



## Surviving After Suicide: Reaching Out To Help Others

### STEP FORWARD 2015

It may seem hard to believe, but spring is just around the corner. With warmer days ahead, the Helpline Center is preparing for the 2015 season of Step Forward to Prevent Suicide. This year the walk/run will be held in Brookings, Sioux Falls, and Pierre. The Helpline Center's Step Forward event is a time of remembrance, awareness, and hope for those who have been affected by suicide. The Helpline Center partners with each community where a walk/run is held. Together they create a unique event and raise funds for services provided to those in crisis throughout the state of South Dakota.



The Helpline Center is the only crisis center in the state of South Dakota. It has provided prevention, education, and support programs for those impacted by suicide for the last thirty years. The Step Forward to Prevent Suicide walk/run grew out of those efforts. The event has created a tradition of providing hope and healing through camaraderie and support. Each year friends, families, and community members walk or run together to raise awareness of suicide, remember those lost to suicide, and support suicide prevention programs. All funds received through the event stay within the state of South Dakota.

The Step Forward to Prevent Suicide walk/run provides a community of healing, resources for those in crisis, and hope for us all. Join us. Please register online at [www.helplinecenter.org](http://www.helplinecenter.org) or email [taryn@helplinecenter.org](mailto:taryn@helplinecenter.org).

#### **Brookings: April 11, 2015**

*Held in partnership with the SDSU chapter of  
Lost & Found*

#### **Sioux Falls: June 20, 2015**

#### **Pierre: September 12, 2015**

*Held in partnership with Avera St. Mary's  
Foundation*

For more information on Suicide and Crisis Support Programs, visit [helplinecenter.org](http://helplinecenter.org).

## SPARK TALKS

Many are affected by the aftermath of a suicide, and that experience often motivates individuals to advocate for increased suicide prevention efforts. However, it is common to become overwhelmed with how big of a task that is to take on, despite the passion and need for suicide prevention. The Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) is making the task easier. SPRC is now providing SPARK TALKS free of charge. SPARK TALKS are “**S**hort, **P**rovocative, **A**ction-oriented, **R**ealistic, and **K**nowledgeable” videos of leaders at the forefront of suicide prevention efforts.



**SPRC • Suicide Prevention Resource Center**

Promoting a public health approach to suicide prevention

Need a starting place to provide a road map for suicide prevention? Visit [sparktalks.sprc.org](http://sparktalks.sprc.org) to listen to the following speakers and topics- all for under 6 minutes!!



*Jerry Reed, PhD, MSW*- offers a new way to help individuals-and the movement as a whole- move forward.

*John Draper, PhD*- challenges traditional ideas about what the “best care” for people at risk of suicide is and champions a transformative perspective.

*Mike Hogan, PhD*- describes how the Zero Suicide approach aims to improve health care and outcomes for individuals in health care systems who are at risk of suicide.

*Ken Norton, LICSW*- discusses role of “postvention” not only as a response to what has happened, but also as protection against and preparation for what could happen.

## SELF-CARE: SURVIVING THE SUICIDE OF A LOVED ONE

After losing a loved one to suicide, the feelings of pain, grief, and loss can easily become overwhelming- even to the point where mental and physical health are at risk. In trying to find a way to work through this pain and loss, there are some tips that can help with self-care. Sometimes following a map of instructions when there is no motivation can lead to the start of healing, and eventually not having to pretend- but actually feeling better.

**TALK!** Don’t feel guilty about confiding in others. Speak as often as you need to about this. Call the Helpline Center at 211 about the Surviving After Suicide program for those grieving the loss of a loved one by suicide.

**Be with your grief.** Your first instinct is to avoid grief. You need to allow yourself to feel, even if it seems overbearing and too painful to experience. Feeling these emotions will allow you to cry, which will relieve tension- it is your body’s way to get rid of stress.

**Let your family and friends help.** You may feel overwhelmed with offers of help. Let others help so you can take time to grieve and let go of the other tasks that are hard to focus on. If you do need space, nicely decline their offers of help but tell them you will seek them out when you are ready.



*Self-Care - continued on page 4*

## HELPLINE CENTER PARTNERING WITH STATE TO IMPLEMENT NATIONAL GRANT

South Dakota was one of twenty-five states or tribes that were recently awarded a grant provided through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act, which provides authorization and funding for grants fostering youth suicide prevention efforts. The Helpline Center will work under the South Dakota Department of Social Services in a public-private partnership to help implement the \$3.6 million grant. (\$736,000 a year for five years)



The grant project, the South Dakota Youth Suicide Prevention Project, will identify, support, educate and refer youth at risk for suicide to behavioral health services through targeting the youth directly and by training the clinical service providers and direct care staff who work with youth at risk. Some of the project strategies include: partnering with hospitals to provide extended follow-up support services to youths admitted to emergency departments and inpatient psychiatric units for suicide attempts and partnering with three institutions of higher learning to introduce a crisis texting program for college students.

South Dakota has gathered data that shows the 2nd most common reason for death for individuals under 35 years of age is suicide, and South Dakota ranked 14th in the nation in 2012 in regard to the number of completed suicides. South Dakota has been above the national average of number of completed suicide deaths for over a decade. This is a statewide problem and crisis, and now there

is funding dedicated to helping save lives and prevent more suicides from occurring. Below are the exciting programs the Helpline Center is assisting to implement to increase prevention efforts regarding youth suicide in South Dakota:

### **Training Behavioral Health Professionals**

This will allow for evidence-based practices for assessing patients, educating patients/families on means restriction, and treating suicidal clients. This promotes continuity statewide on how to manage a client that is suicidal. QPRT (Question, Persuade, Refer or Treat) will be taught regarding risk assessment and treatment. There is an upcoming training on March 6th in Sioux Falls. See the details on page six of this newsletter.

### **Higher Education Partnership**

The grant project will partner with three colleges in South Dakota to introduce a crisis texting program to encourage students to reach out for help. This program is called Text4Hope. Faculty and staff at the colleges will also receive additional training on identifying and referring at risk students.



### **Partnering with Hospitals**

The Helpline Center will have trained staff provide follow up calls to patients after they have been discharged from a hospital inpatient psychiatric



## SELF-CARE - continued from page 2

**Be with family and friends.** You may feel very little desire to interact with others- as grief can literally be paralyzing and you will often experience many symptoms of depression. Don't spend time with those that you really don't enjoy being around, but make it a priority to be with those few individuals that allow you to fall apart and that will help comfort you during this hard time.



**Humor.** Suicide is no laughing matter, but life has lots of funny moments, and gives your grief a break once in a while. When something is funny,

don't hold back. Your loved one that died by suicide would want you to still laugh and enjoy life. Even watching carefree, humorous movies may brighten the mood and provide some relief from your grief. Avoid violent or sad movies. There may be scenes that trigger unwanted emotions.

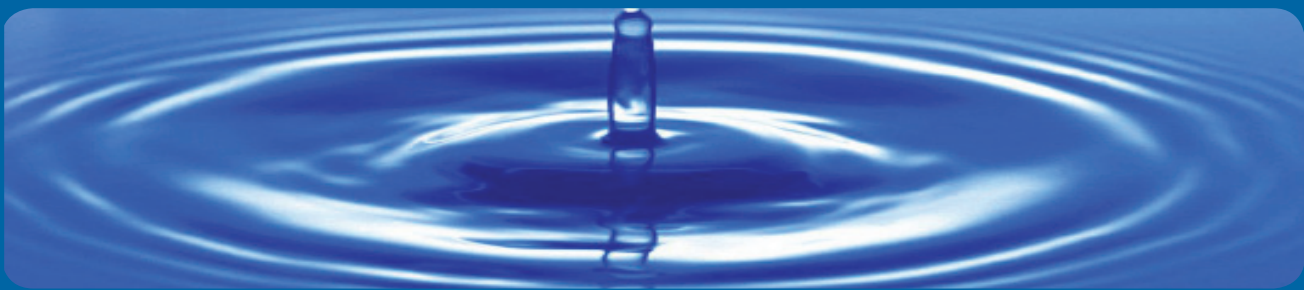
**Routine.** Life is going to feel chaotic after a tragic loss. Establish some level of routine- even if it is just scheduling relaxing activities and when you eat and sleep. Implement activities that are going to help you during this tough time, like a support group with other survivors after suicide. There is a support group that meets on the 1st Thursday of every month from 7-8:30pm at the Helpline Center in Sioux Falls. Seeking out others experiencing the same thing will help you feel less alone.

**Avoid alcohol and be active.** Alcohol is a natural depressant and will disrupt your sleeping schedule. Alcohol can be dangerous when you are more vulnerable to its negative effects during the grieving process. Instead, go for a walk, or burn off aggression/anger/sadness with your favorite recreational activity (run, bike, swim, local gym).

*Self-Care - continued on page 5*

## 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 April 7. 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 and healing. Dial 2-1-1 or call 605-339-4357 for more information.



## SELF-CARE - *continued from page 5*

**Communicate with your employer.** If you need time off, most employers are understanding and are generous with the time you need. Other survivors like to get back to work to help establish a routine in their life because of the recent chaotic events. Bottom line... be open about your needs and discuss them with your employer.

**Seek out community and mental health resources.** If you are concerned about your own self-harm/suicidal thoughts (very normal if you have lost someone to suicide) or need a listening ear, call **1-800-273-8255**. This is the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** number, answered 24/7 by the Helpline Center in South Dakota. You can call if you are struggling with suicidal thoughts, depression, grief, relationship conflicts, or any other life stressors concerning you. The Helpline Center can also help you to locate counseling agencies or support groups in your area.

Source: Larita Archibald from her article "To The Newly Bereaved After Suicide". Founder of HEART-BEAT-groups for mutual support for survivors in the aftermath of suicide.

## NATIONAL GRANT - *continued from page 3*

unit or the emergency department. A series of follow up calls will be made to patients over a period of four weeks. The risk of suicide is the highest for an individual after being discharged and prior to getting connected to follow up care. When someone goes from a structured, therapy-focused inpatient environment to no services, the lack of professional support during that time can be damaging to their recovery process. The patient may start having suicidal thoughts again. It is important to provide continuity of care to the patient so they have a connection with resources throughout the entirety of treatment, which is what the follow up calls will help to provide.

**Educating K-12 staff.** Staff and faculty at K-12 schools across South Dakota will have the opportunity to complete an online training program that will provide them with critical information on identification and referral of youth at risk for suicide.

Contact Lori Montis at [lori@helplinecenter.org](mailto:lori@helplinecenter.org) or Stephanie Moore at [stephaniem@helplinecenter.org](mailto:stephaniem@helplinecenter.org) to sign up for a training, volunteer to help with programs, or for more detailed information regarding all of our suicide prevention programs.

## CARING CARDS PROGRAM

Surviving the death of a loved one by suicide is deeply personal. It can be a complicated grieving process. Survivors sometimes struggle with the stigma that may come with a death by suicide. This stigma can produce shame or embarrassment for close friends and family of the deceased loved one making it difficult to find healthy ways to express grief. Survivors want to remember their loved ones with honor and the Helpline Center wants to help. The Caring Cards program recognizes this need and supports survivors by sending a card near the anniversary of the loss to help honor the life of the person that died by suicide.

Caring cards also serve as a reminder to survivors that support is available. The Helpline Center provides

support to survivors of suicide loss by connecting them to resources in the community, facilitating a monthly suicide survivor support group, and offering bereavement groups for survivors of all ages. The Helpline Center is dedicated to offering support and guidance through the grieving process.

Caring cards are made by fellow survivors who know the pain of losing a loved one to suicide. The cards are sent to survivors near the anniversary of their friend or family member's death. Survivors who would like to receive these cards can email [twyla@helplinecenter.org](mailto:twyla@helplinecenter.org). Please include your name, address, the name of your loved one, your relationship to him/her, and the anniversary of his/her death with your request.

## HELPLINE CENTER SPONSORED TRAININGS

### ASIST – Sioux Falls– Feb 19-20

**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.

### MHFA – Sioux Falls – Feb 28

**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.

### QPRT – Sioux Falls - March 6

This one day workshop is designed for all first responders, primary healthcare professionals, counselors, social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, substance abuse treatment providers, and clinical pastoral counselors who evaluate and treat persons at risk of suicide. The QPRT Suicide Risk Management Inventory is a tool uniquely designed to gather critical, standardized information about a person at-risk's status at an interview, intake or screening while also establishing a safety plan for those determined to be at risk. Information on malpractice is also included in this training. Free CEU's up to 6 credits available.

To register for any of these trainings contact Lori at 274-1406 or [lori@helplinecenter.org](mailto:lori@helplinecenter.org).

## 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](http://helplinecenter.org) today.



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