

VA



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Suicide Postvention: Loss, Bereavement, and Support

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Rocky Mountain Regional VAMC Suicide Prevention Month



Disclaimer

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VA Suicide Postvention Teams

- Suicide Postvention Teams are multidisciplinary teams that assist with the notification of suicides and assist in executing best practices following a suicide loss for Veterans, community members (including family & friends), and employees
- The activities and staff of the Suicide Postvention Team are kept separate from formal Issue Briefs or Root Cause Analysis processes



Chaplains and Postvention

- Chaplains are an integral part of postvention and postvention teams:
 - Provide bereavement support to survivors of a death, including crisis counseling, grief groups, funerals, memorial services
 - Suicide is a different type of loss. Chaplains can support loss survivors with:
 - Complicated grief
 - Guilt/forgiveness
 - Making meaning from the loss
 - Spiritual/religious conflicts
- Suicide loss is also a risk factor for suicide. As postvention is suicide prevention, chaplains support and guidance through spiritual and emotional needs related to so suicide can be preventative for the loss survivor



Postvention Efforts During the Pandemic

Connect By Phone

- Reach out several times a week
- Leave messages letting the loss survivor know you are thinking about them and are here for them
- Offer your full attention; focus on listening by asking open-ended questions
- Provide an emotional presence; make room to simply sit quietly on the phone together
- Send messages of support via text

Connect “In Person”

- Determine what the loss survivor needs help with and assist with tangible, supportive tasks
 - You can drop off prepared foods, groceries, “self-care” kits, etc. without physical contact
- Send notes of support, care packages, and resources via US Mail
- Walk or jog together at a distance
- Utilize technological options (e.g., Facetime, Zoom, Skype, Google Hangouts, Facebook, WhatsApp) to video connect
- Engage in a distraction together
 - Play a game simultaneously (e.g., set an appointment to log on at the same time to play a video game or a web-based game)
 - Do a hobby (e.g., knit, do the same workout) or watch a television show or movie together over the phone or virtually

Connect By Honoring

- Visit the grave; you can pay respects with physical distancing in mind
- Help the loss survivor establish a memorial place and/or a symbol to help honor the person who died
 - Having a designated place in the home (e.g., yard, patio, converted bedroom) can assist with grieving rituals and reflection



Resources



Provides resources and support for **everyone** touched by suicide loss.



Films



Infographics



Podcasts

Uniting for Suicide Postvention (USPV):
www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/postvention/



Supporting Providers Who Serve Veterans

Free consultation and resources for any provider in the community or VA who serves Veterans at risk for suicide.

Request a consult: srmconsult@va.gov

#NeverWorryAlone

www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/consult

Resources

- [Healing Conversations](#)

Healing Conversations
Personal support for suicide loss

Healing Conversations gives survivors of suicide loss the opportunity to speak with volunteers, who are themselves loss survivors.

- [Alliance of Hope](#)

Alliance of Hope
for suicide loss survivors

Hope
after suicide

Welcome to a place of healing & remembrance.
If you have lost a loved one to suicide,
you are not alone.

- [Friends of Survival](#)

Friends for Survival

HOME SUPPORT RESOURCES WAYS TO HELP QUILTS ABOUT/CONTACT US BLOG EVENTS

WELCOME
Offering Help
After A
Suicide
Death

(916) 392-0664
Toll Free: (800) 646-7322

- [Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors](#)

TAPS

Caring for the Families of America's Fallen Heroes

I AM A SURVIVOR HOW CAN I HELP

- [Suicide Awareness Voices of Education \(SAVE\)](#)

SAVE
SUICIDE AWARENESS
VOICES OF EDUCATION

IN A CRISIS? CALL 1.800.273.8255

Who We Are What We Do About Suicide Find Help Get Involved Shop SAVE

Grief Support for Suicide Loss Survivors

Offering a place to turn when the worst has happened.



Thank You!!

Questions?

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