



You don't have to go through this difficult experience on your own. Suicide affects millions each year, and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention offers resources to help loss survivors cope, connect, and heal.

## Resources

### Survivor Outreach Program

Trained suicide loss survivors visit with you in person, by phone, through video chat, or email to help guide you in the aftermath of a suicide. Learn more at [afsp.org/sop](https://afsp.org/sop).

### International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

On Survivor Day, people all over the world gather at local events to find comfort, gain insight, and share stories of healing and hope. Learn more at [afsp.org/SurvivorDay](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDay).

### Suicide Loss Survivor Support Groups

AFSP maintains an online directory of support groups so you can easily find groups in your community. Learn more at [afsp.org/SupportGroups](https://afsp.org/SupportGroups).

### Loss Survivor Documentaries

AFSP's documentaries show that through resilience and support, loss survivors can find hope, meaning, and even joy in their lives while celebrating the lives of those they've lost. Watch all our films at [afsp.org/SurvivorDayFilms](https://afsp.org/SurvivorDayFilms).

### Books about Suicide Loss

Find recommended books about suicide, suicide prevention, and suicide loss at [afsp.org/books](https://afsp.org/books).

### Lifekeeper Memory Quilts

Our memory quilts – both physical and digital – allow suicide loss survivors to share stories of their loved ones through individual memorial squares. Visit [afsp.org/quilt](https://afsp.org/quilt) to learn more.



American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention

# After a Suicide



American  
Foundation  
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Prevention





**Know that you  
are not alone.**

## The Immediate Aftermath

There are common realities you may have to address in the first few days after your loss, such as assisting the police, making preparations for a funeral or memorial service, arranging an obituary, and talking to people (possibly including children) about what happened.

This is a lot to take on, especially as you do your best to process so many difficult feelings.

For practical information on what to do in the immediate aftermath of a suicide loss, please visit [afsp.org/immediately-after-a-loss](https://afsp.org/immediately-after-a-loss).

## Understanding Suicide Loss

Everyone experiences suicide loss in their own way. In addition to common grief responses such as sadness and shock, you may also feel anger, shame, disorientation, relief, and guilt.

Allow yourself to feel what you feel and understand that healing takes time. If you are struggling to cope or experiencing suicidal feelings, reach out to a mental health professional.

## Understanding the Why

Though research shows that most people who take their own life have a mental health condition at the time of their death, the reasons behind any suicide are complicated and answers may be hard to find. It's natural, at first, to dwell on how a loved one died (or even why they died), but focusing instead on the time you shared together may help you move forward in your healing journey.

## Healthy Healing

### Be Patient

Know that everyone grieves at his or her own pace. Give yourself time.

### Take Care of Yourself

Eat nutritiously. Get sleep and exercise. Even a 10-minute walk can make a difference.

### Seek Professional Help

Many people find that counseling helps them deal with their grief in healthy ways.

### Learn about Suicide Loss

Knowing what to expect often helps you get through the more difficult times.

### Connect with Other Suicide Loss Survivors

Find comfort by reaching out to people who understand what you're going through.

