

Supplemental Interview Questions

Opening and consent

- To start, in your own words, what brought us together today?
- Before we talk details, what would help you feel comfortable in this conversation?
- What do you understand about the purpose of this interview and how the information will be used?
- What would you like me to know about you as a person before we talk about recent events?

Presenting situation and intent

- Tell me about the message or situation that led others to be concerned. What did you hope would happen when you sent or said that?
- What problem were you trying to solve, and what outcome were you aiming for?
- What do you think the other person or people experienced when they received your message?
- If you could redo that moment, what would you keep the same and what would you change?

Audience, distribution, and leakage

- Who has seen or received your messages or documents so far? How did you decide whom to include?
- Did you expect the message to be shared beyond that person? If so, with whom and why?
- Have you talked with anyone else about your plans or feelings before sending the message?
- Is there anything you chose not to send or say? What held you back?

Boundaries, directives, and impact

- What is your understanding of the current boundaries or directives in place (for example, no-contact or safety orders)? How do you plan to follow them?
- How do you think your actions affected the other person's sense of safety or comfort?
- If the other person asked for no further contact, how do you plan to respect that?
- What would make it easier for you to keep clear boundaries going forward?

Written artifacts and digital behavior

- Walk me through how your document or post came together. When did you start, and what guided your writing?
- Why did you choose that title, imagery, or language? What do those choices mean to you?
- If a file was password-protected or formatted in a particular way, what was your reason for doing that? How did you choose the password?
- Did you use any tools to help draft or polish the writing (for example, writing assistants or code)? If yes, which parts were most assisted?
- Where else does this material live online or in print? Who controls those copies?

Pathway behaviors (research, planning, acquisition, reconnaissance, legacy, last-resort)

- Since these events started, what have you researched related to the person, place, or topic? What sources did you use?
- Have you made any plans about when, where, or how to approach anyone involved? What would that look like in practice?
- Have you obtained, practiced with, or handled any tools or items that could be used to harm yourself or others? If yes, what, when, and where are they now?
- Have you visited or tested any locations to see how people move, where doors are, or how security works?
- Have you created anything you wanted to be remembered by (for example, a statement, video, or letter) in case things escalated?
- Have you found yourself thinking "there are no options left" or "this is the only way"? When do thoughts like that show up?

Access to means and capability

- What items do you routinely carry or have access to that could be used as weapons? How are they stored?
- Do you have training or experience with tools, tactics, or systems that could be relevant here?
- If someone handed you a difficult problem right now, how confident do you feel in your ability to handle it without scaring or hurting anyone?

Grievance, motives, and meaning

- What feels unfair or unresolved to you in this situation? How long has that felt true?
- When you imagine the person or institution you are upset with, what story do you tell yourself about them? What story do you think they tell themselves about you?
- If this situation ended in a way that felt fair to you, what would that look like?

Identity, ideology, and language choices

- Who or what do you identify with most strongly right now (for example, writer, scientist, advocate, survivor)? How does that shape your decisions?
- Are there communities, media, or online spaces that reinforce the way you see this situation? Which ones?

Emotional state and negative cognitions

- When you think about the other person or this situation, what feelings come up first? Where do you feel them in your body?
- What thoughts show up about blame, justice, or payback? What helps those thoughts pass?
- What has helped you calm down or step back when you felt overwhelmed?

Suicidality and self-harm (ask for everyone's safety)

- In the past month, have you had thoughts about not wanting to be alive or about hurting yourself?
- Have you ever done anything to prepare for harming yourself? What stopped you?
- When things get darkest, who or what helps you hold on?

Substances, sleep, and coping

- How have you been sleeping and eating lately? Any big shifts in energy or focus?
- What role, if any, do alcohol or other substances play when you are writing or deciding what to do?
- What coping strategies have worked for you when stress spikes? Which ones have backfired?

Supports and protective factors

- Who are your people right now? Who are the family, friends, and mentors who give you honest feedback and support?
- What responsibilities or goals would you never want to risk losing?
- If we offered help, counseling, academic structure, or mentorship, what would you actually use?

Target selection, proximity, and approach risk

- Why this person or place in particular? If that channel closed, would your focus shift to someone else?
- How close have you come, physically or digitally, to the person or place recently? What happened?
- What would keep you from showing up unannounced or reaching out again?

Peer influencers and echo chambers

- Who do you talk to when you are most upset about this? What advice do they give you?
- Is there anyone encouraging you to take risks, escalate, or ignore boundaries? How do you respond to them?
- Is there anyone you trust who consistently helps you slow down and think things through?

Understanding, accountability, and willingness to change

- What parts of your behavior make sense to you, and what parts do you now see as concerning?
- If the other person says "no contact," what commitments are you willing to put in writing to honor that?
- What would success look like in the next thirty to sixty days to show you are moving in a safer direction?

Safety planning and next steps

- What are the top three things you can do this week to lower risk for everyone involved?
- What would help you follow through? Clear rules, check-ins, therapy, or academic structure?
- If you notice your thoughts or urges ramping up, who will you contact first, and what is your plan for the next hour?

Closing

- What did I not ask that feels important for me to understand?
- What concerns do you have about how this will be handled, and how can we address them fairly?
- Are you willing to work with us on a plan that protects everyone's safety while helping you move forward?