

UNDERSTANDING GRIEF AFTER A SUICIDE LOSS

Gentle guidance for survivors of suicide loss

Grief after a suicide loss can hold many emotions at once: shock, love, anger, guilt, confusion, relief, shame, yearning, or numbness. Some feelings may seem contradictory, and they may change without warning. There is no correct way to grieve and no timetable you must follow. Your response reflects the depth and complexity of what you have lived through.

A COMPLICATED GRIEF EXPERIENCE

Suicide loss can affect your sense of safety, identity, relationships, and understanding of the past.

- Shock and disbelief may return in waves
- Questions may feel urgent or unanswerable
- Stigma can make grief feel isolating
- Traumatic stress and grief may overlap

COMMON THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

You may experience emotions that are intense, mixed, or difficult to name. None of them makes you disloyal.

- Guilt, regret, anger, or helplessness
- Longing for the person who died
- Fear about yourself or other loved ones
- Moments of relief followed by guilt

WHAT MAY HELP

Gentle support can make room for your grief without asking you to explain, defend, or hurry it.

- Talk with someone who can listen without judgment
- Connect with a suicide-loss support group
- Write, create, move, pray, or sit quietly
- Protect your privacy and set needed boundaries

WHEN TO SEEK MORE SUPPORT

Extra care is appropriate when grief, trauma, or safety concerns feel too heavy to carry alone.

- Contact a grief- or trauma-informed professional
- Tell someone if you feel unsafe or overwhelmed
- Create a simple plan for difficult moments
- In the U.S., call or text 988 for immediate support

A GENTLE REMINDER

Your grief is real, even when it feels confusing or different from the grief of others. You deserve compassionate support and room to heal in your own way.

Your grief is real. Your questions are welcome. You do not have to carry this alone.

