Link between suicide and addiction disorders

Comments taken directly from Linda Rosenberg (President & CEO, National Council for Behavioral Health) article titled Suicide and Addictions: The Neglected Link

“… addiction is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. — 600,000 out of the 2.5 million deaths in the U.S. annually are attributable to tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs. The failure to integrate addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery effectively into our nation’s healthcare structure costs upwards of $468 billion annually, harming families and communities across the country.

Alcohol and drug abuse are second only to depression and other mood disorders as the most frequent risk factors for suicidal behavior. Alcohol and some drugs can result in a loss of inhibition, may increase impulsive behavior, can lead to changes in the brain that result in depression over time, and can be disruptive to relationships — resulting in alienation and a loss of social connection and increasing suicidal ideation. An overdose of alcohol or drugs could also result in death.

Individuals with addiction disorders are almost 6 times more likely to report a lifetime suicide attempt than those without an addiction disorder. Yet only one in ten people with addictions report receiving any treatment at all.... addiction is a brain disease, not a moral failing or character flaw that many still believe it to be. By raising awareness, focusing on the science, and expanding access to treatment, we can do for addictions what has been done for cancer, heart disease, and AIDS. We can save lives!”