

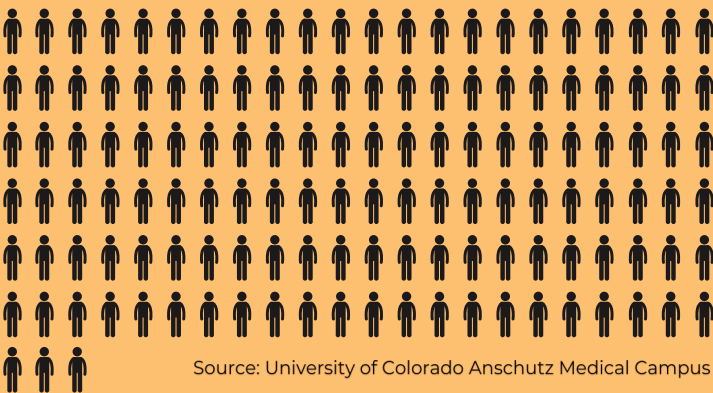
Grief After Suicide Loss

Losing a loved one to suicide is one of the most painful experiences. For every person that dies by suicide, it is estimated that 135 people are affected.¹ Suicide loss often comes with unique emotions, with feelings of shock, disbelief, shame, and guilt. These feelings can be overwhelming and isolating. It's important to remember that there is no right or wrong way to grieve, and your feelings and experiences are valid.

Feelings After a Suicide Loss

After a suicide loss, it's common to experience a wide range of emotions. Shock and disbelief might make you feel emotionally numb, making it difficult to accept the reality of a loved one's death. You may also feel anger toward your loved one or at yourself and others for missing possible warning signs. There may be feelings of guilt, with recurring thoughts of "what if" or "if only," as one might blame themselves for not preventing the loss. Despair can lead to depression, loneliness, and helplessness. These feelings might come with physical exhaustion or even thoughts of suicide. Confusion is also a common feeling, as many people search for answers, though some questions may remain unanswered. Lastly, feelings of rejection may occur, leaving you to wonder why your relationship wasn't enough to prevent the loss.²

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Finding Support

Support after suicide loss can be vital for healing. Many resources are available, including local support groups through mental health organizations and online resources like LOSS Community Services at <https://losscs.org/>. These groups offer a safe space to share, connect, and find understanding among others with similar experiences.

Online resources include:

- Survivor of Suicide Loss Support Groups ohiospf.org/postvention/support-group/
- Emotions and Grieving ohiospf.org/postvention/emotions-and-grieving/
- 988 Lifeline 988lifeline.org/help-yourself/loss-survivors/

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Supporting Yourself Through Grief

Experiencing the loss of a loved one to suicide can be deeply challenging and isolating. Here are some ways to support yourself during this difficult time:

- Talk openly and honestly about your feelings.
- Educate yourself on the grief process and suicide loss for greater insight.
- Seek support from friends, family, or a support group to connect with others who understand.
- Allow yourself the time and space to grieve at your own pace.

Supporting Others After a Suicide Loss

Supporting someone who has experienced a loss to suicide can be incredibly meaningful but may feel challenging to navigate. Here are some ways to offer comfort and understanding during this difficult time:³

- Listen without judgment and encourage open conversations about their feelings.
- Check-in regularly to show consistent support, even after time has passed.
- Offer practical help, such as meals, childcare, or errands, to ease daily burdens.
- Be patient, allowing them to process their grief at their own pace.
- Encourage seeking support from grief groups or mental health professionals if they're open to it.
- Remember and honor the loved one with them if they wish to share memories.

Help is Available

It's important to acknowledge that grief can feel isolating, but you are not alone in this experience. Connecting with friends, family, or support groups can provide comfort and understanding during this challenging time.

If you find yourself struggling with suicidal thoughts or in crisis, please reach out to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline for immediate support and assistance. Your feelings are valid, and help is available.

References

- 1 Kelley L. "Expert Untangles Complexities of Grief for Suicide Loss Survivors." <https://news.cuanschutz.edu/news-stories/expert-untangles-complexities-of-grief-for-suicide-loss-survivors>. Accessed October 12, 2024.
- 2 How to Heal after a Loved One's Death. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/end-of-life/in-depth/suicide/art-20044900>. Accessed October 12, 2024.
- 3 "10 Ways to Support a Loved One Who Has Lost Someone to Suicide." <https://afsp.org/story/10-ways-to-support-a-loved-one-who-has-lost-someone-to-suicide>. Accessed October 12, 2024.

ABOUT OHIO SUICIDE PREVENTION FOUNDATION

Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation (OSPF) educates, advocates for, and builds connections and support for individuals, families, and communities to prevent suicide.



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