

Take care of yourself

- You can get through this
- Take one day at a time
- Let others know what you are feeling
- Set limits on what others are asking of you
- Keep time for yourself
- Remember your own personal strengths during previous difficult times

Let others help you

- Find supportive friends, relatives, co-workers or anyone you feel comfortable talking to
- Get professional help
- Acknowledge and share feelings with others who understand what you are going through...
join a support group
- It's O.K. to take a break from grief to experience moments of peace and joy.



Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council

Dedicated to the reduction of suicide
and suicide behavior in our community
www.wrspc.ca

Crisis Services of Waterloo Region
519-744-1813 • 1-800-366-4566

People Needing People
519-745-2195

Coping Centre
519-650-0852

KW Counselling Services Inc.
519-884-0000

Catholic Family Counselling Centre
519-743-6333

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ERB & GOOD
FAMILY FUNERAL HOME

171 King Street South, Kitchener, Ontario N2J 1P7
519-744-7645 ext. 310

WHY??

Grief after suicide. First steps to healing...

Validating the experience for those who suffer in silence with grief.



Taking first steps...

Grief is more complicated when death is sudden and there has been no opportunity to say good-bye. When a death by suicide occurs, people experience trauma and grief. This can be overwhelming. This powerful response is made even more difficult by the stigma that is often associated with suicide.

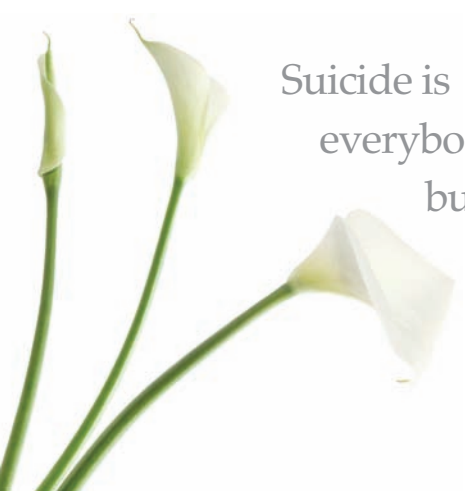
You have the resources to cope and eventually heal from this loss. Taking first steps will help you seek answers to why.

Take care of your body

Traumatic Grief is a very physical experience. Sleep disturbances, changes in appetite, pain and anxiety are physical reactions to stress. See your family doctor to discuss your body's way of dealing with stress.

Eat nutritiously and exercise as often as possible. Physical activity can help. It can restore energy and reduce anxiety.

Suicide is
everybody's
business



Take care of your feelings.

Your body has natural coping mechanisms which assist you in the early phases of traumatic grief. The initial experience of shock may lead you to feel detached, confused, numb, forgetful and overwhelmed. As the weeks pass by, feelings begin to come out that reflect the pain of your loss. Protest, guilt, loneliness, shame and very deep sadness are just a few of the many feelings which you may experience in waves of varying intensity. These feelings are there for a reason—acknowledge your feelings and express them. You are grieving and grief is nature's way of healing a broken heart.

The search for WHY?

Allow yourself to search for answers as to why things happen and how things come to be. Asking questions is part of working through the trauma and the responsibility that you may be feeling. This may lead to a greater understanding of the death of your loved one. It will assist you in the release of feelings of guilt and sorrow. You may not get all of the answers, but you will gradually learn to live with questions as you begin to create your new normal. It is important to know that the pain will lessen and that you will heal. Build a community of support—grief work cannot be done alone.

Conquer the Stigma

Society continues to struggle to understand suicide. Suicide is the end result of a complex set of thoughts and behaviors. It is set on a continuum of ideas to actions. It is the result of illness which affects one's ability to make healthy choices and to see hope.

There are many myths about suicide that contribute to stigma.

Suicide affects both males and females regardless of their economic or social status.

In Canada, there are more fatalities by suicide than by car crashes. It is a major public health concern world wide.

Better understanding of the issues will lead to a healthier society and a reduction in stigma.

Suicide prevention organizations encourage the use of non-judgmental language. The term "died by suicide" has officially been adopted to replace "commit" or "completed" suicide, which perpetuates stigma.

Talking about suicide will impact our entire community. It will begin a dialogue that will encourage healthy lifestyles, shared understanding and hope for those who are affected.