

Suicide Loss Resources:

Survivors of Suicide, Inc. (SOS)

Monthly adult suicide loss support groups Philadelphia and suburbs

215-545-2242 (Voice Mail)

www.sosphilly.org

Healthy Minds (Phila. DBHIDS)

Monthly adult suicide loss support groups in Philadelphia County.

215-685-6440 (24/7)

<https://healthymindsphilly.org/>

NAMI Bucks County PA

Bi-monthly adult suicide loss support group

215-343-3055

<https://namibuckspa.org/>

Center for Grief and Bereavement

Support for Suicide Loss Group

610-222-4110

<http://bereavementcenter.org/>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)

National Support Group Locator

<https://afsp.org/find-a-support-group/>

About Survivors of Suicide:

We are a voluntary nonprofit organization funded by donations formed in 1983 by two women who lost sons to suicide.

We provide mutual self-help with bereavement after a suicide and promote understanding of the trauma associated with such loss.

We believe that sharing experiences and feelings effectively supports recovery from suicide loss.

Our goals:

- Support individuals and families affected by suicide loss
- Support local and national suicide loss awareness efforts
- Provide community information and education on suicide loss



Understanding Suicide Loss



Survivors of Suicide, Inc.

PO Box 128

Morton, PA 19070

215-545-2242

sosphilly30@gmail.com

www.sosphilly.org

@phillysos

What is suicide loss?

Experiencing the suicide of a loved one or close friend is a severe emotional trauma. Suicides produce shock and disbelief; unanswerable questions about the deceased's intent; and often strong feelings of anger, betrayal, abandonment, shame, and guilt. The unanticipated nature of most suicides may lead to an obsessive search for the "why" by survivors.

Why is suicide loss different?

Losing someone to suicide is very different from "normal" deaths such as to illness or to old age as well as other sudden, unexpected deaths. The reasons for why other deaths, even violent ones, occurred may be painful but known. A suicide is the only death directly caused by the deceased. Suicide is surrounded by many misconceptions and is highly stigmatized. These characteristics set it apart from other deaths.

How long does suicide loss last?

The length of time that you may be affected by a suicide largely depends on how close you were to the person that you lost. Some suicide loss survivors experience a relatively short-term bereavement, which passes within several weeks. Those who feel stronger ties to the deceased may experience a much longer, much more intense bereavement that may last one year or even much longer. There is no standard pattern. Grieving is a highly personal response .

What makes suicide loss worse?

Witnessing the suicide or finding the person can significantly increase stress. If you have a history of trauma, mental illness , or substance use you may experience recurrence of symptoms or relapse. Suicide loss may challenge recovery and sobriety. Being unable to grieve openly or being in settings or organizational cultures intolerant to grief may be harmful.

What helps suicide loss coping?

Understanding that what you are feeling is normal – You may think that you are suffering a severe psychiatric crisis or even a "breakdown," but what you are enduring is an acute bereavement that associated with an extremely traumatic loss.

Getting support – The coping skills you employed with previous losses may be inadequate. Suicide loss is best endured with help. Mutual self-help with others sharing your loss or with similar loss experiences will be beneficial. Most survivors find support groups helpful. In some cases, however, professional help may be necessary.

Accepting that you will need time to deal with your loss and grief – Most survivors will need to take things slowly, take care of themselves, their families, or their friends or co-workers, and not set or accept deadlines for "getting over it." Suicide loss has no "quick fix."