

# **“You Have to See ‘Em...To Save ‘Em”**

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## **BEYOND THE NEED FOR SAFETY AND SURVIVAL, EVERY PERSON NEEDS A FEELING OF:**

**AFFECTION-** smiles, hugs, handshakes, tone of voice, kind eye, concern, etc.

**INCLUSION-** We are gregarious. Loneliness scares us. A group of two (you and them) is better than no group at all

**COMPETENCE-** the feeling that one is capable (of something other than killing themselves) is paramount. Instilling statements, ‘You look like the kind of kid that can handle that.’ ‘What are you going to do about that?’ ‘I know you can, try again.’ ‘How did you make that happen?’ (Attribution theory)

**CONTROL-** Even the very young need the feeling that they have some control over their existence. Lack of control invites brain stem thinking. Moving from brain stem to frontal cortex is critical and primary. Asking questions, expressing expectations for alternate solutions, admiring their concern, etc. can get possible victims out of brainstem.

## **The forest for the trees...Are you getting to look them in the eye?**

Is my office full of those seeking help? If ‘no’, why not?

Are my subliminal messages saying I don’t want clients?

Too many non-counselor duties?

Lack of access to classrooms or assemblies?

Does my clientele trust my confidentiality? If no, why not?

Did your predecessor leave you a confidentiality mess?

Do your colleagues expect/demand information? (too bad!)

Is the temptation to share too great?

Fix these problems first!!! Work with the administration to find the time you need.

**It’s all about building TRUST...YOU HAVE TO SEE ‘EM...TO SAVE ‘EM!** Use classroom presentations, pieces of assemblies, parent meetings, one on one conversations etc. to get the word out that you care, and can be trusted.

**Information gathering technique...**Cover your eyes with hand on your head, hand on top, use finger to say yes.

Have I ever lied to you? You to me? Can we keep it that way?

**NOW 'SEE' THEM!**

**I hear you are thinking about killing yourself. Congratulations!**

You may hear, "You're weird...that's stupid!" (Now where is the focus? Presto, end of pity party! Out of brain stem, at least, temporarily)

**How many ways can you congratulate a kid that is suicidal? Link it to expectations.**

**Second grader in custody battle...ice cream made the difference**

**Granddaughter with shame...Dying would be better than disappointing Grandma**

**Dad who would be estranged from step-children...logical guy being illogical**

**Christmas dance Thursday...teacher on Monday**

Everyone (administrators, teachers, parents, students) need to know you are available 24/7. Yes, your phone number is out there!

**General questions to help you 'see' them. (and get them out of brainstem)**

What does it feel like? (Bottom of well and light went out, can't breathe, steam roller slowly running over me).

How do you eat an elephant?

What have you tried? Why do you think it didn't work?

Would you like some options you haven't tried?

How many days will you give me to work on this?

**You are always moving toward suicide pact. The eye ball to eye ball, heart to heart promise that they will not hurt themselves without talking with you first.**