

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in Construction

The time is now to re-think traditional safety and culture



Two issues... same root cause?

- ❑ Lack of control
- ❑ Low perception of skill





CIASP's involvement at the highest level



Strength. Determination. Grit.

CHARACTER TRAITS THAT GET HARD WORK DONE.

The same traits can be a
barrier to asking for help.

SPEAK UP TO
STANDUP



INFORMATION & RESOURCES AT
preventconstruction suicide.com



THE NATIONAL SUICIDE
PREVENTION LIFELINE AT
1.800.273.TALK (8255) or
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

CRISIS TEXT LINE

TEXT **HELLO** TO 74741
Free, 24/7, Confidential
crisistextline.org

**IT'S OK TO NOT BE OK. BE BRAVE – SPEAK UP
FOR YOUR TEAM. SPEAK FOR YOURSELF.**



Let's clear up some language

- ❑ Die by vs. Commit
- ❑ Has vs. Is
- ❑ Weak, selfish

Why?

- ❑ Construction is most at risk industry for suicide deaths
 - ❑ All levels: laborers, skilled trades, operators, management
 - ❑ Overall rate: 49.4/100,000 – 3.5x the national average
 - ❑ Equipment operators have highest prevalence





It's not just construction

- Suicide is a societal issue:
 - 48,344 deaths annually
 - 14.2/100,000
 - 132 Per Day

Rethink safety focus

□ 2018:

□ 1008 Construction Worker Fatalities (9.5/100,000)

□ 5,242 Construction Worker Suicide (49.4/100,000)

It definitely IS a workplace concern

- 1 in 5 Adults Will Experience Mental Illness
- 43.8 Million
- 60% are left untreated

Nearly half have a co-occurring substance abuse disorder

Depression is the first leading cause of disability & increases risk of other chronic medical conditions – Mental health claims are 1/3 of all disability claims

33% of Workers Comp claims in men & 66% in women had an existing mental health condition
50% report symptoms of depression in the month following an injury

- 6.9% Depression
- 18.1% Anxiety
- Can lead to up to 27 lost workdays per year

Mental illness leads to \$193 billion of lost earnings

A \$1 Investment in mental health results in a \$4 Return on Investment



What are the Construction Risk Factors?

Chronic pain

Extreme pressure /
low margin for
error

Promotion of
supervisors without
leadership training

Skills gap / feeling
stuck

Stoic / tough guy
mentality

Separation and/or
isolation

Layoffs / financial
instability

Access to lethal
means

Veterans in the
workforce

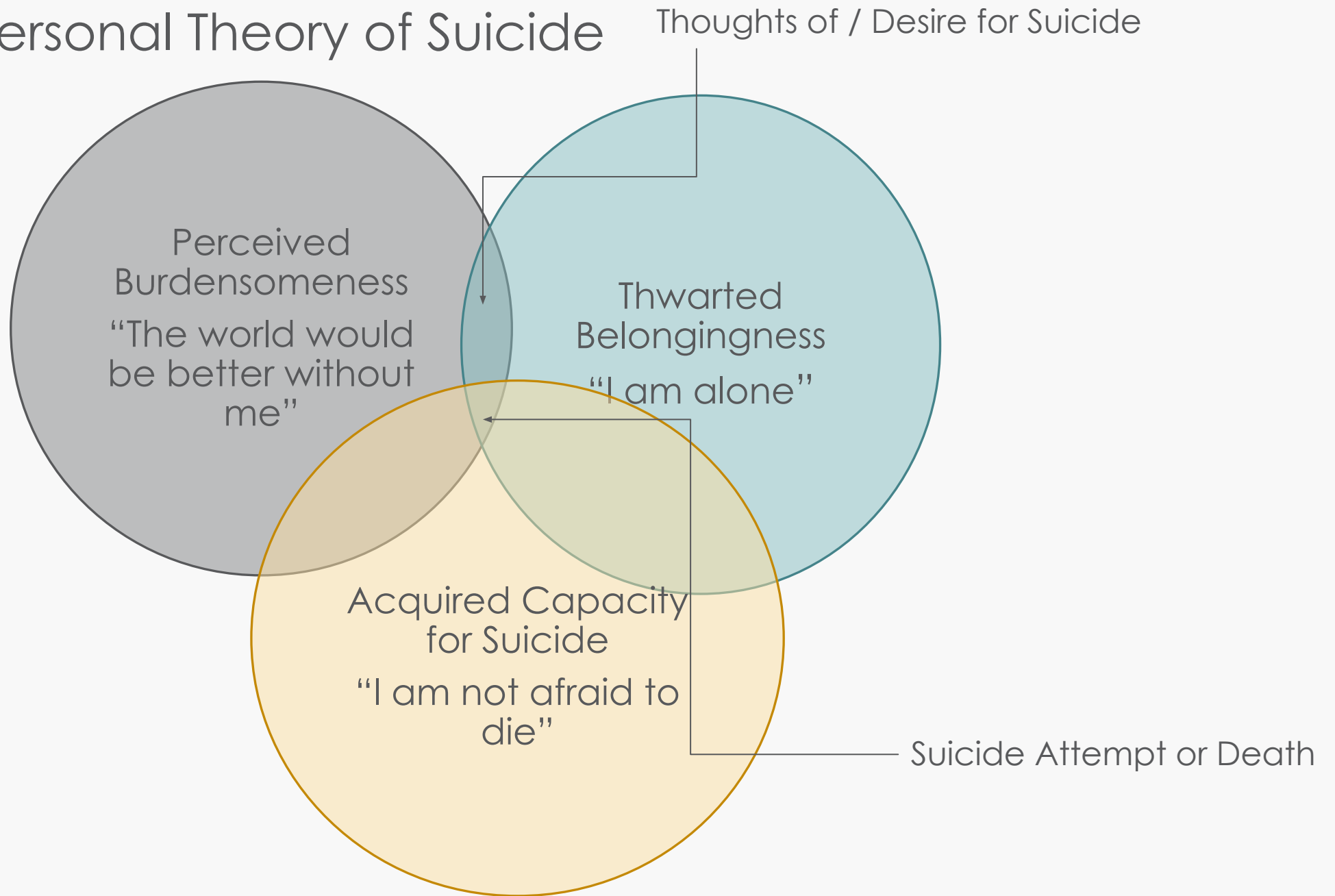
Alcohol &
Substance Abuse

Demographics:
Men in the middle

Sleep disruption /
deprivation

Poor access to /
utilization of
behavioral health
care

Joiner's Interpersonal Theory of Suicide



Create a Caring Culture

Leadership support /
encouragement

Injury management
programs / return to
work /pain
management

Considering the person
and their needs in
scheduling, assigning
to out of town jobs

Creating /
encouraging peer
support relationships –
building teams

Personal financial
management /
education

Reduce jobsite access
to lethal means

Gun safety education

Confirm access to
benefits / educate
employees on
availability including
EAP

Substance abuse
education / screening
programs / second
chance agreements

Staff projects
appropriately / have
reasonable
expectations

Train
managers/supervisors
in people
management – soft
skills, communication

Train & develop
employees to reach
full potential, given
future hope

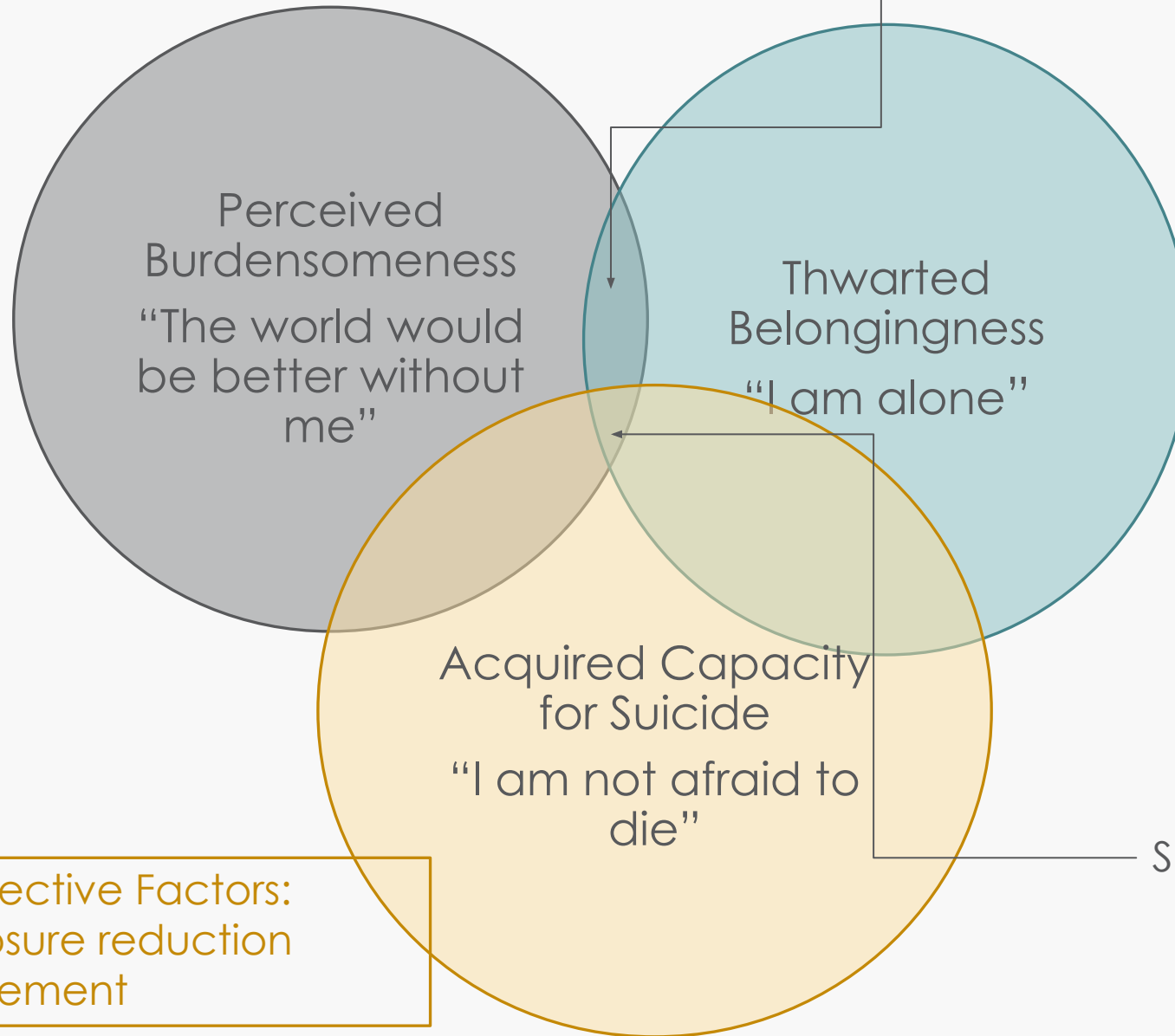
Build in Veteran
protective factors

Joiner's Interpersonal Theory of Suicide

Thoughts of / Desire for Suicide

Workplace Protective Factors:

- Management support
- Realistic expectations
- Constructive correctional actions



Workplace Protective Factors:

- Encouraging peer relationships
- Creating social connectedness
- Watching out for people at times of relationship changes

Workplace Protective Factors:

- Trauma exposure reduction
- Crisis management

Suicide Attempt or Death

Performance Issues That Can be Warning Signs

- ❑ Decreased problem solving ability
- ❑ Decreased self confidence
- ❑ Decreased productivity
- ❑ Increased tardiness & absenteeism
- ❑ Increased conflict among co-workers
- ❑ Increased near hits, incidents, injuries



Opioids Have No Place in the Workplace

- ▢ 16,790 Prescription Opioid Overdoses
- ▢ 47,600 Opioid Overdose Deaths Overall

▢ Illegitimate Use:

- ▢ Impairing
- ▢ Probably a sign of an opioid misuse disorder

▢ Legitimate Use (Prescribed):

- ▢ Impairing
- ▢ Addicting
- ▢ Increases risk of future disability
- ▢ Delays recovery
- ▢ Increases medical costs
- ▢ Less effective than alternatives

Acute Rx Leads to Long Term Use

Duration of acute use:

1 Day = 6% chance of still using the drug a year later

7 Days = 13.5% chance

31 Days = 29.9% chance

Long term use leads to:

- Increased perception of pain
- Increases risk of depression
- Increases risk of suicide

Recognize the Signs to Speak Up

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- ◆ Talking about feeling trapped
- ◆ Saying they want to die
- ◆ Feeling like they are a burden to others
- ◆ Expressing hopelessness or helplessness
- ◆ Conflict or confrontations with co-workers

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

- ◆ Increased tardiness or absenteeism
- ◆ Decreased productivity and problem solving
- ◆ Near misses, hits or other safety incidents
- ◆ Misusing drugs or alcohol
- ◆ Acting anxious, agitated or reckless
- ◆ Withdrawing from social groups and interactions
- ◆ Extreme mood swings

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THEIR LIVES?

- ◆ Relationship issues
- ◆ Major life changes
- ◆ Loss of a loved one
- ◆ Financial difficulties
- ◆ Illness or injury



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FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

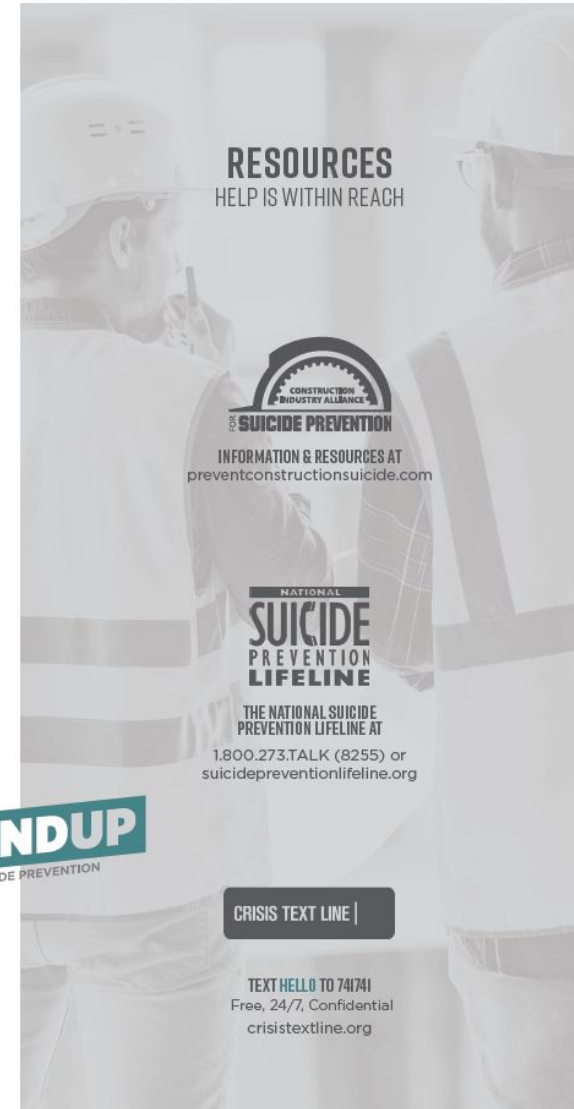
RESOURCES
HELP IS WITHIN REACH



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A scenic photograph of a river flowing through a dense, green forest. The river is turbulent, with white rapids and foam, suggesting a powerful current. The surrounding trees are lush and green, and the sky above is blue with scattered white clouds. The river flows from the background towards the foreground, creating a sense of movement and progression.

Upstream:

- Caring Culture
- Preventative Factors
- Identify & Promote Resources
- Mental Health Literacy

Midstream:

- Education on warning signs
- Early Identification
- Mental Health Screenings
- Connection to care

Downstream:

- Manage Crises
- Restrict Access to Lethal Means
- Provide Resources
- Crisis Response Management
- Offer Support

Know How to Respond: TASC

Tune in

Tune in: When you notice or sense that a person may need help, focus your attention on them for warning signs

Ask

Ask: Ask if they are thinking about suicide clearly, directly & calmly – and without judgement

State

State: State that suicide is serious and that connecting to help is important

Connect

Connect: Connect the person to a helping resource who knows suicide first-aid skills



STANDUP

FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

GET HELP

Know who to contact if you or someone you know is at risk of suicide

GET INFORMED

Learn why construction is the most at-risk industry for suicide deaths

GET STARTED

Pledge to STAND UP for suicide prevention and address it as a health and safety priority

WE ALL
STAND
STRONGER
TOGETHER



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Take the pledge, download resources,
order supplies, access free training
and screening tool – all on our website



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