



## Summary

VULNERABILITY brings together ALONE (moderate), FREE FALL (low), HOPELESS (moderate), TEASED (low), and SELF-CONCEPT (moderate). It represents an overall potential for isolation and vulnerability to considering suicide or violence to others. Overall vulnerability makes it more likely for the person to act out without regard to social pressures to conform, as they already perceive a high degree of negative emotion and punishment. As there is little hope for a better future, they consider more extreme action as they have little to lose.

It is difficult for them to connect to others, make friends, and they find little progress in their efforts to change. Loneliness and sadness are common experiences. This leads to an uncertainty about the future and difficulty focusing on daily tasks. Negative feelings about their looks make it hard to fit in, develop friendships, and leads to feeling like an outsider at times.

## Interventions

- Given their difficulty connecting with others and making friends, efforts should be made to help them connect to groups such as an athletic team, running club, book club, gym, martial arts, a club around a hobby interest, trivia night, religious study, or social justice group.
- As change creates a sense of uncertainty and fear about the future, it is important to support and praise early steps in the right direction and discuss ways to help them overcome obstacles.
- Identifying ways to strengthen existing resources and looking for additional supports to their change would help address the sadness and isolation they are experiencing.
- Offer encouragement to help them appreciate that it will not always be like this in their life and the future is full of opportunities to change and adjust their behaviors to be more successful.

- Negative Thoughts **HIGH**

## Summary

NEGATIVE THOUGHTS brings together IRRATIONAL (low), AGGRIEVED (high), CONSUMED (high), OBJECTIFIED (moderate), INCEL (low). It represents an overall potential for a pessimistic and negative view of others and who is to blame for their difficulties in life. These obsessional, clouded, and misguided ways of seeing others contribute to the motivation for targeted violence. As they are seen as increasingly distant from others but with successful progression in their grades, work performance and/or relationships, there are few remaining reasons to conform with societal norms.

Actual or perceived injustices frequently occupy their thoughts and conversations. Others are blamed and these resentments will not be easily overcome or forgiven. A singular thought becomes all encompassing, leading to an inability to be redirected or focused. This impacts their grades, work, and/or relationships as they rant about their ideas. A lack of empathy and consideration for others makes it difficult to maintain lasting friendships as well as work/school relationships.

## Interventions

- Given their tendency to assign blame quickly to others and become overwhelmed with intense feelings related to real or perceived injustices and mistreatment, encouraging them to talk calmly and without judgement or defensiveness about their thoughts may help them feel less combative and challenged. This could occur in counseling, group therapy, or supportive activities like sports, trivia night, book club, martial arts, religious or social justice organizations, or hobby clubs.
- A growing lack of empathy toward others and the escalation to a 'me vs. the world' philosophy should be countered with opportunities to share and be understood, as well as listening to others and understanding. They will likely be entrenched in this viewpoint and reluctant to consider change.
- Social isolation will likely escalate if they continue to rant and blame others for their problems. This may occur with women due to a lack of dating opportunities as well as with classmates, work colleagues, family, and friends. Help them explore how their current behavior is leading to unwanted outcomes in their life. This development of discrepancy between their behavior and its outcome is also taught through motivational interviewing, a therapeutic approach to working with stuck or difficult people.
- Grades, work, family, and friendships are suffering because of the way they are interacting with others. While difficult, a referral to therapy or conversations with a mentor, coach, religious leader, sponsor, or trusted person may help return them to a balanced perspective.

- Environmental Stressors **LOW**

## Summary

ENVIRONMENTAL brings together their experience with difficulties, loss, and current challenges in life. The loss of key supports, changes in employment or school status, financial, or legal difficulties, and chronic experiences of teasing and bullying each contribute to weakened resiliency and an inability to remain positive and hopeful about the future. While rarely causal to suicide or targeted violence, the combination of recent losses with growing stressors creates less resistance in a person's life when they are considering suicide or violence to others.

- Suicidality **HIGH**

## Summary

SUICIDAL brings together STATEMENT (low), EAT (low), SLEEP (low), TREATMENT (moderate), SELF-INJURY (low), SUBSTANCES (low), SELF-CONCEPT (moderate), ATTEMPTS (low), HOPELESS (moderate), IMPULSIVE (moderate), WEAPONS ACQUISITION (high) and VETERAN STATUS (no). Suicide is best understood as an idea to action process, where thoughts and ideas such as disappearing, feeling trapped, and wanting to die lead to suicide attempts, self-injury, skipping medication, and inpatient hospitalization. Additional changes to eating and sleep can further increase the risk of suicide as can previous attempts and self-injury. Substance use can dull emotions or escalate suicide risk due to an increase in impulsivity, particularly if they have access to weapons. Suicidality and hopelessness are some of the highest risk factors for targeted violence as the person has lost all social regulation for their behavior and any hope of a positive outcome for their future.

While not currently in care, they may be considering therapy as an option, as it may have helped previously. They have not been in the hospital before for mental health treatment. There is a negative view of self-related to looks, an outsider status, and/or a lack of friends. This leads them to talk and post online more about sadness. Negative self-concept increases the overall risk of suicide. While loneliness and sadness are common experiences, they do increase the risk of suicidal thoughts. They may also impact their ability to make friends and increase supports and protective factors. Impulsive behavior occurs regularly with them engaging in poorly planned, reactive, and emotional outbursts. There is a chronic nature to the behavior, and they are unsuccessful at attempts to change. Impulsive action and poorly thought-out behavior are risk factors for a completed suicide. Suicide risk is increased with access to firearms. They have access to multiple weapons in their home.

## Interventions

- They should be encouraged to explore therapy as an option to help address the difficulties they are experiencing. This could occur in the school through the guidance office or in the workplace through an Employee Assistance Programs (EAP). Talking with a trusted adult could be another way to address this concern if they are reluctant to engage in therapeutic support.
- There is a sense of isolation and negative self-concept and they may experience teasing and a lack of friends. While they may be resistant to positive comments and praise, there should be an encouragement of hope that things will improve. A referral to the school guidance office, outpatient therapy, or talking with a trusted adult if they are reluctant to engage in therapeutic support.
- Hopelessness in the form of loneliness and sadness can be a contributing factor to more extreme action. Helping them talk about what increases these feelings, identifying triggers that make their feelings worse and what helps them feel more connected and optimistic about a positive future is recommended. This can be accomplished through a conversation with a supportive adult, school, or work staff.
- Impulsive behaviors often occur when they are triggered by an outside event or when they experience frustration or anger they cannot control. Talk with them about alternative strategies when they encounter something they cannot change or that annoys them. Reducing impulsive action is best achieved through identifying the triggering event, adjusting their belief about what they are experiencing, and selecting an alternative behavior. This can be accomplished through talking with a trusted adult, school counselor, work supervisor, colleague, human resources, or the EAP.
- Given the direct access to firearms in the home, efforts should be immediately taken through means restriction. When weapons access is paired with other suicidal risk factors, such as previous attempts, impulsivity, hopelessness, and self-injury, the risk of suicide or other extreme action rises considerably. If other suicide risk factors are present, take immediate steps to limit or remove weapons from the home, encourage parents to change the safe combination, or set up additional challenges to access.

- Attack Preparation

**HIGH**

## Summary

ATTACK PREPARATION brings together WEAPONS INTEREST (low), RESEARCH (moderate), PLANNING (moderate), AGGRIEVED (high), ENCOURAGERS (low), COSTUMING (low) and VETERAN STATUS (no). A target is being considered and they have begun researching, planning, and considering different weapons to be used in the attack. The injustices and grievances they have endured drive them forward with the plan and they are encouraged by others (often in online groups) to escalate the attack plan. The preparation often offers some emotional release and feeling of calm as they struggle with isolation, frustration, and hopelessness about life.

There is a curiosity about the tactics, weapons, and planning of past mass shooters. They collect and organize materials for further study. There is planning and research on a target with a focus on repaying injustices and/or sending a larger message to others. While threats may be detailed, they haven't been shared to a wide group of people and they lack a sense of immediacy or direct ties to real life. Frequent discussions occur about actual/perceived injustices and how others are to blame for the problems they are currently experienced. These are carried as intense resentments and slights.

## Interventions

- As they become increasingly interested in past attacks and studying/collecting material, there should be an exploration of how these research behaviors may connect to a desire to conduct an attack. This becomes increasingly important to explore as other preparation behaviors such as weapons interest, planning, aggrieved, encouragers, or costuming occur. Consider an open-source intelligence review to determine if there are concerning social media posts. Conversations should occur with school authorities, parents, work supervisors and/or human resources. A coordinated response with the school, college, or workplace BIT/CARE and/or threat team would be advised.
- They are looking more deeply into past attacks, studying/collecting material, and planning potential revenge for their own attack. Consideration should be taken to determine if this is related to their attack planning. With increased risk related to research, weapons interest, aggrieved, encouragers, or costuming, the overall risk is increased. Consider an open-source intelligence review to determine if there are concerning social media posts. Conversations should occur with school

authorities, parents, work supervisors, and/or human resources. A coordinated response with the school, college, or workplace BIT/CARE and/or threat team would be advised.

- Given the increased blame on others, further exploration on the presence of other preparation behaviors such as research, weapons interest, planning, encouragers, or costuming should be considered. The presence of injustice or grievance collecting is a concern the same way a flame is a concern. When paired with fuel, such as the other preparation behaviors, the risk escalates quickly. Conversations should occur with school authorities, parents, work supervisors, and/or human resources. Consider an open-source intelligence review to determine if there are concerning social media posts. A coordinated response with the school, college, or workplace BIT/CARE and/or threat team would be advised.

## - Attack Approach HIGH

### Summary

ATTACK APPROACH brings together WEAPONS ACQUISITION (high), CATALYST (moderate), CHECKLIST (low), PENETRATION (low), APPROACH (low), SADIST (low), VENGEANCE (moderate) and VETERAN STATUS (no). Approach behaviors are those that occur prior to an attack and can be seen as the physical acting out of preparations. Weapons are selected and acquired for the attack, countermeasures for security of the target are devised and a checklist for preparation is created. Events have occurred in their life that have increased stress, feelings of hopelessness.

Various weapons have been purchased along with optics, tactical gear, ammunition, and carrying equipment. There is an excitement to acquiring weapons that accompanies a feeling of power and accomplishment. Upsetting changes and loss, such as HR actions, breakups, financial stress, and academic failures, have the potential to escalate plans of violence. There is a desire to set things right based on real or perceived injustices and grievances that have overwhelmed them in the past.

### Interventions

- Access to lethal means increases the risk of an attacker's ability to cause more casualties. Conversations about the motivation for acquiring firearms, optics, and tactical gear would be useful to clarify the reasons for the purchases. Consider an open-source intelligence review to determine if there are concerning social media posts. A coordinated response with the school, college, or workplace BIT/CARE and/or threat team would be advised.
- Upsetting changes and multiple losses have the potential to further destabilize someone on the pathway to violence. Efforts should be made to offer additional supports and accommodations given the recent losses and challenges faced in school, work, home, and with friends. Talking with a trusted adult, school counselor, work supervisor, human resources, or EAP counselor is another way to help. A coordinated response with the school, college, or workplace BIT/CARE and/or threat team would be advised.
- With intensifying thoughts about real or perceived injustices, there is an increased justification for violent action to the target of their frustrations. Talking with them about the intensity of these feelings and how they may serve as a motivation for acting out toward the target of their frustrations will help further assess the risk and develop alternative strategies. Encourage them to talk to a trusted adult, school counselor, work supervisor, human resources, or EAP counselor to help lessen the intensity of their frustrations.

## - Threat EXTREME

### Summary

THREAT brings together DIRECT (moderate), ORGANIZATION (low), LETHALITY (extreme), TIME (low), LEAKAGE (moderate), LOCATION (low), TONE (moderate), RHETORIC (low), PLANNING (moderate), APPROACH (low), BLAZE (moderate), VETERAN STATUS (no), and SUICIDE. Threat indicates the overall severity of a threat that has been made. Someone has the potential to be violent even without making a threat, however threats that are made provide insight into the planning prior to a potential attack. Threat gathers information together about the time and location of an attack, the lethality or dangerousness of the threat, and if planning or approach has begun. Information about the transient or substantive nature of the threat is gathered through the tone and rhetoric of the threat.

There has been a vague threat without mention of a target, time, or location for the attack. Transient threats carry with them a decreased likelihood of being carried out. There is access to multiple firearms and the knowledge of tactics and logistics that increases the overall lethality of a potential attack. The threatener has practiced to increase lethality. There have been limited and/or vague comments about the threatener's frustrations, sadness, and/or injustices experienced. In the comment/threat there is no specific time, place, target, or method mentioned for an attack. The threat is vague but includes an angry and frustrated quality. The threat is designed to intimidate and includes themes of sadness, injustice, and pain expressed in the characteristics of the threat. There is planning and research on a target with a focus on repaying injustices and/or sending a larger message to others. While the threats may be detailed, they haven't been shared to a wide group of people and the threats lack a sense of immediacy or direct ties to real life. There is a growing frustration and fear their life is headed in a negative trajectory and things won't change. There are passing thoughts of suicide or martyrdom as a solution. Given the presence of significant suicidal thoughts, any threats should be seen at a heightened level of concern given their chronic pain, hopelessness, and despair. They likely feel they have little to lose and if they are willing to take their own life, taking others with them to send a message or give meaning to their death should be considered.

### Interventions

- The threat is vague in nature. It is unlikely the threat will be carried out but asking some clarifying or follow up questions to determine if the threat is transient or substantive would be recommended. Encourage them to talk to a trusted adult, school

counselor, work supervisor, human resources, or EAP counselor to help better understand the nature of the threat. These concerns are further heightened when other threatening behaviors such as organization, lethal, time, leakage, location, tone, rhetoric, planning, approach, blaze, veteran, or suicide are present.

- They have access to multiple firearms and the tactical and logistical ability to carry out an attack. They have practiced their attack plan to increase potential lethality, which is a critical, late-stage behavior that should immediately involve conversations with law enforcement, school authorities, parents, work supervisors, and human resources. The risk of an attack is further heightened when other threatening behaviors such as direct, time, leakage, location, tone, rhetoric, planning, approach, blaze, veteran, or suicide are present. An open-source intelligence review should be conducted to determine if there are concerning social media posts. In addition, law enforcement should conduct a local systems check (computer automated dispatch/CAD), criminal history, and wants/warrants search. A coordinated response with the school, college, or workplace BIT/CARE, and/or threat team would be advised.
- As they become increasingly interested in past attacks, studying/collecting material and planning potential revenge for their own attack, there should be an exploration of how these research and planning behaviors may connect to a desire to conduct an attack. This becomes increasingly important to explore if other threatening behaviors such as direct, lethal, time location, tone, rhetoric, approach, blaze, veteran, or suicide are present. Consider an open-source intelligence review to determine if there are concerning social media posts. Conversations should occur with school authorities, parents, work supervisors and/or human resources A coordinated response with the school, college, or workplace BIT/CARE and/or threat team would be advised.
- There is a potential here for an early intervention, as they allow their frustrations to push toward fantasies of suicide or martyrdom. The intervention should involve talking with a trusted adult, school counselor, work supervisor, human resources, or EAP counselor to help explore alternative ways to manage their frustration with life and offer hope for a better future. This is made more difficult if there are other threatening behaviors present, such as direct, lethal, time location, tone, rhetoric, planning, approach, veteran, or suicide. A coordinated response with the school, college, or workplace BIT/CARE and/or threat team would be advised.

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