



Suicide Postvention Information for Loss Survivors



A suicide loss survivor is anyone who is close to someone who died by suicide or feels affected by it. This may include family members, friends, coworkers, and other close contacts who feel the impact of the suicide.

Shock



It is common to search for reasons why the suicide occurred.

Grief



Grief is a very personal experience with no “right way” to go through it. It may be intense and complex, with many different feelings accompanying it. Healing does occur.

Moving Through Grief



Grief and other emotions can feel overwhelming, especially in the initial days and months. Try to be kind and gentle with yourself. It helps to establish routines, get extra sleep, exercise, and eat healthy.

Difficult Emotions



Difficult emotions like betrayal, anger, or relief are common. It can help to remember that there is no right or wrong way to feel and that it's okay to acknowledge these difficult emotions.



Common emotions experienced during grief include:

- Shock
- **Guilt**
- Sadness
- **Despair**
- **Disbelief**
- **Stress**
- **Confusion**
- **Depression**
- **Numbness**
- **Helplessness**
- **Anger**
- **Denial**
- **Aloneness**
- **Self-blame**
- **Shame**
- **Hopelessness**
- **Rejection**
- **Anxiety**
- **Abandonment**
- **Relief**



Stigma

Stigma, shame, or embarrassment can prevent loss survivors from reaching out for help. Survivors sometimes feel that others might blame them for the suicide. Some may feel they need to deny what happened or hide their feelings. Additionally, stigma and discomfort can prevent others from being supportive and understanding in the way that is needed. Those around the survivor might feel uncertain about what to do or say to help. They may wait for the survivor to talk about their loved one or ask for help.

Connection and Support

You are not alone. Many survivors feel isolated in their grief, even among family and friends, who may not have experienced a death like this. Know that others have endured and you can, too. Many survivors find support groups helpful. Being with others who have been through something similar and sharing feelings without pressure or fear of judgment and shame can provide relief and comfort. Support groups can be a source of understanding, guidance, and healing.

Crisis

Some people develop persistent despair or emotional distress while grieving. They may even have thoughts of suicide themselves. Help is available. If you are in distress or having thoughts of suicide, contact the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline by calling or texting 988, or use the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Chat at 988lifeline.org/chat.

