By Quentin Derby

Suicide Matters

Suicide is a major public health concern worldwide. It is the act of intentionally taking one's life due to a feeling of hopelessness or despair. Suicide is a complex phenomenon, and it can stem from several factors, including mental illness, trauma, substance abuse, or social isolation. To prevent suicidal behaviors, it is essential to understand the importance of "I matter, you matter, we matter" and how it relates to suicide.

"I matter, you matter, we matter" highlights the significance of self-worth, connectedness, and social support. It is a concept that emphasizes the interdependence of individuals on each other and the importance of taking care of oneself and others. In the context of suicide, it means that every individual's life holds intrinsic value and is essential to the community's well-being.

The first element of "I matter, you matter, we matter" is "I matter." This concept speaks to the importance of individual self-worth, self-esteem, and personal values. It signifies that each person's life is the foundation of the larger community and that everyone's contribution is essential in creating an atmosphere of belonging and safety. The belief in one's value as an individual fosters a sense of purpose, self-confidence, and resilience that can significantly impact suicidal ideation.

The second element is "You matter." This emphasizes the importance of interpersonal relationships and social connections. The sense of belonging and support that comes from positive social connections can be a buffer against suicide. Social support systems are essential in helping individuals cope with stress, trauma, and difficult life events.

The final element is "We matter." This highlights the collective responsibility of each person in the community. It stresses that the well-being of individuals is interdependent on the healthy functioning of the whole community. A sense of connection and responsibility to others motivates individuals to seek help, prevent suicide, and support others who may be struggling.

Now, the statement "I matter, you matter, we matter" holds immense value for me. This phrase conveys that everyone's existence is significant, not just to themselves, but also to the people around them. It encapsulates the idea that we all have worth and are entitled to respect and dignity.

For me, this phrase is a reminder that I am not insignificant, and my actions and choices can have an impact on others. It encourages me to consider how my words and deeds can positively affect those around me, and conversely, how they can also hurt or harm others. By recognizing that I matter, I become more motivated to make positive contributions to the world and to strive for my dreams and aspirations. It helps my self-esteem, self-image, and overall thoughts about my being.

Similarly, acknowledging that you matter reminds me that others also have inherent worth and should be treated with kindness and empathy. It is a reminder to be compassionate and considerate of others and to recognize and appreciate their value. Knowing that each person has their own unique experiences and struggles, it is crucial to look beyond mere appearances and take time to understand and empathize with others.

In my community and city, suicide prevention has been a topic of great concern for several years. Every year, it claims hundreds of lives, leaving behind immense emotional and psychological trauma for loved ones. The We Matter campaign aims to prevent suicide among

youth while promoting hope and awareness through storytelling. This campaign has the potential to make a significant difference in my city and beyond.

Firstly, the We Matter campaign can break down the stigma surrounding suicide and mental health in my city. Many people suffer in silence because they fear being judged or misunderstood. Indigenous youth, in particular, are often reluctant to reach out for support due to intergenerational trauma that discourages vulnerability. The We Matter campaign can offer a safe and inclusive space where individuals can share their stories and receive validation, encouragement, and support.

Secondly, the We Matter campaign can bring communities together to act on suicide prevention. Communities that openly discuss suicide and openly work to reduce it experience lower rates of suicide. The We Matter campaign can inspire community champions who can take the lead in organizing events and activities centered on promoting hope, awareness, and self-care. They can also work to connect individuals with available resources such as counseling and mental health services.

Finally, the We Matter campaign can utilize social media even more than it already is to reach individuals who are at risk of suicide or those who are struggling to find support. Social media is an accessible and powerful platform that is capable of reaching an extremely broad audience. By sharing stories of hope and resiliency, individuals who are isolated or feel alone can find comfort and feel more hopeful about their future.

In conclusion, suicide prevention is a critical issue that should concern everyone in Owasso. Via the We Matter Campaign, this community can help reach out and stop suicide in its tracks. By working together, the community can create a more supportive and empathetic

environment that values mental health and wellness. This gives individuals the support they need

to withstand challenges and inspires a sense of hope and positivity. In Owasso, everyone matters.

References

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