

Coping with Suicide Loss

There are no words to describe the pain felt after someone you know commits suicide.

It is normal to feel grief. You may also feel angry, anxious, depressed and extremely sad. Some people feel guilty after a suicide of someone they know because they feel there may have been something they could have done to prevent it. All of these emotions are normal and part of the grieving process.



Emotional Well-Being

Dealing with the aftermath of suicide can be difficult. It is important to give yourself permission to grieve and to seek help if you need it.

Symptoms You Might Experience

Everyone experiences loss differently. Here are some common symptoms you might experience:

- Physical — headache, upset stomach, trouble sleeping and/or exhaustion
- Psychological — feelings of shock, numbness, sadness, anger and/or depression
- Behavioral — forgetfulness, preoccupation and/or hypersensitivity

What You Can do After a Loss

Give yourself time to grieve. Be patient and allow yourself the opportunity to mourn. Recognize your changing feelings as a normal part of the grieving process.

Give yourself permission. To cry, laugh, be angry and seek professional help if you need it. Remember you are moving through a complicated loss.

Talk to someone. Don't be afraid to ask for or accept help. It is quite possible that you will not be able to accomplish all that you are used to while you go through the grieving process. It is not a sign of weakness to ask for help.

Join a support group. Talking with others who have also experienced a loss can be helpful. The environment can provide a mutually supportive, reassuring healing environment.

Take care of yourself. Make sure you are eating properly, exercising and trying to get enough sleep. Avoid illegal drugs and excessive alcohol use.

Keep a normal routine and find ways to relieve stress. Be aware of the stress you are experiencing and find ways to relieve stress. Many people find relief by getting in touch with their spiritual side through mindfulness meditation and/or prayer.

Plan ahead. When you feel ready, find ways to mark birthdays, holidays or other milestones. Understand that new moments, experiences or events can be met with difficult emotions. Preparing for how you will move through these calendar dates will help minimize traumatic reactions.

Additional Resources

There are resources available for you to talk to someone for additional support, should you need it. Check with your company's human resource department for more information on the benefits that are available, like your Employee Assistance Program. Other resources include:

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

<https://afsp.org/find-support/ive-lost-someone/>

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention website has information for immediate questions as well as resource listings for ongoing support.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline)

<https://988lifeline.org/> and <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
Call 988 or 800-273-TALK (8255) (offers 24/7 call, text and chat access)

Sources:
Suicide Prevention Lifeline <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
www.psychologytoday.com/

