

Surviving After Suicide

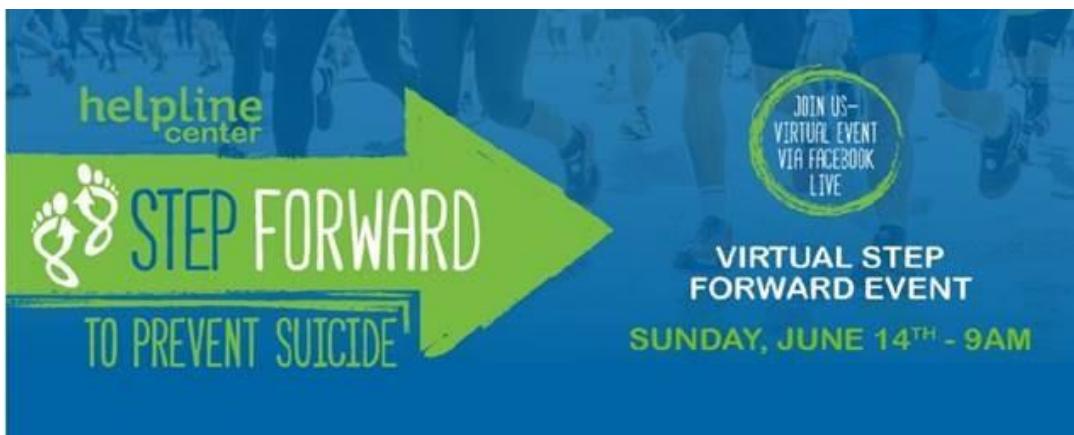


A supportive and informational newsletter for those impacted by the suicide of a loved one.

June, 2020



Helpline 2020 Step Forward Event Goes Virtual



As our communities and state continue to experience the loss of family and friends to suicide, the Step Forward to Prevent Suicide event promotes hope and healing for all who participate. There is hope through raising awareness about suicide and funding prevention programs.

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and our concerns for the safety of all of our participants, the Sioux Falls Step Forward 2020 will be held as a virtual event. Join us at 9:00 a.m. on June 14th on the Helpline Center's [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#) page. Our live event will feature our 2020 Honorary Step Forward spokesperson, Sam Breske, live music, and will conclude with the tradition of our remembrance ceremony and balloon release.

The link to join the event on Sunday June 14th is:

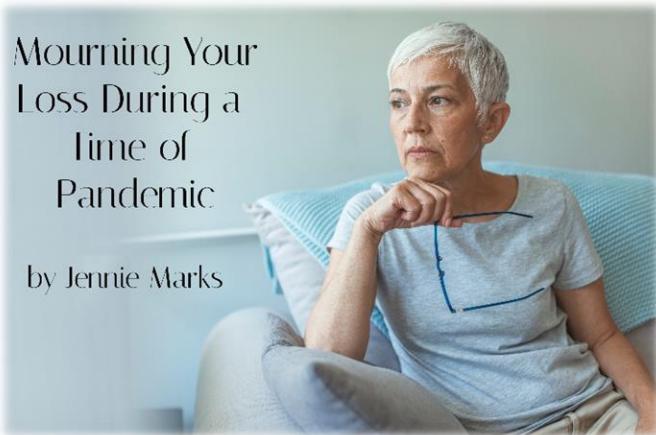
http://support.helplinecenter.org/site/TR?fr_id=1101&pg=entry

- With our event being a virtual event for 2020 we have made up some great signs for you to print off. You can use these signs to post in your home window, office window and/or car window. To get the printable file, please contact Janet Harvey via her contact information below.
- We will be having a special drive-by event on Thursday June 11th from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. for you to get your event wristbands and for Team Captains to get their bandanas. If you wish to do a pre-order of the wristbands and your bandana you can do that with this form we have created at <https://form.jotform.com/201395662909160>. With this form you can order the wristbands that pertain to you, your team members and/or your family and friends. You can provide us the quantity of each of the colors so we can have a package ready for you to pick up when you drive up to the Helpline Center office. If you have completed a pre-order you just need to let our volunteers know as you arrive so they can grab your package and get it to you quickly. The address for the drive-by pickup is 1000 N. West Ave at the Non-Profit Center.
- Also on Thursday evening, you will also be able to turn in any fundraising (checks, cash) that you may have as staff will be there to take care of logging that in for you.
- New for 2020 is a frame for your profile photo on Facebook. It was created especially for the Step Forward to Prevent Suicide event and it is called “Step Forward to Prevent Suicide by Helpline Center.”
- You may submit the name of your loved one to be read during the remembrance ceremony. We ask that participants submit the names of their loved ones by Friday June 12th at 5:00 p.m. in order to have them ready for the morning of the event.

If you have any questions about any matters relating to the event, please contact Events Coordinator Janet Harvey by calling 605-274-1418 or email events@helplinecenter.org

Mourning Your Loss During a Time of Pandemic

by Jennie Marks



As a survivor of the suicide of a loved one, you are no stranger to loss. Now, with the COVID-19 pandemic, we are suddenly faced with many new types of losses to deal with that may make mourning particularly difficult and stressful.

For those newly impacted by suicide, health-mandated social distancing has deprived us of traditional grief rituals. We may not get to honor our loved one in the manner that we would have wished. Funerals and memorial services are important ceremonies in which we begin to accept the reality of the death and begin the essential work of mourning and healing. Without the ability to be physically surrounded by friends and extended

family, those navigating new loss are deprived of the outpouring of love and support that an in-person ceremony provides. Most funeral homes have accommodated this need by offering drive-by visitations and live-streamed services. Online condolences become even more meaningful for those who are unable to contact the family personally. An advantage of the virtual funeral experience may be that friends and family from long distances who ordinarily would not be able to attend a physical funeral ceremony may now be able to attend online. Many families choose to delay a remembrance ceremony until such time as they can gather in person and pay tribute to their loved one.

The ongoing support we have had from others may not be physically available for now. Please take advantage of phone calls, video chats, and yes, even letters and cards, to connect with those with whom we have a therapeutic bond. Helpline has begun offering its monthly grief support group and Surviving After Suicide support class virtually, via Zoom. While we miss the intimacy that meeting physically affords, we are also gratified to be able to offer these important programs to an expanded group of participants. For now, being within driving distance of Helpline is no longer a concern.

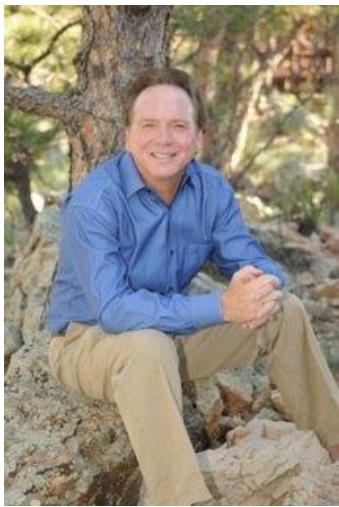
Additional losses can compound the feelings of loss that we experienced before the pandemic struck. Working from home may leave a survivor adrift, deprived of organization in their lives. The structure provided by going to work and being with co-workers often provides a welcome diversion from the frequent thoughts of loss and pain. It provides a place to “feel normal” during the workday. It’s important to try and build routine and structure into days which might become scattered and disorganized without that familiar routine. Setting goals, making lists, and being accountable to our co-workers aid us in that effort.

Loss of freedom is particularly frustrating if you are not able to get out into public and exercise, shop, socialize, or pursue any of the activities that previously gave you enjoyment and diversion. Fortunately, we have begun to open up and public gathering restrictions are being lifted. It’s important to take advantage of these opportunities in a safe and healthy manner by using masks, sanitizers, and good hygiene practices to prevent the further spread of the disease. We must also be prepared for future “waves” of the corona virus that may necessitate a return to stringent social distancing mandates. We need to bear in mind that surges in illness may force our leaders to “pump the brakes” on opening up and rein in some of our restored freedoms.

Loss of income is a very real concern and also leads to heightened anxiety and distress. Many have lost all or part of their wages due to business closures and quarantine. If you are struggling with additional financial stress because of COVID-19, please call 2-1-1 to learn about available resources that can help you weather this economic storm.

Losing someone to suicide often gives us a sense of unreality, as if our world has been turned inside-out. Living through a pandemic is also surreal. Both leave us, in varying degrees, with a sense of shock and disbelief. Please know that Helpline is there to support you -- every day, all day. You have been through something that no one else can ever understand but fellow survivors. We are always and absolutely better together.

Helpline Hosts Noted Author and Grief Therapist, Dr. Alan Wolfelt



Helpline, in conjunction with the South Dakota Department of Social Services, is pleased to be able to bring Dr. Alan Wolfelt to Sioux Falls for two important events. Dr. Wolfelt is one of North America's leading grief counselors and the author of many best-selling books about

healing in grief. His book, "Understanding Your Suicide Grief" and the accompanying journal are used for Helpline's Surviving After Suicide support classes. He is a noted author, educator, and grief counselor. Recipient of the Association for Death Education and Counseling's Death Educator Award, he serves as the Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition (www.centerforloss.com) in Fort Collins, CO. Dr. Wolfelt is also a faculty member of the University of Colorado Medical School's Department of Family Medicine.

Tending to Your Broken Heart When Someone Dies: Hope for Your Healing

Wednesday, July 29, 2020, 6:00 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn Downtown
201 E 8th St, Sioux Falls, SD

For more information or registration, please visit:
<https://hopeforyourhealing.eventbrite.com>

Agenda: Among the content areas to be explored in this program are the following:

- Broken Hearts: A Broader Framework for Loss
- Exploring the "Ripple Effect" of Grief: Loss of Self, Security, Meaning
- Understanding the Value of Convalescence

- Distinguishing Grief from Mourning
- The Unique Influences on Your Grief
- Describing Potential Dimensions of Your Response
- Identifying the Six Central Needs of Mourning
- Understanding Your Self-Care Essentials
- Hope for Your Healing: Reconciliation versus Resolution

In response to COVID-19, we will be practicing social distancing and room capacity will be at 50%. You are also encouraged to wear a mask. Please visit www.helplinecenter.org/when-disaster-strikes for additional guidance and recommendations on the response to COVID-19 or dial 211.

Understanding Grief After a Drug-Overdose Death: Companioning Caregiving

Thursday, July 30, 2020, 9:00 a.m.

Hilton Garden Inn Downtown

201 E 8th St, Sioux Falls, SD

For more information or registration, please visit:
<https://griefdrug-overdosedeath.eventbrite.com>

Purpose: This workshop will help members of the caregiving community explore the critically important topic of supporting those in grief after experiencing a drug-overdose death. Dr. Alan Wolfelt will take us on a journey into the most important lessons he has learned from loved ones who have picked up the pieces in the aftermath of a drug-overdose death. The workshop content will include: special features of overdose deaths, dimensions of the grief response and the helping role, facilitating the six needs of mourning, and the overdose death mourner's bill of rights.

Who Should Attend: This compassionate workshop will help anyone who wants to learn more about how to support those who have experienced drug-overdose deaths. Counselors, psychologists, social workers, chaplains, nurses, and other interested health care professionals helping individuals cope with drug-overdose deaths are encouraged to attend. Regardless of your specific job title or life role, you can and will benefit from this learning experience.

*CEU's for SD BAPP, SD Social Work and SD Counseling

Participants of both events will receive Dr. Wolfelt's newest book "Understanding Your Grief after a Drug-Overdose Death."

Online Support Programs

To ensure the health and safety of our survivors, Helpline's support group meetings and classes are currently being held virtually, via Zoom. Participants need only contact the Grief Support Coordinator, Jennie Marks, to receive a link to enter the meeting. There is no software or app to download, and the meetings can be accessed on a desktop computer with webcam, laptop, tablet, Android phone, or iPhone.

Surviving After Suicide Virtual Monthly Support Group

The Surviving After Suicide Support Group is open to anyone over 18 years old who has lost a family member or friend to suicide. We are here to support you whether your loss is recent or even years ago.

Feelings shared are kept confidential and discussed only within the confines of the group meeting. Thus, our SAS support groups provide a comfortable, non-threatening setting to share our experiences and thoughts. Questions are encouraged to help in coping with the grieving process and with the feelings that are particularly intense in the aftermath of suicide. As there is a different group dynamic each month, we encourage you to attend more than one meeting to determine if support group is helpful to you. There is no fee and no registration is required. **Monthly meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month, from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

Note: The monthly in-person support group is tentatively scheduled to resume on the 1st Thursday in September and the virtual support group will be held on the 2nd Thursday of each month.



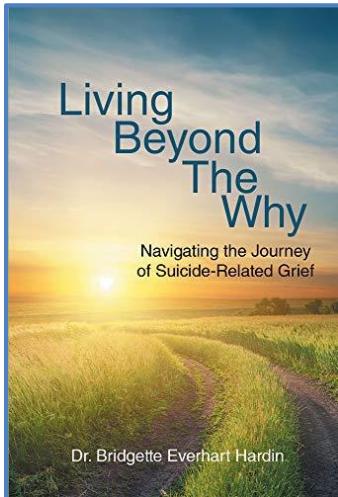
Upcoming Support Classes

Registration is now open for the July Surviving After Suicide support class, which begins on **Tuesday, July 7th**. The class is held for **8** consecutive Tuesdays virtually on Zoom from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. **Registration is required** and we ask that you commit to attending all of the 8 sessions. The supportive mourning process is guided by participant needs and a handbook that addresses important topics and issues after a suicide loss. It includes straightforward information and practical strategies for coping and healing. The course and related materials are free of charge to all participants. To register, call Jennie at 605-339-4357 or 211 or email her at griefsupport@helplinecenter.org.

Note: The 10-week classes held at the Helpline Center are scheduled to resume in September. If you are interested in registering for an in-person class, please contact Jennie to reserve a spot as space will be limited.



Reading for Healing

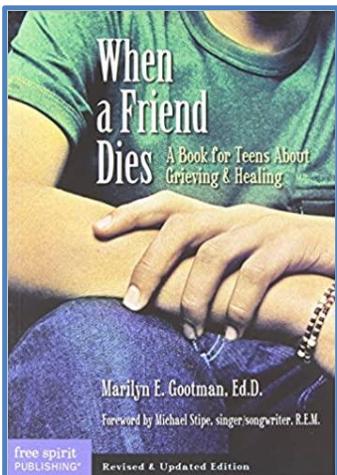


Living Beyond the Why: Navigating the Journey of Suicide-Related Grief

Dr. Bridgette Everhart Hardin
February, 2020

Dr. Hardin shares valuable insight on grief, coping strategies and simply explains what all survivors have gone through and continue to go through as they figure out their lives without their love one. Inspiring, helpful, encouraging, and educational, the book aims to help survivors:

1. identify their personal grief patterns,
2. recognize relevant and beneficial coping strategies used to promote emotional healing, and
3. explore and consider the various resources available to survivors as they navigate their personal grief journey.



When a Friend Dies: A Book for Teens About Grieving & Healing

Marilyn E. Gootman, Ed.D.

April, 2005

"Makes learning how to grieve as painless and soothing as possible. Gootman's non-preachy and compassionate book gently handles this sensitive topic." —NEA Today

The revised edition includes new quotes from teens, new resources, and new insights into losing a friend through violence. Also recommended for parents and teachers of teens who have experienced a painful loss.

If you or a loved one is struggling with thoughts of suicide, please contact the Helpline Center 24/7 at 1-800-273-8255. A caring, nonjudgmental specialist is always there to listen and provide help and hope.

