



TIPS FOR SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE

- Remember the basics of life - eat, sleep, exercise, drink plenty of water, and breathe ... just sit back a few times a day and take a deep breath.
- Allow yourself your feelings - feelings are not “good” or “bad.” They are just feelings, and they are ALL normal.
- Keep a journal - write your feelings, your dreams, and your memories. Journaling is a great way to work out your emotions, and it allows you to look back later to see how far you have come.
- Allow yourself to talk about your loved one. Find a safe place to do just that - whether you call a friend, speak with your pastor, or join a support group.
- Remember that you have suffered a great loss and a horrific trauma. Allow yourself the time you need to heal. Also, remember individuals deal with loss in their own way, in their own time.
- Find special ways to honor the memory of your loved one - plant a tree, make a memory album, donate money in their name, light a candle on their birthday...whatever feels appropriate for you.
- Learn more about suicide. Read books, search the internet, and talk to other survivors. Survivors of suicide are in a high-risk group for taking their own lives. Become familiar with the warning signs: suicide threat or other statement of desire to die; recent changes in mood (both positive or negative); recent changes in behavior (eating and sleeping patterns, impulsivity, etc); feelings of depression, hopelessness, or desperation; tendency toward isolation (withdrawing from friends, family, activities); getting affairs in order or giving away prized possessions; abuse of alcohol or drugs. If you think that someone is contemplating suicide, ask the person directly if they are having thoughts of suicide. If a person is suicidal, stay with this person and seek assistance through family members, significant others, or emergency medical services. If you are having thoughts of suicide, tell someone and find help. Stop the legacy of suicide.