

Mini-Interventions:

Tactics, phrases, or small actions that reflect elements that are present across many evidence-based treatment programs.

Sit next to, rather than across

Position yourself next to the person, signaling you're working together alongside them.

Slow down and listen

- Instead of asking immediately about their plans and intentions, take time to understand what's happening in their life.
 - Ex: That's serious. I need to know more about what you're thinking –but first, can you tell me what's got you so upset?

When in doubt, tell the truth

- If you're worried, say you're worried. If you don't know what to say, say that.
 - Ex: This is really overwhelming. Even for me and I'm not the one going through it. I'm taking in what you're going through and I need a minute to process it.

Highlight the desire behind the suicidal desire

- Suggest survival-oriented desires, like escaping the pain or having a sense of control, lie behind the suicidal desire
 - Ex: With all that you've been going through, it makes sense that your mind has been searching for an escape, a way to get away from all the hurt.

Contrast the tunnel vision of the suicidal mind with a vision of options

- Help the person see options to feeling better rather than suicide
 - Ex: Sometimes though, our minds can play tricks on us. When you've been feeling bad for a really long time, you can start to think there's no other way out of the pain you've been feeling. Does your mind ever play that trick on you?

Express radical empathy and radical hope

- Radical empathy - Empathize with the suicidal thought
 - Ex: Wow. You're dealing with a lot, and with all that going on, I can understand how you'd be searching for a way out.
- Radical hope – Present hope for feeling better
 - Ex: I've known you for a long time, and I know you're going to be okay, and even more than okay in the long run.

Ground your optimism in experience and evidence

- Affirm that you can work with the person to feel better
 - Ex: Because I've been doing this a while, I've seen a lot of people overcome. I can see ways that you can feel better, even if you can't right now.