

# Changing Minds

## Module Five Handout

### Suicide Prevention Resources

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## Symptoms and Signs of Suicide

### Warning Signs of Suicide

These signs may mean someone is at risk for suicide. Risk is greater if a behavior is new or has increased and if it seems related to a painful event, loss or change.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself.
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun.
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly.
- Sleeping too little or too much.
- Withdrawn or feeling isolated.
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.
- Displaying extreme mood swings.
- Preoccupation with death.
- Suddenly happier, calmer.
- Loss of interest in things one cares about.
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye.
- Making arrangements; setting one's affairs in order.
- Giving things away, such as prized possessions.

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## Resources for Survivors of Suicide Loss (U.S)

### Websites

Alliance of Hope for Suicide Survivors (<http://www.allianceofhope.org>)

For survivors of suicide loss provides information sheets, a blog, and a community forum. Through the forum, survivors can contact others with similar losses, share their stories, and discuss healing from a loss by suicide. The forum

operates like a 24/7 support group with a team of trained moderators and a mental health clinician who contributes regularly.

Friends for Survival (<http://www.friendsforsurvival.org>)

For people who have lost family or friends to suicide and professionals who work with people who have been touched by suicide. All of the staff and volunteers have been directly impacted by a suicide death. The organization produces a monthly newsletter and runs the Suicide Loss Helpline (1-800-646- 7322), which is available 9 a.m. – 9 p.m., seven days a week. It has also published the guide Pathways to Purpose and Hope, which provides comprehensive information on building a community-based suicide survivor support program.

HEARTBEAT: Grief Support Following Suicide  
(<http://heartbeatsurvivorsaftersuicide.org>)

This organization has chapters providing support groups for survivors of suicide loss in Colorado and some other states. Its website provides information sheets for survivors and a leader's guide on how to start a new chapter of HEARTBEAT.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1–800–273-TALK (8255)

The Lifeline is a 24-hour toll-free phone line for people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. An online chat option is available at:  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/GetHelp/LifelineChat.aspx](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/GetHelp/LifelineChat.aspx)

Parents of Suicides and Friends & Families of Suicides (<http://www.pos-ffos.com>)

This website provides a public message board called Suicide Grief Support Forum, a listserv for parents, a separate listserv for others, and an online chat room for an international community of survivors of suicide loss.

Suicide: Finding Hope (<http://www.suicidefindinghope.com>)

This website provides information sheets, a resource list, and a few brief videos for survivors of suicide loss and also for suicide attempt survivors.

## Information

American Association of Suicidology (AAS) (<http://www.suicidology.org>)

AAS addresses many aspects of suicide prevention, intervention, and survivor support. Its website has a section called “Suicide Loss Survivors” (<http://www.suicidology.org/suicide-survivors/suicide-loss-survivors>), which

includes newsletter articles, personal stories, and a directory of support groups for survivors of suicide loss. There is also a section for clinicians who have lost a patient and/or family member to suicide. AAS, in collaboration with AFSP (below), organizes the one-day Healing After Suicide conference to provide survivors with educational tools and resources to help deal with their personal grief; assists mental health providers and other caregivers in understanding the needs of survivors; and provides assistance to leaders of existing support groups and participants who want to establish new support groups.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) (<http://www.afsp.org>)

AFSP provides a wide variety of services related to suicide prevention and coping with suicide. Its website has a section called “Coping with Suicide” (<http://www.afsp.org/survivingsuicideloss>), which offers information for survivors, as well as personal stories and a directory of support groups for survivors of suicide loss. AFSP provides a training program for support group facilitators and a survivor outreach program through which volunteer survivors listen, show support, and provide information about local resources to newly bereaved survivors. AFSP also sponsors the International Survivors of Suicide Day, an event where the survivor community comes together for support and healing.

Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE) (<http://www.save.org>)

SAVE is an organization that focuses on public awareness and education about suicide and suicide prevention. Its website has a section for suicide loss survivors called “Coping with Loss” (<http://www.save.org/coping>), which contains information sheets, personal stories, a directory of support groups for survivors of suicide loss, and an extensive resources list.

Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) (<http://www.sprc.org>)

SPRC provides information, training, and technical assistance related to suicide and suicide prevention. Its online library has a large number of materials for survivors of suicide loss at [http://www.sprc.org/library/resources/listing/search?tid\\_3=All&tid\\_2=All&tid\\_1=All&tid=254](http://www.sprc.org/library/resources/listing/search?tid_3=All&tid_2=All&tid_1=All&tid=254)

## Key Guides

After a Suicide: Recommendations for Religious Services and Other Public Memorial Observances <http://www.sprc.org/sites/sprc.org/files/library/aftersuicide.pdf>

This booklet helps community and faith leaders plan memorial observances and provide support to survivors.

SOS: A Handbook for Survivors of Suicide

[http://www.suicidology.org/Portals/14/docs/Survivors/Loss%20Survivors/SOS\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.suicidology.org/Portals/14/docs/Survivors/Loss%20Survivors/SOS_handbook.pdf)

*Available in Spanish at*

[http://www.suicidology.org/Portals/14/docs/Survivors/Loss%20Survivors/SOS\\_Espanol.pdf](http://www.suicidology.org/Portals/14/docs/Survivors/Loss%20Survivors/SOS_Espanol.pdf)

This is a brief handbook to help people who have experienced a loss by suicide cope with their emotions and questions.

Suicide: Coping with the Loss of a Friend or Loved One

[http://www.save.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=shop.productDetails&product\\_id=548F7ABC-A30B-FA7B-3375C27BCFB5A265](http://www.save.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=shop.productDetails&product_id=548F7ABC-A30B-FA7B-3375C27BCFB5A265)

This is a brief guide to understanding and coping with emotions and questions that arise from losing a friend or loved one to suicide.

Surviving a Suicide Loss: A Financial Guide <https://www.afsp.org/coping-with-suicide-loss/resources/a-financial-guide>

This brief guide was developed to help survivors of suicide loss deal with personal financial issues, especially if the person who died was the primary bread winner or financial decision maker in the family.

Surviving a Suicide Loss: A Resource and Healing Guide

<https://www.afsp.org/resourceandhealingguide>

This is a brief guide to help people cope with a loss by suicide. It includes information on several different ways to connect with other survivors of suicide loss.

## Survivor Support Groups and Programs

Pathways to Purpose and Hope <http://www.friendsforsurvival.org/pathways.html>

This is a guide for creating a support program for survivors of suicide loss that offers a variety of services on a long-term basis. It is designed to help any lay person start a new program or enhance an existing one. It provides instructions for developing an agency brochure, database, and website; welcoming new families; facilitating support meetings; compiling a newsletter; and other services. It also includes chapters on communications, finances and fundraising, training, governance, and evaluation, as well as sample forms and handouts.

Preventing Suicide: How to Start a Survivors' Group

[http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/prevention/suicide/resource\\_survivors.pdf](http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/resource_survivors.pdf)

This manual discusses the needs of suicide survivors and the ways in which self-help groups can help. It also provides guidance on how to establish and run a survivors' support group.

Support Group Facilitation Training <http://www.afsp.org/facilitatortraining>

AFSP sells a 95-page guide to effective support group facilitation titled *Facilitating Suicide Bereavement Support Groups: A Self-Study Manual*, along with a 90-minute companion DVD. AFSP also offers a two-day training program that uses lecture, interactive discussion, and role-playing to prepare participants to create and facilitate a survivor support group. The training is offered throughout the year across the United States.

SurvivorVoices: Sharing the Story of Suicide Loss

<http://www.theconnectprogram.org/sites/default/files/site-content/docs/SurvivorVoices-BACK.pdf>

This two-day, in-person training program teaches suicide loss survivors how to speak safely and effectively about their loss—both publically and privately. It is usually provided to a group of no more than eight survivors to allow time for each person to share and get support.

The Basics: Facilitating a Suicide Survivors Support Group

[http://www.sprc.org/sites/sprc.org/files/library/The\\_Basics\\_Facilitator\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.sprc.org/sites/sprc.org/files/library/The_Basics_Facilitator_Guide.pdf)

This guide provides information on survivor issues and starting and facilitating a survivor support group, handouts and resources that can be used by group facilitators, and reflections from a survivor's perspective.

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## Suicide Attempt Survivor Resources

*(Click on the links below)*

- [Connect- training professionals & communities in suicide prevention and response](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Action Network USA](#)
- [Suicide Attempt Survivors: A community for people who survived a suicide attempt](#)
- [American Association of Suicidology](#)
- [The Terry Wise Story: A Suicide Attempt Survivor \(National Suicide Prevention Lifeline\)](#)

- An excerpt from DeQuinzy Lezine's book Eight Stories Up
- Attempter survivor DeQuincy Lezine's blog