

## Self-Care Activities for Autistic Individuals Bereaved by Suicide

If you have experienced bereavement by suicide, it is normal to also struggle with your own mental health or to feel more emotional than normal. These five tips have been designed to help you support yourself through a challenging time. Research suggests that autistic individuals may experience grief differently and thus may have different self-care needs during bereavement than autistic individuals. These tips have been created with autistic individuals in mind, and in consultation with autistic individuals, but they may not suit everyone. Every autistic individual will have a different experience of grief and there will be no one-size fits all approach, but hopefully these tips provide some support.

1. Speak to a counsellor who is neuro-affirming and understands how autistic traits may affect the grieving process. To find a suitable counsellor, you could search the directory of the National Autistic Society. Many counsellors also offer a free trial appointment so you can see if it is right for you. There are also specific companies that focus on supporting neurodivergent individuals such as [Home - Butterfly Counselling \(butterfly-counselling.co.uk\)](https://www.butterfly-counselling.co.uk)
2. Don't feel a pressure to communicate to others about your grief if you don't want to, support yourself in the way which is best for you. There are online communities such as MIND [Side by Side: our online community - Mind](#) which may be more accessible than face-to-face support groups
3. Engage in your special interests. Sometimes people feel guilty for enjoying their special interest when they have experienced bereavement but it is important to maintain things you enjoy and things which give you joy to get through difficult times.
4. Listen to your body. If you have less energy to socialise or do things around the house, prioritise yourself. If this means cooking easier meals or changing your routine, that is fine if you are okay with it. Try to be kind to yourself and show self-compassion

The Here to Help 'resources', which include but are not limited to, website, information sheets, and in person workshops are intended to provide general information only. The 'resources' provided by 'Here to Help' do not replace, or supersede, professional and/or medical advice. Users should take professional advice before taking action which contradicts previous medical guidance. So far as permissible by law, SJOG does not accept any liability related to individual's use or interpretation of the 'resources' provided.

Whilst we have selected some resources from other organisations which we believe will be helpful, we accept no liability for the content of these resources.'

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5. Don't measure your grief against other people's. Your grief may look different and this is okay, it doesn't mean you cared for your loved one any less.

If you feel like you need support with your own mental health, these 24/7 services can help:

**National:**

Samaritans 116 123

999

111 (Option 2- Mental Health)

Papyrus Hopeline: Call- 0800 068 4141 or Text 88247

Text Shout to 85258

**Teesside:**

Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Crisis Team: 0800 0515 171

## Resources

**Website title: Suicide and Co**

**Website Description:** Suicide and Co provide 12 sessions of free counselling to anyone 18+ who has been bereaved by suicide in England or Wales.

**Website Link:** [Suicide&Co | Support after Suicide Bereavement](#)

**Website title: IfUCareShare**

**Website Description:** IfUCareShare provide a number of useful resources and additional support to those who have been bereaved by suicide.

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**Website Link:** [I have lost someone to suicide | If U Care Share](#)

**Website title:** Support Groups for Individuals Bereaved by Suicide

**Website Description:** This website provides information about how to join a support group if you have been bereaved by suicide.

**Website Link:** [Support groups for people bereaved by suicide \(samaritans.org\)](#)

Moreover, autistic individuals may experience bereavement differently than non-autistic individuals. These resources provide specific support to autistic individuals experiencing bereavement:

**Website title:** National Autistic Society Bereavement Support

**Website Description:** Guides for autistic individuals who have experienced bereavement

**Website Link:** [Bereavement \(autism.org.uk\)](#)

**Website title:** Supporting an autistic child with bereavement

**Website Description:** A video providing step by step guidance to supporting an autistic child with bereavement

**Website Link:** [Supporting a bereaved autistic child | Child Bereavement UK](#)

**Website title:** Supporting neurodivergent people who have been bereaved by suicide guide

**Website Description:** A comprehensive and detailed exploration of best practice in supporting neurodivergent individuals who have been bereaved by suicide.

**Website Link:** [Overview of our new guide: supporting people bereaved by suicide who are neurodivergent – Support After Suicide](#)

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