

## Help is available today

To talk to one of the Survivors Support Team Volunteers, to receive the *Survivors of Suicide Resource Guide* or for more information about the Bereavement Support Group, call or e-mail the support team coordinator:

LINDA HAGAN

270-316-0316

lshteh@yahoo.com  
sos@orspc.org

If you are unable to reach the coordinator, please call the RiverValley Behavioral Health Crisis Line at:

270-684-9466 or 800-433-7291

## SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE (SOS) BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

The Owensboro Survivors of Suicide (SOS) Bereavement Support Group meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the Logsdon Center (Fireside Room) at 2400 Friendship Drive, Owensboro, KY 42303.

## FINAL WORDS

As fellow survivors of suicide, we urge you to remember these few but important things:

- You are not alone.
- There are resources and people to support you.
- There is no universal time frame for healing, but you will move forward from the place where you are now.

We wish you strength and courage as you travel through your grieving and healing.



OWENSBORO REGIONAL  
**SUICIDE PREVENTION**  
COALITION, INC.

Owensboro Regional Suicide Prevention Coalition, Inc. is a non-profit community group dedicated to preventing the tragedy of suicide and supporting “survivors” who have lost loved ones to suicide.

ORSPC, Inc • 2400 Friendship Drive Suite B  
Owensboro, KY 42303

270-852-6544  
orspc.org

# After Suicide

## FINDING THE SUPPORT TO SURVIVE



## Owensboro Survivors of Suicide (SOS) Bereavement Support Group

An outreach of



OWENSBORO REGIONAL  
**SUICIDE PREVENTION**  
COALITION, INC.

## SURVIVING AFTER SUICIDE

If you have lost someone to suicide, the first thing you should know is that you are not alone. Each year more than 30,000 people in the United States die by suicide. The devastated family and friends they leave behind are known as “*survivors*.”

Each year more than one-half million moms, dads, spouses, siblings, grandparents and friends become new survivors. *Surviving* may best describe what we do after suicide.

## WHY IS THIS GRIEF SO DIFFICULT?

In the past, suicide was the “unspeakable death” – governments and society exacted a huge penalty from survivors including confiscating property and public ridicule. Today, more enlightened attitudes prevail, but there remains a strong emotional reaction or stigma, creating isolation just when a family needs unconditional support the most.

It is impossible to measure the pain one feels after any significant loss. We know that certain amounts of shock, numbness, anger, guilt, anxiety and depression are all normal after the death of a loved one. The grief following suicide includes all of these emotional responses, yet they are often magnified significantly. It is a death that begs an explanation and many survivors struggle to understand the reasons for suicide, asking over and over again: “Why?”

We now know that 90% of all people who die by suicide are suffering from mental illness, most often depression and/or substance abuse disorder, at the time of their death. Try to understand that suicide is almost always complicated, resulting from a combination of psychological suffering, desperate hopelessness and underlying mental illness.

## YOUR CHOICES

You didn’t choose for your loved one to die; no one offered you that choice. You only get to choose what to do with what has happened. No one can make that choice for you, but we do hope that you will consider some, if not all, of the following suggestions from other survivors.

- Know you can survive – you may not think so at times, but you can.
- Please don’t try to keep the fact that your loved one died by suicide a secret – this only adds stress to that loss. Find good listeners who will let you talk without judgment.
- Call one of the Survivors Support Team Volunteers listed on this brochure to talk with another survivor or receive the *Survivors of Suicide Resource Guide*.
- Consider attending at least three sessions of the Owensboro Survivors of Suicide (SOS) Bereavement Support Group. Information about this group is included in the *Survivors of Suicide Resource Guide* and in this brochure.

- Go on asking the “Why?” questions until you can let them go. Letting go doesn’t mean forgetting.
- Call on your personal faith – any time, any place.
- Remember the choice was not yours.
- Know that you will never be the same again, but you can survive and even go beyond surviving.
- Remember that you may be overwhelmed at times by your feelings and that is normal considering what you are going through.

## Help is available today

If you are thinking about suicide or you are concerned about someone else, please call

**NATIONAL SUICIDE  
PREVENTION LIFELINE**

**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

or

**RVBH CRISIS LINE**

**270-684-9466**

**800-433-7291**