

# Suicide Nomenclature

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# A Brief History of the Development of a Nomenclature and Classification System

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# The Problem...

- Field of suicidology challenged by lack of conceptual clarity about suicidal behaviors and corresponding lack of well-defined terminology
  - In both *research* and *clinical* descriptions of suicidal acts
- Variability of terms referring to same behaviors (e.g., threat, gesture). Often pejorative and based on incorrect notions about seriousness and lethality of methods (e.g., manipulative, non-serious, etc).



# Current Terminology

## Research Implications of the Problem

### Example 1.

#### ABSTRACT

**Background.** Psychiatric emergency room (ER) patients are thought to be at increased risk of suicide. The prevalence and characteristics of suicidal behavior in a recent sample of patients who came to the ER for psychiatric evaluation were examined.

**Methods.** Charts of 311 consecutive psychiatric ER patients were reviewed. Suicidal behavior was considered present if current suicidal ideation or attempts within 24 hours of or during the emergency evaluation were noted in the chart.

**Results.** Suicidal behavior was present in 38% of the psychiatric ER patients. Younger age, white race, affective disorders in female patients, and substance abuse disorders in male patients were features of the suicidal group. Sex of the patient was not associated with suicidal behavior.

**Conclusions.** Suicidal behavior is prevalent in the psychiatric ER. Effective suicide prevention in this setting will hinge on finding more specific risk factors.

(Dhossche, 2000)



# Current Terminology

## Research Implications of the Problem

### Example 2.

#### Introduction

Suicide prevention has been at the forefront of mental health strategy for some years [1,2]. Effective management of deliberate self-harm (DSH) patients must be an important element in any suicide prevention policy [3]. This is because of the significant risk of completed suicide following deliberate self-poisoning or self-injury [4–7] and the fact that approximately half of all suicides in the United Kingdom have a history of DSH [8,9].

(Hickey, Hawton, Fagg, & Weitzel, 2001)

# Consequences...

- Makes interpreting the meaning of suicidal occurrences more difficult and hampers precise communication on individual or population basis
  - Occurrences that should be classified as suicidal may be missed
  - Occurrences may be inappropriately classified as suicidal



# The Need for Consistent Definitions & Data Elements

“Research on suicide is plagued by many methodological problems... Definitions lack uniformity ... reporting of suicide is inaccurate...”

*(Reducing Suicide: A National Imperative, Institute of Medicine, 2002)*



# Synonyms for Suicide

- Committed Suicide
- Completed Suicide
- Failed Attempt
- Fatal Repeater
- Fatal Suicide
- Fatal Suicide Attempt
- Hastened Death
- Intentional Self-Murder
- Intentional Suicide
- Lethal Suicide Attempt
- Rational Suicide
- Self-Inflicted Death
- Self-Murder
- Self-Slaughter
- Suicide Victim
- Successful Attempt
- Successful Suicide
- Unintentional Suicide





# Synonyms for Suicide Attempt

- Aborted Suicide Attempt
- Attempted Suicide
- Cry for Help
- Death Rehearsals
- Failed Attempts
- Failed Completion
- Failed Suicide
- Near Lethal Self-Harm
- Near Miss Attempt
- Non-Lethal Self-Injurious Act
- Non-Suicidal Self-injury
- Parasuicide
- Risk-Taking Behavior
- Self-Assaultive Behavior
- Self-Destructive Behavior
- Self-Inflicted Behavior
- Self-Injurious Behavior
- Suicidal Episode
- Suicidal Manipulation
- Suicidal Rehearsal

# “Unacceptable Terms”

- Attempted Suicide
- Completed Suicide
- Committed Suicide
- Failed Attempt
- Failed Completion
- Fatal Suicide Attempt
- Nonfatal Suicide Attempt
- Nonfatal Suicide
- Suicide Victim
- Suicide Gesture
- Manipulative Act



# What is a Nomenclature?

## **Nomenclature (def.):**

- a set of commonly understood
- widely acceptable
- comprehensive
- terms that define the basic clinical phenomena (of suicide and suicide-related behaviors)
- based on a logical set of necessary component elements that can be easily applied



Silverman (2006)

# What is the Purpose of a Nomenclature?

- enhance clarity of communication
- have applicability across clinical settings
- be theory neutral
- be culturally neutral
- use mutually exclusive terms that encompass the spectrum of thoughts and actions



Peter Brueghel the Elder, 1563

# Beck, et al., Classification (1974)



Table 1  
Classification of Suicidal Behaviors

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- I. Completed suicide (CS)
    - A. Certainty of rater (1-100%)
    - B. Lethality (medical danger to life)  
(zero, low, medium, high)
    - C. Intent (to die)  
(zero, low, medium, high)
    - D. Mitigating circumstances (confusion, intoxication, etc.)  
(zero, low, medium, high)
    - E. Method (not an ordinal scale)
  - II. Suicide attempt (SA)
    - A. Certainty (1-100%)
    - B. Lethality (medical danger to life)
    - C. Intent (to die)  
(zero, low, medium, high)
    - D. Mitigating circumstances  
(zero, low, medium, high)
    - E. Method (not an ordinal scale)
  - III. Suicidal ideas (SI)
    - A. Certainty (1-100%)
    - B. Lethality (medical danger to life)  
(undetermined, low, medium, high; refers to consequences, if life-threatening plan were to be carried out)
    - C. Intent (to die)  
(zero, low, medium, high)
    - D. Mitigating circumstances  
(zero, low, medium, high)
    - E. Method  
(multiple methods may be listed. In some cases the method may be unknown. Not an ordinal scale)
- 

Source. Beck, A. T., Resnik, H. L. P., & Lettieri, D. J. (Eds.). (1974). *The prediction of suicide*. Bowie, MD: Charles Press Publishers (p. 41).

# Beyond the Tower of Babel: A Nomenclature for Suicidology

Patrick W. O'Carroll, MD, MPH, Alan L. Berman, PhD,  
Ronald W. Maris, PhD, Eve K. Moscicki, ScD, MPH,  
Bryan L. Tanney, MD, and Morton M. Silverman, MD

Suicidology finds itself confused and stagnated for lack of a standard nomenclature. This paper proposes a nomenclature for suicide-related behavior in the hope of improving the clarity and precision of communications, advancing suicidological research and knowledge, and improving the efficacy of clinical interventions.

# O'Carroll, et al. Nomenclature (1996)

Terms for suicide-related behaviors		Intent to die from suicide <sup>1</sup>	Instrumental thinking	Outcome			
				No injury	Nonfatal injury	Death	
S U I C I D E - R E L A T E D B E H A V I O R	I N S T R U M E N T A L B E H A V I O R	Instrumental suicide-related behavior					
		-with injuries	No	Yes		✓	
		-without injuries	No	Yes	✓		
		-with fatal outcome <sup>5</sup>	No	Yes			✓
	S U I C I D A L A C T S	Suicide attempt					
		-with injuries	Yes	+/-		✓	
		-without injuries	Yes	+/-	✓		
		Completed suicide	Yes	+/-			✓

<sup>1</sup>Conscious intent to ends one's life through the suicidal behavior.

<sup>5</sup>Note that a fatal outcome of instrumental behavior is properly considered accidental death, since by definition there is no intent to die from suicide.

# **Rebuilding the Tower of Babel: A Revised Nomenclature for the Study of Suicide and Suicidal Behaviors**

## **Part I: Background, Rationale, and Methodology Part II: Suicide-Related Ideations, Communications and Behaviors**

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Nels D. Sanddal, M.S.

Patrick O'Carroll, M.D., M.P.H.

Thomas E. Joiner, Jr., Ph.D.

SLTB (2007), 37(3), 248-277





Suicide-Related **IDEATIONS**

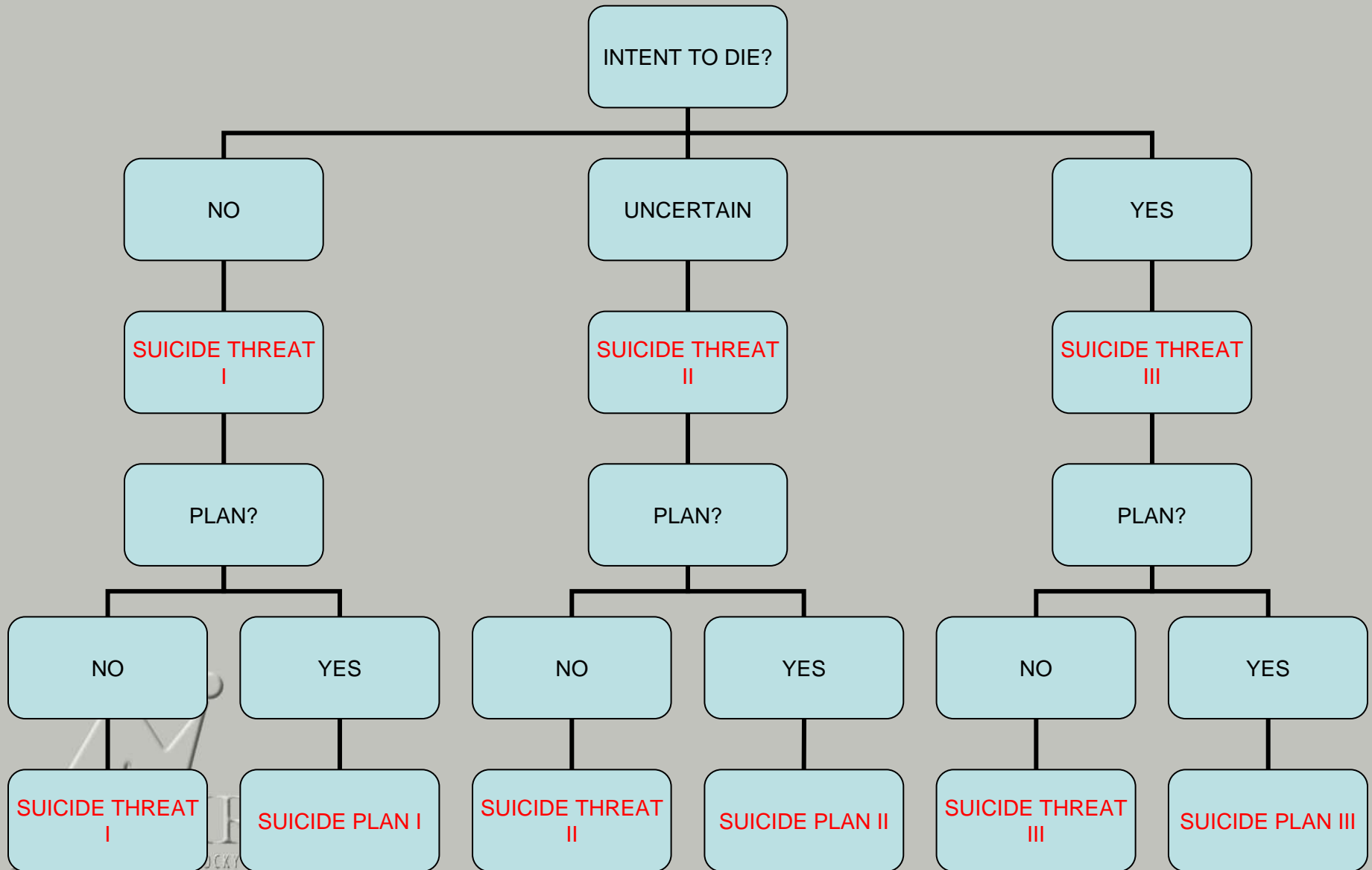
Suicide-Related **COMMUNICATIONS**

Suicide-Related **BEHAVIORS**

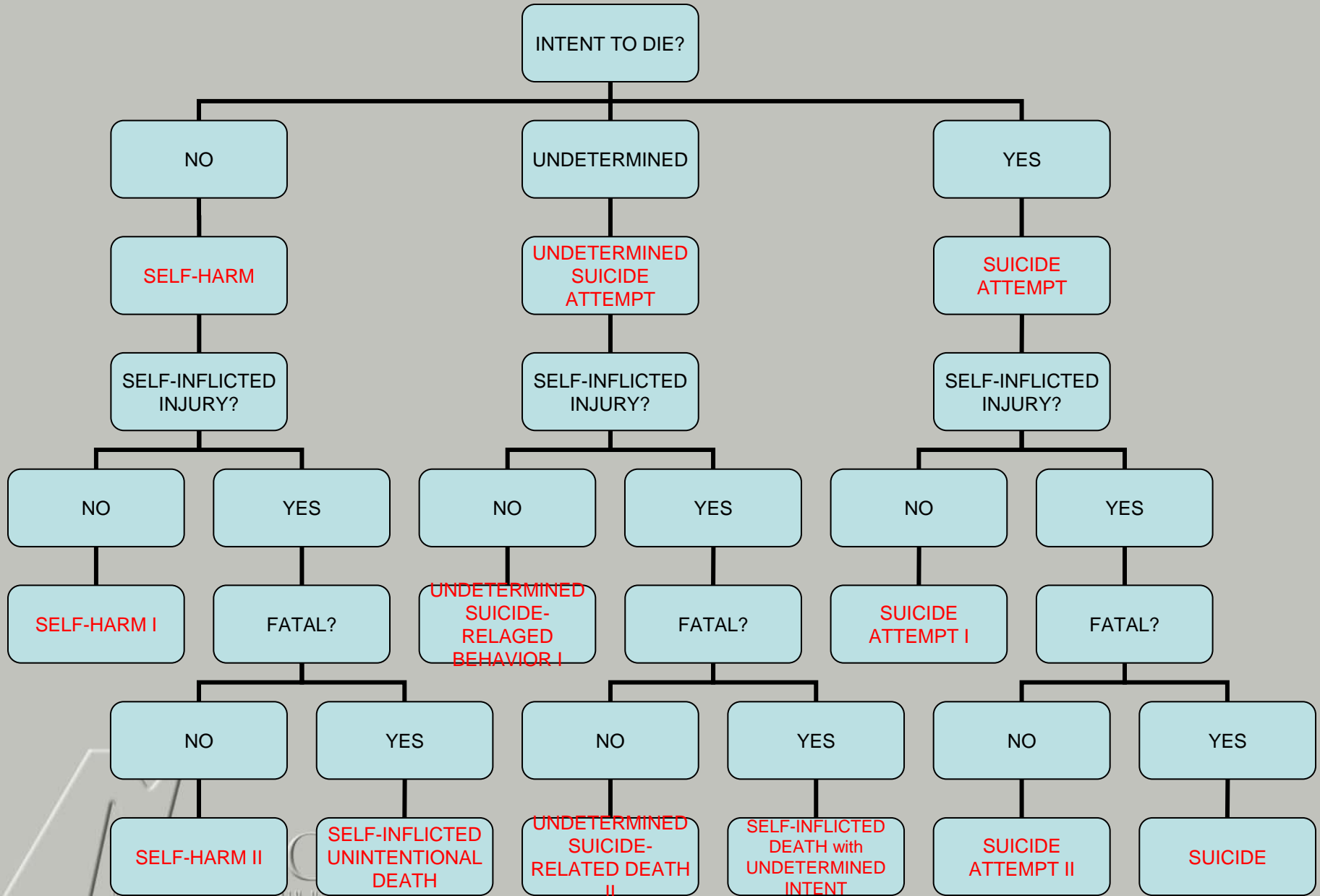


# Suicide-Related Communications

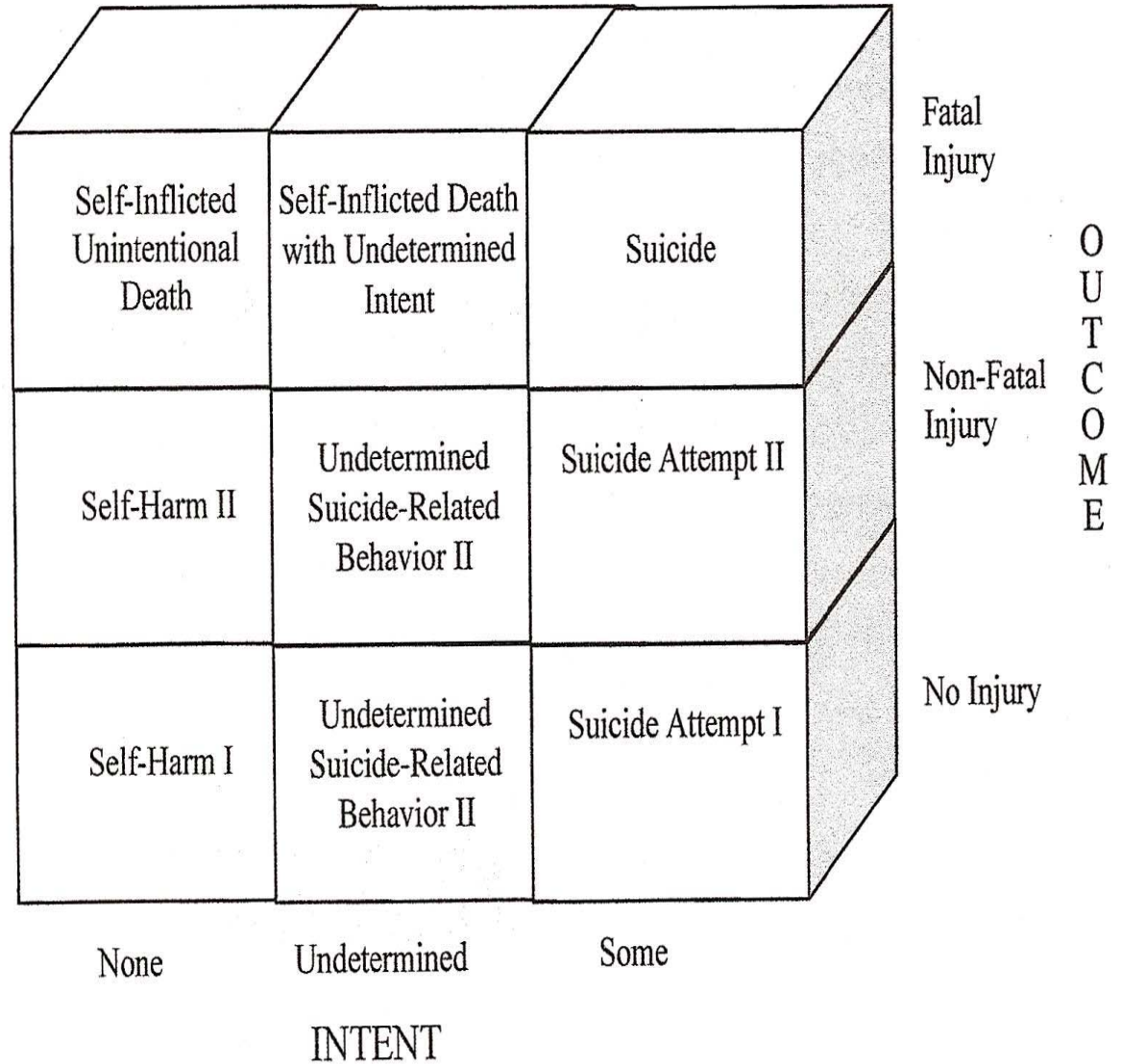
(Silverman, et al., 2007)



# Suicide-Related Behaviors



# Suicide-Related Behaviors



# Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Development of standard definitions  
and recommended data elements for  
self-directed violence (SDV)  
surveillance

Alex E. Crosby, M.D.



# Self-Directed Violence Classification System

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## Self-Directed Violence Classification System\*

Type	Sub-Type	Definition	Modifiers	Terms
Thoughts	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Ideation	<p>Self-reported thoughts regarding a person's desire to engage in self-inflicted potentially injurious behavior. <i>There is no evidence of intent to die.</i></p> <p>For example, persons engage in Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Ideation in order to attain some other end (e.g., to seek help, regulate negative mood, punish others, to receive attention).</p>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Ideation</li> </ul>
	Suicidal Ideation	<p>Self-reported thoughts of engaging in suicide-related behavior.</p> <p>For example, intrusive thoughts of suicide without the wish to die would be classified as Suicidal Ideation, Without Intent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intent</li> <li>-Without</li> <li>-Undetermined</li> <li>-With</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Suicidal Ideation, Without Intent</li> <li>•Suicidal Ideation, With Undetermined Intent</li> <li>•Suicidal Ideation, With Intent</li> </ul>
Behaviors	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence	<p>A self-inflicted potentially harmful or preparatory behavior with <b>NO</b> intent, such as to affect external circumstances or affect internal state.</p> <p>For example, persons engage in Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence in order to attain some other end (e.g., to seek help, regulate negative mood, punish others, to receive attention).</p>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury</li> <li>-Without</li> <li>-With</li> <li>-Fatal</li> <li>• Interrupted by Self or Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury</li> <li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li> <li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury</li> <li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li> <li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Fatal</li> </ul>
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	Suicidal Self-Directed Violence	<p>A potentially harmful or preparatory behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior.</p> <p>For example, hoarding medication for the purpose of overdosing would be classified as Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory.</p>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory</li> </ul>
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# Self-Directed Violence Classification System\*

Type
Thoughts
Behaviors

# Classification Guideline 1



When both Thoughts and Behaviors are present  
**Behaviors trump Thoughts**  
for purposes of classification

# Self-Directed Violence Classification System\*

Type	Sub-Type
Thoughts	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Ideation
	Suicidal Ideation
Behaviors	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence
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	Suicidal Self-Directed Violence

## Self-Directed Violence Classification System\*

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury</li> <li>-Without</li> <li>-With</li> <li>-Fatal</li> <li>• Interrupted by Self or Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury</li> <li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li> <li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury</li> <li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li> <li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Fatal</li> </ul>
	Suicidal Self-Directed Violence	<p>A potentially harmful or preparatory behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior.</p> <p>For example, hoarding medication for the purpose of overdosing would be classified as Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory.</p>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury</li> <li>-Without</li> <li>-With</li> <li>-Fatal</li> <li>• Interrupted by Self or Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Suicide Attempt, Without Injury</li> <li>•Suicide Attempt, Without Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li> <li>•Suicide Attempt, With Injury</li> <li>•Suicide Attempt, With Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li> <li>•Suicide</li> </ul>

# Classification Guideline 2

**When both Preparatory and Self-Inflicted Behaviors are present**  
**Self-Inflicted Behaviors trump Preparatory Behaviors**  
**for purposes of classification**

Terms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Ideation</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Suicidal Ideation, Without Intent</li><li>•Suicidal Ideation, With Undetermined Intent</li><li>•Suicidal Ideation, With Intent</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury</li><li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li><li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury</li><li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li><li>•Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Fatal</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury</li><li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li><li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury</li><li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li><li>•Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Fatal</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Suicide Attempt, Without Injury</li><li>•Suicide Attempt, Without Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li><li>•Suicide Attempt, With Injury</li><li>•Suicide Attempt, With Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other</li><li>•Suicide</li></ul>

## Self-Directed Violence Classification System Clinical Tool

FRONT

**STEP 1** - Answer the following:

- I. Is there any indication that the person engaged in self-directed violent behavior (either preparatory or potentially harmful)?  
*(If YES, go to STEP 2; If NO, see Question II below)*
- II. Is there any indication that the person had thoughts of suicide or non-suicidal self-directed violence? *(If YES, answer Table A questions; if NO, there is insufficient evidence to suggest thoughts of self-directed violence)*

**Table A: Thoughts**

- ┆ Do the thoughts suggest non-suicidal self-directed violence ideation, or do they suggest suicide related ideation?
- ┆ If the ideations were suicide related, was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Related	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Ideation		
Suicide Related	Suicidal Ideation, Without Intent	Suicidal Ideation, With Undetermined Intent	Suicidal Ideation, With Intent

**STEP 2** - Answer the following:

- I. Did the behavior involve any injury? *(If NO, see Table B; if YES, see Table C)*

**Table B: Behaviors, Without Injury**

- ┆ Was the behavior preparatory? (see key term on reverse side)
- ┆ If the behavior was not preparatory, was it interrupted by self or other?
- ┆ Was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Without Injury (Preparatory)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory	Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory
Without Injury (Interrupted by Self/Other)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury Interrupted by Self/Other	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury Interrupted by Self/Other	Suicide Attempt, Without Injury Interrupted by Self/Other
Without Injury (Uninterrupted)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury	Suicide Attempt, Without Injury

**Table C: Behaviors, With Injury**

- ┆ Did the behavior result in a fatal injury or a non-fatal injury?
- ┆ If the behavior resulted in a non-fatal injury, was it interrupted by self or other?
- ┆ Was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Non-Fatal Injury (Interrupted by Self/Other)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self/Other	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self/Other	Suicide Attempt, With Injury, Interrupted by Self/Other
Non-Fatal Injury (Uninterrupted)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury	Suicide Attempt, With Injury
Fatal Injury	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Fatal	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Fatal	Suicide



## Self-Directed Violence Classification System Clinical Tool

### Key Terms (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

<b>Intent:</b>	There is past or present evidence (explicit and/or implicit) that the individual intended to kill him/herself <b>and</b> wished to die, <b>and</b> that he/she understood the probable consequences of his/her actions or potential actions.
<b>Preparatory Behavior:</b>	Acts or preparation towards imminently making a suicide attempt, but before potential for harm has begun. This can include anything beyond a verbalization or thought, such as assembling a method (e.g., buying a gun, collecting pills) or preparing for one's death by suicide (e.g., writing a suicide note, giving things away).
<b>Injury (paraphrased):</b>	A bodily lesion resulting from acute overexposure to energy (this can be mechanical, thermal, electrical, chemical, or radiant) interacting with the body in amounts or rates that exceed the threshold of physiological tolerance (e.g., bodily harm due to suffocation, poisoning or overdoses, lacerations, gunshot wounds, etc.). Refer to the Classification System for the full CDC definition.
<b>Suicide Attempt:</b>	A non-fatal self-inflicted potentially injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior
<b>Suicide:</b>	Death caused by self-inflicted injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior

**BACK**

## Self-Directed Violence Classification System Clinical Tool

**STEP 1** - Answer the following:

- I. Is there any indication that the person engaged in self-directed violent behavior (either preparatory or potentially harmful)? *(If YES, go to STEP 2; If NO, see Question II below)*
- II. Is there any indication that the person had thoughts of suicide or non-suicidal self-directed violence? *(If YES, answer Table A questions; if NO, there is insufficient evidence to suggest thoughts of self-directed violence)*

**Table A: Thoughts**

- Do the thoughts suggest non-suicidal self-directed violence ideation, or do they suggest suicide related ideation?
- If the ideations were suicide related, was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Related	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Ideation		
Suicide Related	Suicidal Ideation, Without Intent	Suicidal Ideation, With Undetermined Intent	Suicidal Ideation, With Intent

# THOUGHTS

**STEP 2** - Answer the following:

- I. Did the behavior involve any injury? *(If NO, see Table B; if YES, see Table C)*

**Table B: Behaviors, Without Injury**

- Was the behavior preparatory? (see key term on reverse side)
- If the behavior was not preparatory, was it interrupted by self or other?
- Was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Without Injury (Preparatory)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory	Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory
Without Injury (Interrupted by Self/Other)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury Interrupted by Self/Other	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury Interrupted by Self/Other	Suicide Attempt, Without Injury Interrupted by Self/Other
Without Injury (Uninterrupted)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury	Suicide Attempt, Without Injury

**Table C: Behaviors, With Injury**

- Did the behavior result in a fatal injury or a non-fatal injury?
- If the behavior resulted in a non-fatal injury, was it interrupted by self or other?
- Was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Non-Fatal Injury (Interrupted by Self/Other)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self/Other	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self/Other	Suicide Attempt, With Injury, Interrupted by Self/Other
Non-Fatal Injury (Uninterrupted)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury	Suicide Attempt, With Injury
Fatal Injury	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Fatal	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Fatal	Suicide

# BEHAVIORS

**STEP 1 – Answer the following:**

I. Is there any indication that the person engaged in self-directed violent behavior (either preparatory or potentially harmful)? *(If YES, go to STEP 2; if NO, see Question II below)*

II. Is there any indication that the person had thoughts of suicide or non-suicidal self-directed violence? *(If YES, answer Table A questions; if NO, there is insufficient evidence to suggest thoughts of self-directed violence)*

**Table A: Thoughts**

- Do the person's thoughts suggest non-suicidal self-directed violence ideation, or do they suggest suicide related ideation?
- If the ideations were suicide related, was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Related	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Ideation		
Suicide Related	Suicidal Ideation, Without Intent	Suicidal Ideation, With Undetermined Intent	Suicidal Ideation, With Intent

**STEP 1 – Answer the following:**

I. Is there any indication that the person engaged in self-directed violent behavior (either preparatory or potentially harmful)?  
*(If YES, go to STEP 2; if NO, see Question II below)*

II. Is there any indication that the person had thoughts of suicide or non-suicidal self-directed violence? *(If YES, answer Table A questions; if NO, there is insufficient evidence to suggest thoughts of self-directed violence)*

**Table A: Thoughts**

- Do the person's thoughts suggest non-suicidal self-directed violence ideation, or do they suggest suicide related ideation?
- If the ideations were suicide related, was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Related	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Ideation		

**STEP 1 – Answer the following:**

I. Is there any indication that the person engaged in self-directed violent behavior (either preparatory or potentially harmful)?  
*(If YES, go to STEP 2; if NO, see Question II below)*

II. Is there any indication that the person had thoughts of suicide or non-suicidal self-directed violence? *(If YES, answer Table A questions; if NO, there is insufficient evidence to suggest thoughts of self-directed violence)*

**Table A: Thoughts**

- Do the person's thoughts suggest non-suicidal self-directed violence ideation, or do they suggest suicide related ideation?
- If the ideations were suicide related, was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Suicide Related	Suicidal Ideation, Without Intent	Suicidal Ideation, With Undetermined Intent	Suicidal Ideation, With Intent

**STEP 2 – Answer the following:**

I. Did the behavior involve an injury? *(If NO, see Table B; if YES, see Table C)*

**Table B: Behaviors, Without Injury**

- Was the behavior preparatory? (see key term on reverse side)
- If the behavior was not preparatory, was it interrupted by self or other?
- Was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Without Injury (Preparatory)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory	Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory
Without Injury (Interrupted by Self/Other)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury Interrupted by Self/Other	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury Interrupted by Self/Other	Suicide Attempt, Without Injury Interrupted by Self/Other
Without Injury (Uninterrupted)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Without Injury	Suicide Attempt, Without Injury

**STEP 2 – Answer the following:**

I. Did the behavior involve an injury? *(If NO, see Table B; if YES, see Table C)*

**Table C: Behaviors, With Injury**

- Did the behavior result in a fatal injury or a non-fatal injury?
- If the behavior resulted in a non-fatal injury, was it interrupted by self or other?
- Was there evidence of intent (without, undetermined, or with)?

	Without Intent	Undetermined Intent	With Intent
Non-Fatal Injury (Interrupted by Self/Other)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self/Other	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self/Other	Suicide Attempt, With Injury, Interrupted by Self/Other
Non-Fatal Injury (Uninterrupted)	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury	Suicide Attempt, With Injury
Fatal Injury	Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Fatal	Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Fatal	Suicide

# **VISN 19 MIRECCC Research Projects**

## **Self-Directed Violence Classification System**

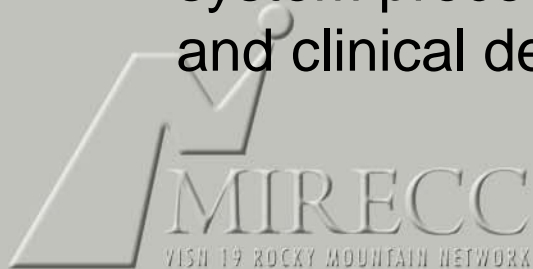




# Implementation and Refinement of the Suicide Classification System

## Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Services Research and Development

- Implement the VISN 19 MIRECC training program for the Self-Directed Violence Classification System in two clinical settings.
- Evaluate organizational- and provider-level factors associated with implementation, including barriers and facilitators to change, and the feasibility of a QUERI Phase II demonstration project.
- Analysis of the programmatic impact on health care system processes pertaining to suicide risk assessment and clinical decision making.



# Suicide Nomenclature and Measure Development

## TATRC Award #W81XWH-08-P-1042: Tele-TBI Cell Phone Initiative SME Support/

- Phase I: Development: Develop a measure that will facilitate identification of a particular suicide/self-harm term based upon responses to yes/no questions. The questions will be modified to allow for self-report or clinician administration.
- Phase II: Qualitative Analysis: This phase will involve convening a panel of experts to establish face validity of the measure. The expert panel and study staff will participate in a focus group to review the measure and associated nomenclature. The question hierarchy will be discussed. During this phase, questions will be revised as needed based on expert responses
- Phase III: Feasibility: The goal for this phase of the project is to assess the feasibility of the battery including: 1) veteran comprehension of the questions; 2) veteran comfort with the measure; 3) ease of use; and 4) perceived usefulness as determined by mental health clinicians.



# Thank You

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# Self-Directed Violence Classification System

## Clinical Application

Alex E. Crosby, M.D.



# Sample Vignettes

- A former Navy pilot has bipolar disorder and is delusional in the midst of a mixed episode. Friends report that he has been rambling about themes of religious self-sacrifice, and the need to atone for the sins of the world. The client is found dead after falling to his death from the roof of his apartment building.
  - A. Suicidal Ideation, With Intent
  - B. Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory
  - C. Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Fatal
  - D. Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury
  - E. Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, Fatal
  - F. Suicide Attempt, With Injury
  - G. Suicide

# Sample Vignettes

- A woman drives to a remote location and parks. She is angry at herself for being unable to keep a job since she left the Army, and now she has lost her boyfriend. She uses the car's cigarette lighter to burn herself on her upper arms. She reported later, "It felt right, I wanted to punish myself."
  - A. Self-Injury Ideation
  - B. Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory
  - C. Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury
  - D. Non-Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, With Injury, Interrupted by Self or Other
  - E. Undetermined Self-Directed Violence, With Injury
  - F. Suicidal Self-Directed Violence, Preparatory
  - G. Suicide Attempt, With Injury

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