

# Resources

A variety of resources are available to you and your family when you are ready.

**The Link's National Resource Center for Suicide Prevention and Aftercare** hosts Survivors of Suicide Support Group Meetings across the state: [www.thelink.org/nrc.htm](http://www.thelink.org/nrc.htm)

**Compassionate Friends** has chapters across the state and hosts meeting for parents, grandparents, and siblings who have lost a loved one at any age, from any cause: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

**Kate's Club** provides supportive services for young children and teens who have lost a parent in Georgia: [www.katesclub.org](http://www.katesclub.org)

## Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Program

Surviving family members and victims of attempted murder-suicide may qualify for up to \$25,000 in compensation through the Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Program. Learn more and find out if you qualify for compensation by visiting [www.crimevictimscomp.ga.gov](http://www.crimevictimscomp.ga.gov) and clicking on the link for victims.

### Types of Expenses Covered

- Medical & Dental Expenses: Up to \$15,000
- Loss of Income or Support: Up to \$10,000
- Mental Health Counseling: Up to \$3,000
- Funeral Expenses: Up to \$6,000
- Crime Scene Sanitization: Up to \$1,000

*"As far as I can see, grief will never truly end. It may become softer over time, more gentle, but some days will feel sharp, but grief will last as long as love does— forever. It's simply the way the absence of your loved one manifests in your heart: a deep longing, accompanied by the deepest love. Some days, the heavy fog may return, and the next day, it may recede, once again. It's all an ebb and flow, a constant dance of sorrow and joy, pain and sweet love."*

*— Lexi Behrndt*

Staff at the Georgia Commission on Family Violence are available to help you find resources in your local community.

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# SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MURDER-SUICIDE

## SUGGESTIONS, RESOURCES AND REMINDERS FOR GRIEVING FAMILIES, FRIENDS AND COMMUNITIES

# About Murder-Suicide

A domestic violence murder-suicide occurs when a person kills one or more victims, including a current or former intimate partner, and then commits suicide. Most domestic violence murder-suicides occur in the home, and sometimes children are present or are witness to the death(s) of their parent(s).

Every year in Georgia, there are an average of 20 domestic violence murder-suicides, leaving behind hundreds of family members and friends.

A murder-suicide can shatter the equilibrium in your life. Losing a loved one, particularly in a sudden and violent manner, can be traumatic. For many, losing two loved ones at the same time in such a manner can exacerbate and complicate the grieving process.

# What Happens Next

Following a murder-suicide, families and friends may be confronted with several situations which they may find overwhelming. You may be asked to speak with law enforcement, identify the bodies of the deceased, talk with the media, visit the crime scene, arrange for the crime scene to be cleaned, prepare for the funeral(s), claim the personal effects of the deceased, and handle their estate.

# Grief: What to Expect

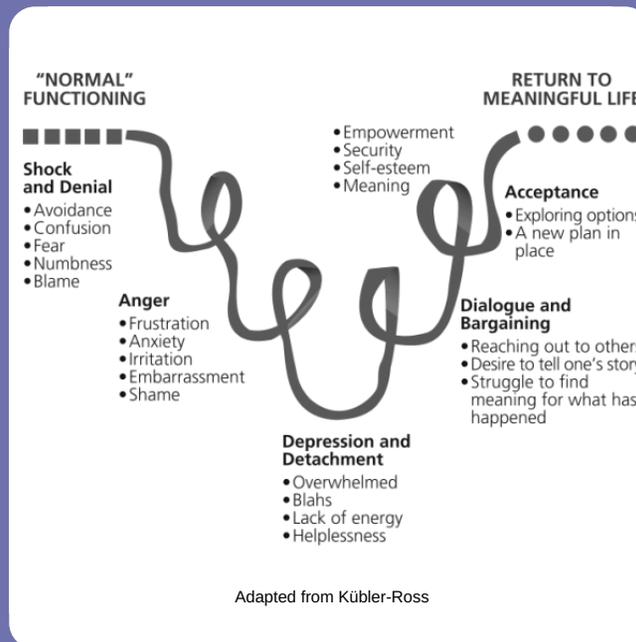
Expect a range of emotional, physical, and behavioral changes in the aftermath of a murder-suicide. All of these are normal reactions after losing someone you love.

**Emotional Impact:** Shock, numbness, anger, fear, anxiety, guilt, shame, and pain

**Physical Symptoms:** Rapid heart rate, shortness of breath, headaches, body aches, loss or increase of appetite, and extreme fluctuations in crying

**Behavioral Changes:** Avoiding the subject of death, poor concentration and memory, intrusive thoughts, difficulty sleeping, and hyper-vigilance

# Stages of Grief



# Healing Considerations

Allow yourself to express your emotions. Confide in trusted individuals. Tell the story of your loss. Seek help from a counselor or faith leader. Groups addressing grief and unexpected loss may provide an opportunity to talk with others who have shared a similar experience.

If you are not ready to seek help from a counselor or support group now, familiarize yourself with what resources are available for when you are ready, or for when you may need support and resources for your family members and friends.

Find ways to connect to your lost loved one by keeping a journal and writing to them. Carry an object linked to the person who died. Create a memory area in your home.

Take care of yourself. Get plenty of rest, incorporate exercise you enjoy, and eat well. Develop nighttime routines to help you sleep. Allow yourself some time alone.

Do something to help others. This may allow you to step outside of your own pain for a while and find comfort in acts of service in your community.

Give yourself time; there is no time limit on grieving. Do not be afraid to reach out for help, even if years have passed.