



Surviving After Suicide: Reaching Out To Help Others

SURVIVOR OF SUICIDE REACHES OUT FOR SUPPORT

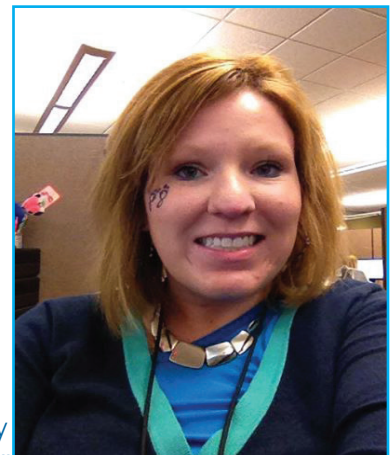
Amanda Claflin is no stranger to loss. She's also no stranger to the Helpline Center. Amanda first learned of the Helpline Center's Suicide and Crisis Support Services on the radio. "I was driving in my car, and heard an ad for Step Forward to Prevent Suicide. I knew I wanted to get involved." Amanda had lost her father to suicide just one year earlier. She decided to participate and called the Helpline Center to sign up.

Then, the unthinkable happened. In 2012, just one week before she was to participate in the First Annual Step Forward to Prevent Suicide Walk, Amanda found out that her mother had died by suicide. Amanda lost both of her parents in the span of a year. She and her husband, Adam, were devastated.

Amanda knew she needed help, but wasn't sure where to turn. Because she had signed up to participate in Step Forward, she received a newsletter from the Helpline Center that talked of an upcoming picnic for those bereaved by suicide. Amanda attended the picnic and immediately felt a sense of belonging with those in attendance. She decided to continue to seek out support, participating in both the Monthly Support Group for survivors and the 9 week Suicide Support Class offered by the Helpline Center.

"These groups have become so important to me. Especially losing my parents, you need that extra support. These people became my family."

Amanda has learned from those who have shared similar experiences. "There were people there to support me and listen to me. You guys have knowledge not only on grieving, but on grieving through a suicide. That's a very unique form of grief."



Amanda has sought out other sources of support, too. She and Adam live in Harrisburg with their two dogs and cat. Amanda has two nephews who have helped her heal immensely. She has been able to share the information she has learned with others in her family. "I didn't know how to grieve, I'd never lost anyone really close to me." She shares that she didn't consider unique grief experiences of her family members until she started having conversations with them. This led to conversations with others she met in the community. "It does something to you when you hear that word [suicide], when you've lived through it. It's surprising how many people have been through it, too."

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For more information on Suicide and Crisis Support Programs, visit helplinecenter.org.

STEP FORWARD WALKERS REMEMBER LOVED ONES

A beautiful sunny day, hundreds of brightly colored balloons, and over 800 fellow walkers greeted participants at the 3rd Annual Step Forward to Prevent Suicide Walk/5K at Falls Park on June 21. This year's event featured a new walk route, including the Phillips Avenue walkway. After the walk, Bryan Wehrkamp from Avian played a set including a song encouraging those who might be struggling to reach out for support. Karen Krietlow, this year's Step Forward spokesperson, also shared some of her own story. Karen lost her brother-in-law, Jimmy, to suicide nearly ten years ago.

Karen said about the event, "It was an honor for me to speak to all of those in attendance at the Step Forward walk this year. I hope that those in attendance were able to find inspiration and hope in hearing my story of losing my brother, Jimmy, to suicide and how my family & I continue to deal with our grief and life without him."

Over \$48,000 was raised to benefit the Suicide and Crisis Support Services of the Helpline Center. The Helpline Center answered over 1,300 calls on the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline in 2013. This was a 44% increase in call volume over the previous year. Additionally, the Teen Crisis Texting Program was expanded to serve students at 30 high schools in Eastern and Central South Dakota.



Karen first learned about the Helpline Center's services for survivors of suicide through the first Step Forward to Prevent Suicide event in 2012. Since then, this day has become an important part of her healing. "It was such an emotional day for me and one of the days of the year that I always feel it is ok to let my walls down and mourn. Walk day has become such an important day for my husband & I and we hope that others will continue experiencing the healing effects of this walk!"

Step Forward to Prevent Suicide events are held annually in Sioux Falls, Pierre, Brookings, and Gregory. For more information, call 605-274-1418 or visit helplinecenter.org.



WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK SEPTEMBER 7-13

World Suicide Prevention Week is September 7-13, coinciding with World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10. During this time, individuals and agencies are asked to help raise awareness for suicide prevention through participation in prevention activities on both the local and national level.

This year's theme for Suicide Prevention Day is "Suicide Prevention: One World Connected". The day also marks the release by the WHO of the World Suicide Report. The report follows the adoption of the Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020 by the World Health Assembly, which commits all 194 member states to reducing their suicide rates by 10 percent by 2020.

Suicide is the fifth leading cause of death among those aged 30-49 years in 2012 globally, and is the second leading cause of death in the 15-29 year age group in 2012 globally. Overall, it is estimated that during 2012 for each adult who died of suicide there were 27 others who made suicide attempts. In South Dakota, suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in people ages 34 and under.



The Helpline Center will observe National Suicide Prevention Week with activities throughout the week, including:

September 9 Surviving After Suicide Class-

This 9 week class for those bereaved by suicide starts at 7pm at Helpline Center office located at 1000 N. West Avenue in Sioux Falls.

September 10 Suicide Prevention Day-

Light a candle and put it in your window to honor loved ones lost and remind others of the importance of suicide awareness and prevention.

September 13 Survivor Picnic –

Where: Rotary-Norlin Park (corner of 18th and Southeastern Ave.)

Time: 11:30 am – 2:00 pm

Contact Sandy for details at 211 or 605-339-4357.

(In case of inclement weather the picnic and healing project will be moved to the Non-Profit Center in Sioux Falls at 1000 N. West Ave.)

This picnic is a time for those bereaved by suicide to come together with others who understand their grief. The Helpline Center will supply chicken, bottled water, punch and dinner settings. Please bring a main dish, salad or dessert to share. Please also bring a large serving spoon for your salad or main dish.

This year, in addition to the picnic, participants who are interested will participate in a healing painting project following the meal. All in attendance are invited to stay and participate in this art project, or join those who are painting while connecting with other survivors and work toward healing together. Feel free to bring along pictures or other memorabilia that remind you of your loved one.

Be part of the connectedness of World Suicide Prevention Week this year. Join with others locally and globally who are working towards the common goal of preventing suicide. Together, we can shine a spotlight on this major public health problem and ensure that it receives the attention that it deserves.

SURVIVOR REACHES OUT FOR SUPPORT CONT.

Amanda has made strides in dealing with her loss, but she knows it's a process of ups and downs. "The grief after losing someone to suicide is a journey", shared Sandy Parham, Suicide and Crisis Support Coordinator at the Helpline Center, "it's important to let yourself feel the hurt so you can heal."

While Amanda knows her grief journey will continue, she feels strongly about helping others through theirs. "I know I can't be sad and angry every day. I know they're watching me, and they would want me to do good in the world. Everything happens for a reason, and I want this to be a reason- to help others." For the last two years, Amanda has served as a Team Captain and brought her friends and family together to participate in Step Forward to Prevent Suicide, raising funds and awareness for the Helpline Center. She also attended the Luminary Remembrance Service held in December for those needing or wanting extra support during the holiday season.

Amanda encourages those who are struggling with a suicide loss to seek out support through the Helpline Center. As for Amanda, she is once again looking toward the future. She plans to participate in Survivor Voices in January. Survivor Voices is a training that helps survivors learn to share the story of their loss in a way that promotes their own healing while also educating audiences using safe messaging. If you'd like to participate with Amanda or would like more information on the Helpline Center's Suicide and Crisis Support Services, call 605-274-1406 or visit helplinecenter.org.



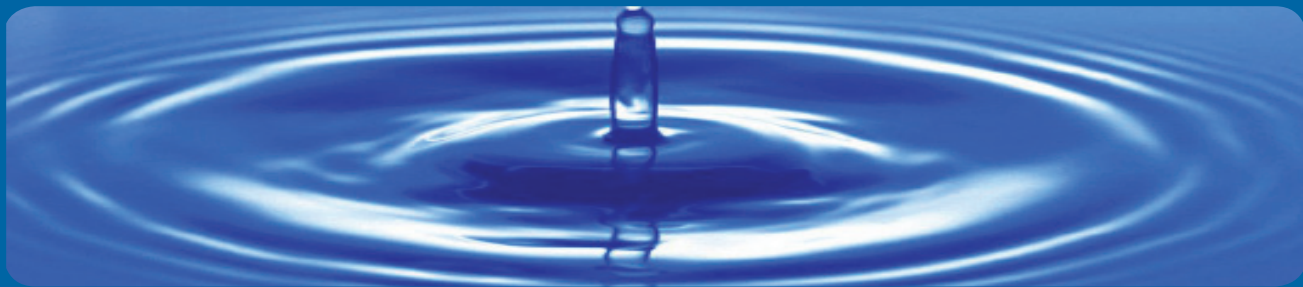
Amanda, her husband, Adam, and their puppies.

"You need to have the intention to survive, and if you don't have the tools, you have to reach out for them."

-Iris Bolton

SURVIVING AFTER SUICIDE CLASSES FOR ADULTS

The Helpline Center is offering a nine-week educational and support class for survivors who have lost a loved one to suicide. The class is offered in Sioux Falls three times a year at no charge. The next class will start September 9. The class is structured with specific topics discussed each week and is facilitated by a survivor and mental health professional. All adult survivors are welcome, however pre-registration is required. All survivors are welcome to attend and find hope. Dial 2-1-1 or call 605-339-4357 for more information.



UPCOMING TRAININGS WITH HELPLINE CENTER

Training Descriptions

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills

Training (ASIST) is a two-day skills-based training designed to provide a practical face-to-face intervention model for caregivers to use when encountering a person at risk of suicide. CEU's and undergraduate and graduate credit are available for this training.

Question, Persuade, Refer, Treat/Triage

(QPRT) is a six hour workshop designed for primary healthcare professionals, counselors, social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, substance abuse treatment providers, and pastoral counselors who evaluate and treat persons at risk of suicide.

Mental Health First Aid is the initial help given to a person experiencing symptoms of mental illness or in a mental health crisis until appropriate professional, peer, or family support can be engaged. This interactive eight hour course prepares participants to provide mental health first aid to those in need.

August

ASIST – Flandreau – Aug. 21-22

MHFA – Sioux Falls – Aug.29

September

ASIST – Yankton – Sept. 18-19

October

ASIST – Sioux Falls – Oct. 16-17

ASIST Upgrader training – Chamberlain – Oct. 10

November

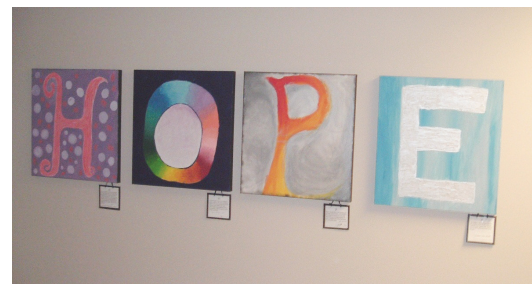
QPRT – Sioux Falls – Nov. 7

ASIST – Mitchell – Nov. 13-14

December

MHFA – Sioux Falls – Dec. 9

QPRT – Yankton – Dec. 18



SURVIVOR VOICES TRAINING HELD IN PIERRE

Survivor Voices training was held in Pierre, SD at the University Center on June 26-27, 2014. The training was co-sponsored by Avera St. Mary's Foundation and Helpline Center. Five people attended this two-day training for survivors of suicide loss. Survivor Voices training helps survivors learn to share the story of their loss in a way that promotes healing while also educating their audiences using safe messaging. Survivor Voices graduates have given talks to community groups, advocated for suicide awareness and prevention within their communities, and served in leadership positions such as spokesperson for the Helpline Center Step Forward to Prevent Suicide event in June.

"Survivor Voices is important because it helps survivors of suicide fulfill an important role in increasing public awareness about suicide," said Lori Montis, Helpline Center Suicide and Crisis Support Director, "By sharing the story of their loved one's life and death in a safe, effective way, they promote their own continued healing and an increased understanding of suicide and loss in those with whom they choose to share their story."

Survivor Voices will be held in Sioux Falls on January 15-16, 2015. For more information or to register, please call Sandy at 605-274-1414 or visit helplinecenter.org.

HELPLINE CENTER NEWS, NOTES & UPDATES

Helpline Center Offering Grief Groups for Children Bereaved by Suicide

Grief following a suicide death can be a lonely and isolating experience for anyone. When the survivor is a child, the journey of mourning someone who died by suicide can be an especially challenging time. That's why the Helpline Center is offering a specialized group for helping children ages 6-12 and 13-18 who have experienced a death due to suicide. The death may be of a parent, grandparent, sibling, friend, or anyone else close to the child. The groups will be held at the Helpline Center office located at 1000 N. West Ave. in Sioux Falls, SD. Please call 605-274-1406 for more information or to register for the next group. There is no cost to attend.

LOSS Volunteers Needed (Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors)

This team is sponsored by the Helpline Center and is comprised of a mental health professional and a volunteer who has lost a friend or loved one to suicide. The team responds to calls to provide help to family members following a completed suicide. Your experience as a survivor of suicide makes you uniquely qualified to help other survivors who are new to this tragedy.

The LOSS team provides immediate assistance to suicide survivors by making an outreach visit to their home. The visit provides support, comfort and education about being a survivor of suicide. The hope is to decrease a survivor's state of crisis by offering them support in a time of intense need. Your presence provides hope to those who are in the midst of their crisis. The reduction of crisis would allow the survivors to begin down a path of positive healing. If you are interested in volunteering for the LOSS Team, please call Sandy at (605) 274-1414 or dial 211.

Support Survivor Services

The Helpline Center is here all day, every day to help those at risk of suicide and those impacted by the loss of a loved one to suicide.

Please consider making a donation to the Helpline Center to support our services. Call 605-274-1418 or go to helplinecenter.org today.



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Sioux Empire United Way