

Emmylou Harris's "Red Dirt Girl"

Me and my best friend Lillian, and her blue tick hound-dog Gideon
Sitting on the front porch cooling in the shade, singin every song the radio
played

Waitin for the Alabama sun to go down
Two red dirt girls in a red dirt town, me and Lillian
Just across the line and a little southeast of Meridian

She loved her brother, I remember back when he was fixin up a 49 Indian
He told her "Lil sis, gona ride the wind up around the moon and back again"

He never got farther than Vietnam
I was standin there with her when the telegram come
Now he's lyin somewhere, about a million miles from Meridian

She said there is not much hope for a red dirt girl
Somewhere out there is a great big world, that's where I'm bound
And the stars might fall on Alabama, but one of these days I'm gona swing
my hammer down

Away from this red dirt town, I'm gonna make a joyful sound

She grew up tall and she grew up thin, buried that old dog Gideon
By a crepe myrtle bush in the back of the yard
Her daddy turned mean and her mama leaned hard
Got in trouble with a boy from town, figured she might as well settle down
So she dug right in, across a red dirt line just a little south east of Meridian

She tried to love him but it never did take
It was just another way for a heart to break, so she dug right in
But one thing they don't tell you bout the blues, when you got um
You just keep fallin cuz there aint no bottom
There aint no end, at least not for Lillian

Nobody knows when she started her skid, she was only 27 and she had 5
kids

Coulda been the whiskey, Coulda been the pills
Coulda been the dream she was trying to kill
But there won't be a mention in the news of the world
About the life and death of a red dirt girl

Named Lillian, who never got any farther across the line than Meridian

Now the stars still fall on Alabama, tonight she finally laid that hammer
down

Without a sound, in the red dirt ground

Questions for Discussion

1. Based on the facts in the story, what are plausible explanations for Lillian's suicide?
2. Identify three facts from the story that are likely relevant to Lillian's suicide.
3. Identify three facts from the story that are likely not relevant to Lillian's suicide.
4. Assume the narrator of the story is now your patient; identify three facts from the story that might be relevant to your assessment of the narrator.
5. Assume the narrator of the story is now your patient; what emotional issues might she suffering from?

Jason Isbell's "Travelling Alone"

Mountain's rough this time of year
They close the highway down
They don't warn the town
I've been fighting second gear for fifteen miles or so
Trying to beat the angry snow
I know every town worth passing through
But what good does knowing do with no one to show it to

I've grown tired of travelling alone
Tired of traveling alone
I've grown tired of travelling alone
Won't you ride with me? Won't you ride?

I quit talking to myself
And listening to the radio a long, long time ago
Damn near strangled by my appetite
In Ybor City on a Friday night
Couldn't even stand upright
So high, the street girls wouldn't take my pay
She said come see me on a better day
She just danced away

I've grown tired of travelling alone
Tired of traveling alone
I've grown tired of travelling alone
Won't you ride with me? Won't you ride?

Pain in the outside lane
I'm tired of answering to myself
Heart like a rebuilt part
I don't know how much it's got left

I've grown tired of travelling alone
Tired of traveling alone
I've grown tired of travelling alone
Won't you ride with me? Won't you ride?

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) Suicide Risk Assessment Standards*

It is policy that each Lifeline caller be asked about suicidality. An affirmative answer will require that the telephone worker conduct a full suicide risk assessment with the caller consistent with the core principles and subcomponents below. These standards are guidelines for NSPL Centers as to the minimum requirements for the core principles and subcomponents of each Center's suicide risk assessment instrument. The Center can use its own suicide risk assessment instrument as long as all of the core principles and subcomponents are incorporated.

CORE PRINCIPLES & SUBCOMPONENTS

SUICIDAL DESIRE	SUICIDAL CAPABILITY	SUICIDAL INTENT	BUFFERS/CONNECTEDNESS
Suicidal Ideation • Killing self and/or others	History of suicide attempts	Attempt in progress	Immediate supports
	Exposure to someone else's death by suicide		Social supports
	History of/current violence to others		
Psychological pain	Available means of killing self/other	Plan to kill self/other • Method known	Planning for the future
Hopelessness	Currently intoxicated		Engagement with helper • Telephone worker
	Substance abuse		
Helplessness	Acute symptoms of mental illness, for example: • Recent dramatic mood change • Out of touch with reality	Preparatory behaviors	Ambivalence for living/dying
Perceived burden on others			
Feeling trapped	Extreme agitation/rage, for example: • Increased anxiety • Decreased sleep	Expressed intent to die	Core values/beliefs
Feeling intolerably alone			Sense of purpose

* Developed by staff from the NSPL at Link2Health Solutions, Inc. in collaboration with the NSPL Certification and Training Subcommittee (for more information see Appendix 1 or <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/about/BioCertification.aspx>) under grant No. 6 U79 SM56176-02-3 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Any opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) Recommendations for an Approach to Asking Lifeline Callers about Suicidality*

PROMPT QUESTIONS

Are you thinking of suicide?

Have you thought about suicide in the last two months?

Have you ever attempted to kill yourself?

The NSPL Certification and Training Subcommittee recommends that crisis center workers ask a minimum of three “prompt questions” (listed above) which address current suicidal desire, recent (past two months) suicidal desire, and past suicide attempts. An affirmative answer to any or all of the above will require that the telephone worker conduct a full suicide risk assessment with the caller consistent with the core principles and subcomponents of the Lifeline’s Suicide Risk Assessment Standards (page 1).

It is important to elicit current suicidal desire given the caller is calling the Lifeline now. What is happening in the caller’s life today that motivated him/her to reach out by calling the Lifeline now?

If the caller denies current suicidal ideation, inquiring about recent suicidal ideation (e.g., past two months) may indicate the caller’s emotional instability. In addition, a caller may feel more ready to acknowledge previous thoughts/behaviors rather than to discuss the more immediate situation. Depending on how the crisis center worker responds, discussing previous suicidal desire and/or attempts can increase rapport and trust leading to disclosure of current suicidal desire if present.

Inquiring about previous suicidal attempts also allows for the telephone worker to engage the caller in a discussion about what happened during and after the attempt, which has the potential to increase awareness of the caller’s coping skills, reasons for living and awareness of available resources.

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Miranda Lambert's "Gunpowder & Lead"

County road 233 under my feet,
Nothing on this white rock but little old me
I got 2 miles till he makes bail,
And if I'm right were headed straight for hell

I'm goin home, gona load my shotgun
Wait by the door and light a cigarette
He wants a fight, well now he's got one
He ain't seen me crazy yet

Slapped my face, shook me like a rag doll,
Don't that sound like a real man
I'm gona show him what a lil girl is made of, Gunpowder and lead

Well, its half past ten, another six pack in
I can feel the rumble like the cold black wind
He pulls in the drive, gravel flies,
But he don't know what's waiting here this time

I'm goin home, gona load my shotgun
Wait by the door and light a cigarette
He wants a fight, well now he's got one
He ain't seen me crazy yet

Slapped my face, shook me like a rag doll,
Don't that sound like a real man
I'm gona show him what a lil girl is made of, Gunpowder and lead

His fist is big, but my gun's bigger,
He'll find out when I pull the trigger
I'm goin home, gona load my shotgun, Wait by the door and lit a cigarette
He wants a fight, well now he's got one, He ain't seen me crazy yet

Slapped my face, shook me like a rag doll,
Don't that sound like a real man
I'm gona show him what a lil girl is made of, Gunpowder and lead

Miranda Lambert's "Gunpowder & Lead"

Key Question:

1. Is there a credible risk of your patient committing serious bodily injury against another person?

Good answers:

1. Applied the criteria from *Psychiatry and Law for Clinicians, Third Edition*, by Robert I. Simon, M.D. ...
 - a. Specific person threatened?
 - b. History of violence?
 - c. How accessible is the victim?
 - d. Motive for wanting to harm the person?
 - e. Availability of lethal means?
 - f. History of impulsive behavior?
 - g. How strong is the therapeutic alliance?
 - h. How strong or volatile are the patient's other relationships?
 - i. Thought insertion or control?
 - j. Command hallucinations?
 - k. Control of anger?
 - l. Compliance with treatment requirements or aftercare instructions?
 - m. Syntonic or dystonic violence?
 - n. Specific plan?
 - o. Abused as a child?
 - p. Alcohol abuse?
 - q. Substance abuse?
 - r. Medication compliance?
 - s. Response to treatment?
 - t. Fear of being controlled?
2. Applied Borum & Reddy's "A-C-T-IO-N" mnemonic from their article ...
 - a. A =
 - b. C =
 - c. T =
 - d. I =
 - e. O =
 - f. N =

John Hiatt's "Nobody Knew His Name"

Well a man in a Cadillac used to come around here
Looking for a long black train
Said his baby left town with an engineer
Cut across the midnight rain, boys
Straight across the midnight rain

Now everybody said he'd been to Vietnam
When he was pretty young
That's when his buddy got killed when his rifle jammed
Now the fighting ain't ever done, boys
Now the fighting ain't never done

Red tip of a cigarette glowing
Windows up against the rain
Night so dark, there was nothing else showing
Nobody knew his name, boys
Nobody knew his name

Sheriff run him off once in a while
But he would be right back
With a cup of coffee, an old newspaper
Sitting by the side of the track, boys
Crying by the side of the track

He'd try to keep from turning the tables
Hired walking horses out at Suffolk Downs
But there was always some whiskey back at the stables
If you knew where to look around, boys
If you knew where to look around

Red tip of a cigarette glowing
Windows up against the rain
Night so dark, there was nothing else showing
Nobody knew his name, boys
Nobody knew his name

Slinging pizza and beer
Down at Waterfront Park

Handicapping dogs for the clientele
A different pick for each one
Yeah, it didn't matter who won
Somebody gonna tip him well, boys
Somebody gonna tip him well

Well they found him in his Cadillac car
Out behind the old farm store
He was sitting there like he was going somewhere
And he wasn't come back no more, boys
He wasn't come back no more

Some of the Elements of Good Story-Telling!

1. Narrator
2. Plot
3. Diction
4. Descriptive language
5. Conflicts
6. Theme

John Hiatt's "Blues Can't Even Find Me"

World is closing in on me
Don't know what to do
Can't see the big picture anymore
If there's even one to view

Wife keeps pushing buttons
Spends all day staring at a little screen
I'm feeling invisible
The blues can't even find me

Wish I had a name for feeling nothing
Wish I still had my old address
Where anyone could come on over
And just put me in a mess

Now I'm telling everybody
When we'll be taking our next breath
Blues can't even find me
Like we never even met

She cried all the way to Memphis, With the kids in back
And only me to talk it out with, Used to be like that

Now's there fifty people in the car
And the kids are grown
And I've heard her side fifty times
Talking on her cell phone

Now were just so lonely, And there's no turning back
It's virtually impossible, But I can live with that

I wouldn't want in on this train wreck
Wouldn't want to be on this last date
Now the blues can't even find me
All I know to do is wait

**John Hiatt's "Blues Can't Even Find Me"
Case Conceptualization Worksheet**

What symptoms do you see manifested in the protagonist?

What feelings does the protagonist have?

What thoughts does the protagonist have?

What beliefs does the protagonist have?

What behaviors does the protagonist have?