

Suicide Prevention and Postvention

September is Suicide Prevention Month. This is a time to raise awareness, de-stigmatize suicidality, and support and remember those who have been affected by it. According to the CDC, approximately 49,476 Americans died by suicide in the year 2022, the highest number ever recorded in the United States. Every suicide is a tragedy that not only includes the loss of life, but also impacts those left behind, the survivors of suicide loss.

Suicide Prevention

It is important to note that postvention is a part of prevention. When it comes to preventing suicide, everyone can help. Whether you can provide someone with resources, be a listening ear, or be brave enough to ask the question – there is a role that *you* can play in saving a life.

Know the Warning Signs

Warning signs of suicide can include actions, behaviors, or expressions. If someone you know is exhibiting any of these signs listed below, they may be considering suicide:

- Talking about wanting to die or expressing interest in death
- Researching a way to kill themselves (e.g., searching online) and/or acquiring the means to do so
- Feeling hopeless, trapped, or in unbearable pain
- Expressing feelings of being a burden to others
- Increasing use of alcohol, drugs, or self-destructive behaviors
- Withdrawing and isolating from others
- Acting anxious or agitated
- Giving away possessions or organizing affairs without an apparent reason

Every 40 seconds,
someone loses
their life to suicide.

It's time to raise awareness and
recognize our role to help prevent it.



Ask.



Listen.



Encourage them
to seek help.

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Ask the Question

It is a common misconception that bringing up the topic of suicide can trigger someone who is having suicidal thoughts. In fact, evidence shows that asking a suicidal individual *"are you thinking about killing yourself?"* can decrease the likelihood of a suicide occurring.

Offer Support

There are many ways that you can support someone who is having suicidal thoughts. Some do not know where to start, so providing resources such as the suicide hotline (988), online materials, or local services can lessen the load. Providing emotional support by spending quality time with the person can, and does, save lives. Showing someone who is thinking about suicide that *they are not alone* can save a life.

Suicide Postvention

What is postvention? Suicide postvention is the organized response and support provided to affected individuals and communities after suicide. Postvention aims to destigmatize suicide, assist affected individuals in coping with their grief, and prevent further suicides. You may know someone who lost a loved one to suicide, or you may have experienced that grief yourself. Here are a few ways to help after a suicide loss.

- **Allow yourself and others to feel the emotions:** Grief is a normal and necessary emotion that someone experiences after a loved one dies by suicide. Allowing space for grief, and other emotions that come with it, can help tremendously with the healing process. Other common emotions that someone may feel following a suicide loss include anger, guilt, shame, and regret.
- **Find a support group:** Support groups are a safe space where survivors of suicide loss can share their feelings with others who have experienced a similar loss. This is a setting where you can learn from other survivors while also getting emotional support from people who understand. Support groups are proven to reduce the likelihood of another suicide.
- **Use healthy coping skills:** It is easy to turn to unhealthy coping strategies, such as substance use, when something bad happens. It is important to identify healthier ways to cope, including spending time with loved ones, practicing self-care, identifying support systems, or even seeking professional help.
- **Utilize resources:** It can be hard for suicide survivors to know where to start in their healing process. Resources are a great starting spot. From reading articles or books, to watching videos, to finding something local, there are resources that can benefit everyone. Below we have included a list of resources for both suicide survivors and those considering suicide.

Resources

For those having suicidal thoughts:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800-273-8255 or call/text 988

Website: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

To locate a support group

Website: <https://afsp.org/find-a-support-group/>

Suicide.org

Website: <http://suicide.org/>

For survivors of suicide loss:

SAVE - Suicide Awareness Voices of Education

Coping with Suicide Loss & Grief After Suicide: [After A Suicide Loss - SAVE: Suicide Prevention, Information, and Awareness](#)

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

To locate a support group

Website: <https://afsp.org/find-a-support-group/>

Friends for Survival

Website: <https://friendsforsurvival.org/>

**For more information, tools, resources, or app information, call your
Life Advisor Employee Assistance Program!**



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for you & your family.**

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