



♥ CONTACT US ♥

SW Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide

Main Number: 720.745.9252

Mailing Address: PO Box 22
Littleton, CO 80160

Meeting Location: Littleton Adventist Hospital
Conference Room 4
7700 S Broadway
Littleton, CO 80122

Website: www.swmetrodenversos.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/swmetrodenversos

Email: info@swmetrodenversos.org

Program Manager:

Charlotte Tankersley: [720.745.9252](tel:720.745.9252) or
charlotte@hope-group.org

Facilitators:

Jeannine Honey: [303.716.3025](tel:303.716.3025)

Shirley Johnson: [303.507.6252](tel:303.507.6252)

Ted Mershon: [303.977.3037](tel:303.977.3037)

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Southwest Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide is for adult survivors of suicide who seek comfort and healing after the heartbreaking loss of a loved one to suicide. We know that the grief that follows suicide is extremely difficult, which is complicated and magnified because not only does the survivor have to grieve the loss of their loved one, but also the action that caused their death. For some of you, this may be the first few days or weeks of life without a loved one who died by suicide, or it may be the 1st, 2nd, 5th, 10th year or more of suicide loss. Our group is open to all who share this journey of suicide grief and loss. We are spouses, partners, parents, siblings, children, family members, friends, neighbors, professionals, caregivers, and co-workers, etc. who have all lost someone to suicide. We're sorry you are here but grateful that you've joined us and allowed us to be a part of your healing journey after such a difficult loss. ♥

Mourning the Passage of Time

By Eleanor Haley (www.whatsyourgrief.com)

I'll be a year older next week as far as my license is concerned. That's a fancy way of saying it's almost my birthday. Though I wouldn't say I look upon the day with dread, I've reached the point in my life where I'm never terribly thrilled to mark the passage of time.

Whether it's my dog, my dad, or one of my daughters getting a year older - I greet milestones with mixed emotions. Yes, I know good things come with getting older and that the future is filled with possibilities (yadda yadda), but ultimately, I'm someone who would maybe like to see what it's like for time to stand still for a little while.

I know those of you who have found peace with the passage of time may be thinking I'm being a little shortsighted, but I suspect just as many of you agree. Whenever Litsa and I hold workshops and ask people



about the losses they grieve, inevitably someone shares something like “*the passage of time*” or “*getting older*” or “*the feeling that memories of my loved one are fading.*”

Furthermore, I’d like to point out that a person can be content with the present and/or excited about the future and still mourn the past. For example, I love the relationship I have with my daughter now that she is older and independent, I’m excited for the possibilities that lie ahead of her in the future, but I also miss when she was a cute and cuddly little 4-year-old. If one is to fully embrace life and the people in it at different life stages, then they will also have to learn to mourn the past while also appreciating the present.

Experiencing a sense of loss over the passage of time and, perhaps, getting older is extremely common. Though we can’t present a list of *all* the reasons why this might be so, we’d like to discuss a few of the more common time-related losses that a person may experience.

1. Deceased loved ones grow more distant.

Being that we are a grief website, this is the most logical place to start because many of our readers are grieving the death of someone very important and significant. People who are grieving are especially susceptible to feeling grief over the passage of time because they may grapple with the sense that they put more distance between themselves and their deceased loved one with every year that goes by.

Not only may it feel disconcerting to think, “*It’s been ‘X’ amount of years since my loved one was here on Earth*”, one may also struggle with the sense that their memories are fading. Though some memories seem vivid, others grow hazy, and it becomes more difficult to recall sensory memories like the sound of their loved one’s voice, the smell of their hair, or the feel of their embrace.

2. Our memories of the past grow more distant.

As noted above, fading memories may feel especially troubling to someone who is grieving because, in many ways, it can feel like this is all a person has. That said, grief over the loss of memories can impact anyone - grieving or not.

I, for one, am excessively nostalgic for the past - obviously, because I miss my mother - but I also because really miss shopping malls and phones that attach to the wall and the original Full House. I don’t like the sense that my memories of the past are slipping away or, in many cases, gone.

Research has shown that even our strongest memories change and degrade with time and it can feel disconcerting to lose memories for things that seemed significant and important. There is a mournful kind of yearning in trying to reconstruct the people, places, and moments of the past.

We are looking for a few supplies for our groups and classes, and we’re always looking to add more books to our lending library. Please check out our Amazon Wish List (<http://bit.ly/hope-wishes>) if you’re interested in purchasing books or supplies which really helps us out! We greatly appreciate your generosity and support!

3. Time seems to fly by as we get older.

Do you ever feel like the older you get, the quicker time seems to pass? Well, it turns out there are real scientific reasons for that! Though physical time is an objective fact, ‘mind time’ - i.e. your perception of time - is a little more subjective and as you get older, mind time seems to speed up. I will let someone much smarter explain it via a quote from this article:

“Time is happening in the mind’s eye. It is related to the number of mental images the brain encounters and organizes and the state of our brains as we age. When we get older, the rate at which changes in mental images are perceived decreases because of several transforming physical features, including vision, brain complexity, and later in life, degradation of the pathways that transmit information. And this shift in image processing leads to the sense of time speeding up.”

And another from this article:

“The more familiar the world becomes, the less information your brain writes down, and the more quickly time seems to pass. “Time is this rubbery thing...it stretches out when you really turn your brain resources on, and when you say, ‘Oh, I got this, everything is as expected,’ it shrinks up.””

So yeah, as we get older, it truly seems like we’re losing time faster.

4. Places change.

Some people don’t mind seeing non-human things like places and objects change. I am not one of those people. Not only do I feel that certain places and objects have a spirit all their own, but they are the props and backdrops involved in my most cherished memories. If you’re like me, you get it. We’ve written a bit on this topic so if you’re looking for more check out these articles:

- Saying Goodbye to a Home and Grieving Places Past
- More Than Just a Teapot: The Items that Connect Past to Present
- Sentimentality and Holding Onto Items
- Small Remembrances and Expressions of Love

5. We change as we grow older.

Aging is a mixed bag. Many people feel that as they age, they become wiser, stronger, less stressed (at a certain age), better at recognizing what matters, better at managing social conflicts, better at managing emotions, and so on. In fact, many say that their happiness has increased as they have grown older.

At the same time, aging brings many physical and cognitive changes that *may* cause a person to mourn for a time when they felt more healthy, independent, and indestructible. Again, a person doesn’t have to feel entirely one way or the other. It is possible to appreciate the growth you’ve experienced with age, while also wishing you could scan a restaurant menu without your cheaters.

Changing roles and sense of purpose: Another way people change is in the roles they inhabit, so as time goes on a person may grieve the loss of certain roles and/or a sense of purpose. For example, a stay-at-home parent may grieve the loss of this role when their child leaves the home. Another example, a person may grieve their sense of purpose when they enter retirement after a long career. As they say, when one door closes another one opens, so there may now be time for *new* roles and purpose, but this doesn’t mean you won’t experience grief over things that have changed.

6. Other people change.

Though you may feel the changes in your own reflection are gradual, the changes you observe in others can sometimes seem rapid. Kids grow into adults and parents grow elderly in a blink of an eye. People get sick, people get born, people die, and our friends come, and they go. Such changes can cause a person to experience losses related to death, distance, estrangement, anticipatory grief, and grief over the transformation of a person who is still present.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Suicide Intervention Skills Gatekeeper Training Workshop

Saturday, January 18th, 2020, 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Wednesday, February 12th, 2020, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Sheridan Public Library’s Theresa Dando Meeting Room* - 3425 W Oxford Ave., Denver, CO

To register, visit: www.denverqprtraining.com



Cost: \$25.00

The *Suicide Intervention Skills Gatekeeper Training Workshop* is a 2-hour educational program that includes an evidence-based suicide gatekeeper training known as QPR (Question, Persuade & Refer). QPR is designed to teach lay & professional “gatekeepers” how to Question, Persuade, and Refer someone who may be suicidal, the common causes of suicidal behavior, the warning signs of suicide, and how to get help for someone in crisis. We will have an opportunity to practice these new skills in a safe environment, participate in a group discussion about the impact suicide has in our personal lives and our communities, and we will talk about what community resources are available to utilize in a crisis for yourself or someone you love.

The cost of the workshop is \$25.00 and includes the 2-hour training, a QPR training booklet and wallet reference card, a sheet with local resources, a certificate of attendance (if desired), light refreshments, and digital copy of the book *Suicide: The Forever Decision* by Dr. Paul G. Quinnett, founder of the QPR Institute. Southwest Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide Program Director Charlotte Tankersley teaches the workshops, assisted by Southwest Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide facilitator Shirley Johnson. We would love for you to join us, so make sure to register soon before the workshops fill up as the number of spots is limited! For more information, please visit www.denverqprtraining.com. (Use the special discount code **SWMETDENSOS** when registering to receive \$5 off your registration fee, so the class is only \$20!)

Teens Overcoming Grief After Suicide 7-week Suicide Bereavement Workshop

Tuesdays, Dates TBD, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Littleton Adventist Hospital - 7700 S. Broadway St., Littleton CO

For more information visit www.survivingaftersuicide.com/togas

Cost: \$50

Teens Overcoming Grief After Suicide is a seven-week support group for teens who have lost a loved one to suicide. Teens can meet with others who are the same age to share their grief, experiences and learn coping skills after the loss of a family member, friend, neighbor, co-worker or another person of significance in their lives. Like *Surviving After Suicide* for adults, *Teens Overcoming Grief After Suicide* is curriculum-based with structured group learning activities and a specific curriculum tailored to teens. We will meet on Tuesday nights from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm as soon as we have 8 teens interested in the group. The cost is \$50 for the 7-week session to cover the cost of materials and snacks. If you are interested in learning more, want to know if this group may be appropriate for you or your teen, or to be placed on the waitlist, please contact Charlotte Tankersley at (720) 745-9252 or charlotte@hope-group.org.



Surviving After Suicide 7-week Suicide Bereavement Workshop

Fridays, February 7, 2020 - Friday, March 20th, 2020, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

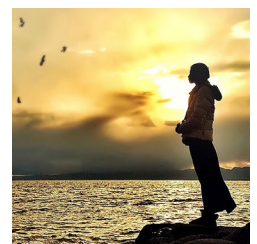
Littleton Adventist Hospital, Conference Room 1 - 7700 S. Broadway St., Littleton CO

For more information or to register, please visit www.survivingaftersuicide.com

Cost: \$25/session or \$150/7 week series

Surviving After Suicide is a 7-week workshop for adults (18+) who have experienced the death of a loved one by suicide. This workshop is designed to provide members with information about the grieving process and to provide a weekly safe, supportive, and non-judgmental space to share their experience and feelings with others who share a similar loss. Pre-registration is required as space is limited, and attendance at all meetings is requested to facilitate healing.

The cost of the workshop is \$25/session or \$150.00 if prepaid in full in advance for the seven-week series and includes all materials, activities, and light refreshments at each meeting. Southwest Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide’s facilitators Charlotte Tankersley & Shirley Johnson are the facilitators of this



workshop. A topical outline is available at www.survivingaftersuicide.com along with further information about the class and a link to register. Contact Charlotte at 720.745.9252 or charlotte@hope-group.org with any questions.

♥ Other Local Suicide Survivor Bereavement Support Groups ♥

North Metro Denver HEARTBEAT

Collier Hospice Center @ Lutheran Medical Center
3210 N Lutheran Pkwy., Wheat Ridge
720.300.8213

East Metro HEARTBEAT

Heart Light Center
11150 E. Dartmouth Ave., Aurora
Centennial
303.755.2679 or 303.667.7864

Southeast Littleton HEARTBEAT

Littleton Adventist Hospital
7700 S. Broadway, Littleton
720.328.9229
info)

Longmont Suicide Survivors Support Group Springs

Longmont Sr. Center
910 Longs Peak Ave., Room G, Longmont
970.978.6802

Parents Surviving Suicide

Bethany Lutheran Church
4500 E. Hampden Ave., Cherry Hills Village
303.322.7450

Surviving Your Spouse's Suicide

Southfield Park Towers Office Complex
12835 E. Arapahoe Rd., Tower 2, Suite 410,
303.548.2392

Boulder HEARTBEAT/Sibling HEARTBEAT

Calvary Bible Church
3245 Kalmia Ave., Boulder
720.244.9052 (Sibling group meets as requested, call for

HEARTBEAT Survivors After Suicide CO

East Methodist Church
1505 E. Monument St., Colorado Springs
719.596.2575

♥ Additional Resources for Support ♥

Choose Life! - Choose Life! is an 8-week peer-facilitated mutual support group for individuals (18+) who are suicide attempt survivors or who have persistent and ongoing suicidal ideation (thoughts). Choose Life! offers adults a safe, non-judgmental space in which to share their stories, a chance to learn new skills from others for stress management, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, etc., and provides the opportunity to build a larger support network through additional group activities - all of which are key factors in reducing the chances that individuals will make an additional attempt or will go on to die by suicide. Choose Life! is held Wednesday nights from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm at Littleton Adventist Hospital. Cost is \$25/session or \$150 for the 8-weeks when paid in advance. Please contact Charlotte at [720.745.9252](tel:720.745.9252) or charlotte@hope-group.org for more information or to be placed on the roster for the next group rotation.



If you're looking for a new book, check out our online bookstore at www.swmetrodenversos.org/bookstore! Amazon donates a portion of all sales to Southwest Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide and The Hope Group!

Group 4F (Fortifying Families and Finding Friendships) - A free monthly peer-facilitated mutual support group for family members and friends of individuals who are suicide attempt survivors, who have persistent and ongoing suicidal ideation or an ongoing mental health condition. Group 4F provides an opportunity find new friendships and establish a support network for yourself and your family as you share your experiences with others and learn new ideas to take care of yourself and your family member/friend. Group 4F meets the last Sunday each month from 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm in the Sheridan Public Library's Theresa Dando Meeting Room*. This mutual support group, sponsored by The Hope Group, is facilitated by SW Metro Denver SOS Program Manager Charlotte Tankersley. Please contact Charlotte at [720.745.9252](tel:720.745.9252) or charlotte@hope-group.org with any questions.

Pathfinders - A 10-week program that uses art, play, and activities to help children process their grief. While youth are in their groups, caregivers discuss the challenges of raising grieving children and receive support for their own grief. There is a follow-up group, *Connections*, available after completion of Pathfinders to those who qualify. Judi's House provides counseling services to grieving youth ages 3-25 years and their families. Call [720.941.0331](tel:720.941.0331) or email assist@judishouse.org to speak with a Grief Care Coordinator to find out more about individual and family services.

Surviving, Striving & Thriving - Surviving Striving & Thriving is a free peer-facilitated support group for adult (18+) suicide attempt survivors and individuals who may be struggling with suicidal ideation (thoughts). We gather monthly (2nd Thursday of the month from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm in Study Room 2 of the Sheridan Public Library*) to meet with others in a safe environment free from the judgement that we often face from others when talking about our suicidal thoughts. Learn more at www.survive-strive-thrive.org or call [720.745.9252](tel:720.745.9252) and speak with Charlotte (Program Manager of SW Metro Denver SOS and Executive Director of The Hope Group) for more information.

Teens Surviving, Striving & Thriving - Teens Surviving, Striving & Thriving is an 8-week peer support group for teen suicide attempt survivors and teens with ongoing suicidal thoughts. We gather to provide understanding through mutual experiences, learn coping skills, and to link youth to additional resources in the community while building a support system to create a safety net and promote healing. Other opportunities for socialization are provided outside the group, as is a group community service project to foster growth, increase self-esteem, and offer a chance to give back to the community. This mutual support group, sponsored by The Hope Group, is facilitated by SW Metro Denver SOS Program Manager Charlotte Tankersley and will meet on Thursday nights from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm. Cost is \$50 for the 8-week session. Please visit www.survive-strive-thrive.org/teens or contact Charlotte at [720.745.9252](tel:720.745.9252) or charlotte@hope-group.org for more information or to have your teen join the next group which is beginning soon.

♥ Online Resources for Suicide Prevention & Postvention Information and Support ♥

www.swmetrodenversos.com - Our Website
www.facebook.com/swmetrodenversos - Our Facebook
www.hope-group.org - Our Organization's Main Page
www.coloradocrisiservices.org
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

www.suicidepreventioncolorado.org
www.thesecondwindfund.org
www.afsp.org
www.suicidology.org
www.nami.org
www.allianceofhope.org (24/7 online support community for survivors of suicide loss)

If you or someone you know is in crisis:

Please **CALL**:

Colorado Crisis Services: [844.493.TALK](tel:844.493.TALK) (8255)
The National Suicide Hotline: [800.273.TALK](tel:800.273.TALK) (8255)
Military Veterans: [800.273.8255](tel:800.273.8255), Press 1
Spanish Lifeline: [800.273.8255](tel:800.273.8255), Press 2
The Trevor Project: [866.488.7386](tel:866.488.7386) (LGBTQ youth)
Trans Lifeline: [877.565.8860](tel:877.565.8860) (transgender youth and adults)

OR **TEXT** “TALK” to 38255 or “HOPE” to 741-741,

OR **VISIT** your local 24-Hour Denver-Metro walk-in Crisis Center:

Aurora Walk-In Center: Anschutz Medical Campus - 2206 Victor Street
Denver Walk-In Center: 4353 E. Colfax Ave
Littleton Walk-In Center: Santa Fe House - 6509 S. Santa Fe Drive
Westminster Walk-In Center: 84th Ave. Neighborhood Health Center - 2551 W. 84th Ave.
Wheat Ridge: Jefferson Center for Mental Health - 4643 Wadsworth Blvd.

OR **DIAL** 911.



ABOUT OUR GROUP

Each Southwest Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide meeting is led by trained peer facilitators who have also been personally impacted by suicide, its complex issues, and its aftermath; and our facilitators have each had years of experience with suicide loss support groups.

Because our meetings are peer-led, group members can share their thoughts and experiences in an environment free from the stigma and judgment usually associated with the topic of suicide. Members provide mutual support as they discuss difficulties coping with their shared losses, can seek opportunities to learn new ways of approaching challenges, often look for experience dealing with difficult anniversaries, special occasions or “tender days”, and process other feelings often associated with a suicide loss (including guilt, anger, shame, blame, self-doubt, fear, abandonment, etc. in a confidential and non-judgmental environment that is non-discriminatory and is inclusive in nature.

We all share a common experience—the loss of someone close to us by a suicide death; and we believe race, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, military or veteran status, physical disability, presence of a mental health disorder (a loved one’s or our own struggles), religion or politics should not be things that further divide us as we grieve. We gather together as loss survivors - we are former spouses or partners; parents; grandparents; children; siblings; aunts or uncles; cousins; friends; co-workers; doctors, dentists, nurses, teachers, counselors or therapists; neighbors; etc. - our relationship with those we lost does not matter. Our group exists as a space to share our experiences and our feelings - including those feelings and experiences that others who have not experienced the loss of a loved one by suicide may not understand.

Southwest Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide is a program of The Hope Group, LLC, an organization dedicated to reducing Colorado suicide rates by providing peer support opportunities for all individuals impacted by suicide. Our meetings are open to all adult suicide loss survivors and are free, although donations are gratefully accepted! There is no need to call ahead or pre-register before attending; however; you are always welcome to call us any time at [720.745.9252](tel:720.745.9252) with any questions or concerns you may have. **Southwest Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide meets from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm on the 3rd Monday every month in Conference Room 4 at Littleton Adventist Hospital.** Littleton Adventist Hospital is near the intersection of Broadway & Mineral ([7700 S Broadway](https://www.google.com/maps/place/7700+S+Broadway)) in Littleton, CO, 80122. Enter the main hospital entrance and then go straight. Take a right after you pass the piano (just before the café). Conference Room 4 is the second room on the right. We want you to know that we are here for you and hope you will join us at our next meeting.



The Hope Group is appreciative of the space that the Sheridan Library and Littleton Adventist Hospital provide for our workshops and groups.

*The granting of permission by the Arapahoe Library District to use library facilities does not constitute endorsement by the Library District staff or Board of Trustees.

For more information about Southwest Metro Denver Survivors of Suicide, please visit our website: <http://www.swmetrodenversos.org>, email info@swmetrodenversos.org, or contact our Program Manager, Charlotte Tankersley, directly at [720.745.9252](tel:720.745.9252) or charlotte@hope-group.org.

For more information about the programs The Hope Group offers, please visit www.hope-group.org



We hope you will allow us to join you on your healing journey.

