

GRIEF AFTER SUICIDE:
Finding Hope and Healing
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Description:

The suicide of a loved one can have a profound and sometimes devastating impact on those left behind, called suicide survivors. Bereavement after suicide may entail high levels of disorientation, guilt, regret, anger, and trauma. Survivors sometimes struggle with the social stigma often placed on suicide. Survivors may also be at risk for elevated rates of complicated grief and even future suicidality themselves. All of this makes surviving the suicide of a loved one a potentially life-changing ordeal that requires all of the resilience that a survivor can muster, and all the support that family and community can provide for them.

This workshop will draw on the presenter's years of experience as a grief counselor specializing in work with suicide loss survivors to describe the remarkable pathways of healing that survivors can walk. The presentation will cover topics such as the impact of suicide on individuals and the family as a group, some of the myths of grief recovery, things that survivors can do to help themselves, and when to seek professional help. The workshop is geared towards people who are grieving the loss of a loved one to suicide, but will also be of value to those who wish to support a grieving survivor, and to professional caregivers such as therapists and clergy who are working with survivors. The format will include didactic presentation, case examples from the presenter's practice, and time for questions and answer with the audience.

Educational Goals:

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Identify at least five common themes in bereavement after suicide.
2. Identify common myths about the grieving process
3. Describe principles of self-help for suicide survivors
4. Recognize when professional help is needed in the grieving process after a suicide.