

DARE TO TALK ABOUT SUICIDE TO CULTIVATE CARING

SOMEONE HAS LOST A LOVED ONE TO SUICIDE?

5 TIPS FOR TALKING IT OVER WITH THEM



HAVE THE RIGHT TOOLS

- Keep in mind that suicide prevention resources are also for people who have lost a loved one to suicide.
- Have these resources at your fingertips, so that you're ready to share or use them when needed.



FIND THE RIGHT SOIL

- Choose a suitable time and place to have the conversation.
- Reach out to the other person, no matter how long it's been since the passing. Help is often there at first, then quickly fades. However, bereavement brings many challenges well beyond the first few months.



CHOOSE THE VARIETY

- Ask the person what their needs are. They can be very different from one person to another.
- Offer to help in concrete ways: take the person out to give them a change of scenery, cook meals, offer to babysit or do housework, help with death-related paperwork, etc.

For example, you could say:

- "I'm so sorry for the loss of [name of deceased]. I'm here if you need me."
- "I know you usually don't want to bother people, but I really want to do something to help you. Tell me what I can do."
- "I heard you're by yourself this evening. I'd be glad to spend time with you. Whatever state of mind you're in right now is fine."



WATER WITH CARE

- Ask the person if they want to talk about the deceased. Often, the bereaved stop talking about the deceased for fear of bothering the people around them. And the people around them stop talking about it for fear of reopening the wound.
- Normalize the right to not constantly be suffering. Some people in mourning experience guilt when they feel better, as if they're forgetting the deceased. Encourage them to give themselves a break.

For example, you could say:

- "It's been two years today that he's been gone. Would you like to talk about him?"
- "You have a right to feel good. It doesn't mean you're forgetting her. It's okay not to be sad all the time."



PROVIDE LOTS OF LIGHT

- Remind them there is no right or wrong way to grieve. Each person's grief is unique. There is no perfect way to mourn or any mandatory steps.
- Offer the person your support, while respecting your personal limits.

For example, you could say:

- "You have the right to cry and to not cry. Give yourself permission to grieve in your own way."
- "Did you know that the **suicide.ca** website has a whole section of information for people bereaved by suicide? Maybe it could give you useful tips."

PRO TIPS

Whether it's before or after having this type of conversation, you can seek professional help at any time by calling **1-866-277-3553**, texting **535353** or using the chat feature on **suicide.ca**.