

# Recommended Readings for those Bereaved by Suicide

(adapted from recommended bibliographies from AFSP and AAS)

## Survivor Guides

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***After Suicide Loss: Coping with Your Grief.*** Baugher, B. & Jordan, J. (2001). Newcastle, WA: *The Family Loss Project*.

Available through AFSP. This excellent handbook is organized chronologically, around the first days, weeks, and months of a suicide loss. It includes straightforward information about psychiatric disorders, and when to seek professional help, as well as practical strategies for coping and healing.

**\*\*\**Dying to Be Free: A Healing Guide for Families after a Suicide.*** Cobain, B. & Larch, J. (2006). Hazelden.

Co-authored by the cousin of Kurt Cobain, the lead singer of the band Nirvana who took his own life in 1994, and a crisis intervention specialist, this book combines personal accounts from survivors with practical guidance for coping with suicide loss.

***Healing After the Suicide of a Loved One.*** Smolin, A. & Guinan, J. (1993). New York, NY: Fireside.

So many survivors struggle with wondering, "why?" and "what if?" This book contains case studies together with advice, to help survivors begin to heal.

***Silent Grief: Living in the Wake of Suicide.*** Lucas, C. & Seiden, H. M. (1997). Northvale, MI: Jason Aronson.

Co-authored by a psychologist and a survivor of multiple suicide losses, this book is written with sensitivity and understanding, and offers simple, constructive suggestions for healing along with straightforward information and a message of hope.

***Suicide Survivors' Handbook -- Expanded Edition.*** Carlson, T. (2000). Benline Press.

Providing specific suggestions and practical advice from other survivors, the author addresses the questions: Why? What about shame and guilt? How long does the pain last? What helps? How do you deal with others?

***Suicide of a Child.*** Wroblewski, A. (1993). Omaha, NE: Centering Corp.

A basic guide for early bereavement after your child's suicide. Comfortable, compassionate, easy-to-read observations and personal messages.

***Survivors of Suicide.*** Robinson, R. & Hart, P. (2001). New Age Books.  
A compilation of advice and survivor stories.

***Touched by Suicide: Hope and Healing After Loss.*** Myers, M. F. & Fine, C. (2006). Gotham.

Co-authored by a psychiatrist and survivor, this book offers detailed steps, practical suggestions, and compassionate advice for how to cope with all aspects of suicide.

## Survivor Stories

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***A Special Scar: The Experience of People Bereaved by Suicide, (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)***

Wertheimer, A. (2001). Brunner-Routledge.

The author (who lost her sister to suicide) presents interviews with fifty survivors, and covers a wide range of issues, including the press, stigma, guilt, anger and rejection.

***Before Their Time: Adult Children's Experiences of Parental Suicide***. Stimming, M. T. & Stimming, M. (1999). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Presents adult children survivors' accounts of their loss, grief, and resolution following a parent's suicide. Separate sections offer perspectives on the deaths of mothers and fathers. Also includes the reflections of four siblings on the shared loss of their mother.

***My Son, My Son: A Guide to Healing After Death, Loss or Suicide***. Bolton, I. with Mitchell, C. (1984). Atlanta, GA: Bolton Press.

A mother's account of her progression through the grief process after the suicide of her 20-year old son.

***\*\*\*\*No Time to Say Goodbye: Surviving the Suicide of a Loved One***. Fine, C. (1999). Mainsfield, OH: Main Street Books.

Following the suicide of her husband, the author interviewed over 100 suicide survivors. She weaves their experiences into her book, creating a story of loss, grief and survival.

***Sanity & Grace: A Journey of Suicide, Survival, and Strength***. Collins, J. (2003). New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher.

A grieving mother and celebrity shares her own story about the loss of her son to suicide and her own struggle with mental illness.

***The Empty Chair: The Journey of Grief After Suicide***. Glover, B.S. (2000). In-Sight Books.

The grief process as experienced by a variety of people dealing with different emotions following the suicide of a family member.

## Helping Children

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***After a Parent's Suicide: Helping Children Heal***. Requarth, M. (2008). Healing Hearts Press.

Written by a bereavement counselor who lost her own mother to suicide when she was just under four years old, this book offers constructive, compassionate and clear suggestions for helping children.

***After a Suicide: A Workbook for Grieving Kids***. The Dougy Center. (2001). Portland, OR: The Dougy Center.

Developed for use with children, this workbook combines explanations of mental illness and suicide, creative exercises, practical advice, and quotations from child survivors.

***But I Didn't Say Goodbye: For Parents and Professionals Helping Child Suicide Survivors***. Rubel, B. (2000). Kendall Park, NJ: *Griefwork Center, Inc.*

Told from the point of view of a child, this book is intended for adults to read and then share with children.

***Child Survivors of Suicide: A Guidebook for Those Who Care for Them.*** Parkin, R. & Dunne-Maxim, K. (1995).

This practical guide offers guidance for family members, educators, and others who deal with young survivors. (Available through AFSP.)

***Someone I Love Died By Suicide: A Story for Child Survivors and Those Who Care for Them.*** Cammarata, D. (2001). Palm Beach Gardens, FL: Grief Guidance.

An illustrated book that explains depression and suicide in child-friendly language.

## **For Adolescents and Teenagers**

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***After.*** Chalifour, F. (2005). Tundra Books.

Nominated for the Canadian Governor General's Literary Awards 2005, this autobiographical novel tells the story of 15-year-old Francis, whose father took his own life. It explores Francis's struggles with guilt, anger, profound sadness and search for hope, during the first year after his father's suicide.

***After a Suicide: Young People Speak Up.*** Kuklin, S. (1994). Putnam Publishing Group. Nine personal accounts of survivors, many of whom are teens. Each account focuses on a specific topic, such as losing a parent, losing a sibling, seeking therapy, support groups.

## **For Men**

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***When Suicide Comes Home: A Father's Diary and Comments.*** Cox, P. (2002).

Roswell, GA: Bolton Press Atlanta.

A father's perspective on the first year following his son's suicide, this book is written in a simple, straightforward way – an easy read for early grief. While written from a father's perspective, female readers (especially spouses) have said that it helped them better understand the male experience of grief.

\*\*\*\* denotes available as an audiobook