

Supporting Individuals and Communities Impacted by Suicide Loss

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Overview

- Introduction/About AFSP
- The Experience of Suicide and Suicide Loss
- Helping the Suicide Loss Survivor and Impacted Communities
- Resources



1

2

When Suicide Loss Occurs

- One study estimated that 135 people are exposed to each suicide. One in five reported that this experience had a devastating impact or caused a major life disruption.¹
- Exposure to suicide can lead to an array of negative outcomes for the individual, including mental health issues, social isolation, and an increased risk of suicide.²

¹Chen, L., Brown, B., & Smith, R. (2018). Suicide Loss: A Review of the Literature. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 57(10), 1055-1065. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00004583-201810000-00010>

²Wahl, J. (2018). Suicide Loss: A Review of the Literature. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 57(10), 1055-1065. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00004583-201810000-00010>

3



4

ABOUT AFSP

In **1987**, the organization was founded by researchers and families who had lost loved ones and wanted to take action against this leading cause of death. Today, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention combines science and the grassroots, and gives those affected by suicide a nationwide movement of **over a million people**, with chapters in all **50 states**.



5

HOW WE FIGHT

Our Work



Research



Advocacy



Prevention Education



Interactive Screening Program



Loss & Healing



Chapters



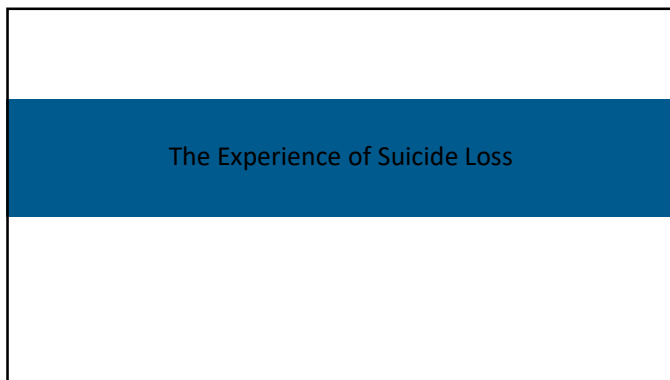
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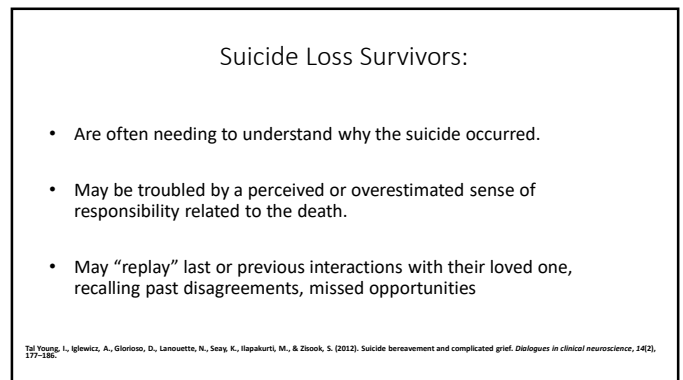
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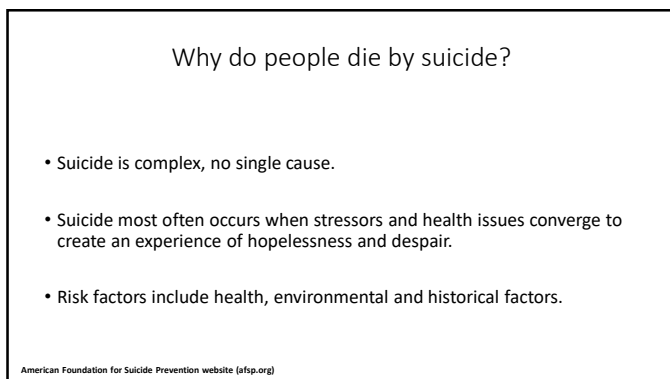
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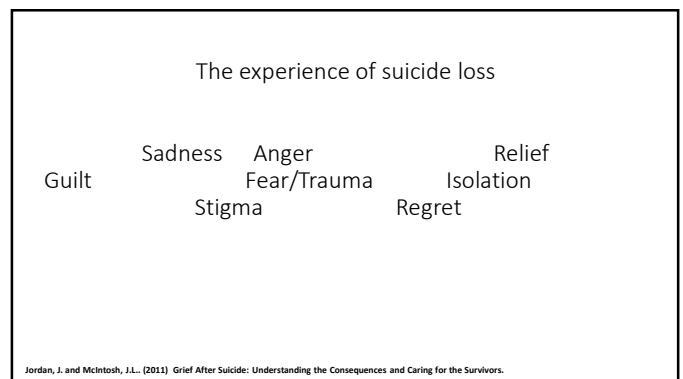
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10



11



12

Suicide loss survivors....

- May be unsure as to what to tell others about the death.
- May question whether to have a public funeral (or what memorials are appropriate, if any).
- May experience intrusion by those investigating the suicide.

Clark, S. (2003). Bereavement after suicide—how far have we come and where do we go from here? *Crisis: The Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention*, 22(3), 102–108

13

Helping the Suicide Loss Survivor

- Help loss survivors engage support, resources
- Share resources with impacted communities
- Use your understanding of public health to educate, reframe
- “Witness the journey...”
- Provide hope



14

Suicide Loss Resources

15

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

- AFSP Healing Conversations Program
- National Suicide Loss Support group listing
 - Often free, community-based groups
 - Online support groups also exist.
- International Suicide of Suicide Loss Day

16

Loss & Healing

Loss & Healing



- Healing Conversations give those who have lost someone to suicide the opportunity to talk with our experienced volunteers. Our trained volunteers have experienced suicide loss themselves and know firsthand the pain associated with this type of loss. They can help provide guidance, empathy and share useful community resources.

These conversations are available by both phone and video chat.

17



International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

Loss & Healing

- International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day is a day of hope, healing and connection held the Saturday before American Thanksgiving every year.
- AFSP has created many documentaries related to the journey of grief and loss after a suicide
- These documentaries are available for viewing on our website and are an excellent resource for a loss survivor looking for connection and some understanding in the wake of a suicide loss.

18

Loss & Healing

AFSP Loss & Healing Resources

- Children, Teens & Suicide Loss
- After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools, 2nd ed.
- After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Medical Schools
- After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Residency Programs
- Recommended Book & Film listing
- Digital Memory Quilts
- Support Group Listing
- Suicide Bereavement Trained Clinicians




19

International Survivor of Suicide Loss Day

- Events held across the country and online to support suicide loss survivors
- afsp.org/survivorday
- The Saturday before Thanksgiving
- This year: November 21, 2020



20

Other Suicide Loss Resources

- Action Alliance Survivor of Suicide Loss Task Force: Responding to Grief, Trauma and Distress After A Suicide: US National Guidelines
- <https://theactionalliance.org/resource/responding-grief-trauma-and-distress-after-suicide-us-national-guidelines>
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (www.taps.org)
- Center for Complicated Grief at Columbia Univ: <https://complicatedgrief.columbia.edu/>

21

Thank you!

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22