

The Trans-Help team is available to offer support. We do not give families false hope, we are honest, we are supportive, we care and can guide you.

We have in the past assisted families who have been grieved by suicide and also assisted drivers that have been suicidal.

We are not professionals; we are volunteers who have life experiences in trauma and the transport industry.

Losing a loved one to suicide is harder than being bereaved by a terminal illness or an accident, because you are not only grieving, you are not the getting answers you are seeking. You know you will never get over your grief and you will never find the answer to the WHY!

As hard as that sounds, you need to understand, because the longer you wait for the answer, the harder it will be for you.

Eventually you will need to go back to work, and when out there on the road you will find it very hard. Sometimes you won't want to ring home, because you know your wife/partner will be worried about you and your emotions on top of her own grief. The same will be for your wife/partner, she will not want to ring you, because she will think it will upset you.

If you are at work, especially driving and you feel your emotions are overwhelming, you need to pull up. This is for your own safety and the safety of others. If you feel like crying, let it out as it releases some of the tension and grief.

Trans-Help can assist you, as we are here for both you and your family. We operate a 24/7 help line in which either can call. We can support you and your family to work on strategies to enable you to eventually cope.

Don't be afraid to pick up the phone!

Trans-Help Foundation is a nonprofit community based organisation dedicated to assisting transport families when in need. Our objectives are to help to reduce the incidence and impact of any traumatic event, especially road trauma, within the road transport industry.

Please contact Trans-Help for more information.



Help Line
1300 78 79 96

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Tarcutta, NSW 2652
or email to

admin@transhelpfoundation.com

ABN: 20 119 028 545 ACN: 119 028 545

www.transhelpfoundation.com.au



**Support for
Australian Truckers
& their families
when in need**

*When someone close to you
died by suicide*



1300 787 996

When someone close to you dies by suicide, it affects how you feel and are able to cope. When that person had a mental illness, you may feel additional grief that is difficult for you and others to fully understand.

Common responses when someone dies by suicide

If only I'd done more to help, maybe they would still be alive. I feel like this is my fault.

It is not your fault that the person died, but people often feel guilty even though they are not responsible for what happened. Many factors contribute to someone taking their own life. Talking through how you feel can help lessen this feeling of guilt over time.

I feel very confused, I'm not sure what's going on.

- When someone you care about has a mental illness, it is natural for this to affect your relationship. It is common to have complicated feelings such as resentment at the unfairness of the world, guilt or even a sense of relief that the person is no longer suffering.
- Anger is also a common reaction. You may feel angry at the person or angry at mental health services for not doing enough to prevent the suicide. These are normal reactions, and it is important to talk about them, so you can begin to understand and manage them while you are grieving.

I didn't really take in their mental illness, and now they're gone it's starting to sink in.

- After someone with a mental illness dies by suicide, you may find you are grieving for the person they were before the illness, as well as before they died.
- It helps to talk about how you felt when the person was diagnosed and how that affected your life. This can help you understand some of the feelings you have as a result of the suicide.

I feel physically affected – is this normal?

It is common to feel physical effects. Don't be alarmed if you have headaches, nausea, begin to walk or speak slowly, or cannot sleep. However, do tell your doctor if these symptoms persist.

This has hit me hard. I have a mental illness myself.

The suicide of a family member or friend can be particularly hard and you may feel others do not understand. Talk to your doctor or caseworker about the suicide and ask for some extra support – you need it just as much as anyone.

Others say I should be finished grieving by now or that I need to move on.

There is not always a clear beginning or end to grief. Take the chance to grieve in your own way and time. If not, the feelings you do not express may return and be even more upsetting later. You will never get over your loss, but in time you can work on strategies to cope.

I don't feel comfortable telling my close friends. They don't seem to understand what I'm going through.

Sometimes people find it difficult to understand mental illness and even harder to understand suicide. Talking to friends can ease feelings of loneliness, so seek out someone supportive to talk to – some will be pleased to help.

I can't imagine a time when living without the person won't hurt this much.

Grief affects everyone differently but with support you can find ways to cope with the loss. Talking to a counsellor or joining a support group can be an important step to look at ways to 'move with' your grief.

Communication and Support

Friends or family may feel uncomfortable and not know what to say, but it's important to talk about how you feel. Tell them not to worry – sometimes a hug or someone to listen can be enough.

It's OK to cry in front of family, friends and even strangers. Tears are a physical way to release emotions.

- You may want talk to a professional bereavement counsellor to discuss the emotions you are feeling.
- It's OK to say the person's name out loud. Even though they are no longer living, they are still an important part of your everyday life.
- It can be helpful to talk to people at the mental health service where the person was being treated. Finding out more about the circumstances around their death could help to bring some understanding.
- Talking with others who have been through a similar experience can be a great help. There are support groups for the friends and families of people who had a mental illness and died by suicide.
- The Internet can be a good way to access information and support, particularly if you feel too upset to see people face-to-face or have difficulty travelling.
- If you feel that you can't cope, talk to a health professional such as a GP or someone at your local community health service. Although grief is a normal part of life, sometimes it becomes too difficult to deal with on your own and it could trigger other health problems.
- Children who are bereaved may need special support to help them cope. For more information contact Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800