

Full-Day Set #8

Uncovering Suicidal Ideation and Other Dangerous Secrets in Schools

Presenter: Shawn Christopher Shea, M.D.

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Description

This four-part workshop series provides school counselors - from middle schools to universities - with the state of the art skills necessary to tackle some of the most difficult clinical situations facing experienced counselors regarding suicide assessment. Topics include: the practical use of risk and protective factors in formulating risk, innovative strategies for uncovering suicidal ideation and intent, forensically sound methods for documenting risk, interview strategies for uncovering taboo topics often associated with increased suicide risk such as substance abuse and incest, and interviewing tips for spotting dangerous psychotic process both directed towards self and others.

In the first workshop, Dr. Shea provides a sophisticated exploration of the concept of risk and protective factors, focusing on their immediate application to the clinical formulation of suicide potential (including detailed looks at the SAD PERSONS SCALE, the NO HOPE Scale and the new risk-factor mnemonic from the American Association of Suicidology). Dr. Shea then proceeds to dissect the fine art of documenting a suicide assessment, providing tips for writing a sound document that is both a useful communication tool which can help save lives and a written record that can keep the counselor and school "out of court."

The second workshop is devoted to understanding five practical interviewing techniques for enhancing validity: the behavioral incident, shame attenuation, gentle assumption, symptom amplification and denial of the specific - the cornerstones for effectively eliciting suicidal ideation. Using videotape of an adolescent client Dr. Shea demonstrates how these interviewing techniques can also provide powerful gateways for uncovering the types of sensitive topics that may lead to suicidal thoughts in students including: problems with grades, relationship problems, physical abuse, drug abuse, antisocial behavior, bullying, and incest.

The third workshop of the day, also enriched by a vivid videotape demonstration with an actual client is devoted to an exploration of how these validity techniques can be woven into a specific strategy for eliciting suicidal ideation – the Chronological Assessment of Suicide Events (the CASE Approach). The highly acclaimed CASE Approach, as integrated into a sound suicide assessment in Dr. Shea's book *The Practical Art of Suicide Assessment*, was described in the following review from School Psychology Resources Online:

“Dr. Shea makes the process of discovering suicidality come alive. Even if you are not directly involved in suicide risk assessment, this is a very worthwhile read. If you are directly involved, this is a must read.”

The last workshop looks at the puzzling world of psychosis, which often first shows itself in high school and college years. Using a series of compelling videotapes from actual client interviews with late adolescents, Dr. Shea demonstrates specific interviewing techniques to help school counselors ferret out the early signs of impending psychosis as well as spotting dangerous psychotic process including suicide, homicide, and self-mutilation.

Objectives

- 1) Be able to use the current state of the art regarding risk and protective factors to better formulate suicide risk with students.
- 2) Understand how attorneys use the written document to attack or defend in malpractice suits and the "Seven Protective Principles for Suicide Documentation."
- 3) Recognize and be able to utilize the following five techniques for increasing validity when interviewing students: the behavioral incident, shame attenuation, gentle assumption, symptom amplification and denial of the specific.
- 4) Be able to utilize flexible strategies for weaving the above five validity techniques into effective methods of uncovering sensitive and taboo material related to suicide such as antisocial behavior, substance abuse, poor academic performance, history of incest, and violent ideation, while maintaining a powerful engagement.
- 5) Apply the CASE Approach to uncover the hidden suicidal ideation, planning, intent, and actions of students.
- 6) Understand and be able to utilize interviewing techniques for spotting delusional mood, delusional perception, the life-cycle of a psychosis, and dangerous psychotic processes including command hallucinations, alien control, and hyper-religiosity as related to suicide and violence towards others.

Sample Schedule

Workshop I	8:30 - 10:00 a.m.
Risk and Protective Factors in Suicide Assessment and the Art of Sound Documentation	
BREAK	10:00 - 10:15 p.m.

Workshop II 10:15 - 12:00 p.m.

Innovative Interviewing Techniques for
Uncovering Dangerous, Sensitive,
and Taboo Material with Students

LUNCH 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Workshop III 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

The Delicate Art of Eliciting Suicidal Ideation
- The Chronological Assessment of Suicide Events

BREAK 2:30 - 2:45 p.m.

Workshop IV 2:45 - 4:15 p.m.

The Elusive World of Psychosis: How to Help
Students Share the Frightening World
of Psychotic Process

The Speaker

Shawn Christopher Shea, M.D. is an internationally acclaimed workshop leader and educational innovator in the fields of suicide prevention, resiliency, clinical interviewing, and improving medication adherence having given over 850 presentations worldwide. He has been a recipient of an Outstanding Course Award presented by the American Psychiatric Association for his presentations at their annual meetings. He is a frequent presenter at the annual meeting of the American Association of Suicidology and at the Cape Cod Symposium where his course has received the highest evaluation of the thirty courses featured over the summer. He has also presented at the Santa Fe Symposium, the Door County Summer Institute, and the Muskoka Summer Seminar Series from McMaster University.

Dr. Shea is the author of six books and numerous articles including one of the classic texts in the field of suicide prevention, *The Practical Art of Suicide Assessment*. His works have been translated into a variety of languages as diverse as French, Greek, Japanese, and Chinese. Both editions of his book, *Psychiatric Interviewing: the Art of Understanding*, have been chosen by the Medical Library Association for the Brandon/Hill List as one of the 16 most important books in the field of psychiatry.

His book on creating resiliency in difficult times - *Happiness Is* - was chosen as a Brodart Library Gem, a Bowker's title to Watch, and as the Philosophy Book of the Month by the Radical Academy. He has carried the book's provocative slant on how hope, wonderment, and compassion can play a powerful role in coping with the daunting

challenges of college onto campuses themselves having provided the commencement address for Antioch University of New England as well as presenting to student audiences at institutions such as Dartmouth, Bryn Mawr, and George Washington University.

Former Surgeon General C, Everett Koop, M.D., Sc.D. provided the foreword to Dr. Shea's latest book, *Improving Medication Adherence: How to Talk with Patients About Their Medications* which, in 2009, was chosen for Doody's Core Titles list of the most important books in the fields of medicine and nursing.

Dr. Shea is the Director of the Training Institute for Suicide Assessment and Clinical Interviewing (www.suicideassessment.com), a training and consultation service providing workshops, consultations, and quality assurance design in mental health assessments. Dr. Shea is also in private practice.