



How to cope and heal after a suicide

Suicide is tragic for the family and friends of the person who has died. Whether it is a family member, a friend, or even someone you might not know very well, suicide can cause extreme sadness, shock, guilt and anger.

It is estimated that an average of six people are directly impacted by every suicide that occurs¹.

Common responses to suicide

Some common responses to the loss of a loved one or friend from suicide may include:

- **Shock** – You may feel shocked and surprised. You might not believe it. You may not think it happened.
- **Anger** – You may feel angry or upset. You may feel abandoned. You might also feel angry for not seeing signs that the person was thinking of suicide.
- **Guilt** – You may feel guilty. You might think about how you should have stopped the person from doing it.
- **Despair** – You might feel very alone, sad, and helpless. You could become physically and emotionally sick. You might consider suicide yourself.

Coping with a suicide

All of the emotions that survivors of suicide have are normal. Healing from suicide takes time. Here are a few things to think about when coping with the loss of a loved one or friend:

- **Keep in touch** – Stay in touch with other loved ones and friends. They can help comfort you. They can help you heal. Surround yourself with people who are willing to listen. Talk to them about what happened.
- **Take time to grieve** – Do what is best for you. You might want more alone time. You may want to talk to friends and family. Whatever you feel you need to do to deal with the loss is normal.
- **Recognize triggers** – Be prepared for reminders such as birthdays, holidays and other special days. You might have to change traditions to get over the loss. Recognize that some things may cause strong emotions. Think about how to react in advance.

This document is for your information only. It is not meant to give medical advice. It should not be used to replace a visit with a provider. Magellan Health does not endorse other resources that may be mentioned here.

¹ U.S.A Suicide Official Data