
Why didn't my loved one tell me?

Some may not want to burden others with their problems. Some feel shame at being suicidal. Some may incorrectly believe that nobody cared or that nothing could help them. Psychological pain sets its sufferers apart from those around them. It takes away the sense that anything can be done about it.

Why didn't somebody do something?

Suicide is not predictable. It can be determined that someone may be at risk of suicide. There is no way to say for sure if or when an individual may complete suicide.

Why did this happen?

Every suicide is different, but intense hopelessness seems to be a factor. Whatever the problem, it is devastating to the individual. Coping skills fail; the sense of control is lost. The problem may only seem solvable by death.

Why didn't I know?

It is difficult to determine if someone is at high risk of suicide. Not all suicidal individuals show signs of suicide risk, some may try to hide it. Others may fear seeming weak if they ask for help so they did not share their feelings.

What is suicide bereavement?

This is what is felt by family members, friends, and others who lose someone they cared for to suicide. It is a period of grief and mourning that is more intense than after other losses. Suicide deeply affects those it touches. This is especially true when mental health or substance abuse may be impacted by the loss.

How may suicide loss affect me?

You may feel betrayed, angry. You may feel that the one you lost let you down, that he or she never gave you the chance to help. You may feel that you should have or could have “done something.” Such feelings are common but not always appropriate. Suicide is unpredictable and sudden, and often occurs in a way to deter help or rescue. Nobody is ever ready for a suicide.

How can I deal with suicide loss?

You need to understand your feelings, get support, and learn more about suicide to gain insight into your loss. You need to be ready for expressions of stigma and ignorance about suicide, why it happens, and how it relates to mental illness. What you hear may be hurtful.

What is a self-help support group?

Support is critical to recovery from suicide loss and groups are an effective way to receive it. Support enhances coping ability. Information sharing is a key element. Groups are “safe places” to talk about your feelings. At meetings, participants say what they are comfortable in saying about their loss and share thoughts on grieving.

For information about support groups contact Survivors of Suicide, Inc. at 215-545-2242 or sosphilly@hotmail.com.

What will I need later?

You must be ready to deal with “triggers.” These are events or things that may rekindle your grief. The most common are anniversaries of your loss and the first holidays after the loss. Other events may also be triggers.

How can I help myself?

Proceed at your own pace. Don't set impractical goals or let others impose unrealistic expectations or time limits for you (e.g., when somebody says: “Shouldn't you be over this by now?”). Everybody grieves differently.

Mental Illness and Suicide:

Here are some important things to know about the relationship between mental illness and suicide:

- ◆ Mental illness does not cause suicide; it is a risk factor for suicide but only one of many.
- ◆ Treating mental illness and substance abuse significantly lowers the risk of suicide.
- ◆ Ignorance about mental illness plays a role in suicide because stigma may keep people who feel suicidal from seeking help.
- ◆ Thoughts of suicide may occur with mental illness, but they do not always worsen and should be disclosed to your provider.
- ◆ Sometimes hospitalization is necessary for safety, but other forms of treatment can help.

How can MCES help?

We have a 24/7 crisis line staffed by crisis intervention professionals available to talk to you about suicide loss. This may include counseling over the phone, referrals to sources of help, and information about suicide and suicide loss.

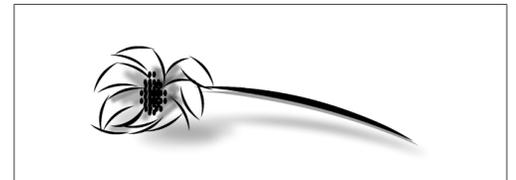
Our Crisis Department is open 24/7 and our staff are available to assist you if you feel that you are in crisis or that your loss may be causing reoccurrence of symptoms or other problems at a time when your provider is not available.

It is the policy of MCES to treat all clients without regard to race, color, sex, sexual, sexual preference, national origin, religious creed or disability.

There is no distinction in eligibility for, or in the manner of providing any service. Clients will not be referred to providers which are known to MCES to be in non-compliance with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act.

Suicide Bereavement & Mental Health

***Some answers for
those who have
experienced a
suicide***



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