



Tips for Taking Care of Yourself And Those Around You

The death of a family member – particularly by suicide – is a very stressful event. Be aware of how you might be affected and take steps to care for yourself and others affected by the death.

Be kind to yourself and those around you.

Stress can:

- ❖ Affect your mood (depression, anxiety, irritability)
- ❖ Lower your immunity to sickness
- ❖ Change your appetite (too little or too much)
- ❖ Change your sleep habits (too little or too much)
- ❖ Change your energy levels (fatigue or hyperactivity)
- ❖ Reduce your concentration (difficulty in paying attention)

Suggestions to minimize the effects of stress:

- ❖ Get plenty of rest.
- ❖ Drink plenty of water and avoid alcohol, caffeine and sweet drinks.
- ❖ Get lots of exercise – especially outside in nature – or doing things you enjoy.
- ❖ Eat more fruits and vegetables. Avoid too many sweets and carbohydrates.
- ❖ Talk to people about how you are feeling - family, friends, counselor, other loss survivors. Avoid the tendency to isolate yourself.
- ❖ Write about how you are feeling – try poetry, a journal, or writing letters.
- ❖ Listen to music you enjoy.
- ❖ Take a hot shower or hot bath.
- ❖ Meditate, do yoga, or try some other form of self-relaxation.
- ❖ Find opportunities to laugh - a great stress reliever.
- ❖ Spend time outside.
- ❖ Allow yourself time and space for spiritual reflection.
- ❖ Avoid major decisions – like moving, quitting a job, – until some time has passed.
- ❖ Allow yourself to cry—it can be a release.

Reduce the risk of another suicide death

- ❖ Experiencing a suicide death can put people at higher risk of suicide themselves
- ❖ Reduce this risk by temporarily removing firearms, medications and other lethal means from your home. Ask a friend or family member to hold onto them until you are feeling better. Make sure this person is not at risk themselves.

Important Phone Numbers:

- **Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24/7): 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

