

Resources for Suicide Prevention

Diego De Leo
Vita Poštuvan
(Editors)

Bridging Research
and Practice

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Resources for Suicide Prevention

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Edited by

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Foreword

Suicide is one of those existential topics that touches every one of us. As human beings, we all have something to say about it, because we have opinions about life and death. It is, therefore, challenging to study suicide in a scientific manner. It seems that the science around it is less exact than that of mathematics. Suicidologists need to be aware of and reflect on their cultural background, professional training, and many personal experiences that influence them and thus can also influence their scientific thinking.

Such reflecting is always easier with others around. Colleagues from the Slovene Centre for Suicide Research (established at our university) have invited established scientists in the field of suicidology to reflect on the TRIPLE i in Suicidology conferences, and in this book, on the past, present, and future knowledge that suicidology has acquired.

This volume, *Resources for Suicide Prevention: Bridging Research and Practice*, gathers the thoughts of distinguished researchers. The chapters focus on the topics of qualitative and quantitative research approaches, means to assess and implement suicide prevention programmes, and understanding those bereaved by suicide.

For many of the authors, knowing the late Prof. Andrej Marušič was an important personal experience. He initiated many Slovene and international projects that shaped public mental health programmes attempting to prevent suicide and promote mental health. Once he related a story about a patient with schizophrenia who could be cured of his hallucinations. As his psychiatrist, he told the patient that whenever the hallucinations occurred, he should use his mobile phone to “talk” to them. Andrej told me how the patient used this technique while he was on a bus in Ljubljana. When a hallucination “rang,” he took his mobile and said, “What do you want? My psychiatrist told me you don’t exist, so there is no point in you calling me, so please stop....”

Today, the work of the Slovene Centre for Suicide Research continues the ideas Andrej initiated. The centre plays an important role in the promotion of mental health and in prevention, postvention, and interventions related to suicide. Being at one of the newest universities in Slovenia, we encourage these activities and consider the continuation of them as an important public responsibility. We hope that this book will give further motivation for that.

Last but not least, I would like the readers to take the opportunity to reflect on their attitudes while reading the book. Perhaps this will stir some new ideas that can help us to better understand the phenomenon of suicide.

Dragan Marušič
Rector

University of Primorska, Slovenia

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Preface

Imagine that you are invited to consider innovative and intuitive ideas for preventing suicide. How would you respond?

Perhaps your ideas would go back into history, and you would search for the best practices and summarise all of the achievements that science has accomplished so far. Then you might collect all of the best current practices and see how new experiences are bridging the gaps – targeting youths and older persons, and creating large public health initiatives. Or perhaps you would attempt to understand the most vulnerable people or those bereaved by suicide. Maybe, you would just peer into the future and leave it to your intuition, imagination, and sense of innovation.

Resources for Suicide Prevention: Bridging Research and Practice is based on the TRIPLE i in Suicidology international conference (devoted to intuition, imagination, and innovation), which is organised annually by the Slovene Centre for Suicide Research (Andrej Marušič Institute, University of Primorska, Slovenia) in memory of the late Prof. Andrej Marušič, with the aim of promoting intuition, imagination, and innovation in the research and prevention of suicide and suicidal behaviour. The authors of this book's chapters presented their ideas during those conferences.

The first TRIPLE i in Suicidology conference was held in May 2009 around the time of Andrej Marusic's birthday. In recent years, the conference has connected many people in the field of suicide research and prevention. The conference has developed into a platform for productive discussion among distinguished experts, interacting with young and future suicidologists or other enthusiastic professionals in the field. TRIPLE i in Suicidology has become an opportunity to express and practice intuition, imagination, and innovative ideas.

The intention of this volume is to provide food for thought to lay people, practitioners, researchers, and all others that come in contact with the tragedy of suicide. Our aim is to stimulate new ideas and interventions that can help in the difficult fight against suicidal behaviours, a fight that requires the active participation of everyone.

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