TAPS SUICIDE POSTVENTION MODEL™

The TAPS Suicide Postvention Model™ is a three-phase approach to suicide grief that will 1) help stabilize you and your family members in the immediate aftermath of a loss, 2) guide you onto a healthy journey of grieving, and 3) move you toward post-traumatic growth in a fully intentional way. Suicide-loss survivors are uniquely poised to achieve posttraumatic growth, first by making meaning from their loss and, second, by using lessons learned on the lookback to effect change. The TAPS Suicide Postvention Model™ has helped thousands of survivors do just that.

As you read through the model's phases and tasks, please note that not all tasks need to be completed in strict chronological order. Even the three major phases, which are ordered to work along a "typical" progression of grief, may be revisited after completion to address issues that resurface in the later stages of your grief journey. Here's how it works.

PHASE 1: STABILIZATION

Stabilization is the period immediately following the death of your loved one. During these first days, weeks, and months, your emotions are raw, answers are elusive, and the intense grief around the death is seemingly insurmountable. It's critical in this period to ensure safety and well-being for yourself and those you love. During this phase, our trained staff will conduct a needs assessment for any mental health concerns and offer referrals for care you may need. We will also inquire about any trauma you may have experienced in addition to the loss and find support for you if needed. Finally, we will work to identify any other suicide-specific issues that might interfere with a positive and healing grief journey so that you can move ahead with the confidence that you will get through this.

PHASE 2: GRIEF WORK

We grieve because we love. Grief is not a time-limited event with a beginning and an end, but a process that will last throughout your life. During Grief Work, we intentionally focus on integrating grief into your life in a positive and productive manner. This phase involves moving away from the manner of death and toward a commemorative posture with regard to your loved one's life and service. It means folding your grief into your continuing life by finding a productive and helpful rhythm to stay on a path toward healing. It's about forming a new relationship with your loved one, if that's what you want.

PHASE 3: POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH

Post-traumatic Growth describes the stage of the grief journey that follows a period of focused and intentional grief work when many of the complicating factors around your loss have been resolved or mitigated. Post-traumatic Growth is a reflective and transformational time in your journey when you've set the pace for a life of continued healing, learning, and love. In this phase, you will — we hope — begin to find meaning from the loss, be able to spread a hopeful message of love, loss, and recovery by sharing your story, and — above all — find a new appreciation for your life after loss.

[MORE]

The TAPS Suicide Postvention Model™ is a field-leading, best-practice approach to postvention care for survivors of suicide loss and has been:

- Peer-reviewed and was published in Death Studies in January 2021
- Validated in a large-scale study of 691 TAPS participants and 95 Peer Mentors
- Highlighted as the central postvention strategy in the Department of Defense Suicide Postvention Toolkit, released in October 2019
- Presented at multiple Tier 1 conferences in the U.S. and internationally
- Widely disseminated throughout the military and Veterans Affairs (VA) system
- Funded for further dissemination in a series of courses sponsored by the NFL Foundation

ABOUT THE TEAM

The TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention Team is a division of the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) that addresses the challenge of suicide in the military, the veteran community, and across the nation. This team of dedicated professionals draws from a powerful combination of clinical expertise, survivor "lived experience," and TAPS' own best practices in peer-to-peer grief support to care for those who have lost loved ones to suicide and help prevent more loss.

Visit **taps.org/suicide** or call 24/7 at 800-959-TAPS (8277)

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