



# Roses in the Ocean

## stemming the tide of suicide

### *Am I ready to play an active role in Suicide Prevention?*

For some people, there comes a time when you feel that you would like to contribute in some way to suicide prevention. You're not sure exactly how or what it might mean to you both emotionally and mentally.

We know that storytelling is a powerful tool for changing attitudes, opinions, education, raising awareness and leaving lasting impressions. Talking about suicide, sharing the insights and wisdom gained through your own experience with suicide certainly has the power to save lives. It is of utmost importance though that YOU are ready, and that your involvement is a rewarding and positive experience. It's tough to talk about suicide when it has and does impact your life so profoundly. It can also be incredibly rewarding and satisfying.

Due to the nature of life itself and our own suicide experience, the way we feel about being involved can change over time and vary depending on the time of year, and significant dates etc.

As you read this document you will see some **bold questions**. When you get to these questions we need you to stop and consider your answers. Maybe write them down or discuss them with your family and friends. They are important decision points for you to consider if you're ready.

### *How do we reconcile our lived experience of Suicide with actively participating in Suicide Prevention?*

We all have our own response to suicide that is unique to us. The words often used to describe the experience are very powerful and emotionally charged.

**Take a moment to think of the words you have used to describe your experience. Have they changed for you as you've reflected on the experience? Have they lost some of their intensity over time?**

Having a lived experience can leave a person sometimes shattered and confused about what it means to them, while others use it to reflect on life and its value.

Finding the balance between being able to think constructively about your experience and managing the overwhelming emotions is tricky and the thought of feeling vulnerable will be difficult for some.

You must take the time to reflect on your experience before getting involved in suicide prevention activities to ensure you can manage that balance.

**What is your energy and drive like after you discuss your experience? Does it still take the same time to recover or is it lessening as you talk more about it? Is it impacting your relationships? Is it impacting your health?**

**How has it impacted on your idea of self-worth? Have you changed your idea of self-worth since your experience? If it's changed, is it for the better?**



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### *Has it been enough time?*

Time is different for all and there is no rule book to follow on what is the right time to get involved after your experience but the following are guidelines for you to consider.

**If you have lost a loved one by suicide** allow at least 12 months to pass before getting involved in suicide prevention. There are a lot of “firsts” to get through.

**If you have made a suicide attempt** allow at least 6 months to pass since your most recent suicide attempt.

These recommendations are provided to help ensure individuals’ are not vulnerable when making a decision to participate. Levels of vulnerability can change over time as suicidality and grief may resurface. When this happens, it is important to know that stepping back and withdrawing from suicide prevention activities at that time is the right thing to do.

**How do you feel about talking about your readiness with your own network?**

**Do you know what times you feel more vulnerable?**

### *Why are you doing this?*

We need you to be aware of your motivation for wanting to get involved in suicide prevention programs such as ours. With this knowledge it will help you decide on the right programs in which to get involved. It’s important to note your motivation may change as you understand or come to terms with your experience. This is not a bad thing but something to remember.

It’s not always easy to identify your motivation. You need to look inwards and possibly discuss how you feel with a close family member or friend to find your motivation. Don’t be hard or judgmental on yourself - it’s your unique experience, so there is no golden guide. Ask “who is going to get a benefit from my involvement”

Usually you will find that you get a mix of yourself and your community benefiting from your involvement and that’s ok.

**Which one is dominant for you? Will being involved in Roses in the Ocean Suicide Prevention initiatives meet your current motivation?**

You must be prepared that people will have different perspectives on suicide. It’s a complex issue and no two experiences are the same for many different reasons. Those who have attempted and those bereaved look at it from different perspectives and this can create strong emotions. The researchers and professional discussions can seem distant and detached. We must respect all views and accept that no one perspective is more relevant or right over the other.

**Have you experienced differing views on suicide to your own? How have you reacted? Has your ability to see differing views changed as time has moved on?**



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### *Should I continue doing this?*

It's extremely important to us that you understand it's perfectly alright at any time, whether it's during training, before you participate in your first suicide prevention initiative or speaking engagement, or at some point throughout your time playing a role in suicide prevention, that it's ok to say that you need a break.

We understand this will be a tough call for you and we know part of your motivation for being involved is preventing others going through the same experience. We know you want good to come out of such a painful experience and this might drive your determination to continue. We must though be realistic about the impact your involvement is having on you and your loved ones.

Remember we are dealing with a complex issue and not one person has the responsibility to stop it. We all do as a community.

If you're struggling with this decision discuss it with your family or friends and seek their guidance. You can also reach out to your Roses in the Ocean Mentor who will be able to discuss your concerns and support you in your decision.

Crisis line contacts (available 24/7)

Suicide Call Back Service 1300 65 94 67  
[www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

Lifeline 13 11 14 [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

Mensline 1300 78 99 78 [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)