

# Fearfully & Wonderfully

The role of mental health in God's Kingdom

SUICIDE

# Facts about Self-Inflicted Death

- It is an upward trend



### Tennessee Suicide Rates- 10 year

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>TN</b>	833	965	939	932	938	956	1017	945	1065	1110
<b>10-24</b>	86	103	117	111	91	97	116	118	131	133
<b>Knox</b>	67	63	71	76	72	77	57	66	67	72

# Facts about Self-Inflicted Death

- It is an upward trend
- 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in Tennessee
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> among Adolescents
- The suicide rate for the elderly (85+) is higher than any other age group
- Men are more likely to die of suicide
- Women are more likely to attempt suicide
- Suicide cuts across all demographic categories

# Facts about Self-Inflicted Death

- Surviving family members are at higher risk of dying by suicide
- Talking about suicide will NOT increase the risk of suicide

*Suicide is preventable*

# Clearing Up Misconceptions

- **Myth:** “People who complete suicide always leave notes.”

**Fact:** Most people don't leave notes.

- **Myth:** “People who die from suicide don't warn others.”

**Fact:** Out of 10 people who kill themselves, eight have given definite clues to their intentions. They leave numerous clues and warnings to others, although some of their clues may be nonverbal or difficult to detect.

# Clearing Up Misconceptions

- **Myth:** “People who talk about suicide are only trying to get attention.”

**Fact:** Over 70% who do threaten to carry out a suicide either make an attempt or complete the act. Few people die by suicide without first letting someone else know how they feel.

# Clearing Up Misconceptions

- **Myth:** “Once someone has already decided on suicide, nothing is going to stop them. Suicidal people clearly want to die.”

**Fact:** Most suicidal individuals don't want death; they just want the pain to stop.

# Clearing Up Misconceptions

- **Myth:** “After a person has attempted suicide, it is unlikely he/she will try again.”

**Fact:** People who have attempted suicide are very likely to try again. 80% of the people who die from suicide have made at least one previous attempt.

- **Myth:** “If someone survives a suicide attempt, they weren’t serious about ending their life.”

**Fact:** The attempt in and of itself is the most important factor, not the effectiveness of the method.

# Clearing Up Misconceptions

- **Myth:** “You shouldn’t mention suicide to someone who’s showing signs of severe depression. It will plant the idea in their minds, and they will act on it.”

**Fact:** Many depressed people have already considered suicide as an option. Discussing it openly helps the suicidal person sort through the problems and generally provides a sense of relief and understanding. It is one of the most helpful things you can do.

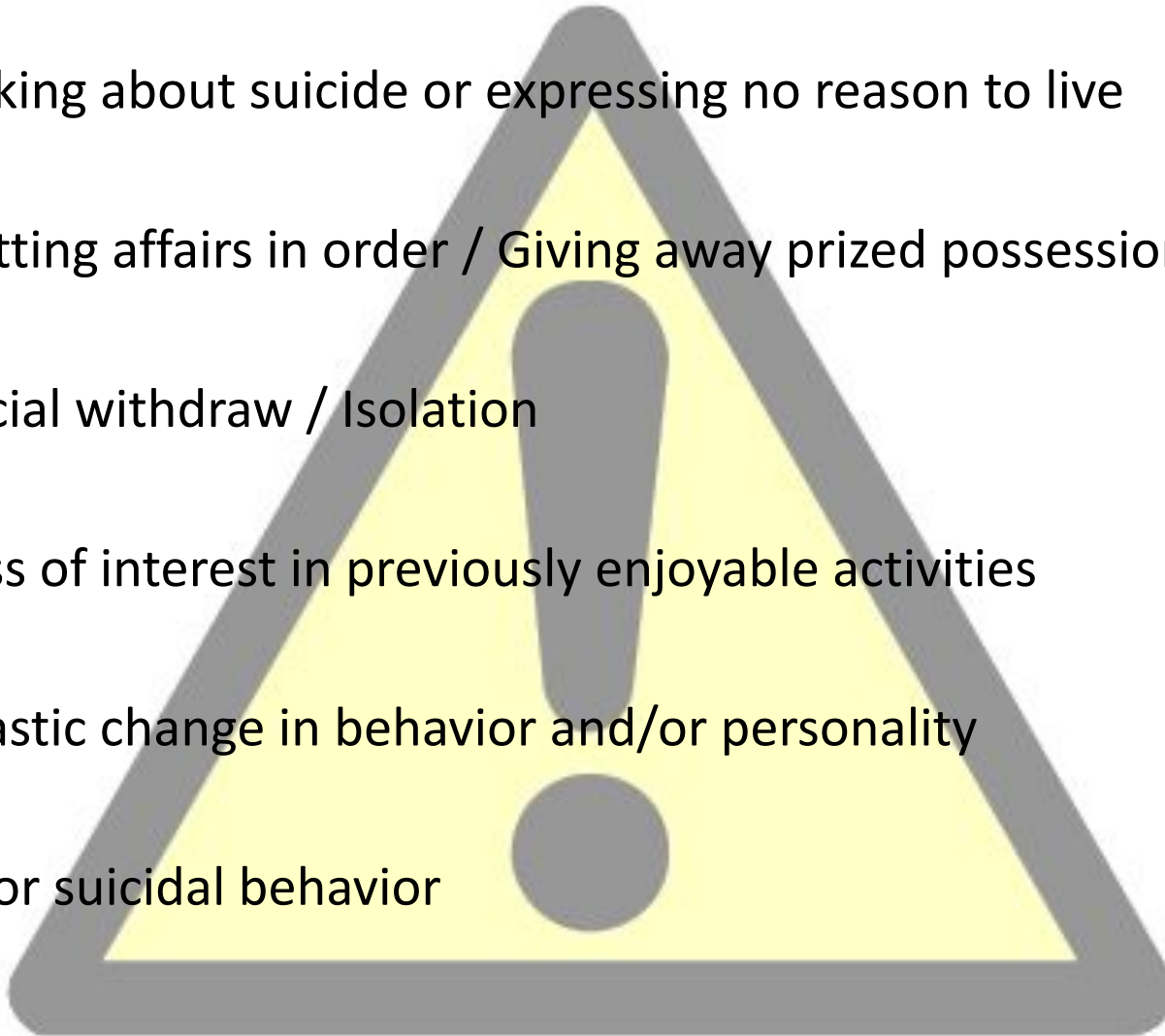
# Clearing Up Misconceptions

- **Myth:** “Once the emotional state improves, the risk of suicide is over.”

**Fact:** The highest rates of suicide occur within about three months of an apparent improvement in a severely depressed state. Therefore, an improvement in emotional state doesn't mean a lessened risk.

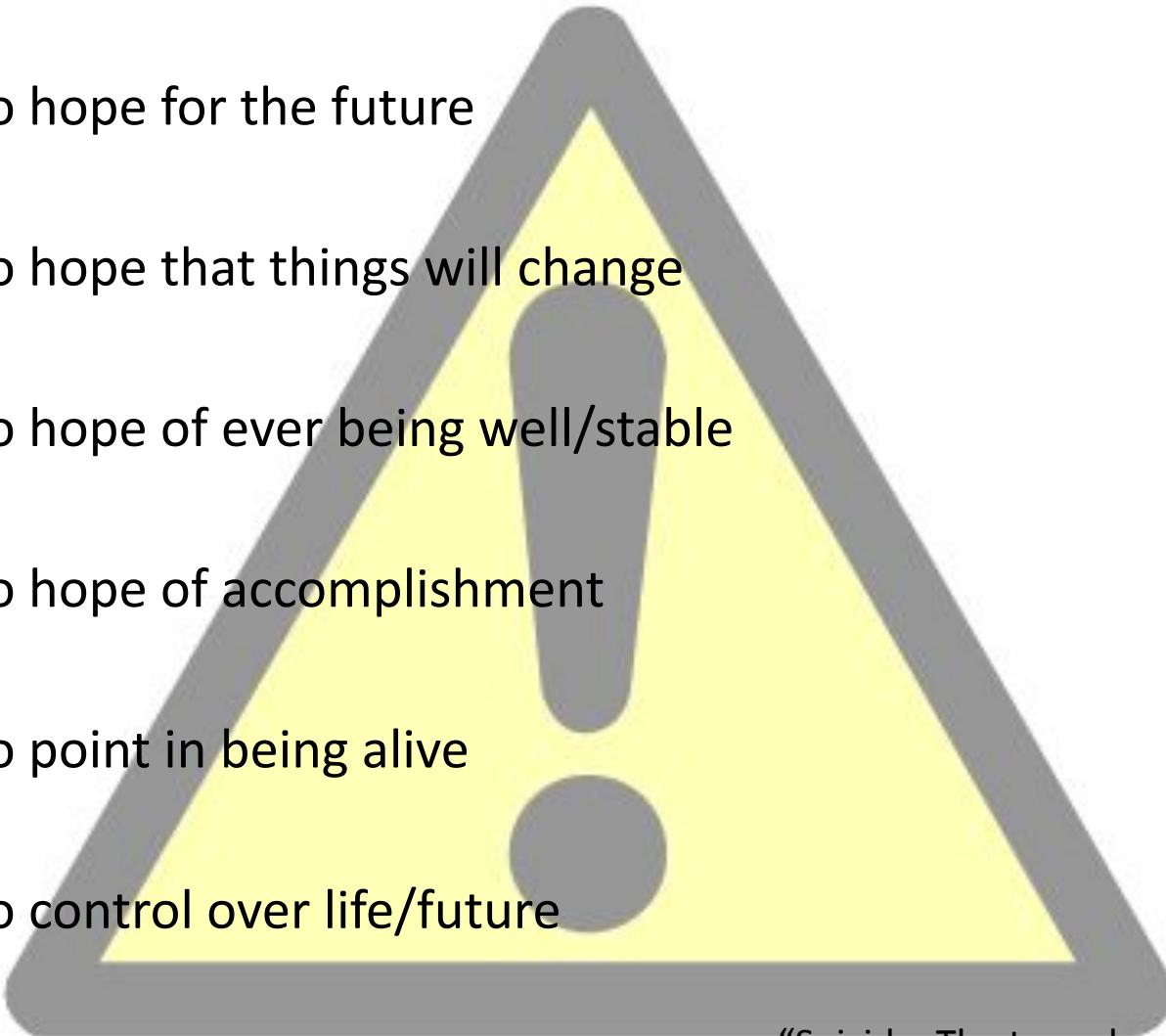
# Warning Signs

- Talking about suicide or expressing no reason to live
- Getting affairs in order / Giving away prized possessions
- Social withdraw / Isolation
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities
- Drastic change in behavior and/or personality
- Prior suicidal behavior



# Hopelessness & Despair

- No hope for the future
- No hope that things will change
- No hope of ever being well/stable
- No hope of accomplishment
- No point in being alive
- No control over life/future



“Suicide: The tragedy of Mood Instability”  
-Mary Ellen Copeland (1996)

# Responding to Suicidal Thought

- If you have concern, ASK

“I just want to check in with you.”

“I care about you and have noticed some changes in your behavior.”

“I feel concerned about you- are you thinking of killing yourself?”

# Responding to Suicidal Thought

- If you have concern, LISTEN

“I may not be able to understand what you’re going through but I’m here for you.”

“What can I do to help you the most right now?”

“How can I support you?”

“Can I go with you to talk to someone?”

# Responding to Suicidal Thought

- If you have concern, ACT

“Do you have a PLAN?”

“Do you have a METHOD and the MEANS?”

“Do you have a TIME FRAME?”

“Do you have INTENTION?”

# If Suicidal Behavior seems IMMINENT



**NEVER**

leave someone who is actively suicidal alone

# Responding to Suicidal Thought

- After the crisis is resolved

“Let’s make a safety plan.”

“Let’s schedule an appointment with your therapist or doctor.”

“Let’s remove potential means of suicide.”

“Let’s work together on healthy lifestyle changes.”

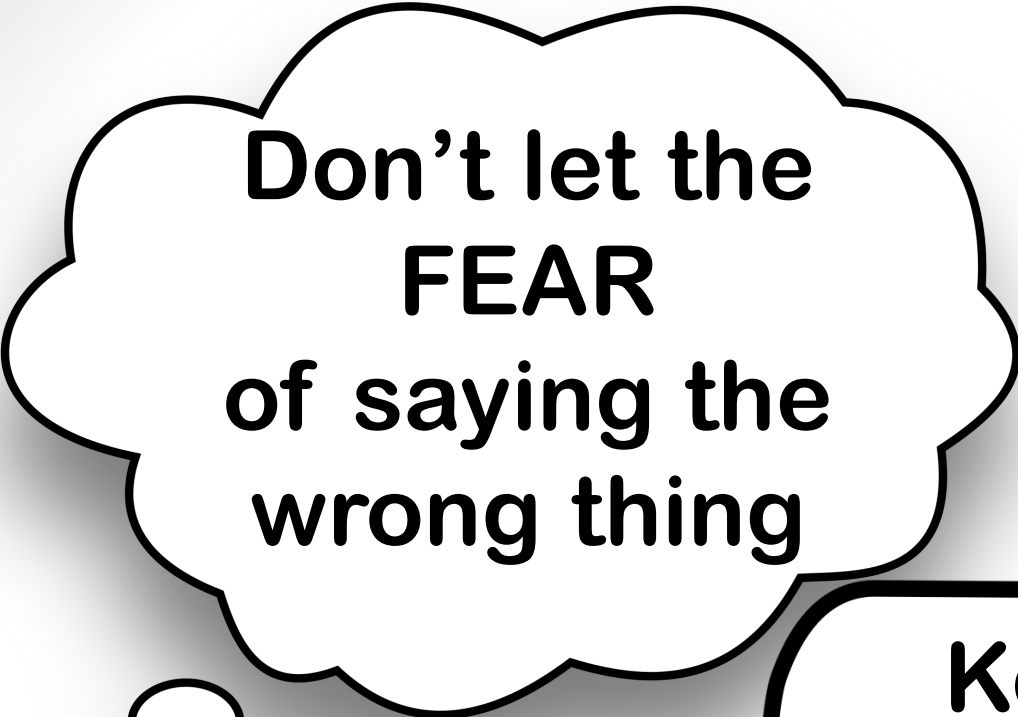
# When talking to someone who is suicidal

## Do

- Be yourself
- Listen more than you talk
- Take the person seriously
- Be sympathetic
- Offer hope

## Try not to

- Argue
- Assign judgment
- Promise confidentiality
- Offer ways to fix the problem
- Blame yourself



Don't let the  
**FEAR**  
of saying the  
wrong thing



Keep you  
from  
**REACHING  
OUT**

# Resources- National



# Resources- Local



Are you or a loved one experiencing a crisis?

*Call one of our crisis numbers below*

If you have a medical emergency, please call 911 or visit your local hospital emergency room.



Mobile Crisis Unit  
(All Ages)  
(865) 539-2409

Adult Crisis  
Stabilization Unit  
(865) 541-6958

Family Crisis Center  
(Domestic Violence)  
(865) 637-8000

Sexual Assault Center  
of East Tennessee  
(865) 522-7273

865-539-2409



Connect. Comfort.  
Reassure.

# Resources- Local

- **Suicide Anonymous**

3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00PM

Room 111, Cornerstone of Recovery

4726 Alcoa Highway Louisville, TN 37777

- **Suicide Grievers Support Group**

2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM

Paula J. Alexander, LCSW, CGC ([pj4031@tds.net](mailto:pj4031@tds.net))

# Resources- Mobile Apps

**A Friend Asks**  
**Jason Foundation**



**Operation**  
**Reach Out**



**MY 3**

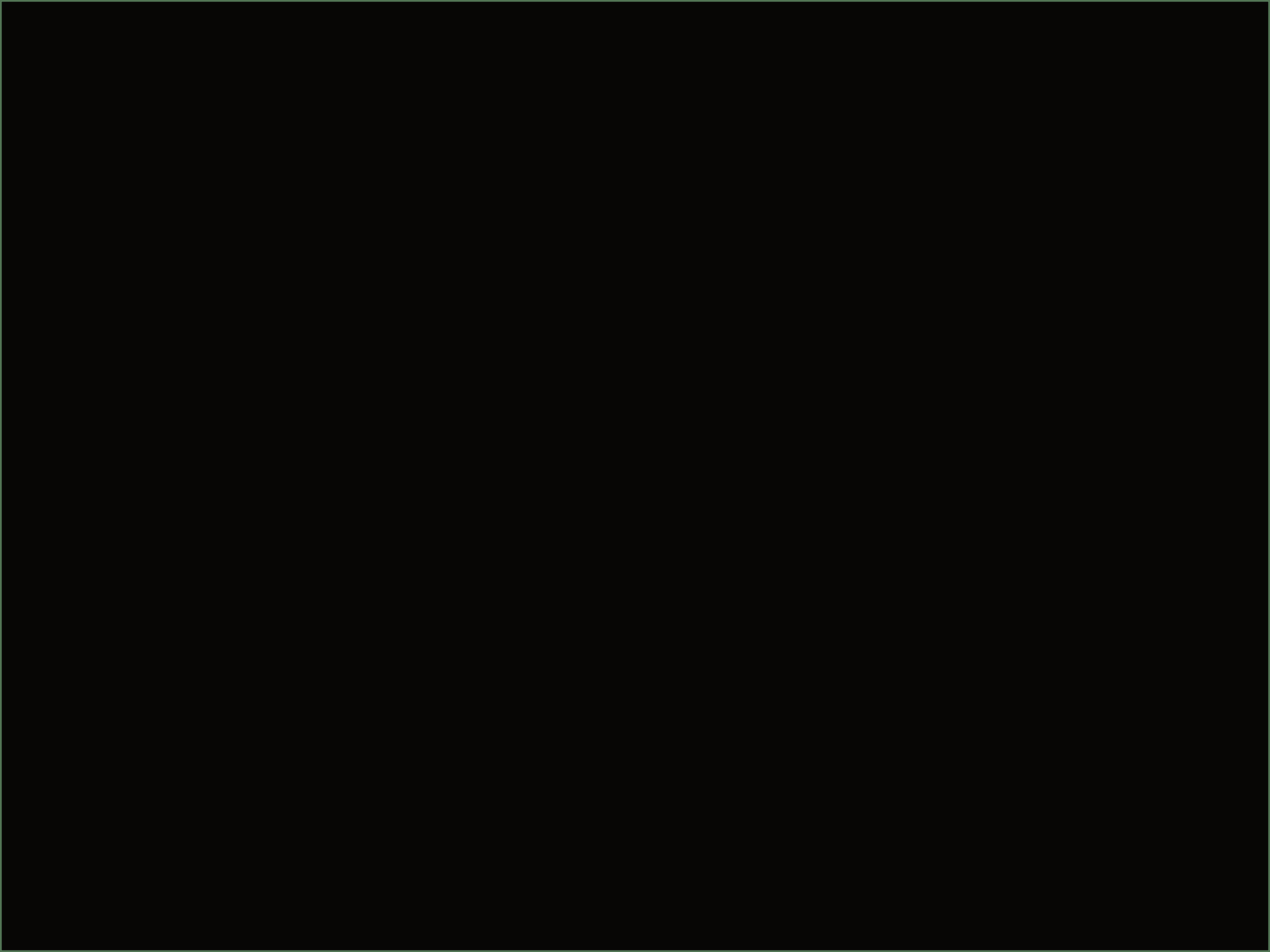


*"Saving Lives in Tennessee"*

[www.tspn.org](http://www.tspn.org)

# What Survivors want most. . .

- “Just keep loving me.”
- “I want to be treated with compassion and understanding.”
- “Recognize the depth and validity of my despair.”
- “Acknowledge what happened without dwelling on it.”
- “I want the opportunity to talk about my feelings without being lectured or told all the things I did wrong.”
- “Treat me like everyone else. Believe me, I already feel like a freak.”



hope

