

Self Care Tips after a Suicide Loss



Suicide Loss Survival

If *you* or a *loved one* has recently experienced a *suicide loss*, the reality probably came as a shock to you and you are trying to find a means by which to *cope with the loss*.

It is essential that during this coping process that you remember a few things:

- **You are not alone**—you have a support network of friends, family, and/or a professional community to listen, help, and offer their services.



**You are important.
You matter.**

- **You can take care of yourself**—begin the whole-body healing process physically, mentally, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually. Don't wipe away tears if you are not yet ready.
- **You can get through this**—find a positive path to manage grief and move on with your life to survive this loss.

Survivor Coping

- You will feel a **great deal** of emotions from anxiety to sadness to grief to self-blaming. This is normal and part of the **complicated grieving** process.
 - Research has shown that the grieving process is **similar** for those experiencing suicide loss than other means of death but suicide loss survivors face additional challenges of **grief, shame, and self-blaming**.
 - You need time to work through the feelings of guilt, shame, and self-blaming and find the support you need—it is not **"irrational"** to feel guilty.
 - Let those emotions out and **cry** if you need to—let yourself find **relief** from emotional pain.
 - Many suicide survivors find comfort **sharing** the truth about their loved one's death by suicide.
- By sharing the truth with your loved ones, you open the door for them to help you and for you to **tell them what you need**.
 - If necessary, **reduce** your interactions with those whom make you **feel worse**. Be honest and say "I know you mean well, but what you are saying right now is not helpful."
 - If you or your mourning loved one begin to find themselves **unable** to handle the grieving process, consider going to a **survivor support group** or seek professional help.
 - If you are the parent of a child or teen, tell them the **truth** in plain words, encourage questions, and offer **loving reassurance**. Let them express their emotions and talk when they need to.
 - **Be Kind to Yourself**. When you feel ready to begin the next chapter in your life, enjoy life! Remember your loved one however it feels right to you and know that you are on the path to healing.

For more resources: www.vtspc.org
info@healthandlearning.org

