



## Discussion Guide | Part 2

### Video: Episode 4 with Grant Heinrich

This guide is meant to be used to engage in a conversation with your peers, colleagues, friends, or family about stress and mental health in the agricultural setting.

From the very beginning of this project, we hoped to tell a story that was authentic to real life experiences. Episode 4 focuses on the story of real people that experienced stress, mental anguish, and even loss.

We hope that these discussion topics will help you work towards an open and honest dialogue around mental health in your workplace to help prevent future tragedies. The SAFE (Stop, Alert, Foster, Encourage) 4-part framework can help guide a fruitful discussion and inform future outreach and education.

**Before showing the short film, we suggest laying some discussion ground rules. We suggest the following language in your statements:**

- *Everyone gets a chance to talk.*
- *It is not uncommon for people to show emotion during this discussion topic. Listening with intention is the greatest gift we can give another. Allow them to talk. Don't feel obligated to rescue them from their feelings. Validate their experience.*
- *This is a safe place to share information, privacy of someone's story is expected. If we feel anyone is in danger of harm, we will have an immediate private conversation.*
- *Thanks for being here today. I'm honored to talk to you about mental health and why it's important in agriculture. Before we start our conversation, I'm going to show you this short film of an individual's experience and perspective of this topic. Some of the content may seem a little heavy, but what you are going to see is the reality for many people that has been impacted by mental distress and suicide.*

**After you have shown the film, you can open a discussion with the group. Below is a list of discussion questions that will help get the conversation going. Feel free to use all or some of these.**

**General Questions:**

1. What are your general reactions to what you just saw?
2. What did you think about the warning signs? Were there any?
3. What would be your response to seeing warning signs in a friend, family member, or coworker?
4. Do you think that helping someone experiencing these signs can help both of you? How?
5. What are the reactions and feelings experienced by someone that has nearly lost or has lost someone to suicide?
6. What information do you think is important to know about someone who may be experiencing a mental health condition or crisis?
7. What actions by Grant made it possible that everyone could go home?

**Agricultural Specific Questions:**

8. How can we make it easier to talk about mental health in agriculture?
9. How can we get more of the agricultural community involved in talking about mental health?
10. What are the stressors in agriculture that can contribute to worry, hopelessness or helplessness?
11. What are the protective aspects of working in agriculture for suicide?
12. Discuss the role of family relationships in agriculture as it relates to mental distress and help seeking for mental distress.

Once you have completed the discussion: *Thank the audience for participating in this discussion and ask if there are any final thoughts.*

### **One-on-One Conversations about Mental Health Conditions, Drug and Alcohol Use or Suicide**

- You may find that after the facilitated discussion, one or more of the participants may want to talk to you. Whether they approached you individually or you noticed someone in the discussion that seemed exceptionally uncomfortable, or you just got a feeling about, consider engaging them in a private conversation.
- Remember, if someone is coming to you, it means that they trust you and value your opinion. Be sure to listen to what they have to say and reaffirm his or her feelings. Let them know that you are there to help and to connect them with services and supports in their community
- Use one of the following plans to determine the proper steps to take to manage the situation:

#### **If you've talked to them and he or she is experiencing signs of a mental health condition:**

1. Remind them that you are there for them and are happy to help.
2. Inform them that there is help available—counselors, therapists, psychiatrists, psychologists are all there to help them feel better.
3. Have them identify one person they can reach out to. It is important to get another adult involved as early on in the process as possible and there are professionals out there that understand what you are going through and how best to help. Let them know it is important to seek help because without help the condition can get worse.
4. Offer them support. Remind them that they are not alone, and that help is available. Have any resources available such as the AgriStress Helpline number or cards they can keep in their wallet.

#### **If he or she is experiencing suicidal thoughts or behaviors:**

1. Take any talk of suicide seriously. If they share suicidal thoughts, let them know that you are glad they have shared this information and reassure him or her that you can help, and he or she is not alone.
2. Provide reassurance. Let them know that there is help available and that you and others care and want to help.
3. Use your judgment. If they have suicidal thoughts, a specific suicide plan and seems intent on ending his or her life, get help immediately by calling 911, the AgriStress Helpline for Texas 833-897-2474, 988 or any regional crisis line that can provide suicide intervention if needed.
4. Do not leave anyone who may be suicidal alone.
5. Share any resources.
6. Share information about the encounter with the Home Safe Home team. Let others within your organization know that you had that conversation with someone in crisis and document how you handled it.

You may also want to work with your organization to determine protocol in these types of situations before you begin your discussion. It is possible that a system is already in place to address these issues and that you can follow the determined steps.

Remember, if anyone is in imminent danger of harm, call 911.

**Always trust your gut. If you have a strong feeling telling you to respond in a certain way to the situation, do it. You have the knowledge and awareness to make the right decision. Trust yourself.**

Trainings that can equip you with skills to intervene effectively with an evidenced based plan:

- QPR for Agricultural Communities
  - contact AgriSafe Network for training dates at <https://www.agrisafe.org/healthcare/mental-health/>
- ASSIST Training
  - <https://www.livingworks.net/asist>
- Mental Health First Aid
  - find a training near you at <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/population-focused-modules/rural-communities/>

**The [NAMI Film Discussion Text](#) was used a guiding document for the development of this content.**