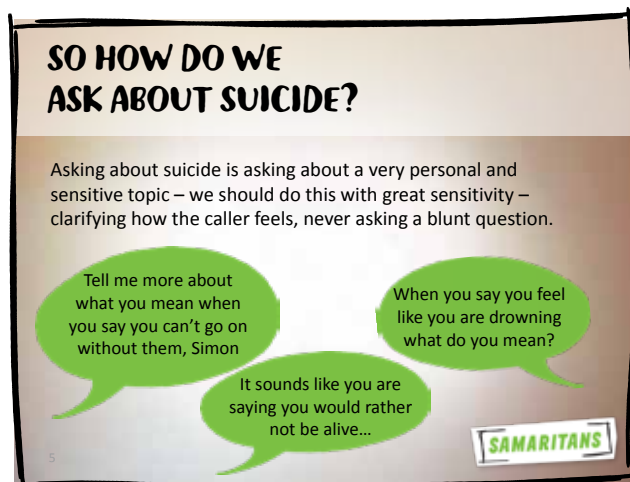
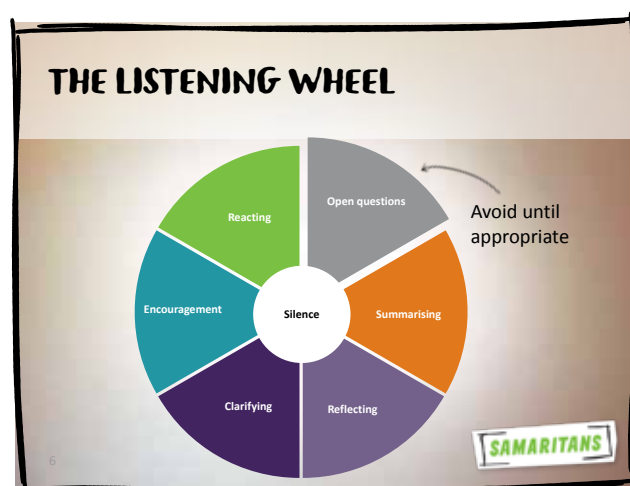


# EXPLORING SUICIDAL FEELINGS



When exploring suicidal feelings, we are asking our caller to share the most intimate and private of thoughts. If a caller is suicidal and we ask in a blunt and inappropriate way, they may well be taken by surprise and automatically deny they have such feelings – in the same way we do when asked about any personal issue in a situation where you have not had time to decide to share.

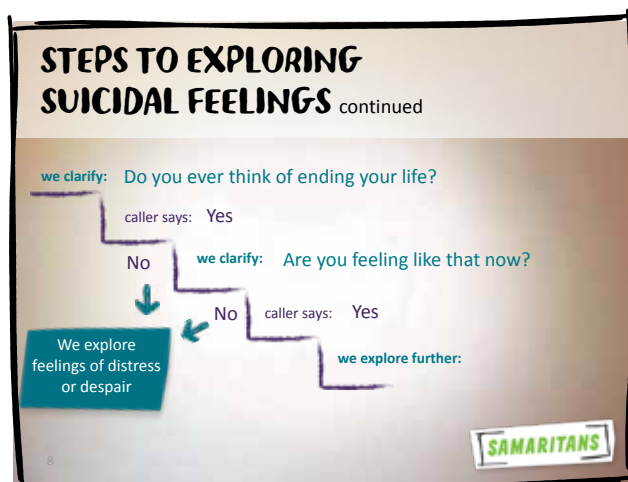


When exploring suicidal feelings, we avoid the 'Open Questions' section of the Listening Wheel. This way we can be confident that we are staying in an area where the caller feels comfortable, and by moving with them through an exploration of their feelings, into an exploration of any suicidal feelings, we can be sure that our exploration of suicidal feelings is in context to the call, and so seems the natural next step in the conversation.

## EXPLORING SUICIDAL FEELINGS continued



We listen for a ‘trigger line’ – a sentence or phrase that opens the door for us to explore their feelings in more depth. Here, the trigger line is: “Sometimes I feel I can’t go on any more.” By moving through a series of steps, we clarify what the caller is feeling – we reflect and clarify the caller’s last statement until we reach a point where we know if the caller has suicidal thoughts.

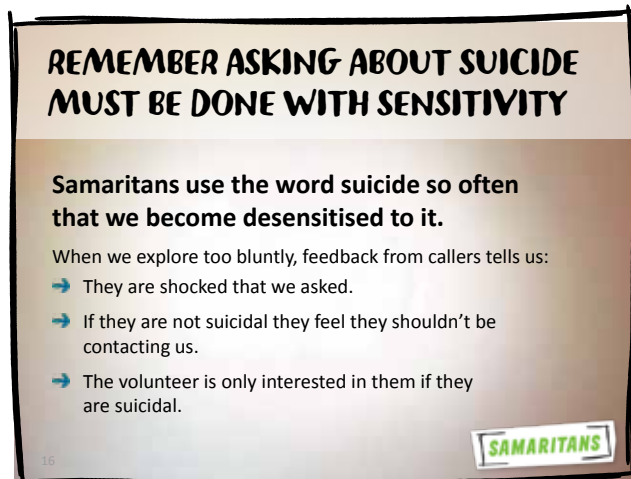


As the caller has now clarified that they sometimes wish they were dead, we clarify if that means they are suicidal by asking if they ever think of ending their life. If the caller confirms that they do have suicidal thoughts, we explore the extent and depth of these feelings. If the caller is not suicidal, we explore the other feelings and emotions they are experiencing.

## EXPLORING SUICIDAL FEELINGS continued



It is important that we clarify using the words the caller uses in order to make sure that we both understand what we are talking about. We continue reflecting and clarifying until we have reached a point where we clearly understand if a caller has suicidal thoughts or not.



We accept a caller's right to make their own decisions, but this does not mean that we don't care what decisions a caller makes. We care very much about what decision they make. Samaritans' Vision is that "fewer people die by suicide". Our aim is to alleviate or reduce emotional distress so that callers are able to find a way to carry on living rather than seeing suicide as their only option. Always remember when exploring suicidal feelings that a caller who is suicidal should feel they have been invited to share these feelings, while a caller who is not suicidal will not realise that we have explored this possibility.