's in that sentence. Count them **ONLY ONCE**, do not go back and count them again.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

Pennsylvania Commission on Crime & Delinquency
2014 Substance Abuse Education & Demand Reduction Fund

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

HONORING THE SPIRIT OF...
FIRST RESPONDER RESILIENCY



Oso, WA Mudslide

When: March 22, 2014, 10:37 a.m.

Where: 4 miles east of Oso on State Route 530, about an hour north of Seattle

Debris field: 1 square mile, 15-75 feet deep

Human toll: 43 people died; 13 survived. The last victim's body was found July 22

Search efforts: More than 1,000 searchers involved at the peak; search ended 4/28

Damage: 49 homes and structures destroyed, a mile of S R 530 made impassable

TWA 800

LODD

9/11

CISM

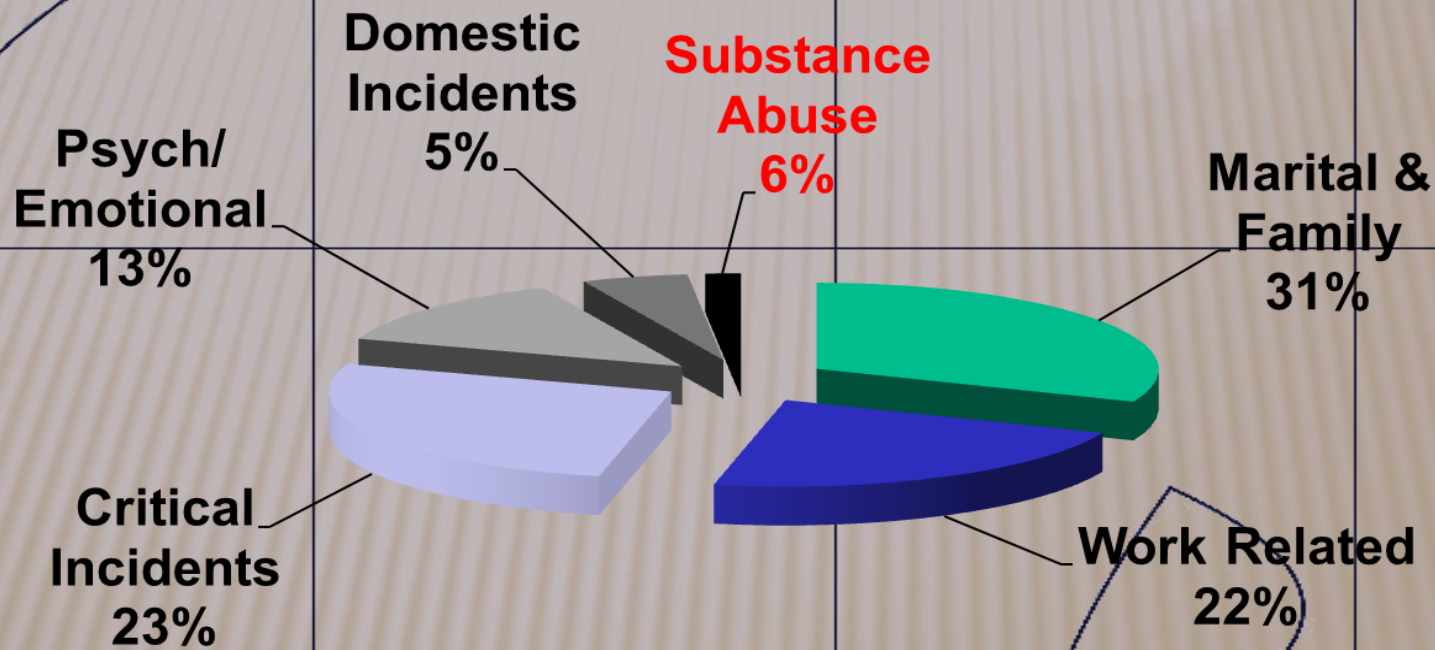
KATRINA

EAP

2 SANDY'S

SUICIDE

TYPES OF PROBLEMS





DO YOU FEEL FINE?

F - Frustrated

I - Insecure

N - Neurotic

E - Emotional



PRACTICE PRACTICE PRACTICE



Hyper vigilance

Vicarious Trauma

Learned

Compassion

Reduction



NJ



TF1

S A

CAUTION
CAUTION
CAUTION
CAUTION

STATE GOVT

MYERS BRIGGS TYPE INVENTORY

Extraversion vs. Introversion (+/-)

× **Sensing** vs. Intuition

First Responder (+)

× **Thinking** vs. Feeling

First Responder (+)

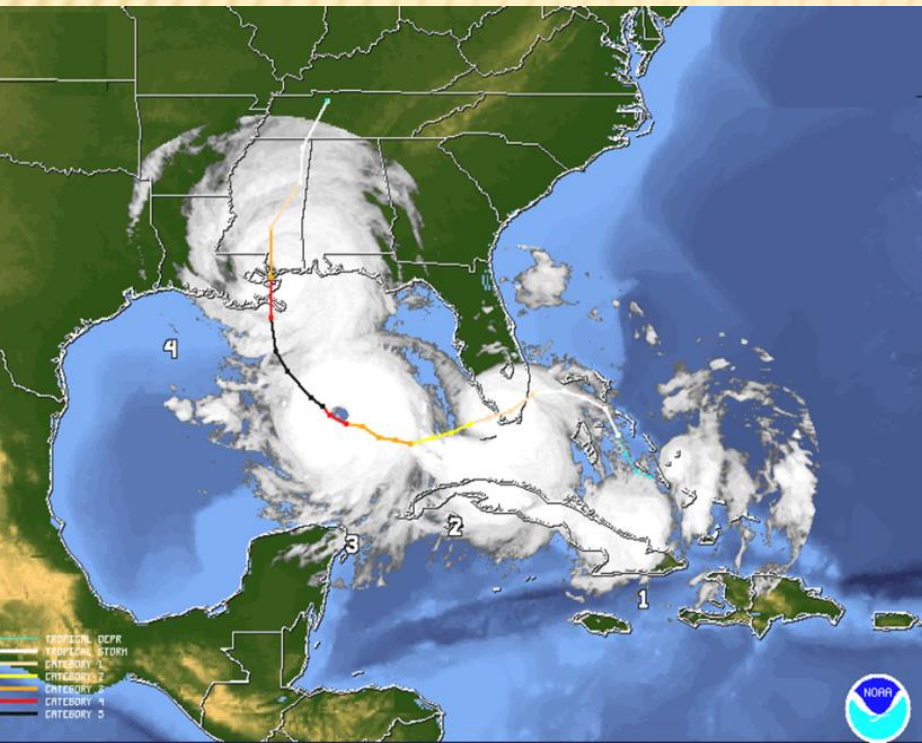
× **Judging** vs. Perceiving

First Responder (+)

LT. MATTHEW LETOURNEAU, 42, OF SPRINGFIELD, WHO DIED FIGHTING A NORTH PHILADELPHIA ROWHOUSE FIRE ON SATURDAY, JAN. 6



KATRINA



CRITICAL INCIDENTS

are events that have the potential to create significant human **DISTRESS and can overwhelm one's usual coping mechanisms**

SANDY HOOK
SCHOOL
1956
VISITORS WELCOME



LEARNED (-) BEHAVIORS

× FEAR

× FORCE

× THREAT

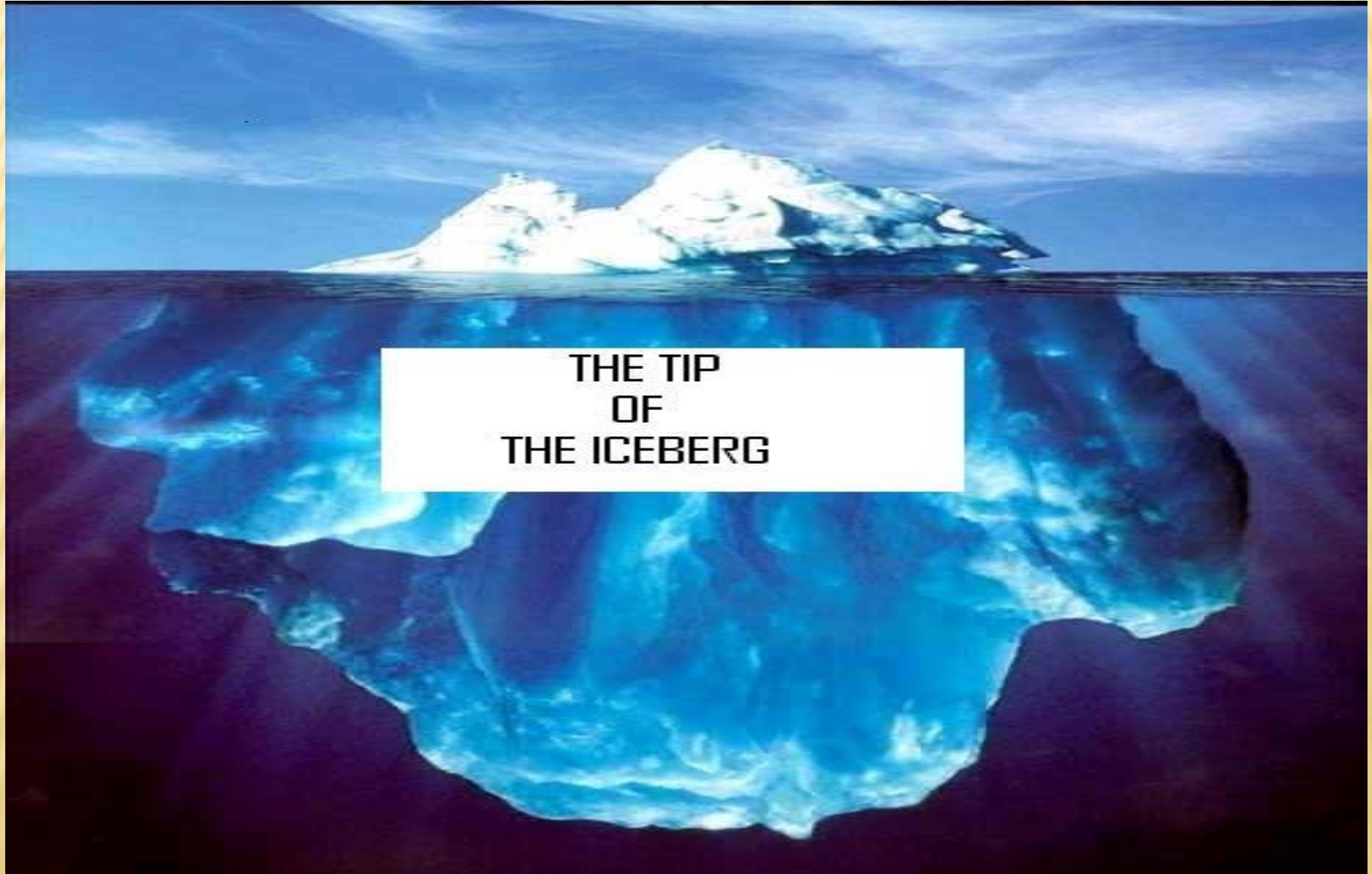
× MINIMIZE

× CONTROL

× INTIMIDATE

CYNICISM

SYMPTOMS



THE TIP
OF
THE ICEBERG

RESILIENCY

*** CHANGE**

*** TOLERANCE**

*** LEARNED
BEHAVIORS**

LEARNED (+) BEHAVIORS

× HUMAN **BEING** vs. HUMAN **DOING**

× PERSONALITY TRAITS

× BODY / MIND / SOUL

SUICIDE

A permanent solution to a temporary situation.....

“Approximately 80% of suicides have communicated their intent...”

SUICIDE STIGMA LEADS TO UNDERREPORTING

- × **10th Leading cause of death in the U.S.**
- × **Approximately 45,000 die by suicide annually (70,000 OD)**
- × **For every suicide there are 25 attempts**
- × **Suicide cost the U.S. \$51 Billion annually**
- × **Over 120 suicides per day (+90 OD's)**
- × **Highest rate is middle age white males**
- × **Firearms account for 50% for all suicides**
- × **26% suffocation (includes hanging)**
- × **Half a Million attempts reported annually**

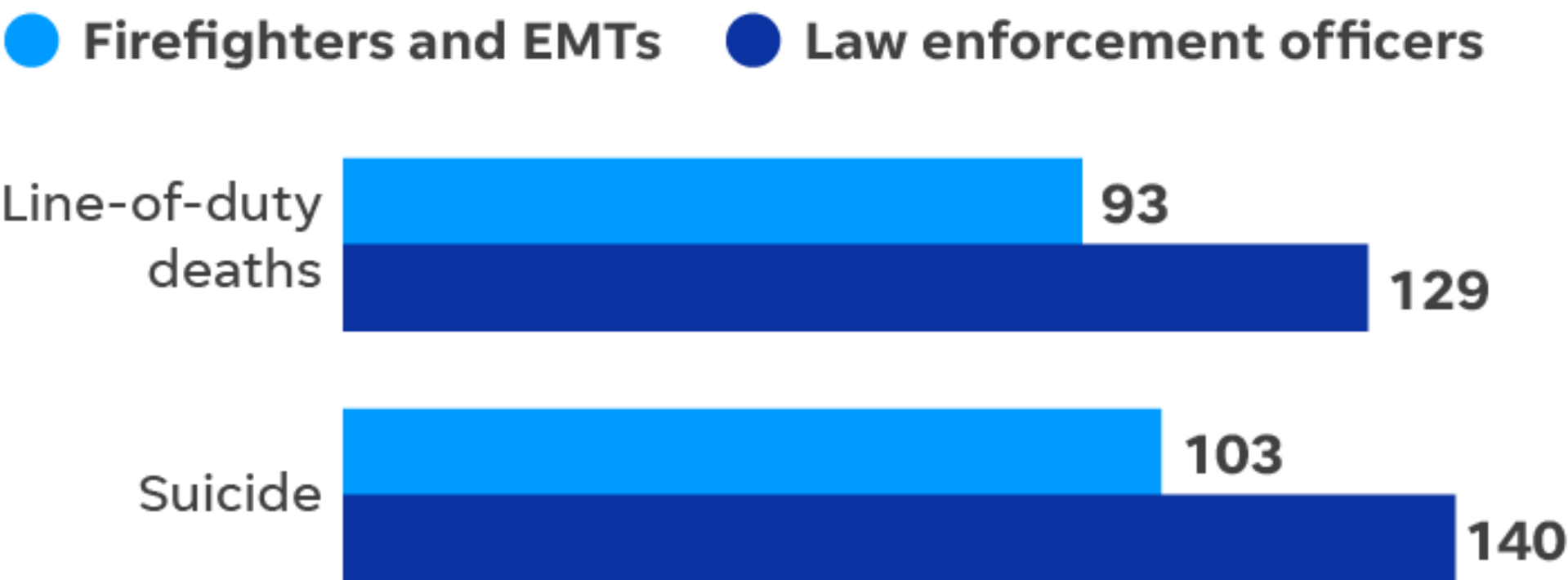
FIRST RESPONDER SUICIDE STATISTICS

Information is in.....

- + First Responders commit suicide at the rate of **17 per 100,000**
- + The general public commits suicide at the rate of **11 per 100,000**
- + First Responder Suicides are still under reported
- + Every **21 hours** an officer in America commits suicide
- + 447 verified officer suicides for 2013
- + Three times as many suicides as LODD
- + **Alcohol present 90% of time**

First responder deaths

The number of firefighters, EMTs and officers who took their own lives outnumber all line-of-duty deaths in 2017.



SOURCE Ruderman Family Foundation
Frank Pompa/USA TODAY

RANKED FACTORS IN SUICIDE

- × Depression**
- × Relationship conflicts or personal losses**
- × Drug and alcohol abuse**
- × Financial difficulty**
- × ...**

MYTHS AND FACTS

Myth: Once a person decides to complete suicide, there is nothing anyone can do to stop them

Fact: Suicide is viewed as the most preventable form of death and almost any positive action may save a life

Size and Number of Departments Reporting Suicides Over the Past 5 Years (n=86)

Size of Dept.	# of Depts. Reporting suicide	Average # Suicides In Depts. Reporting Suicides
1-50 officers	11	1.45
51-1000 officers	48	2.02
1001-6400 officers	27	3.04

New Jersey State Police Trooper Funeral



A WORD ABOUT ALCOHOL...

- ✘ Alcohol dissolves the “wall of resistance” that often keeps suicidal individuals alive.
- ✘ Alcohol is found in the blood of most completed suicides – whether or not they were problem drinkers.
- ✘ **ALCOHOL MAKES DEPRESSION WORSE!**

Costs of Substance Abuse

Abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs is costly to our Nation, exacting more than **\$740 billion annually** in costs related to crime, lost work productivity and health care.

	Health Care	Overall	Year Estimate Based On
Tobacco	\$168 billion	\$300 billion	2010
Alcohol ³	\$27 billion	\$249 billion	2010
Illicit Drugs	\$11 billion	\$193 billion	2007
Prescription Opioids	\$26 billion	\$78.5 billion	2013

- **Misperceptions about addiction are undermining medical care**
- **Brain imaging and behavioral research clearly show that addiction is a complex brain disease**
- **Often misunderstood as a
 - moral failing,
 - a lack of willpower,
 - a subject of shame and guilt**

WHAT IS A **SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER**?

× A Substance Use Disorder (**SUD**) is a continuum of problematic use of substances:

- + On one end of the continuum are people who are using at risky levels. They may not be having problems yet, but are at risk of developing them if current level of use continues.
- + On the other end, SUD is a complex, chronic, relapsing brain disease characterized by compulsive, and at times, uncontrollable drug craving, seeking, and use that persist even in the face of extremely negative consequences.

A WORD ABOUT DEPRESSION...

- ✘ The #1 cause of completed suicide
- ✘ The common cold of modern life....
- ✘ Has biological foundations - Serotonin
- ✘ Very highly treatable if detected and acknowledged
- ✘ Wishing to be dead is a frequent symptom of untreated depression

FIRST RESPONDERS

PERSONALITY TRAITS

S T J

Locus of Control

Internal

External

Optimism

vs.

Pessimism

(+) Serotonin

(-) Serotonin

Healthy

Depression

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

- × **Some General Causes for First Responders**
 - × Cumulative Stress vs. a significant incident
 - + Witnessing too much death
 - + Man's inhumanity to man
 - + Observing sexual abuse and other forms of brutality
 - + First Responder Death and/or shooting
 - + **Elements Necessary for PTSD**
 - × **Intrusion**
 - × **Avoidance**
 - × **Physiological Arousal**

Recent Study on PTSD and Suicide Ideation:

PTSD due to witnessing the homicide of another officer



INCREASES RISK OF SUICIDE THINKING - 2 1/2 times

PTSD due to witnessing death, devastation (e.g. 911), abused children



INCREASES THE RISK OF SUICIDE THINKING - OVER 3 Times



PTSD coupled with alcohol use

INCREASES THE RISK OF SUICIDE THINKING NEARLY 10 TIMES

FIRST RESPONDER SUICIDE

RELATIONSHIP
STRESSORS

WORKPLACE
STRESSORS

**SUICIDAL
QUADRANGLE**



P.T.S.D.

SUBSTANCE
ABUSE

FIRST RESPONDERS OFTEN HAVE FAMILIARITY WITH DEATH AND DYING

HIGH RISK FACTORS

- ✓ Has communicated suicidal thoughts
- ✓ Unable to concentrate
- ✓ Unable to deal with frustration –
easily **angered**
- ✓ Seems to lose love of the profession
- ✓ Giving away possessions

CO-WORKER/SUPERVISOR

HELPING SKILLS

- ✘ Active listening
- ✘ Ask – **“Are you going to commit suicide?”**
- ✘ Use “I” messages
- ✘ If the idea is not there you will not plant it
- ✘ Identify problem

CO-WORKER/SUPERVISOR

HELPING SKILLS

- × Allow ventilation
- × Point out finality of death
- × “Do you really want to die?”
- × **Empathy vs. Sympathy**
- × Reflection of feelings
- × Problem ownership

DO'S OF INTERVENTION

- × Remain calm
- × Help define the problem
- × Rephrase thoughts
- × Focus on central issue
- × Stay close
- × Emphasize temporary nature of problem

Listen...Listen...Listen!!!

DON'TS OF INTERVENTION

- ✘ Do not overlook signs
- ✘ Do not sound shocked
- ✘ Do not offer empty promises
- ✘ Do not debate morality
- ✘ Do not leave person alone
- ✘ Do not remain the only person helping

Running Sum (millions)

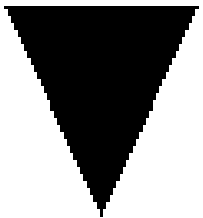
5
4
3
2
1
0

1974 1979 1984 1989 1994 1999

jlm

Survivors

4,395,480



1 of every
62 Americans

Suicides

732,580



BENEFITS OF AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- × **A valuable employee benefit, especially when properly promoted and communicated**
- × **Emphasizes early intervention when confronting a variety of work/life issues**
- × **Encourages employees and managers to take action early rather than later**

SELF-ESTEEM IS THE REPUTATION
YOU HAVE WITH YOURSELF.

BE KIND

BE HONORABLE

BE PRODUCTIVE

BE POSITIVE

Empathy + Humility

=

Emotional Support

Avoid bad habits...

