

## DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE

Bill was the president of the sophomore class, captain of the junior varsity football team and an honor student. Bill was the most popular kid in his class, but one night he put the barrel of a shotgun in his mouth and pulled the trigger. Looking back, his friends say they might have been able to do something if they had known what to look for. He was the youngest in a family of very gifted and suc-

cessful children. And the family had high expectations for him—which he said he could not live up to.

His older sister was killed the year before in an automobile accident. His friends thought it was just the grieving process when he spoke about “going to see his sister soon.” And his favorite comment when he was disappointed or frustrated in a dating relationship was, “I’m going to kill myself.”

## Discussion Questions:

1. If you had been a close friend of Bill's and you heard him speaking this way, what would you do?
  - ☐ probably ignore it
  - ☐ assume he was only joking
  - ☐ ask him what he was really saying
  - ☐ tell a counselor about it
  - ☐ see to it that he gets help at the risk of offending him
2. If you thought Bill should get help but feared you were going to “break his confidence,” what would you do?
  - ☐ tell someone without telling Bill
  - ☐ tell Bill first that I was going to tell someone
  - ☐ get Bill together with his parents and tell them
  - ☐ I don't know what I would do.
3. If Bill was in your youth group, what would you do?
  - ☐ open up about the situation to the whole group
  - ☐ tell the youth leader
  - ☐ tell Bill first that I was going to tell the youth leader
  - ☐ just be a friend to Bill
  - ☐ I don't know.