

Ask the Professionals



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DR. ELAYNE TANNER
Registered Social Worker

Counselling & Psychotherapy

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www.DrElayneTanner.com

Q: I thought I was familiar with the signs of depression and suicide yet someone I am close with attempted suicide recently and this caught me right off guard. He is an older man and not only did I not spot the signs, I thought that because he is a man and older, he was past that concern. What did I miss?

A: Although we hear more about depression in women or teens, over 74 of deaths by suicide are actually carried out by men. Men have the same symptoms as women but they may show them differently. While women tend to be weepy, sad, and withdrawn, men often present as angry and irritable. You may mistake the symptoms and attribute them to stress or physical pain. Men's depression often gets hidden in alcohol or substance usage, and again, this can throw off the diagnosis of depression. The depressed male may be approaching or past retirement age and this may be perceived to be the source of the stress. The substance usage may be misinterpreted as a more relaxed and social state, now that retirement is here. While a depressed man will rarely become nostalgic or weepy, they may begin to show remorse over decisions made or the way life has turned out. This apparent guilt is often very shallow and out of character and really is a cry for help—we are more familiar with this behaviour when phrased as "you would be better off if I were dead." Other phrases that might suggest suicide but are not always recognized include things such as "I'm worth more dead than alive"; "what's the meaning of life? It is hopeless/ all ends the same anyway"; or even a sudden happy calm such as "whatever you like, dear" where there previously was agitation.

We cannot stop someone else's suicide completion if they are determined to do it, but sometimes we can recognize the symptoms soon enough to effectively intervene. If a suicide attempt is imminent, the only option is to get that person to a hospital that has a psychiatric department immediately. But if you can recognize the symptoms before it gets that severe, counselling with someone who can relate, be firm with the individual and is familiar with the many aspects of depression in the older male as well as the many counselling techniques that can be relevant to an older man feeling this way, may be a viable option. As you can appreciate, the language used with a mature male will not be the same as that used with a female of the same age or he will not be able to connect. Societal definitions of "manly" and the expectations we hold for males are still not the same as our definitions of "feminine" or "womanly" and the expectations we have for women. Dr. Elayne Tanner has experience in working with both, the men who are suicidal and their partners who feel lost and helpless. If this can help you, please call for an appointment.

"HELPING YOU HELP YOURSELF"

Elayne Tanner Social Work Professional Corporation



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Zachary Fiddes
B.ENG., O.L.S. President

Q: Does a survey plan expire after a period of time?

A: A survey is a special map of a parcel of land that provides details determined after research and field measurements. It is a snapshot of your property as of the date it was completed.

So a survey doesn't necessarily expire but rather quickly becomes out of date as properties are renovated and fences and sheds are built. A bigger problem using old surveys occurs when road widenings, easements, and severances are added to the property. A new survey will reflect these changes while an old survey does not.

Old surveys can still be very useful in providing historical information about the property and surveyors refer to these old plans for evidence when preparing a new survey. For example, some properties have buildings and fences that have not changed so they can become important information when determining a boundary.

In order to be up to date, a survey must reflect any changes that may have occurred on the property and show current registry office title information all of which won't be shown on an old plan. Only a licensed Ontario Land Surveyor can provide this information. I'm available to discuss your property should you have any questions.

