



Alliance of Hope
for suicide loss survivors

Who We Are

Kindness matters, and to the five million people around the world who lose a loved one to suicide each year, it matters a lot. *We provide healing and compassionate support during the lonely and tumultuous aftermath of suicide.* We help people survive suicide loss and go beyond “just surviving,” to lead productive lives filled with meaning and joy.

The Alliance of Hope for Suicide Loss Survivors (AOH) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit founded in 2008 by Ronnie Susan Walker, a licensed clinical mental health counselor from Evanston, IL. She lived through devastating grief after losing her stepson to suicide and started the Alliance of Hope to ensure that no suicide loss survivor would go without the support they need. Alliance of Hope has now helped thousands of people from around the world through its pioneering online outreach to survivors.

The Urgent Need

- Approximately 45 million people are dealing with the aftermath of suicide, in the U.S. alone.¹ Many grapple with horrific, stigmatized loss, a myriad of debilitating emotions, and complex personal challenges.
- Most who have experienced suicide loss say they never knew such pain existed—yet society is largely unaware of the degree to which survivors are impacted, and most mental health professionals have received little or no training in suicide aftercare.
- Adult loss survivors are nearly 10 times more likely to consider suicide themselves in the initial months following loss.²
- Research shows that individuals bereaved by suicide are 80% more likely to drop out of school or quit their jobs—and 64% more likely to attempt suicide—than individuals grieving sudden losses by natural causes.³ It doesn't have to be this way.

The People We Serve

- AOH staff, volunteers, and members are suicide loss survivors from diverse cultures and faiths. Each day, newly bereaved survivors reach out to us for support. Many found the bodies of loved ones. Some witnessed the death. Most feel devastated, guilty, and alone—and many have to cope with insensitivity or blame from others. They often describe it as the darkest time of their life.
- Challenged by complicated grief and symptoms of PTSD, many survivors have difficulty with routine tasks or job performance. Many must simultaneously tend to the grief of their children. The journey to healing can take years.
- Our peer-based, clinically moderated, online forum is often the only source of support available for those in rural areas. Many people use it as a supplement to counseling and support groups.

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¹ Suicide exposures and bereavement among American adults: Evidence from the 2016 General Social Survey. William Feigelman, Julie Cerel, John L. McIntosh, David Brent, Nina Gutin (Journal of Affective Disorders, 2/18)

² Complicated grief and suicidal ideation in adult survivors of suicide. Mitchell AM, Kim Y, Prigerson HG, Mortimer MK Suicide Life Threat Behav. 2005 Oct; 35(5):498-506.

³ British Medical Journal. (Jan. 2016). “Bereavement by suicide as a risk factor for suicide attempt: a cross-sectional national UK-wide study of 3,432 young bereaved adults.”

Our Services

Through our online presence, hundreds of thousands of people have accessed the Alliance of Hope to understand and cope with the complex emotional aftermath of suicide.

- *Our Website* (allianceofhope.org) has hosted more than 12 million visits since 2008.
- *Our Community Forum* (<http://forum.allianceofhope.org>) hosts more than 24,000 members from around the world, and 580,000 posts describing the survivor experience. Available 24/7/365, it includes discussion boards designed for specific challenges and types of loss. It is tended by a licensed mental health counselor and trained team of 50 moderators and stewards who are themselves survivors. They provide information and hope, and bear witness to survivors' stories without judging.
- *Our Blog and Social Media Pages* publish 30 essays and messages of support a month.
- We provide *Zoom and Phone Consultations for New Survivors* by a trained trauma and loss counselor, for those who cannot find support in their area.
- We offer *Grief Support Resources for Specific Populations*, including a free series of Healing Emails for Mothers, and Online Support Groups for Grieving Fathers and Widows.
- *Personal Attention* is our specialty. We respond to hundreds of calls and email requests for information and support from survivors, clinicians, students, media, and the general public.

We offer these services for the long-term—helping survivors move through every step of the healing journey toward living a meaningful, productive life again.

What People Say

- Since 2011, we have been rated a “Top Health Nonprofit” by GreatNonprofits.org, with a near five-star ranking and over 470 reviews.
- From our reviews:
 - *“No crisis group, medication, or therapy could ever replace the healing I received from Alliance of Hope. The expertise, compassion, 24-hr online support and amazing relationships formed out of grief have been a life saver.”*
 - *“Alliance of Hope was an absolute lifeline for me after my husband died by suicide. The organization brings people together and provides a forum unlike anything else on the web.”*
 - *“When my fiancé died, I lived in a rural area with no counselors or support groups near to me. I knew I had to have help. I was going towards the place where he had been. Alliance of Hope was my lifeline.”*
 - *“This site is respite from the isolation. Always here, always available, always non-judgmental, and always able to ease the loneliness.”*