



# SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS AND RISK FACTORS

TASK: Teach Soldiers the signs of suicidal thinking and behavior.

CONDITIONS: Discussion – Question based

STANDARDS: Understand the warning signs of suicidal thinking and behavior and identify risk factors.

REFERENCE(S): Unit trained Gatekeepers IAW AR 600-63, para 4-4.j.; TA-075-0711; and AKO SP:  
<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/334798>.



# SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS AND RISK FACTORS

## What are the warning signs of suicide?

(First, explain there is no definite measure or answer to predict suicide...these signs might and might not be – there is no “one size fits all” answer as any Soldier can be at risk.)

Ask Soldiers what they think are the warning signs and discuss the following:

- Soldier in trouble (UCMJ)
- Financial problems
- Relationship problems
- Withdrawal from friends and activities
- Giving property away
- Talk of suicide or killing someone else

Pick any of the above. Might this be a reason for suicide? Might this not be a reason? Might some combine and cause them to think about suicide?



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## What are the risk factors?

These factors might place a Soldier at higher risk – but very few with these risk factors attempt or complete suicide.

Relationship problems, divorce, etc.

Work-related problems

Depression

History of Previous Attempts

Family history of suicide

Setbacks in career

Pick any of the above. Might this be a reason for suicide? Might this not be a reason?  
Might some combine and cause them to think about suicide?



# SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS AND RISK FACTORS

When is suicide risk the highest for Soldiers?

When there appears to be **no way out**.

Predominate emotions are **HOPELESSNESS AND HELPLESSNESS**.

**Thinking is slim/tight**...Soldier sees situation as all bad.

Judgment can be impaired by **alcohol or other substances**.

Soldiers who have negative risk factors are at a greater potential for suicidal thoughts or behaviors.