

Suicide & Bereavement

Creating *Hope* Through *Action*



BACKGROUND

Grief is a natural reaction to a loss of a loved person. Although there are some similarities in grief reactions across modes of death, the quality of the grief process after suicide is often specific.

People bereaved by suicide are referred to as suicide survivors, as they are the ones overcoming the impact of such loss. They are often struggling with questions, such as >why< the person has died by suicide and they are ruminating about potentially missed possibilities of recognising signs and preventing the suicide. They are often faced with a complex mix of feelings of pain, sadness, guilt, anger, regret, and other intensive negative emotions. They have also increased risks of mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression, and increased risk of suicidal behaviour.

Unfortunately, suicide survivors often feel misunderstood and lonely, and they find it hard to find support in their grief, which is, at least in part, related to the stigma and shame around the topic of suicide.

YOU CAN *be the light*

HOW TO SUPPORT PEOPLE BEREAVED BY SUICIDE

- * Listen and try to understand the bereaved person's reactions from their point of view.
- * Offer support in everyday activities, even regarding the basic needs.
- * Accept their grief reactions, even if these may change from one day to another.
- * Acknowledge that they are dealing with a complex process, rather than providing simplistic advice on how to change their feelings.



Written in collaboration with the IASP Suicide Bereavement And Postvention Special Interest Group.

STATISTICS

International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day is a time when we reach out to each other around the world creating a warm and supportive global embrace. We are not alone, we are together and we will always remember and mourn our loved ones lost to suicide.



On 10 September each year, IASP invites everyone around the world to light a candle to show support for suicide prevention efforts, to reflect, to remember those lost to suicide and acknowledge survivors of suicide loss.



www.iasp.info/wspd

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- * Be patient. It's not easy to make meaning of such situation and those bereaved might need to talk about this again and again.
- * Be persistent and active in how you show your support even if the bereaved person withdraws a bit.
- * Make sure you also take care of yourself!

TAKE ACTION IF YOU ARE BEREAVED BY SUICIDE

- * Make small gestures of taking care of yourself everyday.
- * Engage in meaningful rituals (such as lighting a candle) to remember your loved one.
- * Share your feelings with people you trust.
- * Find local (suicide related) bereavement support groups. There are online groups too.
- * Do meaningful things that temporarily distract you from your ruminations.
- * Try to engage in something pleasant or start a new activity to change habits.

RESOURCES

- [Australia](#) - StandBy Support After Suicide
- [Belgium](#) - Working Group Further after Suicide
- [Canada](#) - Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention
- [Denmark](#) - Landsforeningen for efterladte efter selvmord
- [Finland](#) - Surunauha
- [Germany](#) - AGUS — Angehörige um Suizid
- [Hong Kong](#) - Samaritans
- [Italy](#) - De Leo Fund
- [Kenya](#) - Befrienders Kenya
- [Norway](#) - Leve
- [UK](#) - SOBS
- [Singapore](#) - Samaritans of Singapore
- [Sweden](#) - SPES
- [USA](#) - Alliance of Hope

STATISTICS

Suicide is a global challenge. Suicide ranks consistently among the top 20 causes of death globally across all age groups. One in every 100 deaths worldwide is the result of suicide. It can affect every one of us.



The global suicide rate is over twice as high among men than women.



Over half (58%) of all deaths by suicide occur before the age of 50 years old.



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