Join in on World Suicide Prevention Day

2017 marks the 15th World Suicide Prevention Day. The day was first recognized in 2003, as an initiative of the International Association for Suicide Prevention and endorsed by the World Health Organization. World Suicide Prevention Day takes place each year on September 10.

Every year, more than 800,000 people die by suicide and up to 25 times as many make a suicide attempt. Behind these statistics are the individual stories of those who have, for many different reasons, questioned the value of their own lives. Each one of these individuals is part of a community, and regardless of the circumstances, communities have an important role to play in supporting those who are vulnerable.

This sentiment is reflected in the theme of the 2017 World Suicide Prevention Day: ‘Take a minute, change a life.’ As members of communities, it is our responsibility to look out for those who may be struggling, check in with them, and encourage them to tell their story in their own way and at their own pace. Offering a gentle word of support and listening in a nonjudgmental way can make all the difference.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUPPORT WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY?

- Learn more about EMPACT-SPC’s Reach Out, Check In, Save a Life Suicide Prevention Campaign, which focuses on checking in with others. When people connect on a real and personal level, it can make a critical difference to someone who is depressed, isolated, lonely. It can literally help save a life. Please visit: www.reachoutcheckin.org

- On September 10, join with others around the world who are working towards the common goal of preventing suicide. Show your support by taking part in our Cycle Around the Globe campaign aimed at raising awareness through community action: https://goo.gl/DFZCE3
Time
How long depends upon the individual; no one can accurately predict. Well meaning friends and relatives may erroneously tell you, “it’s been ____ months, you should be over it now.” You may be tempted to set those same expectations for yourself. Take the time to grieve now, not later. Unless you experience the pain and learn to live with it, unresolved grief will continue to come back when you least expect it in many other forms such as anger, guilt or depression. You’ll know when you have recovered when perhaps one morning you wake up and realize that choking lump in your throat has gone and you have begun to resume control of your life.

Tears
Allow yourself to cry; the tears are healing. Let them flow for their cleansing value; they carry away waste chemicals that have built up in your body. If you cannot do so in public or at work, find a safe place such as a bereavement outreach or self-help network that can understand your tears. It’s amazing the volume of tears and what brings them on (it’s not always an obvious reminder of your loved one)! Remember to drink more water; tears tend to dehydrate you.

Talk
Talk about your memories of your loved one and the details of their dying. Find understanding listeners. Talking helps to finalize their death and to dispel the myth that they will be back. Sometimes friends and relatives fear to mention the deceased thinking it will make you cry. Assure them that you want to talk because it will help you recover.

Touch
You miss those hugs and touches from your loved one. Sometimes soon after their death, you build up a defensive shell around yourself. You may feel like a robot or a zombie. Allow yourself to be hugged, to be loved and to be embraced. If you are all alone without any family, make arrangements with a friend to give you a “healing hug” if you look or feel like you need it. Bereaved children need lots of hugs to reassure them of your continuing love.

Trust
You must trust in yourself that you will recover from this grief after a suicide death. You may have begun to question your trust in your religion. The anger you feel about your loved one leaving so many details for you to deal with may cause you to doubt your trust in yourself. It is a growing and learning experience to rediscover you as an individual.

Toil
Each person grieves in their own way that is right for them. Other words for toil are tiring work, drudgery, hard struggle, a laborious effort, strenuous fatiguing labor, to achieve a task despite the difficulties. Recognize that grief recovery is all this and more, but it’s worth the effort. You will need to get more rest and eat healthily and regularly to renew your body for this work you must do.
For more than a decade, the Arizona Suicide Prevention Coalition has been a beacon of hope for those at risk in our schools, workplaces, and communities. The 10th Annual HOPE Conference is an opportunity to come together again to inspire new dialogues, create new partnerships, and mobilize resources in our fight to reduce suicides in Arizona.

**Keynote Speakers to include:**

- “Responding to Grief, Trauma, and Distress after Suicide”
  - John (Jack) R. Jordan, Ph.D.

- “Child Survivors of Suicide: Hope and Help”
  - Teri V. Krull, LCDW, RPT-S

**Register today at: AZSPC.ORG**

**Special Survivor Rate: $50/day**
EMPACT-SPC is interested in expanding its SOS Program and is looking for new facilitators to help co-lead our support groups.

**SOS Group Facilitator Qualifications:**

1. Must be a Survivor of Suicide, with at least 2 years since the loss occurred.
2. Must submit a Volunteer Application, including references.
3. Must successfully complete our SOS Group Facilitator Training.
4. Must be willing to facilitate an SOS Group at least 1x per month and attend our monthly volunteer supervision meeting.

For more information, please contact Jill McMahon at 480-784-1514, ext. 1108.

― Perhaps the butterfly is proof that you can go through a great deal of darkness and still become something beautiful.‖
Grief is like living two lives...... One is where you “pretend” everything is alright, and the other is where your heart silently screams in pain.

“People are forever changed by the experience of grief in their lives. We, as humans, do not “get over” our grief, but work to reconcile ourselves to living with it. Anyone who attempts to prescribe a specific time-frame for the experience only creates another barrier to the healing process.”

Alan Wolfelt

SOS Memorial Quilts

We have begun working on the 8th Quilt. If you are interested in having your loved one appear on this next quilt, please email the following information to:

Sandra.McNally@LaFrontera-Empact.org

- A picture or pictures of your loved one that you want to use on the quilt.
- Full name of your loved one.
- Dates of your loved one’s birth and death.
- A message you would like included – it can be anything but needs to fit on an 8” x 8” square with the picture (s).
“Creating a Legacy”
Planned Giving for EMPACT-SPC’s Survivors of Suicide Program

“Creating a Legacy” for EMPACT-SPC’s Survivors of Suicide Program is a beautiful opportunity to remember a loved one, and to contribute to the healing of others in our community who have been impacted by a tragic loss to suicide. It is a way to contribute to an agency and program whose mission is to help others in their healing journey.

Nonprofit agencies such as EMPACT-SPC need financial assistance in order to continue their critical work in the community. By making a planned gift, you can make a difference in the lives of others by helping to ensure that EMPACT-SPC is able to continue supporting our Survivors of Suicide program for years to come. The process of Creating a Legacy can be as easy as naming EMPACT-SPC’s Survivors of Suicide program in your will, or as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or retirement plan proceeds.

If you would like to become a part of EMPACT-SPC’s Survivors of Suicide "Creating a Legacy" program, or if you have any questions, please contact Sandra McNally, Survivors of Suicide Program Manager, at (480) 784-1514, ext. 1219 or at Sandra.McNally@lafrontera-empact.org

You also may write to us at EMPACT-SPC, c/o Sandra McNally, 618 S. Madison Drive, Tempe, AZ 85281. We will be happy to provide you information about options for planned giving.