Bereaved by suicide

Support

Suicide bereavement is different, there are characteristics with other bereavements, but it is complex, and last lasts longer than other types of bereavements.

We understand that people bereaved by suicide need support at different times when it is right for them.

Kelly's Heroes support people at any stage of bereavement, from the first few days immediately after your loss or in the longer term when you feel ready to access support.

We support anyone immediately affected by suicide e.g. families and friends but also to those who have been exposed to suicide e.g. neighbours, schools, colleges, social groups and healthcare professionals.

We offer 1:1 emotional and practical support, counselling and group support. Free & confidentially.

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When someone tragically takes their own life, the grieving process can be a very complicated form of grief caused by a combination of feelings, thoughts and behaviours.

Grief is experienced and expressed in unique ways by every individual, a wide range of emotions, which can include confusion, anger, guilt, shame and feelings of isolation.

These feelings can be intense and overwhelming and may include deep sadness, blaming, shock shame, detachment, disbelief, rejection and denial. Thoughts of suicide may also emerge.

Aspects of the experience of bereavement by suicide which make it different can include:

Circumstances of the loss | Emotional and physical reactions | Post-traumatic stress |The survivor's questions – "why?" and "what could I have done | Stigma and isolation | Family and community tensions | Other prejudices |Lack of privacy | Investigations | Practical concerns

People bereaved by suicide need to be reassured that they are not alone. If you are currently grieving know that you are not alone, and that help is available.

It is vital that, as individuals and communities we respond to people bereaved by suicide with compassion and continue to support them through their grief.

If you know someone bereaved by suicide,

DON'T : Don't ask for details
Don't avoid talking about the person who has died
Don't say things such as "They've gone to a better place"
Don't say things such as "You need to move on"

DO : Acknowledge the death as soon as you can
Talk about the deceased and your memories with them
Provide empathetic and non-judgemental support
Encourage positive activities

Signpost them for support

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