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# SOAR Crisis Line addresses offers local help for suicidal thoughts



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By Carmen Rodgers

Staff writer

Suicide has been a topic of discussion after two well-known celebrities took their own life recently. News of the suicides of Kate Spade and Anthony Bourdain affected many in different ways. Suicide is a tough subject to talk about, but one that needs to be discussed more often than not.

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Suicide rates tend to increase immediately after the death of a celebrity. According to the Centers for Disease Control, there were 2000 more suicides in the four months after Robin Williams took his own life.

Suicide is a tough subject that is not often addressed.

Thanks to the newly established S.O.A.R. Inc. there is an open line of communication available to anyone who needs to talk. There is no subject too big, too small or too uncomfortable to talk about. Andrus Love, founder of the non-profit organization, said often it is the small things that escalate to bigger issues.

“There are warning signs,” said Love. “All suicide attempts are a cry for help.”

According to Andrus there are a few things to look for if you think someone may be struggling with suicidal thoughts. If someone suddenly begins giving his or her belongings away this could be a warning sign. The color of clothing a person wears can often mirror the emotions they feel.

“There are certain things that you can pick up and dial in on a little deeper,” he said.

Not only is Love skilled in counseling, he knows the area well and the issues that are often associated with it. Love graduated from Reeltown High School in 1995. After high school he attended Troy University where he earned his master’s in clinical psychology and counseling. He earned his undergrad in criminal justice and sociology at University of Alabama at Birmingham. He has over 10 years in youth services and juvenile probation with the Alabama Department of Corrections and the Department of Human Resources in neighboring Macon County.

“I’m utilizing my education and experience and trying to give back to where I am from,” Love said. “This is where I am from and this is the motivation.”

While he has much experience in youth services, Love said this crisis line is open and available to everyone and anyone. So often suicide is a topic that no one wants to bring up. This is what Love said has to change.

“In our society, we don’t talk about suicide,” Love said. “It’s hidden but I am trying to change that. One of my objectives is to get things out in the open because we are faced with so much in the homes, in the community and in the schools. Lets address these issues.”

If you know someone who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide, you, too, are urged to call the crisis line. Suicide is often unpredictable but with guidance from professionals you will better know how to approach the topic. Start the conversation.

To reach the S.O.A.R. Crisis line call, 334-354-9745. To reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline call 1-800-273-8255.

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