

# Providing Support to Someone Experiencing Suicide Loss



Supporting someone who has experienced a suicide loss can be challenging, but it's essential to be there for them during this difficult time. Here are some guidelines on how to appropriately help someone who is experiencing a suicide loss:

## Be there and listen:

- Offer your presence and a listening ear. Let the person know that you are there to support them whenever they need to talk or just be with someone.
- Avoid judgment, criticism, or trying to provide immediate solutions. Allow them to express their feelings and thoughts without interruption.

## Show empathy and understanding:

- Understand that they may be going through intense emotions like guilt, anger, confusion, and sadness. Let them know that these feelings are normal.
- Use empathetic statements such as, "I can't imagine what you're going through," or "I'm here for you, and I care about how you feel."

## Avoid insensitive comments:

- Be cautious with your choice of words. Avoid saying things like, "I know how you feel" or "It's for the best." Instead, acknowledge their pain without trying to compare or minimize it.

## Encourage professional help:

- Gently suggest that they seek professional help, such as therapy or counseling. Grief can be overwhelming, and trained professionals can provide valuable support.
- Offer to help them find a therapist or counselor if they're unsure where to start.

## Be patient:

- Understand that grief doesn't have a set timeline. People may grieve differently and at their own pace.
- Continue offering support even after some time has passed. Grief can resurface, especially around anniversaries or triggering events.

## Assist with practical matters:

- Offer assistance with practical tasks such as meal preparation, housework, or childcare if they're comfortable with it. Grieving individuals may struggle to focus on daily responsibilities.

## Encourage self-care:

- Remind them of the importance of self-care. Encourage them to eat well, get enough rest, and engage in activities that bring them comfort and relaxation.

## Stay connected:

- Continue reaching out regularly, even when it seems like they're doing better. Isolation can exacerbate feelings of grief and loneliness.

## Respect their privacy:

- Understand that they may not want to discuss the details of the suicide, and that's okay. Respect their boundaries and only offer support where they're comfortable.

## Educate yourself:

- Take the time to learn about suicide, grief, and mental health to better understand what your loved one is going through. This knowledge will help you offer more effective support.

Your role is to provide emotional support, not to "fix" the person's grief. Grieving is a unique and personal process, and your presence and empathy can make a significant difference in their healing journey. If you believe they are in immediate danger or need urgent help, do not hesitate to call emergency services or a crisis hotline.



**Call 988 if you are experiencing thoughts of suicide.**

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