

Speaker: Shawn Christopher Shea, M.D.

**Part 2: Innovations in  
Eliciting Suicidal  
Ideation: the CASE  
Approach**

1

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**About the Speaker**

Shawn Christopher Shea, MD  
Director, Training Institute for Suicide Assessment  
and Clinical Interviewing (TISA)  
[www.suicideassessment.com](http://www.suicideassessment.com)  
(603) 763-0536

*Commercial Associations*

- Publishing Houses: Elsevier, Mental Health Presses
- Pharmaceutical Companies

2

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Over-arching Goal of this  
Session**

3

---

---

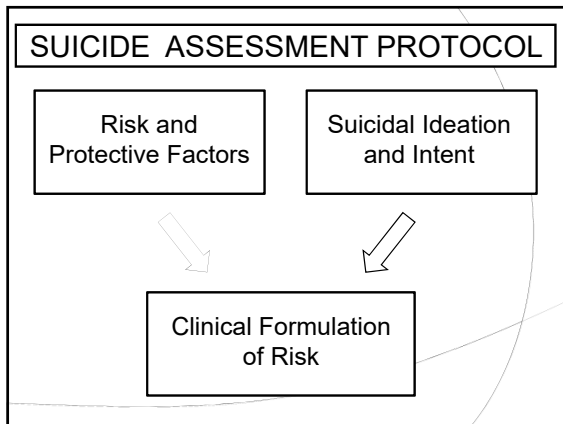
---

---

---

---

---



4

---

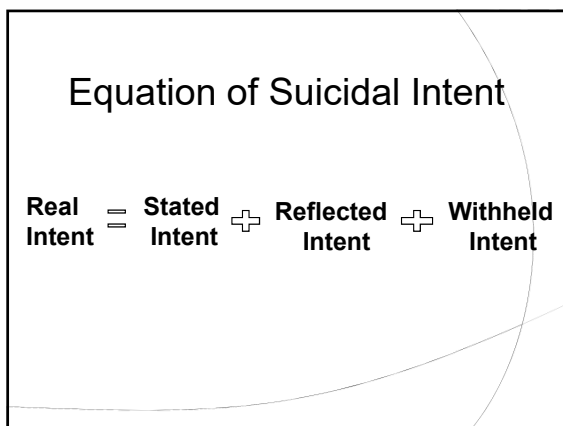
---

---

---

---

---



5

---

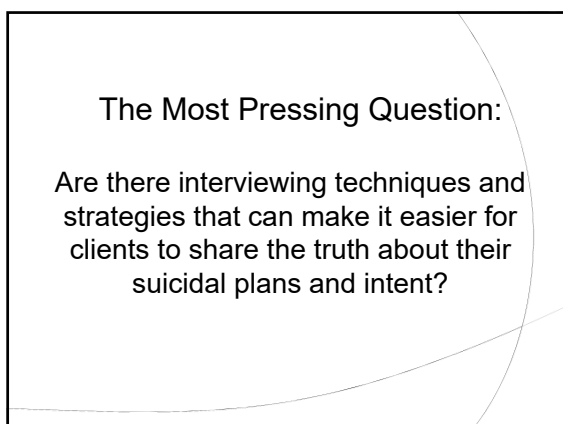
---

---

---

---

---



6

---

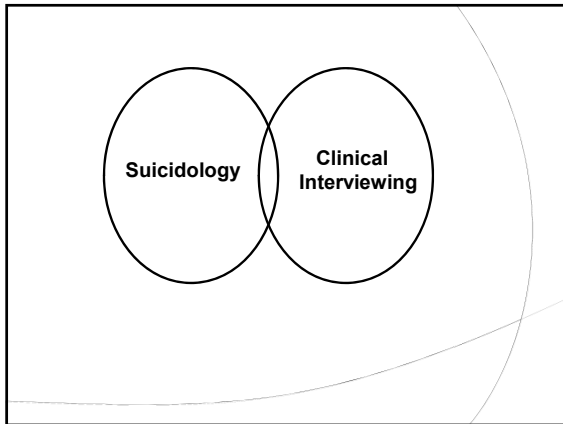
---

---

---

---

---



7

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**National Recognition of the CASE Approach**

- 1) Chosen in 2015 for the ZERO Suicide website's "Suicide Care Training Options" List for use across the United States.
- 2) Chosen in 2013 for the Best Practices Registry of the Suicide Prevention and Resources Center (SPRC) under the auspices of SAMSHA.
- 3) Presented in updated versions for 20 consecutive years as a core clinical course at the Annual Meetings of the American Association of Suicidology (AAS).

8

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Previous studies: Roughly 70% of patients had denied significant suicidal ideation before serious attempts/deaths by suicide

**Jongkind Study (n = 136)**

**Method of Choice (MOC) Results:**

- 1) 76.5% reported they had chosen their (MOC)
- 2) 27.2% had procured their MOC
- 3) 26.5% had either practiced or engaged in a small, moderate or serious attempt using their MOC

**Suicidal Rumination Times:**

- 1) roughly 8% reported 5-10 hours per day on worst days
- 2) roughly 25% reported over 10 hours per day on worst days

9

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Warmly Received in a Diversity of Settings

- 1) Military: DoD Annual Meeting, Tripler Army Base, Groton Naval Base, U.S. Naval Base in San Diego, Vet Centers, Numerous VAs across VISNs
- 2) Psychiatric Hospitals/Medical Centers
- 3) Emergency Rooms
- 4) College Counseling Centers/High Schools
- 3) Native American/First Nation Reservations
- 4) Primary Care/Integrated Care Programs
- 5) Lifeline Telephone Crisis Centers

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

10

### 4 Key Points Regarding the CASE Approach

- 1) Case Approach is not an interview; it is an **interviewing strategy** imbedded inside an interview.
- 2) Risk and protective factors must be explored **in the same interview** either before or after the CASE Approach.
- 3) 95/5er's **may fairly frequently withhold** their method of choice; one must search for it.
- 4) Client's reflected intent is **often** more valid than stated intent, especially with a 95/5er.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

11

### Two Critical Errors When Eliciting Suicidal Ideation

- 1) Invalid Information
- 2) Pertinent Questions Not Asked

---

---

---

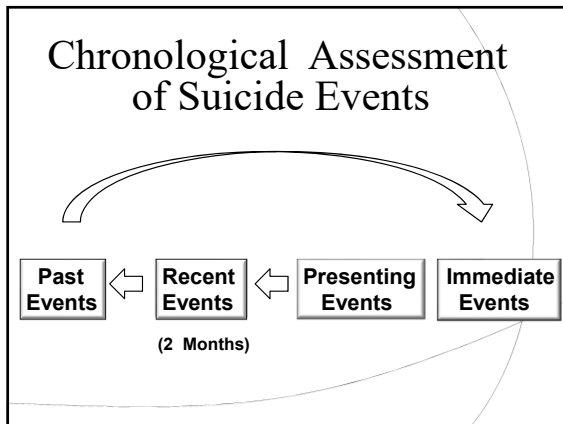
---

---

---

---

12



13

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Puzzle Pieces Needed for the Region of Presenting Events: Overdose as an Example

- 1) What kind of pills
- 2) How many pills
- 3) How many pills left in the bottle (Phantom Number)
- 4) Immediate trigger
- 5) Where were they taken
- 6) Likelihood of rescue
- 7) Lethality (Real and perceived lethality)

14

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Puzzle Pieces Needed for the Region of Presenting Events: Overdose as an Example (cont.)

- 8) Impulsive versus planned
- 9) Drugs and/or alcohol involved
- 10) How did the person feel about the attempt failing
- 11) What stopped the person
- 12) What happened afterwards (the denouement)

15

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Validity Techniques for Exploring Sensitive Topics Once Raised

1) Behavioral Incident

2) Gentle Assumption

3) Denial of the Specific

4) Catch-All Question

5) Symptom Amplification

16

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2 Steps for Making Verbal Video

1) Anchoring the verbal video

2) Make the video (patient walks you through his or her suicidal actions/plans via BI's)

17

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Anchoring the Verbal Video

1) Method-in-Hand Question

2) Anchor to time

3) Anchor to place

4) Summarizing invitation to verbal video (. . . It would help me to understand if you could sort of walk me through this step by step)

18

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Second: Walking through a Verbal Video

- 1) Use a series of behavioral incidents to enable client to walk you through their suicidal actions and/or plans.
- 2) Ferret out "lethal points".
- 3) Frequent use of sequencing BI's with fact-finding BI's used as needed to efficiently uncover lethal points.
- 4) Fix "Nixon Gaps" by rewinding to beginning of gap and re-start with BI's.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

19

### Video Demonstration

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

20

### Anchoring the Verbal Video

- 1) Method-in-Hand Question
- 2) Anchor to time
- 3) Anchor to place
- 4) Summarizing invitation to verbal video (. . . It would help me to understand if you could sort of walk me through this step by step)

---

---

---

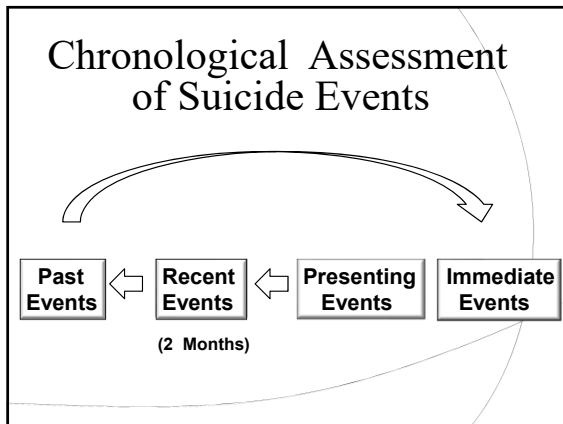
---

---

---

---

21



22

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- ### Before Moving to Region of Recent Events: Use Clarifying Window and Tag Questions if Necessary
- 1) Clarifying window if necessary
  - 2) Tag Questions
    - a) drugs and alcohol during event
    - b) evidence of planning versus impulsivity (wills, suicide notes, etc.)

23

---

---

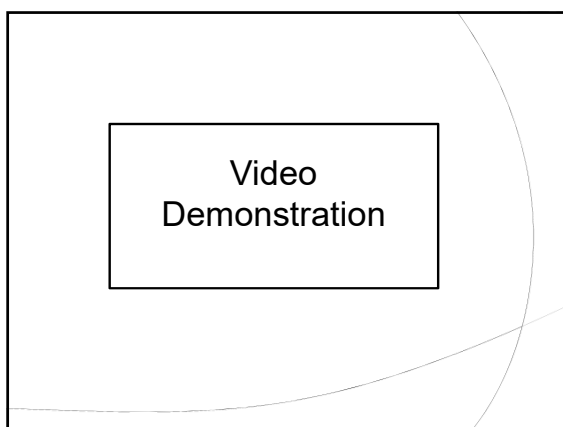
---

---

---

---

---



24

---

---

---

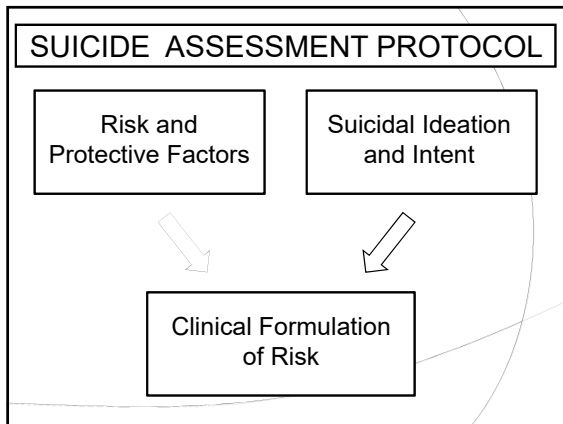
---

---

---

---





25

---

---

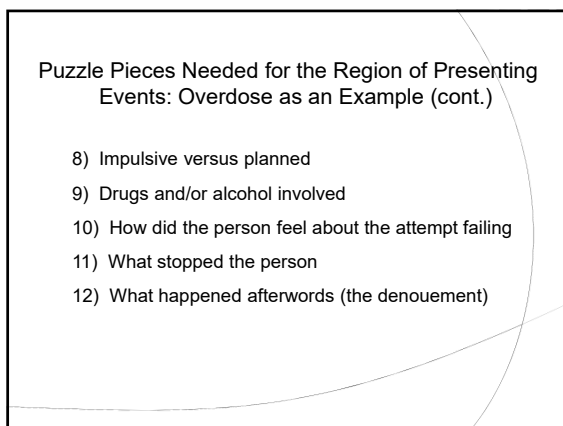
---

---

---

---

---



26

---

---

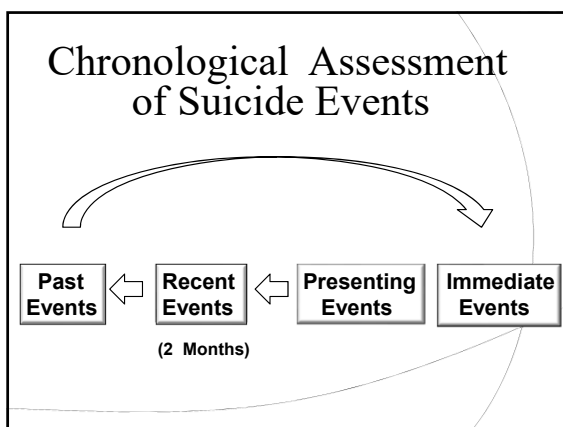
---

---

---

---

---



27

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Equation of Suicidal Intent

$$\text{Real Intent} = \text{Stated Intent} + \text{Reflected Intent} + \text{Withheld Intent}$$

28

---

---

---

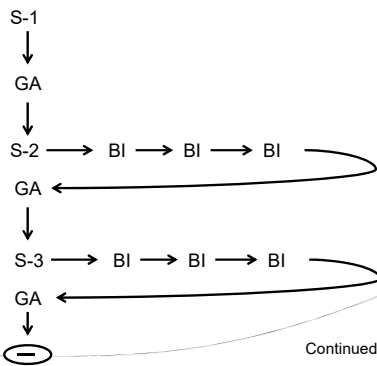
---

---

---

---

## Exploring the Region of Recent Events



29

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Anchoring the Verbal Video

- 1) Method-in-Hand Question
- 2) Anchor to time
- 3) Anchor to place
- 4) Summarizing invitation to verbal video (. . . It would help me to understand if you could sort of walk me through this step by step)

30

---

---

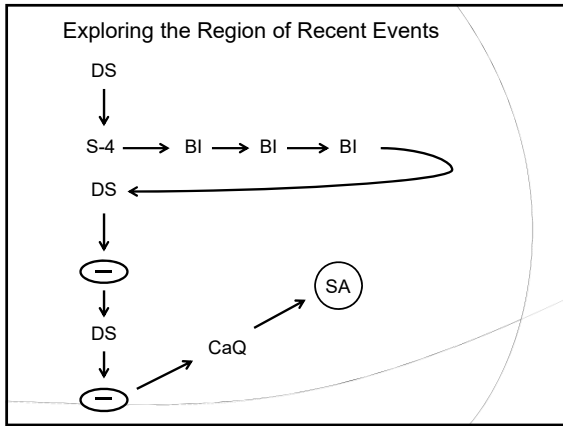
---

---

---

---

---



31

---

---

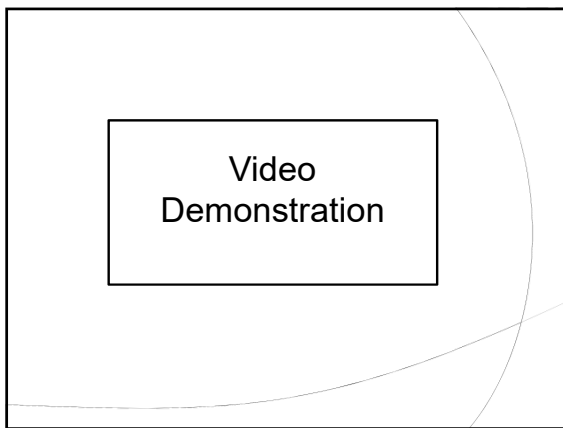
---

---

---

---

---



32

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Equation of Suicidal Intent

$$\text{Real Intent} = \text{Stated Intent} + \text{Reflected Intent} + \text{Withheld Intent}$$

33

---

---

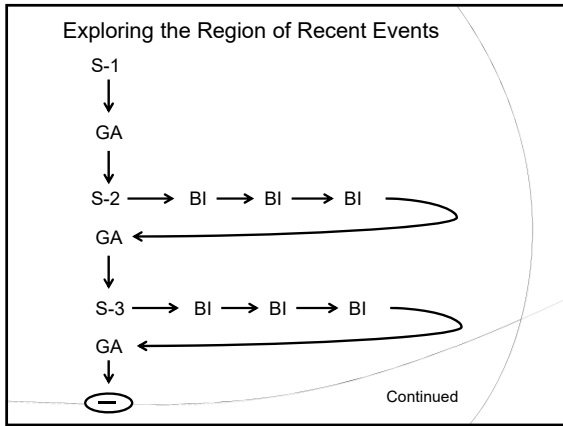
---

---

---

---

---



34

---

---

---

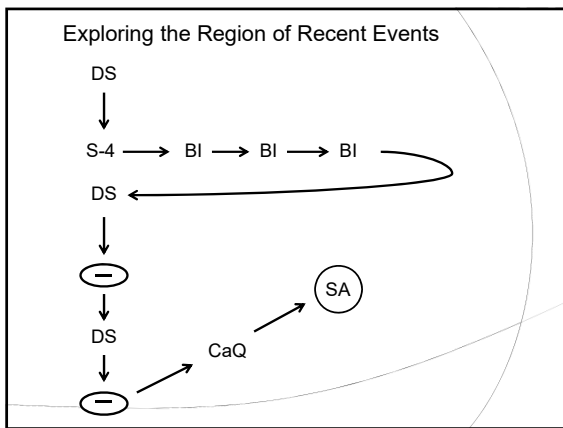
---

---

---

---

---



35

---

---

---

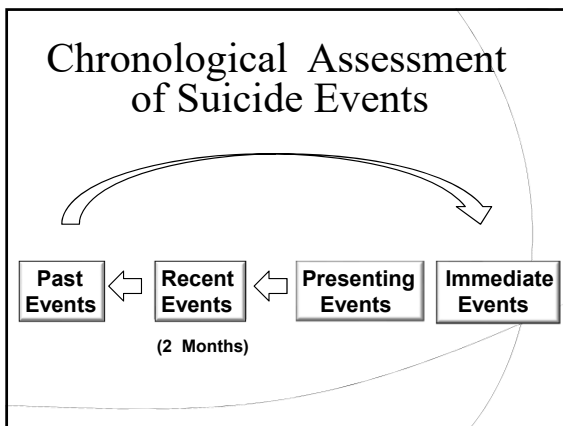
---

---

---

---

---



36

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Exploration of the Region of Past Suicide Events

1) Did the client ever try to kill himself or herself in the past?

2) Most dangerous past attempt

a) similar triggers?

b) same method?

3) # of past attempts

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

37

Video Demonstration

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

38

Chronological Assessment of Suicide Events

Past Events

Recent Events

Presenting Events

Immediate Events

(2 Months)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

39

Exploration of the Region of Immediate Suicide Events

1) Region of Now/Next

2) Hopelessness

3) Helplessness

4) Intensity of Pain

5) Safety contracting versus safety planning

a) First lens: deterrence

b) Second lens: assessment tool

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

40

Video Demonstration

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

41

Recent Literature Resources Used for All Slides

1. Shea SC. (2017). Exploring suicidal ideation: the delicate art of suicide assessment. in *Psychiatric Interviewing: the Art of Understanding, 3rd Edition*. London, Elsevier, with streaming video.

2. Shea SC. (2017). Uncovering a patient's hidden method of choice for suicide: Insights from the chronological assessment of suicide events (CASE Approach). *Psychiatric Annals* 47(8):421-427.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

42

### Recent Literature Resources Used for All Slides (continued)

3. Shea, S.C., Barney, C. (2015). Teaching clinical interviewing skills using role-playing: Conveying empathy to performing a suicide assessment – a primer for individual role-playing and scripted group role-playing. *Psychiatric Clinics of North America* 38(1):147-183, 2015.
4. Shea SC. (2012). Interpersonal art of suicide assessment: interviewing techniques for uncovering suicidal intent, ideation, and actions. In: Simon RI, Hales RE, editors. *The American Psychiatric Publishing Textbook of Suicide Assessment and Management, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing, p.p. 29-56.

43

### About the Speaker

Shawn Christopher Shea, MD  
Director, Training Institute for Suicide Assessment  
and Clinical Interviewing (TISA)

[www.suicideassessment.com](http://www.suicideassessment.com)  
(603) 763-0536

44