



HUGG

HEALING UNTOLD GRIEF GROUPS

Why attend a support group?

- Grief support groups educate and nurture—attendance is not a sign of weakness.
- People bereaved by suicide are at-risk of adverse grief, mental ill-health and suicidal behaviour, further research across the life-span is essential to prevent grief and mental health ramifications.
- One suicide can affect between 6 nuclear family members and 80 relatives, friends and acquaintances. That's more than 34,000 every year in Ireland.
- Those bereaved by suicide experience more feelings of abandonment, rejection, shame, struggles with meaning-making and why questions, and less social support.
- There is also growing evidence of increased physical disorders among people bereaved by suicide.
- Self-help support groups are a powerful and constructive way for people to share their stories, to help themselves and each other.
- Research does suggest that bereavement support groups can be helpful in lowering grief reactions, fostering friendships, hope and normalisation.
- Bereavement support groups provide ongoing help to participants in various ways, including:
 - normalising the grief journey.
 - listening and sharing personal experiences.

- creating social networks and reducing feelings of isolation.
 - discovering personal strengths and building resilience.
 - providing relevant information.
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- Grief support groups are one of the places that provide the bereaved opportunities for expressing their feelings and thoughts. Bereaved can feel a need to relate to others with whom there is **no need to “filter”** what is said, because friends and family are tired of listening to the story and pain.
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- Many bereaved need to tell their story over and over.
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- Some people bereaved by suicide may not want to listen to others telling painful stories and crying, find it too hard to tell their story, they are not ready for a group.



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