

Survivors of suicide loss

If you have lost a loved one to suicide, you are not alone. There are resources available to help survivors of suicide loss cope.

How to Take Care of Yourself

A loved one's suicide is a challenging, confusing, and painful experience. If you're struggling, there are things you can do:

- **Find a support group:** You don't have to cope with your loss alone. There are support groups specifically for those who have lost a loved one to suicide.
- **Do what feels right to you:** Don't feel pressured to talk right away. If you choose to discuss your loss, speaking can give your friends and family the opportunity to support you in an appropriate way.
- **Write:** You may find it helpful to write your feelings or to write a letter to your lost loved one. This can be a safe place for you to express some of the things you were not able to say before the death.
- **Ask for help:** Don't be afraid to let your friends provide support to you, or to look for resources in your community such as therapists, co-workers, or family members.

How to Take Care of Yourself

Supporting someone who has lost a loved one can feel overwhelming and complex. There are ways to help.

- **Accept their feelings:** Loss survivors grapple with complex feelings after the death of a loved one by suicide, such as fear, grief, shame, and anger. Accept their feelings and be compassionate and patient and provide support without criticism.
- **Use sensitivity during holidays and anniversaries:** Events may bring forth memories of the lost loved one and emphasize this loved one's absence.
- **Use the lost loved one's name:** Use the name of the person who has died when talking to survivors. This shows that you have not forgotten this important person and can make it easier to discuss a subject that is often stigmatized.

Resources for Loss Survivors

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
- After A Suicide Resource Director: www.personalgriefcoach.net

Source: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org