

## Suicide of Someone Close to You

We are always affected by the suicide of a colleague even if we had no particular relation of friendship with this person. The following text demonstrates diverse emotions and reactions that we can experience after such event. I hope that these words will reach you and bring you some relief.

News about the suicide of a colleague are always met with surprise and pain of variable intensity, depending on the relation that we had with this person. Here are some reactions that you will perhaps recognise as your own.

You have probably felt incredulity, you had difficulty to believe that it could be true. You felt great sadness which came out as tears or had left you without any word or voice. It is possible in the days following the event to observe these symptoms:

- Think constantly about the person ;
- Difficulty of concentration on well known tasks ;
- Fatigue, insomnia, nightmares ;
- Physical troubles: headaches, gastro-intestinal, palpitations.

Then you asked yourself or you still ask yourself why. You try to understand the person's act, you remember the last moments shared with him/her. Maybe you try to analyse the whole story of this relation to detect signs of distress. Some may also feel guilty of having not been able to see the person's distress. These feelings are hard to bear. Some may feel angry towards the deceased person. This anger is often felt along with sadness and expresses also the pain of powerlessness.

These reactions are normal and indicates that your emotive world has been affected, even shattered. Time will help you to recover peace. It is important to keep in mind that you are not responsible of what happened. Talking about the suicide of someone close to you is normal and

helps to undergo the ordeal. On the contrary, refusing to talk about it could be very harmful and harm the process of grief resolution.

With time you may have the answers that explains the person's act. It is also possible that all your questions remains unanswered. You will thus learn to live with the questioning that his/her death would have brought you, and eventually you will be relieved and less suffering.

Do not forget that the person who commits suicide does it to put an end to his/her pain. Life was unbearable and the only issue for this person was death. The loss of a beloved person often links us to our own interior suffering and sometimes also with our desire to die. We become more aware of our non-resolved difficulties. It would be then the occasion to find solutions to these problems. It is the best way to prevent suicidal thoughts or acts. The death of a human being is a hard to live event. It confronts us to the pain of separation, of powerlessness and of our own finitude. It is a painful period of life. But death can also carry life because it makes us re-evaluate our sense of life and find manners to live more in harmony with our values.

If you want to share what this is making you live, do not hesitate to contact your Employee Assistance Program, a counsellor is here to help you.

Your EAP Team  
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