

Coping with Grief

what to do

The experience of bereavement following a suicide can be intense and overwhelming. There may be a wide range of feelings and thoughts which are difficult to understand and to manage.

Here are some activities, which may be helpful.

- Find ways to look after yourself
- Spend time alone to think, remember, pray, meditate, mourn
- Talk to a trusted 'other' who will listen with understanding to your thoughts and feelings
- Develop a resource list, phone numbers of people and places to contact when the going gets tough
- Find distractions, to provide time out from the pain
- Collect information, read simple books about surviving suicide, or about life enhancement, when you are ready
- Use physical nurture, massage, spa baths, early nights, and get some fresh air by going for short walks
- Keep treasures, a memory box, journal, photo album
- Eat a healthy diet, frequent small amounts of nutritious, easily digested food
- Exercise to use excess adrenaline
- Prioritise daily tasks, do only what is essential
- Use an answering machine, choose who you will talk to
- Write notes to relatives and friends when you need to tell aspects of your story, or to express feelings
- Keep a journal to record your thoughts and feelings, especially if you are unable to sleep
- Spend time with nature
- Review pictures and mementoes
- Visit the burial site or some other special place
- Rearrange and store the person's belongings
- Individual counselling or a support group
- Reading
- Writing
- Spiritual searching of self
- Gardening
- Find ways to honour the life of the person who has died.

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