



World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10, 2023: Creating Hope Through Action and Support

NANAIMO, BC (August 31, 2023) - This year, as communities globally observe World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) on September 10, the focus is not just on preventing suicide but also on creating awareness, and supporting those left in its aftermath. Vancouver Island Crisis Society believes that these responsibilities of prevention, awareness, and bereavement support, can make a significant difference - not just for those surviving loss - but for the entire community.

The theme for 2023, **Creating Hope Through Action**, signifies that every gesture, no matter how minor, can instill hope. Everyone — a friend, family member, colleague, or a neighbor — has a role to play in offering support and preventing suicide.

The loss from suicide is unique, casting a deep shadow of stigma, guilt, and shame. Often, it becomes a taboo topic, leading survivors to wrestle with intense guilt and endless 'what if' questions. This shame and self-blame intensify their isolation, complicating the healing process. This emotional turmoil can lead to 'Soul Exhaustion', a profound state of despair. Researchers note that trauma and grief after suicide are closely linked, making it hard for survivors to grieve without revisiting traumatic feelings, underlining the unique and complex nature of suicide bereavement.

Key Initiatives:

1. **A Global Drive:** World Suicide Prevention Day is more than a commemoration; it's a global mission. With participation from over 50 countries, the shared vision is a world with better awareness, intervention, and support mechanisms.
2. **Emphasizing Bereavement Support:** Vancouver Island Crisis Society offers comprehensive suicide bereavement services for anyone who has lost someone to suicide:
 - a. **Virtual Monthly Peer Support Group:** A confidential space where individuals can connect on Zoom, share experiences, and foster a community of healing.
 - b. **Personalized 1:1 Support:** Tailored sessions conducted virtually, over the phone, or in person, to offer personal, compassionate care during the grieving process.
3. **Collaborative Efforts:** Working alongside organizations like **Victoria's NEED2**, which provides specialized suicide bereavement support [Victoria's NEED2 Support Group](https://need2.ca/programs/support-group) (<https://need2.ca/programs/support-group>), **Pathways Cowichan Valley**, which offers a range of volunteer-driven programs, including suicide bereavement assistance (<https://cowichan.pathwaysbc.ca/programs/896>), and **Nanaimo Community Hospice Society** (<https://www.nanaimohospice.com/our-programs>) who offer an 8 week Traumatic Loss Support Group that provides tools for recognizing and navigating traumatic loss like suicide.

As WSPD approaches, we invite the community to engage with our resources, participate in events, and spread the vital message of hope, prevention, and support.

For further information, resources, or to avail our services, please visit www.vicrisis.ca or reach out to our dedicated helpline at 1-888-494-3888 or text us between 6:00-10:00 PM at 250-800-3806.

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