We hope you will join us in this very special event for survivors of suicide, friends, family members, and the general community to honor loved ones who have died by suicide and to raise awareness about the issue of suicide.

The event will be held at Kiwanis Park in Tempe at the Ruben Romero Corporate Ramada. Registration will begin at 8am, followed by a memorial ceremony. The 5k Run will start at 9:30am, and the 5k Walk at 9:40am.

To register and/or to make a donation, please visit: empactsos.org or email: Sandra.McNally@lafrontera-empact.org
The holidays can be an especially challenging time for survivors of suicide loss. For many, this time of year evokes memories of loved ones who are no longer with us, and while it’s important to express emotions and take the time to grieve, we often feel lost as to how to cope.

Karen Letofsky, CASP board member and Executive Director of Distress Centres and Survivor Support Program, shares her four key tips for coping with suicide loss during the holidays:

1. **Acknowledge life has changes and it’s OK for the holidays to change too.**
   Take the time to reflect on past rituals and celebrations, and ask yourself: is this still meaningful to me? Do I have the energy to do this? Do I want to do it? Will it be more hurtful than helpful? Some people feel like everything else in life has changed so much, they want to make sure the holidays stay the same. Whereas other people acknowledge the holidays are already onerous, and this is an opportunity to find some new rituals. Discover what works best for you, and accept it as your way of coping.

2. **Manage your energy.**
   When you are grieving, your energy levels are significantly impacted due to all of the emotional work you are doing. Self-care becomes even more important, and you must pay attention to your energy levels at this time of year. Be prepared to expect less of yourself – it may not be possible to do all of the things you have done in the past. Be sure to ask for help or modify your plans if your energy level is not there. It’s imperative to be good to yourself, and be active in your self-care in a conscious way that we often struggle with during the holidays.

Continued on the next page.....
3. Have a discussion with family and friends around how you will remember the person who is not there.
Are there new traditions you can create, or special rituals to include the memory of your loved one in the celebration and in the activities you do? It’s so important to remember the person’s life, and know that the way they died does not define who they are, their value, or what they meant to you when they were alive. Have a discussion with the significant people in your life and ask them: how do you want to remember? Determine whether any options are off the table, and find a solution that everyone is comfortable with. Perhaps you would like to serve a particular food the person enjoyed, or acknowledge them by participating in a special activity.

4. Be aware of your social support network.
Focus on creating a meaningful social support network around you – people in your life who are sensitive to what your needs and moods might indicate. These are people who you can rely on as your allies in challenging times.

When we think of social support, we tend to limit our options and look to one person to satisfy all of our needs. But your social support network should be made up of close to seven or eight people. It could be anyone – colleagues at work, friends, family, even the neighbor next door. You’ll need someone who makes you laugh, someone who can be quiet with you and support you, someone who can cry with you, even someone who can help with the shopping. No one person can fill all of those needs. It’s important to identify who you can turn to depending on what you need at that point in time. Recognize the gifts the various people in your world can give you at challenging times, and let them know what you need from them. Tell them, “I don’t need anything else from you except for you to make me laugh,” or “I just need you to be quiet with me.” This guidance will be a gift to them, and you’ll be more likely to get the support you need.

Remember, you are not alone. If you need additional support, please contact EMPACT-SPC Survivors of Suicide Loss program at 480-784-1514, ext. 1108 or www.empactsos.org

Reprinted from https://suicideprevention.ca/tips-for-coping-with-suicide-loss-during-the-holidays/
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 Sandra McNally at 480-784-1514, ext. 1219.

“Perhaps the butterfly is proof that you can go through a great deal of darkness and still become something beautiful.”
**Holiday Suggestions for Survivors of Suicide Loss**

- Plan ahead.
- Have a backup plan.
- Embrace the feelings – both good and bad.
- Realize it doesn’t have to be the best holiday ever – just get through it!
- Find something different to do – go to a buffet instead of fixing the big meal, or leave town.
- Take the pressure off of yourself. Don’t fake it.
- Have reasonable expectations of yourself and others.
- Add something to your tradition that honors your loved one – light a candle.
- Create whatever holiday you want.

Reprinted from “Facilitating a Suicide Survivors Support Group - The Basics”: By Linda L. Flatt

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**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.