

BEATITUDES FOR SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE

By LaRita Archibald (2000).

BLESSED are they who recognize suicide grief is compounded; that we grieve the death of a beloved person but first and foremost, we grieve the cause of the death.

BLESSED are they who give us permission to mourn the loss of one dearly loved, free of judgment, censure and shame.

BLESSED are spiritual guides who relieve our concerns for the repose of our loved one's soul with the truth that God is all-knowing, all-loving and all-forgiving.

BLESSED are they who don't offer the meaningless cliché, "Time Heals", because, for a long while, the passing of time holds no meaning or value for us.

BLESSED are they who don't say, "I know just how you feel", but instead say, "I am here for you. I will not tire of your tears or your words of sorrow and regret."

BLESSED are they who have the patience and love to listen to our repetitive obsession with WHY? without offering useless answers or explanations.

BLESSED are they who reaffirm the worth of our deceased beloved by sharing memories of his/her goodness and times of fun, laughter and happiness.

BLESSED are the mental health care providers who explain to us that, very probably, our loved one died of a terminal illness called depression.

BLESSED are they who challenge our sense of omnipotence with the reminder that no one has enough power or control over another to cause them to end their life.

BLESSED are the first responders to our loved one's suicide who try to relieve our sense of guilt and responsibility by assuring us, "You did not cause this death."

BLESSED are they who lend acceptance to the value of the relationship we shared with the one who died by allowing us to speak of them and 'what might have been'.

BLESSED are they who encourage us to use our loved one's death in a manner that gives our loss and grief meaning and purpose.

BLESSED are they who do not expect us to find "closure", "grief resolution", "recovery" or to "be healed", understanding that these terms define 'grief work in progress' that may take the rest of our life.

BLESSED are community caregivers who direct us to suicide bereavement support groups where our anguish is understood, our loss validated and where we are encouraged by the example of others who have traveled this road before us.

BLESSED are 'seasoned' survivors of suicide loss who role-model not only can we survive, but, in time, we will thrive...we will regain peace of mind, restored confidence, renewed productivity and a revived zest for living.

BLESSED are all who honor our loved ones by remembering how they lived rather than how they died.

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