



Suicide FAQ

The death of someone by suicide is a shocking and upsetting occurrence. When someone you know dies by suicide; there are often unanswerable questions as well as complicated grief. People have wide ranging reactions to the suicide of another person. These reactions can range from anger to guilt to sorrow.

Understanding Suicide

It's hard to understand suicide. There are some explanations that help to understand someone's actions. A number of studies have signified feelings of hopeless and helpless play a role. At times that individual may feel that suicide is the only alternative. Some psychiatric conditions affect the person's ability to think rationally and to control impulses. Sometimes the loss of rational thought can lead a person to think, "the world would be a better place without me." This type of thinking can sometimes develop over time, but with some people can come on rather suddenly.

A person's suicide often leaves many questions unanswered. It is very frustrating to not have answers to explain the behavior of someone you care about. Many surviving family and friends report that they were never able to fully understand why the suicide happened. The lack of understanding often complicates the grieving process.

Ways People React To Suicide

Guilt:

Often people develop feelings of guilt surrounding the suicide of someone they know. These feelings are very normal and common but are most often not truly justified. Thoughts of suicide, death by suicide and even suicide attempts are often kept private from loving and loyal friends. Even when we know someone is suicidal, we may not be able to stop the person from acting on the desire. It is important to understand that love and caring do not always reach a suicidal individual. Sometimes intense efforts to protect someone from harming themselves are unsuccessful.

Anger:

It is very common for people to feel angry with the person who died by suicide. This anger may be related to personal or religious beliefs that consider suicide unacceptable. The anger may be due to the impact that the suicide has on the surviving family, friends and co-workers. Often the anger is mixed with grief and can feel very confusing. Sometimes the anger decreases with time as the survivors begin to accept the person's death.

Sadness:

Intense sadness is a normal part of the grieving process for many people. This sadness can be mixed with guilt and anger and can seem overwhelming.

Coping with Grief

Ask for support and nurturance from your friends and family. Regardless of the cause of death, someone you know has died.

Talk out your feelings with people who can be non-judgmental and supportive. Seek out your co-workers who are having similar feelings, as they can best understand how you feel. Take advantage of supportive services that are made available to you. Group interventions that are designed to help surviving co-workers pull together can be very helpful in understanding each other's feelings.

Seek additional support if you feel you are having a difficult time coping after the initial shock wears off. If you have a relationship with a primary care doctor or therapist, communicate with them that you are having trouble handling what has happened. Other supportive services include your employee assistance program (EAP), peer support team at work, faith leaders and local grief groups.

How To Help a Co-Worker

Allow the person to express their feelings. It can be helpful to share with others. Be non-judgmental of the other person's feelings. Each person has their own feelings about death and suicide. If the other person is expressing suicidal feelings of their own strongly encourage them to get immediate help.

For Assistance:

Call: 800-433-2320

Counselors are available to you 24/7