Chapter 14 Related Activity

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14.14 Exploring Psychology—Suicide

Suicide

What I know about suicide isn’t very much even though I think I have had way too much exposure to it. A couple of things that I know are, a person that talks about committing suicide is looking for help. Men use a more violent way of committing suicide, whereas women usually will try over-dosing. Men are more successful with their attempts than women. Most suicides are committed by people between their teens and early twenties.

Researchers have found these facts: The latest data available from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/suicide/index.html) indicates that 38,364 suicide deaths were reported in the U.S. in 2010. This latest rise places suicide again as the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. Nationally, the suicide rate increased 3.9 percent over 2009 to equal approximately 12.4 suicides per 100,000 people. The rate of suicide has been increasing since 2000. This is the highest rate of suicide in 15 years.

* Every 13.7 minutes someone in the United States dies by suicide.
* Nearly 1,000,000 people make a suicide attempt every year.
* 90% of people who die by suicide have a diagnosable and treatable psychiatric disorder at the time of their death.
* Most people with mental illness do not die by suicide.
* Recent data puts yearly medical costs for suicide at nearly $100 million (2005).
* Men are nearly 4 times more likely to die by suicide than women. Women attempt suicide 3 times as often as men.
* Suicide rates are highest for people between the ages of 40 and 59.
* Native American peoples are most likely to die by suicide, followed by white individuals .

According to Centers for Disease Control for the year 2010, suicide rates for Native Americans were at 17.3%, Whites were at 16%, Asian or Pacific Islander were at 6.3%, Black or African American and Hispanic were both at 5.3%.

One fact that really surprises me is more people between the ages of 45-54 commit suicide, but not surprising is the fact that 79% of all suicides are committed by males.

One myth about suicide is: People who threaten suicide are only seeking attention. People who threaten suicide are reaching out for help, they have lost hope. Never take threats lightly, you could save a life. Another myth is: Talking about suicide with a depressed person may prompt the person to attempt it. Talking about suicide may save their life; you could get them to promise not to try anything before calling for help from a mental health worker. I think these myths come from the fact of not understanding why one would take their own life, so we attach our own reasoning to it. This is problematic because you might be that person’s life line; their one last hope of getting help.

The people that I know that have committed suicide or attempted suicide weren’t that close to me except for one. Looking at the information in our textbook, this person fits right in with what is presented there, except this person was female and used a more violent way to kill herself. She used a gun, but instead of shooting herself in the temple, the mouth, or the heart she shot herself in the leg. She had a long history of depression and had been admitted to the hospital several times. She parked her car in a church parking lot, locked herself in the trunk, shot herself in the leg and bled to death. I think the reason she choose a church parking lot is because she thought someone would be there and hear the gun shot and save her that is why she shot herself in the leg also. Unfortunately it didn’t work out that way.

To parents, schools, and society the biggest thing we can do is pay attention; know the warning signs. Learn where you can turn to get help for the person. Have a suicide prevention plan that includes suicide prevention hot lines. Listen, offer help and let the person know you care.

The knowledge I had before reading the text was pretty much right on with what research has shown, except for the age. I don’t know why but I thought that suicide was something that people “outgrow”. I am really surprised that men in their 70’s and 80’s commit suicide more than the younger men. I was also shocked to learn that suicide is the 10th leading cause of death, and that over 38,000 people committed suicide in 2010, and on top of that is the rates keep going up.

This was one of the hardest papers I have had to write. I think back over the people I know that have committed suicide and how they did it. Female/drove her car into a concrete bridge footing at 110 mph.

Male/gunshot to the head. Male/hanging. Male/ gunshot to the head. Female/drove her car into a tree. Female/ bled to death. Female/?. Male/set himself on fire. I wish I could have helped them. It breaks my heart to know that there are so many people hurting.

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Nevid, Jeffrey, Psychology Concepts and Applications, Houghton Mifflin Company Boston New York