**SUICIDE: Top 5 Myths & Reducing the Risk**

**Top 5 Suicide Myths**

**MYTH**

“People who suicide are weak or cowards.”

**FACT**

The person who is considering suicide is suffering immensely, which takes great strength to bear. Suicide is not an "easy way out", physically or emotionally.

**MYTH**

“People who suicide are brave and honourable.”

**FACT**

While some cultures do consider suicide as an honourable act in certain situations, we must be careful not to glamorise or glorify suicide. For that reason there are strict regulations about how suicide should be reported in the media.

**MYTH**

“People who suicide are all mentally unwell.”

**FACT**

90% of people who suicide are found to have a mental illness, but 10% do not. Some of those people may not have a mental illness, but perhaps did have a sudden loss (job, finances, relationship, loved one). Others may have come to the decision to take their life after much consideration of their circumstances.

**MYTH**

“People who suicide are selfish.”

**FACT**

Usually when people think this, it is because they are focusing on the feelings of the friends and family left behind. What we know is that the person thinking about suicide is in such a degree of suffering that they consider the pain of living to be worse than the pain caused to friends and family. In many cases the person feels like a burden to others and thinks they will be better off without them. Suicide is not a selfish act.

**MYTH**

“People who suicide want to die.”

**FACT**

The majority of people who have attempted suicide, say that they did not want to die. But they did not want to continue living with the suffering they were in. Most people also state that they are glad they did not die.

**WHERE TO GET HELP**

If you’re concerned that you or someone you know may be at risk of suicide, please call one of these numbers:

**AUSTRALIA**

Suicide Call Back Service 1800 247 007

**UNITED STATES**

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (7425)

**NEW ZEALAND**

Samaritans 0800 726 666

**UK & REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**

Samaritans 116 123

**SOUTH AFRICA**

SANEL 0800 060 060

To get your staff trained to respond to a mental health emergency, contact The WMHI.

www.thewmhi.com