**Signs of Distress**

**Are you or is someone close to you experiencing any of these signs of emotional distress?**

**Situation**

Learn about the situation. Almost any challenging situation could lead to suicidal thoughts.

* Are they having relationship problems? Have they recently broken-up with their partner?
* Are they arguing with their parents? Are they misusing alcohol, street drugs or are they involved in gambling?
* Are they being teased, bullied or made fun of by peers?
* Are they failing subjects at school? Are they having problems at work?
* Are they in trouble with the law?
* Are they experiencing significant financial problems?
* Have they been physically or sexually abused or assaulted?
* Are they experienced a significant loss?
* Are they questioning their sexuality or sexual orientation?

**Physical Changes**

Ask about physical changes.

* Do they lack interest or pleasure in things they used to enjoy?
* Do they lack energy or feel tired and sluggish?
* Are they restless and anxious?
* Have you noticed a change in their appearance or a lack of interest in personal care?
* Are they having problems with sleeping? (Sleeping all of the time or unable to sleep)
* Has their appetite changed? (Not eating or overeating)
* Have you noticed an increased number of physical complaints?

**Behaviour Changes**

Observe for behavioural changes.

* Are they irritable, crying or having emotional outbursts?
* Have they had any prior suicidal behaviour or self-harm?
* Are they abusing alcohol or drugs?
* Are they impulsive and participating in reckless, risky behaviour?
* Have they dropped out of school or quit a job? Are they thinking about either?
* Are they fighting or breaking the law?
* Are they withdrawing from friends or family?
* Are they giving away favourite possessions?



* Have there been dramatic mood changes or significant behaviour changes? (This could
* Indicate a more immediate danger.)

**Thoughts**

Listen to their thoughts, in the statements they make.

* Are they talking about suicide or do they seem preoccupied with death?
* Do they have a plan to harm themselves?
* Are they feeling isolated and alone?
* Are they feeling helpless with no future?
* Do they just want to escape?
* Do they feel guilty or damaged?
* Are they making statements like “Everyone will be better off without me”?

**Feelings**

Try to sense what they are feeling.

* Do they feel an overwhelming sadness?
* Are they feeling desperate?
* Are they feeling hopeless and worthless?
* Are they feeling disconnected and lonely?
* Do they feel ashamed or guilty?
* Are they feeling angry?

