

Suicide Grief: What Can You Do?

If you have lost someone to suicide, the grief you are experiencing is complicated. Not everyone in your usual support network will understand what you are feeling and why you are struggling.



Is it OK to feel angry or guilty?

People will feel a variety of emotions after losing someone to suicide. It is normal to feel sadness, confusion, hurt, anger, despair or even guilt. You may even feel all of these emotions as you process what happened. Some people may experience nightmares, trouble focusing or begin to have thoughts of suicide themselves. The pain of losing someone to suicide may surface in different ways.

What if this feels like more than I can bear?

Grief and healing are processes that take time. Some days may seem easy to handle and others will seem too difficult to bear. Be patient with yourself and know that it will get better. It is normal to have ups and downs. If you are having a difficult time with your grief it is important to reach out. Talk to a family member, a friend, co-worker, or someone you trust such as a family doctor, religious leader, counsellor or elder. You could also try a support group. Spending time with people who have lived through similar experiences can provide valuable insights and give you hope.

What happens during bereavement?

You may feel waves of emotions. These can include numbness, shock, loss, disorganization, sadness, or loneliness. You may find you are functioning mechanically and isolating yourself from others emotionally. It's too early to come to grips with the tragedy. You may have problems sleeping and eating as well as focusing or concentrating.

Eventually you will come to a place of acceptance and reorganization. With time you may start to feel better and begin to move on from the pain.

Grief is a very individual experience, and people move through the process in their own ways. People rarely move through the healing process in a straight line. There will always be setbacks or relapses of emotion.

Remember: Part of any loss is the loss of who you once were before this happened. You will never be the same. Part of this process is accepting who you have become.

Do people react and grieve differently?

There is no single right way to grieve. We experience many complex feelings following a death by suicide, feelings that may be different from those following other types of death. These emotions vary in type and intensity for each individual and circumstance.

Family members, friends, and situations differ. You may all express and move through grief so differently that it may be confusing and even frustrating at times. As our needs vary, so do our means of expression.

It is important to move through the stages at your own pace. The length of time needed to grieve and mourn varies from person to person. How long it takes isn't as important as the actual movement. It is the act of mourning that indicates a person is moving through the process.



We need our own space, our own time, and the understanding, support and patience of others for healthy expression of grief.

Approximately one in four people knows someone who died by suicide. A suicide leaves behind a group of family and friends who must cope with the same inner turmoil that you are now dealing with.

You are not alone in your struggle

Am I to blame? Could I have helped?

After a suicide, family and friends often go over events that happened before the death, blaming themselves for things they should or should not have done.

"If only I had tried harder to help!"

"If only I hadn't said what I did!"

"If only...if only...!"

Good Grief Community

Grande Prairie

a place to share the journey of grief and healing in a safe, welcoming environment with others who have walked the path



Community Coffee Time
Wednesdays, 7-8 PM
Bear Creek Funeral Home
11802 99 Avenue
Grande Prairie

Online Community 
Closed Facebook group
Search Good Grief Community Grande Prairie
or go to
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/goodgrief>

For more information call 780-830-7742
or email info@bearcreekfuneral.com
www.bearcreekfuneral.com

BEAR CREEK FUNERAL HOME

NO CHARGE TO PARTICIPATE



It is important to remember that suicide of a loved one is never your fault. No one is able to predict the future and warning signs are not always obvious.



As a friend, what can I do?

Treat your friend as you would treat anyone else who has lost a family member.

Be understanding and patient.

Even if you have gone through a similar experience, you may not truly know how they feel.

It can take some people a long time to completely work through the grief and deal with all their feelings. It must happen in its own time.

Be available to listen and help.

Remind them that no one is to blame.

If needed, encourage your friend to consider outside help from a counselling agency or support group. Advocate for them and even go with them in the beginning.

Every day, we learn more about suicide, mental illness, and how to help. In recent years, we have changed laws, changed our language, found links with mental illness, loss, stress, head trauma, and family history. We are discovering new treatment methods and continue to learn, grow, and improve our understanding