

ARE THERE SPECIAL JEWISH PRAYERS AND RITUALS FOR MOURNING— OR SURVIVING—A DEATH BY SUICIDE?

Depending on the traditions of a person's specific Jewish community, a death by suicide can include all of the same prayers and rituals as any other death. (See "What are the Jewish mourning practices for a suicide?")

However, we should remember the particular sensitivities around death by suicide and the family and friends who survive. We offer some prayers and rituals, written by survivors, you might use or adapt:

- *Prayer for family members after a loss by suicide*
- *Prayer at a funeral of death by suicide*
- *Prayer for those grieving a death by suicide*
- *Personal prayer after a death by suicide*



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Birkat HaGomel After a Nonfatal Suicide Attempt

Blessed are You, Holy Creator, who has created each one of us, intentionally, so that we are not alone.

Blessed are You, Source of Rest, who has commanded us to keep Shabbat, to practice self-care and healthy boundaries, while we care for one another.

Blessed are You, Source of Wisdom, who guides us to seek help when we need it and helps others to see us when we need holy, sacred chesed (loving-kindness).

Blessed are You, Divine Source of Life, whose love and mercy is with each one of us always, especially when we walk through dark valleys and as we climb the mountains of euphoria.

Blessed are You, Source of Peace, who helps us to choose life and remains present to us when thoughts of death are insurmountable.

May we each know that, together with all of creation, you have called us unconditionally good.

May we each move from strength to strength, finding comfort in the company we keep, to wake up renewed for each new day.

And, may the Holy One, who continues to bless us when we wake up and lie down, continue to light the path of life for those who feel unsafe. Amen!

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Mi Sheberach (Prayer for Healing) for One Who is Struggling

**May the One who blessed our ancestors,
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah,
be with us in our struggles.**
As you blessed Jacob three times, be with us in our struggles.
May our wrestling be transformative in our struggles.
Give us patience, courage, endurance, and insight.
May the sufferer be healed in spirit and in body.
May G-d be with us. We pray for meaning in the length of our days.

For Those Contemplating Suicide, by Anonymous



**May the One who blessed our ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, be with us in our struggles.**
As you blessed Jacob three times, be with us in our struggles. **May our
wrestling be transformative in our struggles.**
Give us patience, courage, endurance, and insight. **May the sufferer be
healed in spirit and in body.**
May G-d be with us. We pray for meaning in the length of our days.

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For Those Struggling with Suicidal Thoughts, by Lisa

May you know better days are ahead and stay with us.

May you know taking your own life is not the only path to healing.

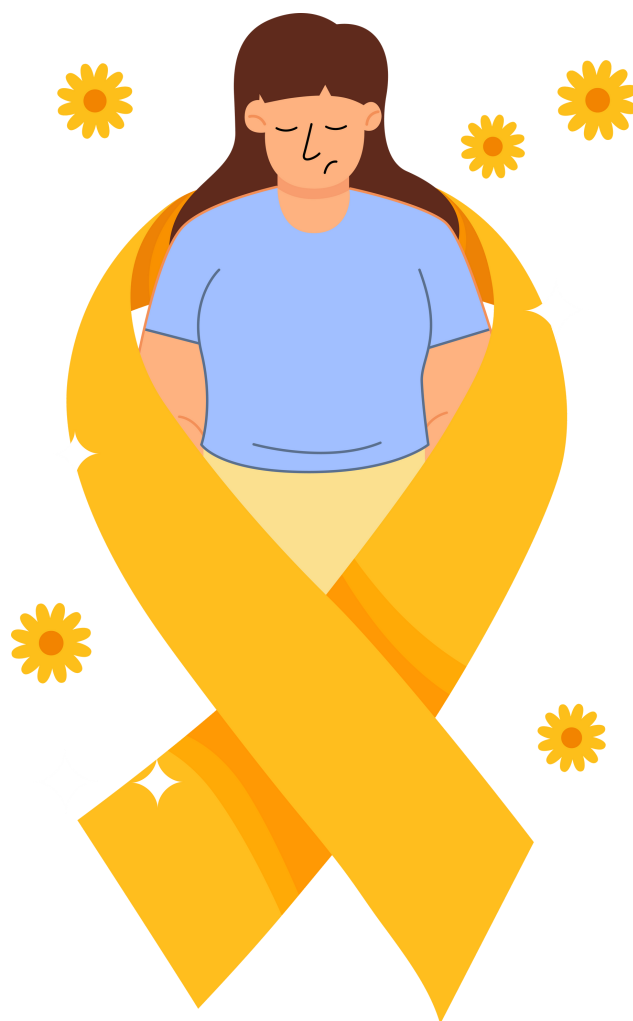
May you never be so low you make an irreversible decision.

May you find courage to reach out and cry for help so you don't suffer alone.

May your deep pain and suffering turn to harmony and tranquility as your health improves.

May you live to celebrate many milestones in peace surrounded by those who love you.

May the prayers of all who care about you bring you healing, happiness, and blessings—refuah, simcha, and bracha.



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For Those Who Have Lost a Loved One, by Devin



May the Source of Strength, who blesses all, bless all who grieve and mourn.

May those who have lost a loved one to suicide find compassion and support from friends and loved ones who seek to connect genuinely. May they be met without expectations for sharing their stories or for speaking before they are ready.

May they find care from those who have “been there,” so they do not have to cope alone or learn to do so on their own.

And may they know when to ask for help or to receive the help of friends and loved ones.

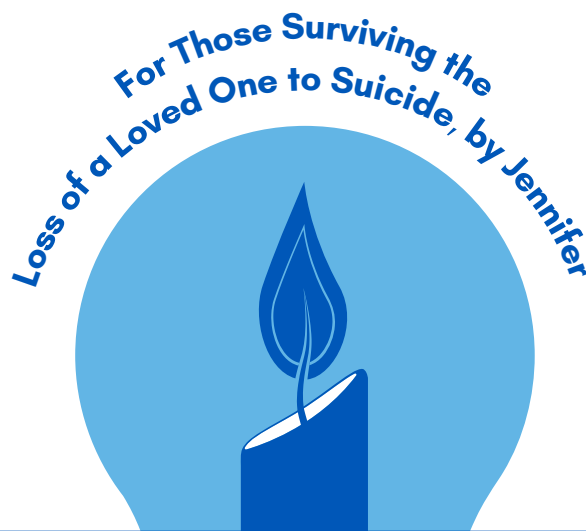
May the Source of Wisdom, who blesses all, bless friends and loved ones of those mourning a loss.

May those who have the opportunity to provide compassion and support do so with love and genuine intention.

May they find ways to connect with their friend or loved one in mourning on important dates like birthdays, holidays, and other anniversaries.

And may they know when to reach out with help or to provide care for their friend or loved one.

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May He who provides light shine down on you.

May you understand this is not your fault, and nothing you could have done would have changed what happened.

May you find solace in that your true love is no longer suffering from the sickness of depression and anxiety.

May you accept love and help from your family, friends, and community.

May you find the strength to seek assistance for your own mental well-being.

May the feelings of emptiness give way to comfort in the sweet reminders of their presence in your life. They are never really gone.

May you find the light that shines within you, that it may lead you to continue your life with purpose, hope, and happiness.

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A Prayer for Our Suicide-Bereaved Community



**May the one who blessed our ancestors,
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah,
bless and heal our whole community.**

**May the Holy One bless our shared memories of _____
Ben/Bat/miBeit _____.**

**May our community remember and honor our memories of
[him/her/them/etc.] with deep compassion and unconditional love.
May our community find strength and hope
as we learn to move forward without [his/her/their/etc.] presence
among us.**

**May our community open our minds and our hearts to a future
as we strive to honor [his/her/their/etc.] memory with revolution and
for blessing.**

**And, may our community move from brokenness to healing and from
grief to wholeness.**

And let us say, "Amen!"

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**Mourner's Kaddish for Congregations on World Suicide Prevention Shabbat
(Second Shabbat in September)** *Italicized text to be read by the whole
congregation together with mourners.

Please, G-d, watch over all those who died by suicide
in this past year, whether known or unknown to us,
who we acknowledge with compassion and empathy.

Draw them close to You and envelope them in Your arms,
and spread over them a *sukkat shlomecha*—a shelter of Your peace.

May they find comfort in the safety of Your home and solace in Your love.

*May they know their time and all treasured memories are
among the greatest gifts they have given to this world, and that
in your image and in your likeness, G-d, they will be blessed
forever and ever... to all eternity.*

For those who died, *may they know their righteousness mattered to our world.*

For those who died, *may they know their memory continues on in revolution and for
blessing.*

For those who died, *may they know they are cared for and embraced in this world
and the next.*

Holy One, bring comfort to all those who face their grief alone and
unacknowledged, or feel the recognition of their loss avoided because of stigma or
shame. May You help us to be sources of hope and strength to all those who face
suicide loss in our congregation and in our community. May those who lost loved
ones to suicide know that we, like you, will offer them a *sukkat shalom* — a shelter of
peace. May all who mourn, together with so many others who grieve, find healing
and wholeness soon, and very soon. And let us say, "Amen."

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Mourner's Kaddish After a Suicide Loss *Italicized text to be read by
the whole congregation together with mourners.

Please, God, watch over _____ Ben/Bat/miBeit _____, who we remember and
honor with love.

Draw them close to You and envelope them in Your arms,
and spread over them a *sukkat shlomecha*—a shelter of Your peace.
May they find comfort in the safety of Your home and solace in Your love.

*May they know their time and our shared memories are
among the greatest gifts they have given, and that
in your image and in your likeness, God, they will
be blessed forever and ever... to all eternity.*

For the one we lost,
may they know their righteousness mattered to our world.

For the one we lost,
may they know their memory continues on in revolution and for blessing.

For the one we lost,
may they know they are cared for and embraced in this world and the next.

Holy One, bring us comfort, just as you bring comfort to all mourners, when they
have lost their loved ones. May You help us to find sources of strength and hope in
our grief, honoring the future we find before us. May we, and all others who grieve,
find healing and wholeness soon, and very soon. And let us say, "Amen."