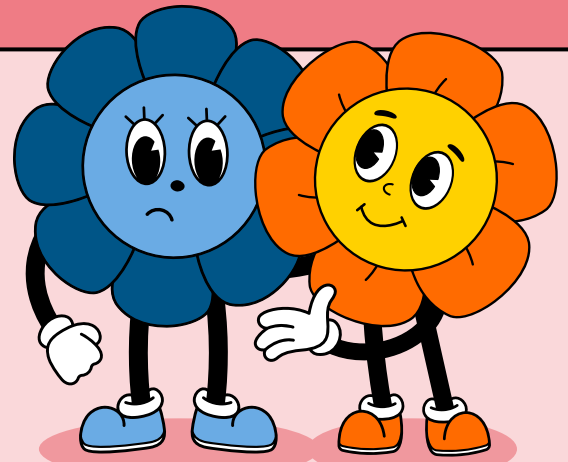


Healing After Suicide Loss

Grief after a suicide death of a loved one is often more complicated than other losses, we may have experienced. **We may ask why this happened, but the truth is we may never know the answer to this question. Suicide involves complex factors and is not the result of a single event.** Those who die are usually seeking to end unbearable psychological pain that may have been apparent or hidden and not shared. A point was reached where the pain was greater than the person's resources to tolerate it or to see other solutions.



HEALING COMES FIRST

No two grief experiences are the same. The pain of loss may come and go like waves, or it may feel constant and overwhelming. Though you are in the middle of one of the most painful losses a person can experience, please know you are not alone. Many people find it helpful to connect with others that have experienced the loss of a loved one to suicide. **Below is a list of organizations and resources that can help you learn more about coping with suicide loss and how to connect with others who understand what you are going through.**

WHAT TO SAY

If you know someone who has lost a friend or family member to suicide, **the most important thing you can do is reach out and listen.** You can't solve their grief, but you can help them feel less alone. Offer your condolences and support the way you would to anyone who has lost someone close to them. Offer to help with meals or other tasks. Often loss survivors feel like their loved one has been reduced to how they died, so talk to them about how their loved one lived their life. For example, ask them about the activities their loved one enjoyed or their favorite song.

If you are talking to a child about suicide, it may seem gentler to avoid the conversation or conceal the cause of death, more often than not children understand more than we realize. **Have a conversation that is age-appropriate but also honest.** This can help build their trust and avoid contributing to the legacy of shame and secrecy surrounding suicide that can persist many years into the child's life. **Understand that depending on the child's age, they may have a different understanding of permanence, so be willing to have this conversation with them as often as needed to help them process their thoughts and feelings.**

RESOURCES

Friends for Survival is an organization dedicated to support those who are grieving a suicide death. Call the toll free Help Line at 800-646-7322 or visit FriendsForSurvival.org.

Alliance of Hope is an online forum that offers healing and remembrance for those who have lost a loved one to suicide. Visit allianceofhope.org.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention offers online resources for support after a suicide loss and a directory of local support programs. Visit <https://afsp.org/ive-lost-someone/>.

