

Next Steps

For those who can guide you through your grief. Use resources available to help you cope with your loss. There are ways to put your grief into action.

Local Survivor Resources

Center for Suicide Awareness Survivors of Suicide (SOS) Support Groups

Survivors of Suicide Adult Support Group:

Meets the 2nd Monday of the month. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2600 E. Philip Lane, Appleton. Open to all people over 18 who have been affected by loss due to suicide. Free of charge and no need to pre-register. Questions please contact: Barb (920) 750-9091

Youth Survivors of Suicide Support Group:

Meets the 3rd Monday of the month. 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2600 E. Philip Lane, Appleton. Open to all people ages 10-18 who have been affected by loss due to suicide. Free of charge and pre-registration is required. Questions, please contact: Barb (920) 750-9091

Additional Resources

American Association of Suicidology-AAS
www.suicidology.org 1-202-237-2280

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention-AFSP
www.afsp.org 1-888-333-AFSP (2377)

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
24/7 Crisis Resource**
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Ways to Get Involved

- * Share your stories
- * Facilitate a support group
- * QPR (Question, Persuade and Refer) Trainings
- * The Annual Walk for Suicide Awareness

www.walkforsuicideawareness.org
www.centerforsuicideawareness.org



109 E. 8th St. Suite 31
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Help and Support After A Suicide

Survivors of Suicide Support Groups
(SOS)



Kaukauna, Wisconsin

Survivors of Suicide



A sudden death can be a traumatic experience for survivors. A death by suicide adds a unique set of challenges for those who are left behind. This information is meant to help you understand what happens after a suicide.

Reactions

People report some or all of these normal reactions which are not the same for everyone. They may come and go like waves or they may feel constant and overwhelming.

- * Physical symptoms in response to trauma.
- * Feeling shock and numbness.
- * A sense of disbelief because the events seem unreal.
- * Loss of concentration and inability to focus.
- * Guilt for having been unable to prevent the death.
- * Anger at the person, others, self, or God.
- * Relief if following a difficult struggle with illness or behavior.
- * Anxiety and worry about yourself or others.
- * Questioning what you or others did or did not do.
- * Deep and profound sadness.

Understanding Why

A suicide can bring about questioning and searching for an answer to, "Why would this person end their own life?"

- * 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.
- * Some questions may remain unanswered as to why.

A Different Grief

There are reasons that a death by suicide may feel different than other losses you have experienced. These can complicate the grieving process.

- * Police and other authorities need to be involved in the death investigation.
- * When suicide is ruled as the cause of death, the reasons may remain a mystery.
- * There may be a final note or communication involved. The message or lack of message can raise questions for survivors.
- * Religious confictions may arise concerning your own beliefs or the beliefs of others who are reacting to the suicide death.
- * With a suicide death, certain stigmas are associated with it.

Talking to Children About Suicide

Discussing suicide can be difficult for adults when there are many unanswered questions, and explaining the death to children is challenging but important.

- * Children may not talk about the death or they may repeatedly ask about it.
- * Children need to hear age-appropriate information about death and suicide from a trusted person.
- * Telling the truth is essential.
- * Expect a variety of reactions including fear that others may die.
- * Anxiety is likely to arise around being separated from caregivers, even for short periods of time.
- * Talk, with school staff or others involved in the child's life about what has happened.

- * Provide opportunities for questions and reactions through activities and other creative outlets.
- * Talk about and remember the person who died.
- * Separate who the person was, from the manner of death.
- * Share your own feelings of grief with your child.
- * Reassure the child that they will be cared for and you will be there for them. Tell them that even though you may feel sad right now, you will not always feel that way.



What Helps

Those who have experienced a suicide loss have shared what has helped them.

- * Work at understanding that you have experienced a traumatic loss.
- * Be patient in allowing yourself the reactions and feelings of grief.
- * Seek out those who give you comfort.
- * Avoid or limit contact with those who complicate your grief.
- * Practice self care along with caring for others.
- * Gain information and skills through reading and using available resources.
- * Discuss your loss with other survivors such as in a support group.
- * Take comfort in any progress you make in surviving your loss.

www.centerforsuicideawareness.org
www.facebook.com/centerforsuicideawareness