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“Grief is the last act of love we have to those we loved.

Where there is deep grief, there was great love.”



Calendar of events

Thursday 21 April - BTS Support Meeting

7pm - 9pm, Uniting Community "U City", 43 Franklin Street (cnr Pitt St), Adelaide CBD

The support meetings are for those bereaved through suicide and are facilitated by trained support workers who have themselves been bereaved through suicide. The meeting offers the opportunity to express your loss in an environment that is caring and safe. Everything shared is treated as strictly confidential. The meetings not only provide the opportunity to share experiences, they also present information about the process of loss and grief and strategies to heal. We look forward to welcoming you.

Sunday 27 March - BTS Coffee Catch-Up

10am - 12pm Adelaide Botanic Gardens - Cafe by the lake

This is an opportunity to catch up with others who have lost someone to suicide, in a less formal setting than our regular bi-monthly meetings. Join us for breakfast or coffee and cake while chatting and listening to others and then take a stroll through the beautiful surroundings of the Botanic Gardens. BTS volunteers will be on hand.

Words from the Chair

Hello

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2022.

The new committee (Janice, Sally, Roger, Lyn, Nicole & Jack) are starting to get an idea of our roles.

We are continuing bi-monthly support meetings with a coffee catch-up in between.

Our February support meeting, our first one for the year, provided a warm and caring opportunity for those touched by suicide.

If you have been touched by suicide, you would be most welcome at one of our meetings.

Please take care of yourselves.

Adrian Maloney

(on behalf of BTS volunteers and committee)

We thought of you with love today,

But, that is nothing new.

We thought about you yesterday,

And days before that too.

We think of you in silence.

We often speak your name.

Now all we have is memories.

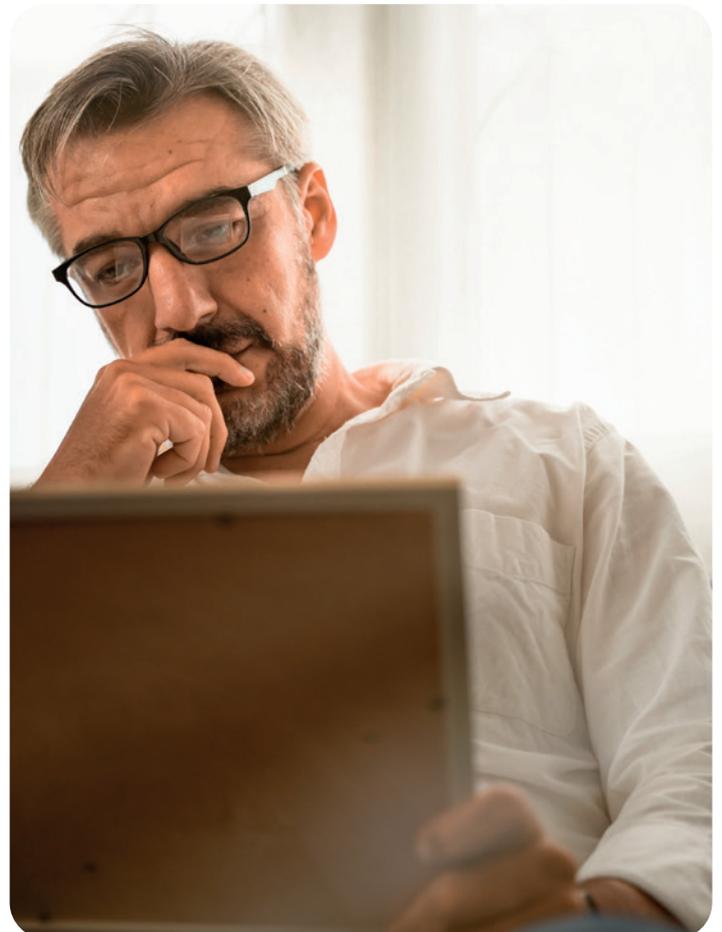
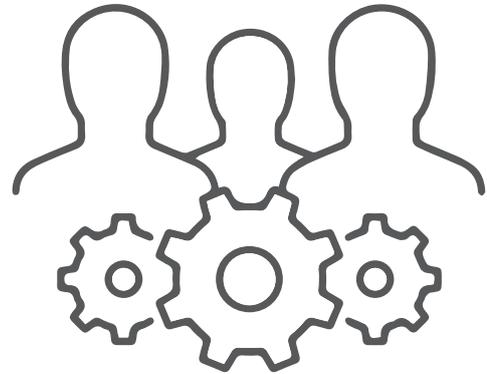
And your picture in a frame.

Your memory is our keepsake.

With which we'll never part.

God has you in his keeping.

We have you in our heart.



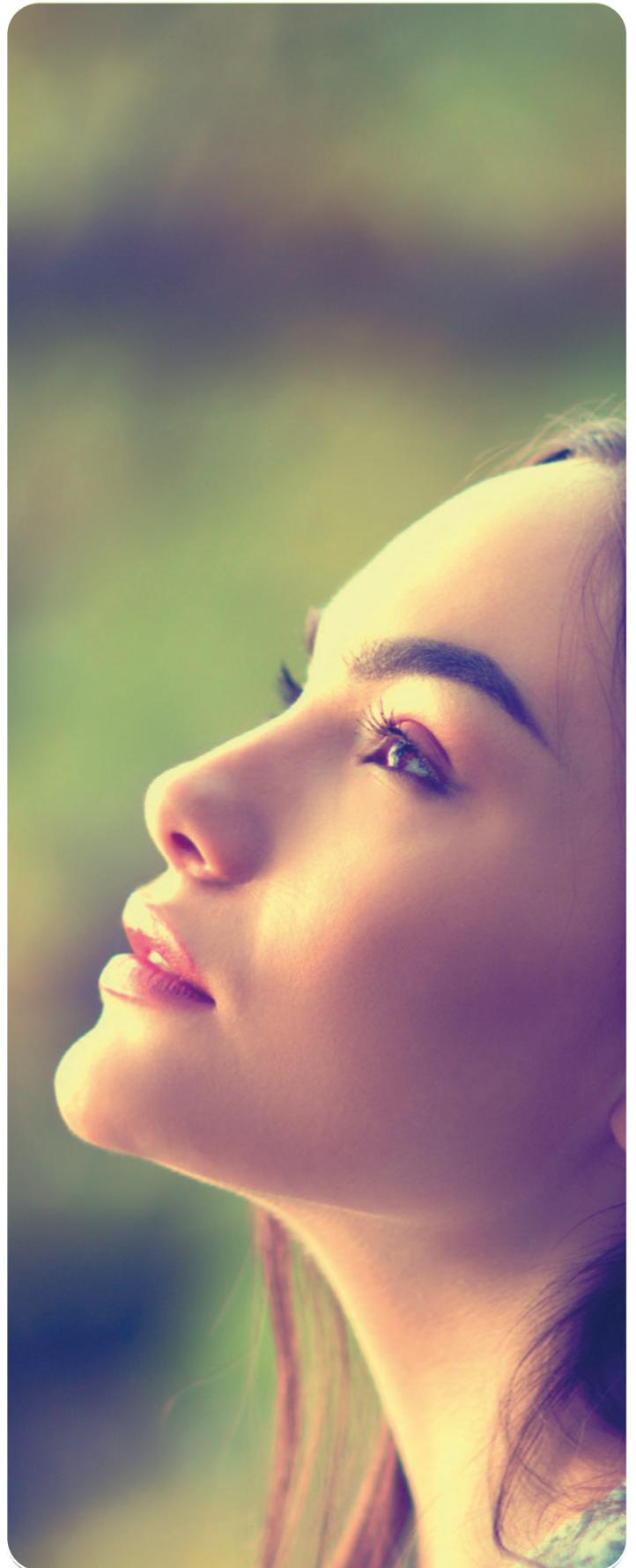
“ I resolve to take you with me into the new year and then every day after that ”

I'll hold onto memories of you, each a separate thread connected to our life together. I'll jumble them up into a ball, so I'm not constantly getting tangled in the past. But I'll make sure I can still pull out a single string whenever I want to remember you.

“ This year I vow to... allow and honour all my feelings ”

- Not to judge myself or my feelings
- Not to utter or think any rules or “shoulds” and listen to my heart
- To enter that still, sure place within, where peace survives
- To trust my inner voice and treat myself like a precious child
- To be gentle and compassionate toward myself
- To be kind and forgiving toward myself
- To reassure myself I am doing the best I can in this moment and give myself whatever time I need to grieve
- Whenever I need it, allow myself the relief from isolation, comparisons, and judgment
- Find support from someone who will be with me just as I am and trust my body to know how to grieve, and then let it.
- Allow love to flow to me from my community, from family who may not have understood me, from unexpected people who surround me
- From a friend to sit with me, hold me, and comfort my mind, body and soul
- To find miracles in the most ordinary of things and events each day - a sunrise, a hummingbird, the wet nose of a dog, a child pumping on a swing
- I will see and even feel wonder and beauty in the world without the guilt or despair that I am enjoying it without my loved one
- To take one deep breath after another; and trust my resilience and ability to be with all my feelings
- To hold on to the love, and not let death end my relationship with my loved one.

SOURCE: healingthespirit.org/new-years-resolution-bereaved



GRIEF IS COMPLICATED

GRIEF IS OK IT'S OKAY TO GRIEVE:

The death of a loved one is a reluctant and drastic amputation, without any anesthesia.

The pain cannot be described, and no scale can measure the loss.

We despise the truth that the death cannot be reversed, and that somehow our dear one returned. Such hurt!! It's okay to grieve.

IT'S OKAY TO CRY:

Tears release the flood of sorrow, of missing and of love.

Tears relieve the brute force of hurting, enabling us to "level off" and continue our cruise along the stream of life. It's okay to cry.

IT'S OKAY TO HEAL:

We do not need to 'prove' we loved him or her. As the months pass, we are slowly able to move around with less outward grieving each day.

We need not feel 'guilty', for this is not an indication that we love less.

It means that, although we don't like it, we are learning to accept death.

It's a healthy sign of healing. It's okay to heal.

IT'S OKAY TO LAUGH:

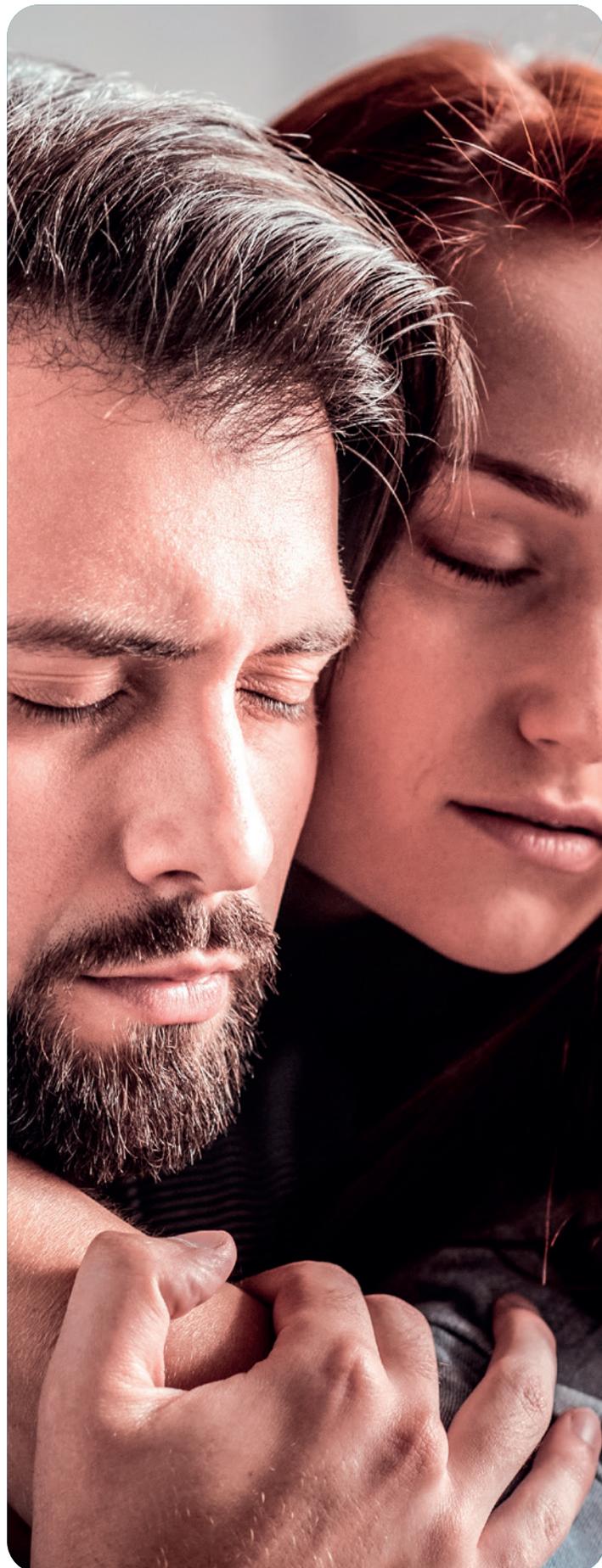
Laughter is not a sign of 'less' grief. Laughter is not a sign of 'less' love.

It's a sign that many of our thoughts and memories are happy ones.

It's a sign that we know our memories are happy ones.

It's a sign that we know our dear one would have us laugh again. It's okay to laugh.

Source survivorsofsuicide.com



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNRESOLVED GRIEF AND SUICIDE

Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation and negative stigma around the topic of suicide, especially in regard to how one's suicide is perceived.

A common attitude that creates a lot of pain and confusion for many people is the belief that suicide is a 'selfish act'.

Suicidal thoughts can be triggered following varying life experiences, including loss of any kind or a series of loss events. Very sadly and tragically, the individual reaches a point of such profound pain and hopelessness, that they just want it to end. It is not about hurting their loved ones, engaging in a selfish act, or even about death. It is about ending the pain. Many individuals who reach this point truly believe that their loved ones would be 'better off' without them.

There are over 40 forms of loss that can cause us to feel pain and despair. Suicide can be triggered by many losses that happen throughout our lives including,

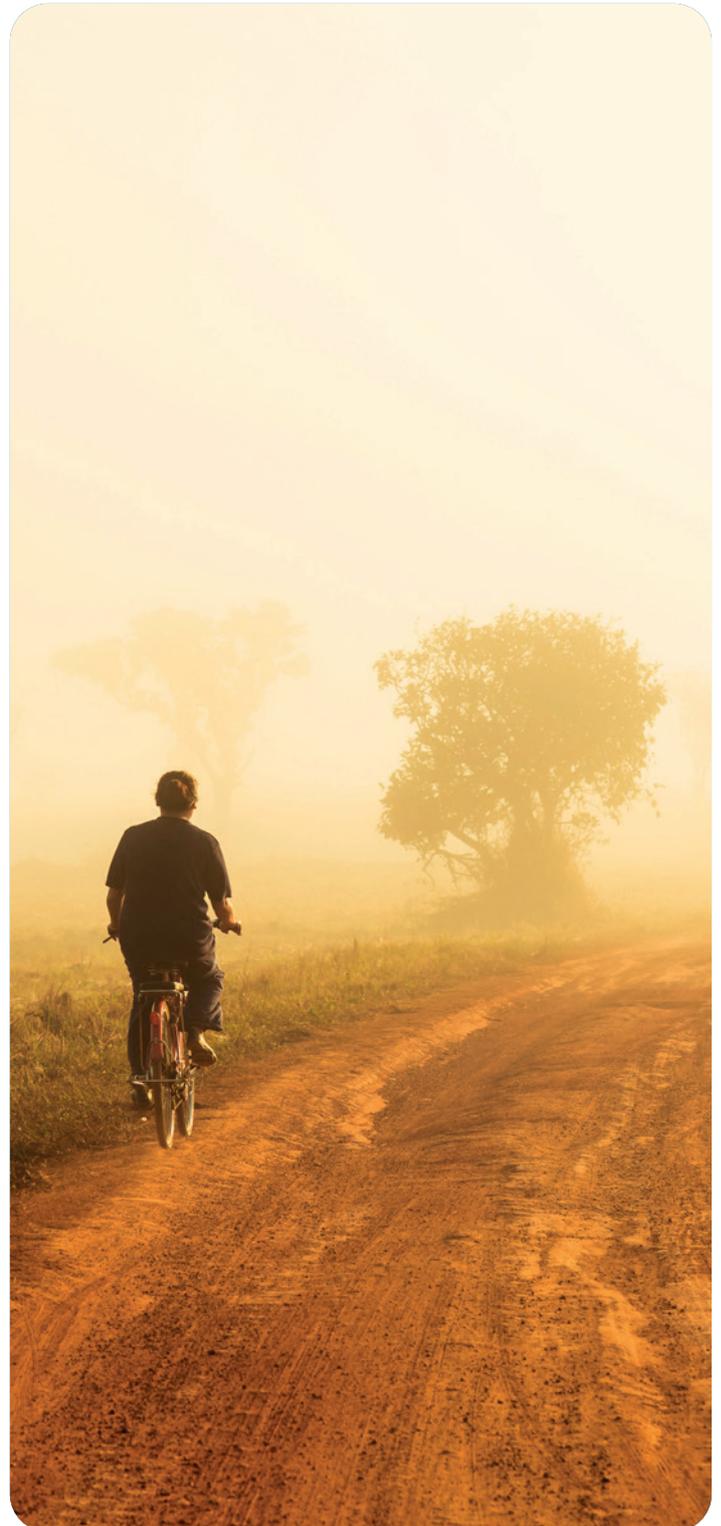
- Death
- Divorce or break-up
- Pet loss
- Job loss
- Economic changes
- Loss of trust
- Bullying
- Retirement
- Legal problems
- Addictions
- Illness or loss of health
- Incarceration
- Loss of fertility or miscarriage

Because we have been taught that it is not okay to share our sad, painful, or conflicting feelings, we often don't feel the safety to share openly with others. The habit we create and become familiar with, grieving alone, has negative implications for our lives. It begins to limit and restrict our happiness and emotional freedom and can lead us down a path of loneliness and self-destruction. Sometimes we become so familiar with our pain, that we lose hope that things can be better or different for our future.

Although the warning signs of suicide can be subtle, some common behaviours include, drug and alcohol abuse, sleeping difficulties, and acts of self-harm. You may notice altering of life choices and the individual partaking in risky behaviours. Additionally, personality change, and attitude change can be an indication of suicidal ideation. We may also start to see the individual withdraw and isolate from relationships and social situations, and they may even begin to lose interest in activities that they used to enjoy.

A life of unresolved grief can trigger hopelessness and thoughts of suicide if the pain becomes too unbearable and unmanageable. Unresolved grief is cumulative and cumulatively negative. Sadly, it restricts us emotionally in our relationships and in our lives. As noted earlier, we often hold back from sharing our feelings with others, as we may not feel as though we have that safe haven to be vulnerable and express ourselves honestly.

It is important that people who are struggling with thoughts of suicide or previous attempts have an outlet for communicating their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. They often just want and need to be heard by someone they trust. We need to be willing to listen without judgment, criticism, or analysis. Being a "heart with ears" may be enough to stop an individual from ending their life.



WHY SUICIDE?

Edwin Shneidman, a clinical psychologist who is a leading authority on suicide, described ten characteristics that are commonly associated with completed suicide. They are:

1. The common purpose of suicide is to seek a solution.

Suicide is not a pointless or random act. To people who think about ending their own lives, suicide represents an answer to an otherwise insoluble problem or a way out of some unbearable dilemma. It is a choice that is somehow preferable to another set of dreaded circumstances, emotional distress, or disability, which the person fears more than death.

Attraction to suicide as a potential solution may be increased by a family history of similar behavior. If someone else whom the person admired or cared for has committed suicide, then the person is more likely to do so.

2. The common goal of suicide is cessation of consciousness.

People who commit suicide seek the end of the conscious experience, which to them has become an endless stream of distressing thoughts with which they are preoccupied. Suicide offers oblivion.

3. The common stimulus (or information input) in suicide is intolerable psychological pain.

Excruciating negative emotions - including shame, guilt, anger, fear, and sadness - frequently serve as the foundation for self-destructive behavior. These emotions may arise from any number of sources.

4. The common stressor in suicide is frustrated psychological needs.

People with high standards and expectations are especially vulnerable to ideas of suicide when progress toward these goals is suddenly frustrated. People who attribute failure or disappointment to their own shortcomings may come to view themselves as worthless, incompetent, or unlovable. Family turmoil is an especially important source of frustration to adolescents. Occupational and interpersonal difficulties frequently precipitate suicide.

5. The common emotion in suicide is hopelessness.

A pervasive sense of hopelessness, defined in terms of pessimistic expectations about the future, is even more important than other forms of negative emotion, such as anger and depression, in predicting suicidal behavior. The suicidal person is convinced that absolutely nothing can be done to improve his or her situation, no one else can help.

6. The common internal attitude in suicide is ambivalence.

Most people who contemplate suicide, including those who eventually succeed, have ambivalent feelings about this decision. They are sincere in their desire to die, but they simultaneously wish that they could find another way out of their dilemma.

7. The common cognitive state in suicide is constriction.

Suicidal thoughts and plans are frequently associated with a rigid and narrow pattern of cognitive activity that is comparable to tunnel vision. The suicidal person is temporarily unable or unwilling to engage in effective problem-solving behaviors and may see his or her options in extreme, all or nothing terms.

8. The common action in suicide is escape.

Suicide provides a definitive way to escape from intolerable circumstances, which include painful self-awareness

9. The common interpersonal act in suicide is communication of intention.

One of the most harmful myths about suicide is the notion that people who really want to kill themselves don't talk about it. Most people who commit suicide have told other people about their plans. Many have made previous suicidal gestures. Schneidman estimates that in at least 80 percent of completed suicides, the people provide verbal or behavioral clues that clearly indicate their lethal intentions.

LIFE

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.

Leo Buscaglia

10. The common consistency in suicide is with life-long coping patterns.

During crisis that precipitate suicidal thoughts, people generally employ the same response patterns that they have used throughout their lives. For example, people who have refused to ask for help in the past are likely to persist in that pattern, increasing their sense of isolation.



The Bereaved through Suicide Support Group

Run by people who themselves have been bereaved through suicide, BTS supports those in the community who have been close to someone who has taken their own life – partner, child, relative, friend or close acquaintance.

Telephone support service: 0468 440 287 from 8am - 8pm
Email support service: support@bts.org.au
Suicide bereavement resources: www.bts.org.au

BTS holds a support meeting facilitated by trained Support Workers, themselves having lost someone to suicide, it is a place for people to find compassion, support and understanding. Thoughts of attending a meeting can be incredibly daunting. Many of us want to be alone. But knowing and talking to others that know, and have an understanding of, how you feel can provide some help and solace in this incredibly difficult journey.

Donations

Without donations, BTS would not be able to continue supporting the Bereaved Through Suicide community.

100% of all donations received are used to continue supporting people bereaved through suicide. BTS receives no government funding and all work is undertaken by volunteers, however we incur costs by providing the support services above.

Should you wish to make a tax deductible donation to BTS you can directly EFT to: **BTS Support Group BSB: 633-000 A/C: 148312366**

Tax deductible receipts will be issued.

Thank you in advance for supporting our very worthy organisation.



Additional Support Services

NATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Lifeline	13 11 14
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
Beyondblue	1300 224 636
Mensline	1300 789 978
Suicide Call Back Service	1300 659 467

OTHER SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SUPPORT SERVICES

SA Mental Health Triage Service	13 14 65
Living Beyond Suicide (LBS)/Anglicare (Metro Adel. only) Between 10am–10pm any day	1300 761 193
Standby Support After Suicide/Anglicare (Statewide)	1300 727 247
Silent Ripples (Murray Bridge)	0417 741 888

Thank you

A big thank you to Uniting Communities "U City" for providing the facilities to hold our support meetings.