

## You are not alone.

Every year, many Alaskans unexpectedly lose dear ones. Like you, these family and friends are survivors of sudden traumatic loss. Together, we can learn to cope and to heal.

Survivors often feel:

- **Shock**  
Feeling numb and having trouble concentrating.
- **Depression**  
Feeling intensely sad, not wanting to eat, having trouble sleeping or sleeping more than usual.
- **Anger**  
Feeling angry towards the person you've lost, someone else or yourself is common.
- **Relief**  
If the death was the end of a rocky life, relief is a normal feeling.
- **Guilt**  
Many people ask themselves if they missed a sign or wonder if they could have done something to help. Survivors may feel guilty about feelings of relief or anger.

These feelings are normal. These usually fade with time as we process our thoughts and emotions, and take steps to heal. This gradual and uneven transition is not a betrayal; it is natural and necessary.

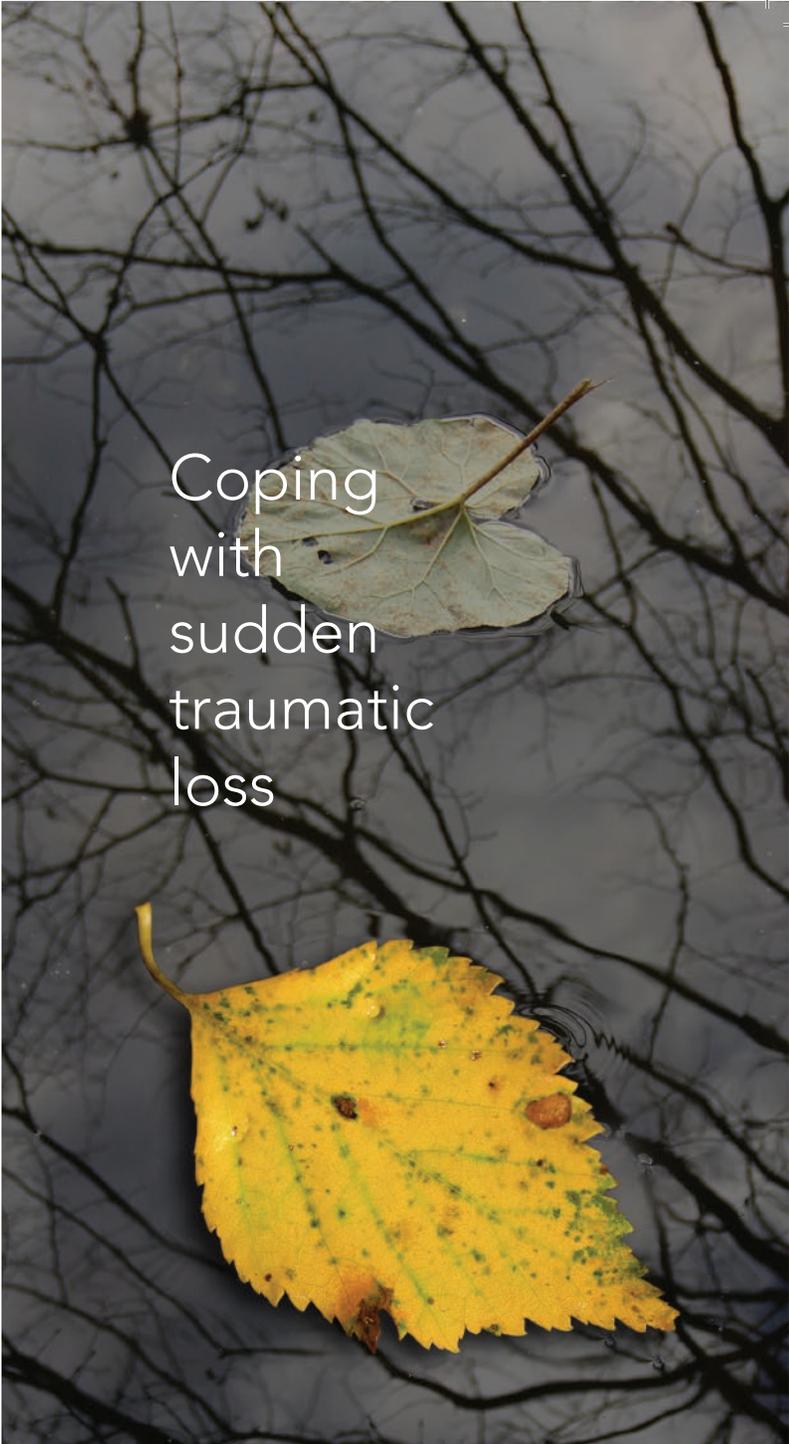
Optional local information here.



Alaska Division of Behavioral Health  
[www.hss.state.ak.us/dbh](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dbh)  
907-465-3370

With thanks to the  
American Foundation of  
Suicide Prevention  
for much of this content.

AFSP's site, [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org),  
has links to support groups and  
other valuable information.



Coping  
with  
sudden  
traumatic  
loss

## Grief support statewide

### General bereavement support

**Alaska's Careline** 877-266-HELP (4357)  
or text *4help* to 839863 most evenings  
[www.carelinealaska.com](http://www.carelinealaska.com)

Careline helps people in crisis, people who are grieving or concerned for someone, or who just need to talk. It's also Alaska's suicide prevention line. Available 24-7.

**Hospice of Anchorage** 907-561-5322

[www.HospiceOfAnchorage.org](http://www.HospiceOfAnchorage.org)

Hospice offers many grief support groups and other resources.

**Veterans & Military Crisis Line** 800-273-8255

Press 1, or text 838255

<http://veteranscrisisline.net>

Confidential support for military members, veterans and their families and friends, 24-7.



### For specific loss

#### Loss to suicide:

**Alaska's Careline** 877-266-HELP (4357)  
[www.carelinealaska.com](http://www.carelinealaska.com)

#### Loss to violence:

**Victims for Justice** offers many support services for surviving family members, including violent death or homicide grief support.  
In Anchorage: Susan Sullivan, 907-278-0977  
Outside Anchorage: 888-835-1213

#### Loss of a child:

**Hospice** has many groups, including for parents. Hospice of Anchorage can direct you to local resources: 907-561-5322.

### Resources for children

**Hospice of Anchorage**, 907-561-5322, can direct you to local resources.

Anchorage Hospice has Forget-Me-Not programs for children, teens and the adults who love them.

Hospice also offers free three-day summer camps for kids ages 6-17, one in Southcentral for kids from all over Alaska, and a local one on the Kenai.

## Steps ahead

### Everyone grieves differently.

You may need to talk; you may need to be quiet. Keep looking until you find a source of support that matches what you need.

Understand that the way other friends and family grieve may be different.

### Be patient with yourself and others.

We all grieve at our own pace. Feelings may last longer than others, or you, expect. It is normal to feel anger and confusion as well as the grief that comes with loss.

Grief may be uneven. Periods of peace and relative happiness may be broken by waves of sadness. You may notice this in children, too.

### Plan ways to cope.

Take care of yourself physically and emotionally. Take walks, eat healthy, be wary of alcohol. Try to keep in touch with people close to you. It may feel exhausting, but it is important.

Prepare for painful dates, like birthdays and holidays. Ask someone to be with you, or if you want to be alone, keep a number on hand to call if you need support. You can always call Careline.

When you feel ready, begin to enjoy life again. This is not a betrayal of your loved one; it is a natural step in the healing process. You can honor the value his or her life held for you by valuing your own life, and living fully.