



**Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 1
Commanding Officer's Policy Statement on
Suicide Prevention**



“Fortitudine” and “Semper Fidelis”

The motto of the Marine Corps “Semper Fidelis,” meaning “Always Faithful,” is common knowledge. Lesser known is that prior to the adoption of “Semper Fidelis” in 1883, the motto of the Marine Corps was “Fortitudine,” meaning “with courage in pain or adversity.” These two mottos of our Corps embody my policy on suicide prevention and awareness.

For those that suffer from depression, lack of self-worth, or are otherwise discouraged to the degree they contemplate taking their own life, I say, “Fortitudine.” Have courage. There is nothing so important in life that it merits taking your own life through suicide. Suicide is never a solution. It is the desperate act of a person who feels that there are no other options available. Know that there are other options and we will get you the assistance you need. Your worth is too great. Stay the course and let the chain of command know when events are beyond your control. Your squadron mates, your leaders, your Chaplains, your Docs, your Sergeant Major, and your Commanding Officer are ready to commit our time and efforts to help you. We can, and will, help.

For the Marines and Sailors of MWHS-1, be ever watchful for signs, comments, or behaviors associated with thoughts of suicide. For those that are aware of, or believe, another individual is thinking of suicide, I say, “Semper Fidelis.” Be faithful to your fellow Marine, Sailor, friend, or family member. Get involved. Intervention and taking action is a reflection of your faithfulness and a demonstration of moral courage. Get help quickly for both them and yourself. Don't make a decision on your own about the best way to help. Someone who is very troubled may be in need of more help than you can give. Ensure an “at-risk” individual is promptly escorted to a behavioral health professional or chaplain.

The 1st MAW Suicide Awareness and Prevention Coordinator is the command chaplain who can be reached at 090-3014-2260. For further help or additional information, contact him or anyone in your chain of command, or visit the 1st MAW Suicide Prevention webpage at the following link for additional resources: <http://www.marines.mil/unit/1stairwing/Pages/SuicidePrevention.aspx>.

Semper Fidelis,

JOSEPH E. RUPP
Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding Officer
Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 1