

Supporting Suicide Loss Survivors



“How can I support someone dealing with the aftermath of a suicide?”

Family members, friends or coworkers of who have lost someone to suicide may suffer alone and in silence. Survivors feel emotional pain and may be reluctant to, or not know how to, deal with these feelings. You may want to help, but may not be sure how to go about it.

Use the following information to help turn your care and concern into positive actions.

- **Accept the Intensity of Grief**

Suicide loss survivors may be struggling with intense emotions including guilt, anger, and sadness. These emotions can go beyond emotions experienced with other types of deaths. Try to be understanding, compassionate, and patient with those who are hurting.

- **Be Compassionate**

Caring support begins with your ability to be an active listener. Don't worry about what to say, but rather concentrate on the words that are being shared with you. Never say you know how they feel because you most likely do not. Just be as caring as you can be.

- **Avoid Simplistic Explanations**

Choose expressions of support wisely and avoid passing judgment or saying “they were out of their mind” or “crazy”. Suicide loss survivors need to process their feelings surrounding the death and actions of others should reflect sensitivity.

- **Be Aware That Suicide Grief is Unique**

Keep in mind that the grief following a suicide is different from other deaths. Be patient with the recovery process as it's unique for everyone. Healing may take a long time.

- **Be Aware of Holidays and Anniversaries**

Suicide loss survivors may have a particularly difficult time during special occasions. These events may be painful reminders of the individual's absence. Respect these times as a natural part of the grief and healing journey.

- **Respect Faith and Spirituality**

Incorporate faith into the healing process if applicable to the suicide loss survivor. Reliance on faith can be impactful to grief recovery.

To schedule an appointment with a counselor, complete our [Counseling Registration Form](#) found at www.BestCareEAP.org under the Forms tab. If you have issues with the form, please call Best Care EAP at (402) 354-8000 or (800) 801-4182 and we'll be glad to help.