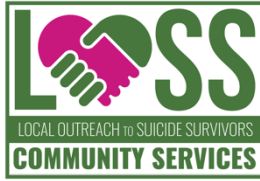


“WHAT DO WE DO NOW???”

A suicide loss is often a shocking, life-changing tragedy which leads to intense emotions, events, and feelings. Here are some things you may need to immediately consider:

- 1. First, if you have not done so already, start gathering your support system around you.**
 - You may want to express strong emotions and talk about what has happened and how you feel. It is important to have trusted friends and family around who can listen to you and can let you ask “Why? Why? Why?” for as long as you need to WITHOUT trying to give you answers.
- 2. Second, have a support member start notifying the people who most need to know.**
 - Notify those who can most easily contact others for you. People who are frail, in poor health, or may react badly to the news should be notified in person if at all possible.
- 3. Try to get some rest and start thinking about your health.**
 - Do not try to maintain an appearance of false strength. Nobody expects as much from you as you do right now. You may hear people say, “take it one day at a time.” A more realistic statement may be, “take it one breath at a time” so be patient with yourself. You may experience physical and emotional effects of grief beyond your control. That’s okay.
- 4. Funeral / Memorial arrangements may need to be made soon.**
 - Religious observances may need to be communicated to the authorities and to those handling your loved one as soon as possible. Be sensitive to the input of those close to your loved one when making arrangements, but keep the number of decision makers to a minimum.
- 5. Dealing with legal matters related to the death**
 - The funeral director will obtain the death certificate and help you determine how many copies to ask for
 - If a Will exists, locate it immediately
 - Begin dealing with the associated cost of the death
 - Begin filing insurance and other related claims
 - It’s not always possible but try not to make major decisions right away or without consulting with a trusted advisor



If people ask, “What can I do?”

- Child and pet care.** Pick up kids from school or babysitting, walk the dogs, clean out the litter box. Not just for the next days but also in the coming days and weeks when you need to spend some time alone to grieve.
- Meals.** Ask those who want to help with meals to spread their help out over the weeks (or even months) to come. It will be more useful to you than a lot of food all at once right now. Also, ask people to put small servings in a Ziploc freezer bag with a label and date.
- **Paper Products.** You may have multiple people visiting and supporting you. This is not the time to worry about dishes. Give yourself permission to use paper plates, utensils and cups. Let others provide these materials.
- Home maintenance.** Help with grocery shopping, organize the mail, assist with the laundry and keeping the house clean. For many people, less clutter means less stress during an already overwhelming time period.
- Yard work.** Rake the leaves, clear the sidewalk, mow the grass, shovel the driveway. This will relieve you of some strenuous activity and reduce some of the stress of cleaning your home.
- Driving.** Dropping off and/or picking people up from airports, funeral homes, motels, etc. You may want someone to drive you as well as concentration may be impacted.
- Referrals.** Have others help find references for doctors, therapists, funeral homes, flowers, etc.

You will get through this. You are not alone.

CONTACT NUMBERS

In Franklin County:

- **Emergency: 911**
- **Franklin County Sheriff’s Office: 614-525-3333**
- **Columbus Police Department: 614-645-4545**
- **Franklin County Coroner’s Office: 614-525-5290**
- **LOSS Community Services: 614-530-8064**
- **Netcare Access: 614-276-2273**

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

National Suicide Crisis Text Line: Text CONNECT to 741741