



Introduction

- A survivor of suicide loss is a person who lost someone close because of suicide.
- Our question: How do we care well for these individuals?



Introduction

“Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you are also full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.
(Romans 15:14)



Introduction

- Are you ready as a counselor to care well for survivors of suicide loss?
- What do you need to know to care well for survivors of suicide loss?
- What do you need to do to care well for survivors of suicide loss?



Are you ready as a counselor to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- From Jesus, we learn about the attitude of care (John 11).
 - Humble
 - Loving
 - Patient with their unbelief
 - Caring



Are you ready as a counselor to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- From Paul, we learn more about the responsibility of care (1 Cor 1:3-11).
 - We are stewards of God’s mercy and comfort (vv. 3-7).
 - We help point people to Christ as we share our suffering (vv. 8-11).



What do you need to know to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- You are on the front row of the hardest ministry and care.
 - Galatians 6:2
“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:14
“...comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak...”



What do you need to know to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- Consider the burden...
 - What does the burden look like?
 - What are some of the specifics of the burden?
 - Grief
 - False Guilt
 - Anger
 - Nagging questions
 - Fear
 - Questions about Eternity



What do you need to know to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- What complicates the response to the grief of being a survivor of suicide loss?
 - The death of a dream
 - Disappointment in God, self, and others
 - Fear of the unknown
 - Loss of relationship(s)
 - Loss of lifestyle



What do you need to know to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- What complicates the response to the grief of being a survivor of suicide loss?
 - Fear of grief
 - Misunderstanding of theology
 - “I must smile.”
 - “I can’t be disappointed.”
 - “I can’t grieve.”



What do you need to know to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- What complicates the response to the grief of being a survivor of suicide loss?
 - Fear of grief
 - Misunderstanding of theology
 - Yet Jesus says, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”



What do you need to know to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- Some things we can never know.
“The secret things belong to the LORD our God,...” (Deut 29:29)
- But what we do know we need to emphasize and live by.
“...but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law” (Deut 29:29).



What do you need to know to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- What can we know?
 - God is good and loves us (Rom 8:31-39)
 - God is trustworthy (Gen 50:19-20).
 - God never leaves us (Josh 1:9).



What do you need to do to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- Listen, listen, listen!!
- Weep with those who weep



What do you need to do to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- Help understand what is going on in suffering
 - Help identify suffering as part of the fall
 - Help to recognize God's purposes in suffering
 - Help with encouragement and hope in the suffering process



What do you need to do to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- Help them remember God and His promises
 - Remember God's presence (Matt 28:18-20; cf. Josh 1:9)
 - Remember God's purpose for living (Rom 8:29)



What do you need to do to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- Help them remember God and His promises
 - Remember God's provisions
 - His Son (1 Cor 15:55-58)
 - His Word (Ps 73:17)
 - His grace (1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 12:9)
 - His Heaven (John 14:1-6)
 - His people (1 Cor 12:12-27)



What do you need to do to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- Help them remember God and His promises
 - Remember God's plan (Rom 8:29-30)
 - Remember God's love (Rom 8:31-39; Eph 3:14-21)
 - Remember God's patience (Job; Elijah; Ps 34:17-18; 56:8; 62:8; 72:12)



What do you need to do to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- Help them remember God and His promises
 - Remember God's hope (Rom 5:1-11; 1 Thess 4:13-18)



What do you need to do to care well for survivors of suicide loss?

- Common responses to encourage:
 - Be honest with God and yourself
 - Face the realities of the circumstance
 - Cry out to God
 - Turn to Christ and the body of Christ
 - Practice the presence of Christ



Implications for Counseling and the Counseling Process

- The path through grieving is not a straight path; however, God is patient and perseveres alongside us (Prov 3:5-6).
- God has big shoulders, you can trust Him (Phil 1:6).
- Weep with those who weep (Rom 12:15; cf. Eccl 3)



Implications for Counseling and the Counseling Process

- Today's response is not the final response (cf. Job).
- There is a difference between a biblical lament and an unbiblical complaint.



Implications for Counseling and the Counseling Process

- Connect with your counsees, and connect your counselee with others. Be with your counsees through suffering.
- Pray with them while teaching them to pray (1 Cor 10:13)



Implications for Counseling and the Counseling Process

- Engage with your counselee long-term. Make yourself calendar reminders to regularly and systematically check up on them.
- Help connect them with serving others in various ways as you can.



Implications for Counseling and the Counseling Process

- Use music as part of your counseling ministry to them.
- Pay close attention to where Christ is in their suffering.

