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### Talk It Out

I was especially pleased to read one of the best things one might do for one concerned about taking his own life: “The best thing you can do is talk about his feelings” [“Suicide Watch,” October 2013, p. 890].

When I returned from Vietnam back in 1962 as a chaplain with the 101st Airborne, the only thoughts I had for years, day after day, was suicide, to be rid of the memories and the pain. I had no one to talk to in my nightmares when my screaming would wake me. Thankfully, I was picked up walking in my sleep by a Houston police officer who knew exactly what was wrong. He took me to the local veterans hospital where a group of former combat soldiers could discuss their agonies. After three months of their talk therapy, I could now speak

of my own pain and agony—and my thoughts of suicide almost disappeared. I say “almost” because one never gets over the pain and agony of combat and its memories. I am terribly grateful to that Houston police officer and those combat veterans who saved my life. That therapy really works. Thank you for the interview with Bree Buchanan.

**Peter J. Riga**  
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### Minor Problems

I work with detained immigrant minors and this opinion really hit home [Ethics Opinion: “Opinion No. 628, May 2013,” July 2013, p. 653]. Attorneys are mandated by the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act to provide detained minors with educational presentations, screenings,

legal counsel, and referrals upon release. If the minors attend court while in shelter, we assist them in requesting pro se continuances in immigration court as Friend of Court, not as a “reputable individual.” Once they reunify, the shelters assist them with requesting pro se changes of venue.

Per Rule 1.02(a), we discuss the nature of our representation with our clients. It is important to note that all attorneys who assist these minors speak Spanish, and if necessary, we use contract interpreters for other languages. We tell the minors that we are here to help them understand the process they are going through, their rights and responsibilities, and what legal relief options they may have. We also inform them as to their right to an attorney (at their own cost) and that we may assist them for advice-giving purposes only while they are detained. Per Rule 1.02(c) we communicate to them that we are not assisting with their applications for relief, to which they consent. Per Rule 1.02(g), if the minor is particularly young or has other incompetencies, we may communicate to the court that appropriate safeguards may be necessary per Matter of M-A-M-. Unfortunately, many dilemmas come from the lack of guidance from the court and immigration law’s own assumption that minors can and shall represent themselves in the face of deportation.

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