



## Connectedness

A frame of mind that reflects an individual's outlook on life and perceptions of belongingness, well-being, and social support. Reflects a member's viewpoint that they are relevant, contributing, and have relationships upon which they can confidently depend on in times of need.

\*Note: The following questions are the actual DEOCS questions.

1. My future seems dark to me.
2. These days, I think I am a burden on people in my life.
3. These days, I feel like I belong.
4. These days, I feel that there are people I can turn to in times of need.
5. I know someone in my organization who has thought of, attempted, or died by suicide.

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The following questions can assist in conducting focus groups and interviews.

- Who (or what agencies) are you aware of that can assist someone if they are contemplating suicide?
- Do you feel members of your organization are adequately trained to recognize if someone needs assistance considering suicide?
- How are members informed on the resources available for someone thinking of suicide?
- What are some of the reasons someone would not feel comfortable requesting the assistance they need?
- How do you feel your leadership would support someone if they requested assistance?

Other clarifying questions based on the DEOCS questions include:

- If your unit generated an elevated score on the following item: “These days, I think I am a burden on the people in my life,” consider the following questions:
  - Are you pulling your own weight?
  - Are you doing your job as a Soldier/ Sailor/ Airman/ Marine?
  - When do you feel most like you're doing your job?
  - Least like you're doing your job?
  - What makes you more or less effective?
  - Is your role in the Service important?
  - Is your role in the Service important to you?
  - What does your Command do that makes you feel like an important/ meaningful part of the mission?
  - What could your Command do to improve/ enhance your feeling that you are an important/ meaningful part of the mission?
  - Which part of military service makes you feel most accomplished?
  - Are there members of your unit you believe don't feel they're pulling their own weight?
  - Are there members of your unit you believe don't feel their work is important?
- If your unit generated a low score on the following item: “These days I feel like I belong,” consider the following questions:

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- How do you “fit in” with the military?
  - With your unit?
  - In other parts of your life?
  - What makes you feel more or less like you fit in?
  - When were the times in your Service history you felt most like you fit in?
  - The least?
  - What could your Command do differently that would make you feel more like part of the group?
  - What could your Command do more of?
  - Are there members of your unit who don’t “fit in” very well?
  - Are there members of your unit you suspect may not feel “fit in?”
  - Where do you feel like you most fit?
- If your unit generated a low score on the following item: “These days I feel that there are people I can turn to in times of need,” consider the following questions:
    - Are people in your life who will “be there” for you if things are not going well?
    - Can you talk to your friends about your problems?
    - Are they open to listening?
    - Are you comfortable talking with them about difficult things?
    - If anything, what might prevent you from turning to your friends in times of need?
    - Can you talk to your military comrades about your problems?
    - Are they open to listening?
    - Are you comfortable talking with them about difficult things?
    - If anything, what might prevent you from turning to your military comrades in times of need?
    - Can you talk to your Command about your problems?
    - Are they open to listening?
    - Are you comfortable talking with them about difficult things?
    - If anything, what might prevent you from turning to your Command in times of need?
    - Can you talk to your family about your problems?
    - Are they open to listening?
    - Are you comfortable talking with them about difficult things?
    - If anything, what might prevent you from turning to your family in times of need?
    - \*\*\* Would you be willing to get treatment from a mental health professional if you were feeling down in the dumps, or having thoughts of taking your own life?
- If your unit generated an elevated score on the following item: “My future seems dark to me,” consider the following questions:
    - Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
    - In 20 years?
    - What does the future hold for you?
    - What could be done to make your future more promising?
    - Do you see the current problems/ challenges in your life improving over time?
    - If you don’t believe things in your life are going well, do you see that improving over time?

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- If your unit generated an elevated score on the following item: “Do you know someone in your unit who’s thought about, attempted, or died by suicide?” consider the following questions:
  - If you know someone in your unit who has thought about or attempted suicide, have they reached out for help?
  - Have they told anyone?
  - How do you know?

**If suicide death.....**

- How has your comrade’s death impacted you?
- How frequently do you think about it?
- If you were experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety, or anger, would you seek out professional help?
- If not, why not?
- Would you seek out support from your command?
- If not, why not?