

Working Together

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Title: Working Together – A Suicide Loss Survivor and Her Grief Therapist

Brief Summary: This unique presentation will include a mother bereaved by suicide, along with her grief therapist, who will discuss their joint work together to support her recovery from the tragedy of her son's suicide death.

Abstract: The loss of a child to suicide can be devastating, and healing sometimes requires the support of a skilled mental health clinician. In this presentation, a mother who lost her young adult son to suicide, and her grief therapist, with whom she worked for several years, will together describe their journey through her mourning process. The therapist will briefly provide a framework for understanding the clinical tasks, and the client will describe in her own words what was helpful (and not helpful) about the therapy process. She will also discuss some of the changes in her grief that occurred over the course of her sessions. Time will also be allotted for questions and comments from the audience. This presentation should be helpful for therapists, counselors, and suicide loss survivors.

Objectives: By the finish of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Identify aspects of grief that are different and/or more intense after a suicide.
2. Better understand the experience of a person bereaved by suicide as a client in grief therapy.
3. Describe the role of the therapeutic alliance in working with suicide loss survivors