

# For Loss Survivors

## *Tips of What Might Help and What Might Not Help*

### What Might Help

- **Expressing your feelings and thoughts:** finding ways to let out your feelings and having people who can listen to you and accept you and what has happened.
  - **Making opportunities to remember:** this may mean talking about the person, looking at pictures, and videos of them, going to places that remind you of them, creating a box with physical memories (tickets, cards, pictures, etc.), writing a journal or blog about them, or continuing to do activities you did together.
  - **Developing 'rituals':** having a way of marking their life, for example by visiting a special place, by creating a lasting memorial or by a simple act as lighting a candle at the same time each week.
  - **Participating in activities:** continuing to do things you have previously enjoyed, such as sports, social events, or music.
  - **Putting your feelings on paper:** you may not feel ready to talk to anyone, but writing down your thoughts and feelings may help you.
  - **Looking after yourself:** eating well and getting sufficient sleep.
  - **Spending time outside:** getting out of the house for a change of scene, connecting with nature or doing exercise.
  - **Meeting, speaking with or reading the words of other people who have been bereaved by suicide.**
  - **Developing an 'emotional first aid kit':** collecting together some things that can help when you are feeling sad or mad or even bad (a music play list, your favorite chocolate, a ball to kick, good reading books, spa candles and some form of cd's that play relaxing sounds or that have healing music).
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### What Might Not Help

- **Avoiding talking about what happened:** although it may be really difficult to start with, talking to someone you can trust can make all the difference.
- **Drinking more, taking drugs:** it can be tempting to try and blot out the pain of what happened, but the short term oblivion doesn't take away the sadness and is likely to make you feel worse.
- **Hurrying to make big decisions:** it may be better to let some time pass before making major changes to your life.
- **Taking risks:** after someone close has died you may feel 'what's the point?' and take risks with your own health, for example driving too fast. Try and talk to someone you trust if you think you are risking your safety or that of someone else.
- **Not seeking help:** you may feel you can't ask for help as you are worried it will make you seem weak, or that you shouldn't bother other people when they are grieving (such as members of your family), or when they are busy (such as your doctor). But how you are feeling is very important, and there are people who want to help.

