

Ideas for Self-Care

Losing a loved one to suicide can bring about intense and complicated emotions. Taking care of yourself during these difficult times may be challenging. We hope these suggestions may help you to do so more easily.

Physical

- Remember the basics – eat, sleep, exercise, drink plenty of water, and breathe slow, deliberate breaths.
- You may experience some physical symptoms. Do not dismiss these symptoms; schedule an appointment with your primary care physician.
- Provide the best opportunity for restful sleep by avoiding stimulants such as caffeine, chocolate, and carbonated beverages throughout the evening. Avoid alcohol as it is a depressant and does not contribute to restful, uninterrupted sleep.
- Exercise helps to improve mood and enhances sleep but should be done earlier in the day.
- Keep a log of medications you consume, including dosages and times as grief may cause forgetfulness.

Emotional

- Your emotions may change minute by minute. Try not to suppress, avoid, or postpone grief's expression. Let yourself feel it. If you are reluctant to express your pain in others' presence, provide uninterrupted time each day to mourn. Allow yourself the time you need to heal.
- Keep a journal to write your feelings, dreams, and memories. Journaling is a great way to express emotions, and it allows you to look back later to see your progress.
- When someone we love dies, we can feel overwhelmed by the pain of loss and fear of the future without them. We may believe we cannot endure the intensity of the pain. For a time, we may not wish to. It is normal to want to escape the pain of loss and grief. It is not abnormal to think of ending one's own life to escape it, but there is considerable difference between having suicidal thoughts and acting upon them. If you are beginning to seriously consider ways of ending your life or believe you don't deserve to live, call the Samaritans Crisis Line at (508) 548-8900, dial 988 for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, or reach the Crisis Text Line at 741741. Schedule an appointment with a mental health professional without delay.

Social

- Find a space to talk about your loved one with others. Consider joining a support group.
- Attend social events as you're able.
- Re-establish routine in your life. Re-establishing routine can reaffirm life's continuance and future well-being.
- Remember this is your journey. Try not to compare your grief to another's grief journey. Everyone deals with loss in their own way and on their own timetable.

If you'd like assistance in finding support resources to aid in your self-care, reach out to our Grief Services team at griefservices@capesaritans.org or (508) 548-7999, ext. 104.