

BEREAVEMENT BY SUICIDE

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

WWW.STATEOFMINDSPORT.ORG/SERVICES

First Published: April 2019, updated January 2026

Prepared by: Dr Phil Cooper MBE, Dr Clair Carson, and
Dr Allan Johnston to Sue Hooton and Owen Cotterell

In addition to the help and guidance available in this document, the NHS publish
a free booklet offering practical advice on all aspects of bereavement post suicide:

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Suicide/Documents/Help%20is%20at%20Hand.pdf



YOU ARE NOT ALONE... SUPPORT IS AT HAND

**WHEN SOMEONE YOU LOVE OR CARE ABOUT HAS
DIED IN CIRCUMSTANCES THOUGHT TO BE DUE
TO SUICIDE...**

it is usual to experience a complicated mix of emotions. Grief is as unique as you are and no two people will react in the same way.

It can also be very confusing as to how to handle the practical things following bereavement by suspected suicide - such as how you talk about this and how you answer sensitive questions.



COMMON TRUTHS

There are four main principles
surrounding grief...

**THERE IS NO RIGHT OR
WRONG WAY AS TO HOW
YOU SHOULD BE FEELING
OR GRIEVING**

**EVERYONE HAS THE
RIGHT TO GRIEVE IF
THEY HAVE LOST
SOMEONE THEY
WERE CLOSE TO**

**ACCEPTING DEATH
DUE TO SUICIDE CAN
BE ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT,
RESULTING IN YOU SEARCHING
FOR ANSWERS, AND FEELINGS
SUCH AS GUILT AND
PERSONAL
BLAME**

**GRIEF CAN ALSO
BE COMPLICATED
BY FEELINGS OF ANGER
AND FEELINGS OF
REJECTION**

DO'S

WHAT CAN HELP ME
DEAL WITH MY GRIEF?

Even though you might be really struggling following your bereavement, people in the same situation as you have found the following things helpful:

SHARE DO express your thoughts and feelings with people you feel comfortable with.	REMEMBER DO make opportunities to remember in a positive way, such as keeping photographs and small routines that were important to you both.	MEMORY BOX DO make a memory box with others who are experiencing grief to help share collective memories and personal stories.	WRITE DO put your thoughts and feelings on paper if it is difficult to talk to others.	
EXERCISE DO spend time outside; connecting with nature or doing exercise can help.	CONNECT DO connect with others with similar experiences through support groups.	LOOK AFTER DO look after yourself; take care with eating and getting enough sleep.	ACTIVITIES DO participate in activities that you enjoyed together and try to avoid isolation.	FIRST AID KIT DO develop an 'emotional first aid kit' including what makes you feel good, if feeling overwhelmed.

DON'TS

BE SILENT DON'T avoid talking to others about what has happened to you.	ISOLATE DON'T avoid others by staying in the house, not wanting to socialise.	DRINK DON'T drink excessively or take non-prescribed medication to ease feelings.	RUSH DON'T rush into making big decisions - give yourself time to heal and recover.
TAKE RISKS DON'T take risks with your own life, even if you feel like 'what's the point'?	REFUSE DON'T refuse help if it's offered, people might find it difficult to come forward so accept a helping hand.	SUFFER ALONE Don't suffer alone as it's not a sign of weakness to seek help from people who have experienced a loss such as yours and want to help others.	

WHAT PROFESSIONAL HELP
IS AVAILABLE IF I WANT IT?

REMEMBER.. YOU ARE NEVER ALONE
TALK TO A MATE - RING THE HELPLINE - CHECK OUT THESE LINKS

Bereavement by suicide does not have to ruin your life - help is available.

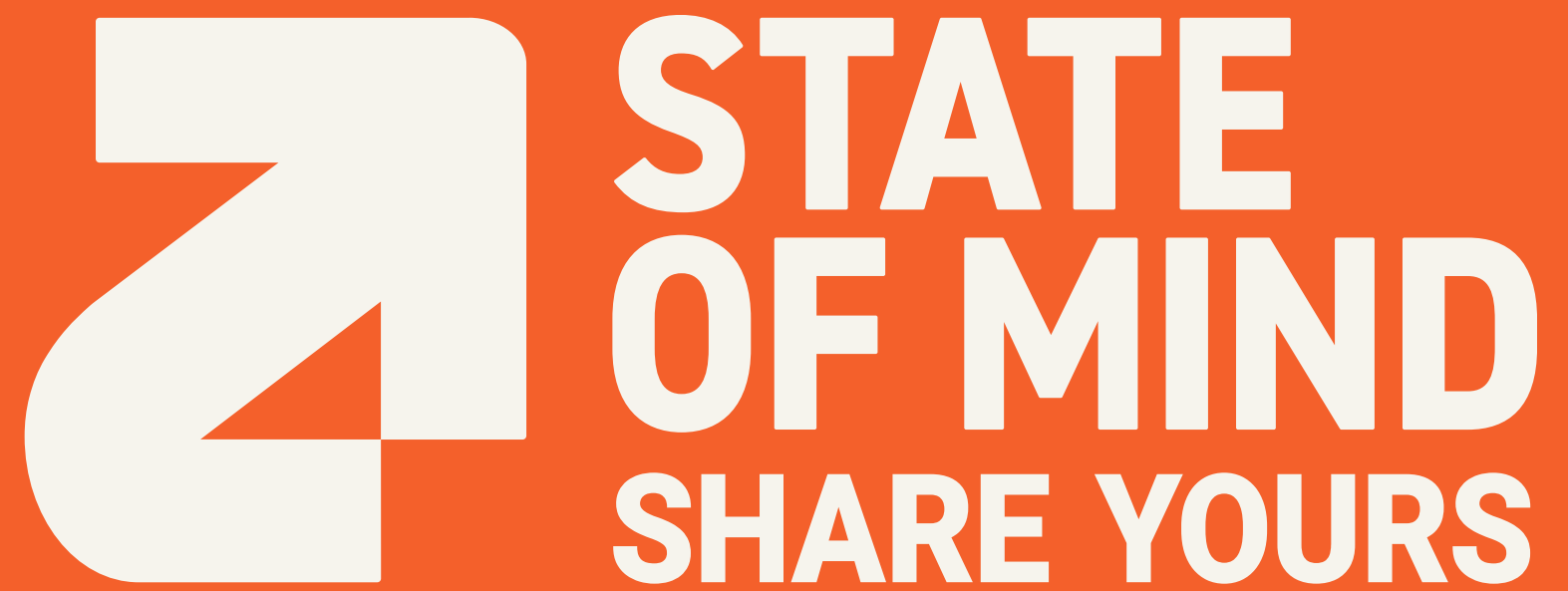
If you have been struggling to come to terms with the death of someone you love or care for, following their death by actual or suspected suicide, call someone now. There are many organisations nationwide and locally that can help you professionally. These include:

Cruse Bereavement Support - Our volunteers are trained in all types of bereavement and can help you make sense of how you're feeling right now. Helpline **0808 808 1677** Open - Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday – 9.30am – 5pm and Tuesday – 1pm – 8pm www.cruse.org.uk/

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS) offers support for those bereaved or affected by suicide through a helpline. Call for support **0300 111 5065**, the Support Line is open every ` day 9am-7pm. www.uk-sobs.org.uk

Winston's Wish offers bereavement support for adults supporting children and young people. Helpline: Call free on **08088 020 021** winstonswish.org/

Samaritans provides emotional support to anyone who is struggling to cope and needs someone to listen. Helpline: **116 123** / www.samaritans.org.uk



***FIND YOURS
BUILD YOURS
GROW YOURS
EXPAND YOURS
OWN YOURS
NURTURE YOURS
SHARE YOURS***

WWW.STATEOFMINDSPORT.ORG/SERVICES