

## Suicide Signs

### Take them seriously

Although unemployment and other kinds of financial distress do not “cause” suicide directly, they can be factors that affect one’s risk for suicide.<sup>1</sup> These factors may include strong feelings of humiliation and despair, as well as feelings of little self-worth,<sup>2</sup> which can lead to suicidal thoughts or actions, especially among, but not limited to, those who may already be vulnerable due to other life experiences or underlying mental or emotional changes (e.g., depression – feeling especially hopeless, bi-polar disorder – episodes of depression and abnormally elevated moods).<sup>1,3</sup>

Signs that may indicate suicide risk include:

- “threatening to hurt or kill oneself or talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself;
- looking for ways to kill oneself;
- thinking or fantasizing about suicide;
- acting recklessly;



- seeing no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life”;<sup>1</sup> and/or
- comments, such as: “I’m finished,” “It’s all over,” “My family would be better off without me,” “There’s no hope,” “There’s nothing I can do,” or “I made a tremendous blunder.”<sup>2</sup>

“If someone indicates they are considering suicide, listen and take their concerns seriously. Don’t be afraid to ask questions about their plans, and let them know you care and they are not alone. Encourage them to seek help immediately from a knowledgeable professional. Don’t leave them alone.”<sup>2</sup> Immediate help may be sought with a healthcare provider, a mental health crisis center, hospital emergency room, or contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for help.<sup>1</sup>

#### Sources:

1. Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (2009). Getting through tough economic times [on-line]. Retrieved June 19, 2009. From <http://www.samhsa.gov/ECONOMY/>.
2. American Psychiatric Association (2009). Getting help for distress in troubled economic times [on-line]. Retrieved June 19, 2009. From <http://www.medem.com/medlib/article/ZZZMAT7A4KD>.
3. Journal of the American Medical Association (2005). JAMA patient page: Suicide [on-line]. Retrieved June 19, 2009. From <http://www.medem.com/medlib/article/ZZZMGERVZ9E>.