When I was a teenager, I went over to help my neighbor work on his patio. During that time, we didn’t talk much and what little we said, I don’t recall. After about 2-3 hours, we finished the work, he thanked me and I went home. Early the next morning, my family and I received a knock at our door from his crying wife and teenaged daughters that he was dead. He had hung himself in the basement of his home. No one saw it coming.

Suicide causes a sudden tsunami of emotions leaving loved ones feeling overwhelmed. Feelings of grief, anger, rejection, shame and a host of other emotions send those in its wake on an emotional roller coaster ride.

To make things worse, many will put a smile on their face and suppress their pain. The fear of being judged, social stigmas and guilt prevent them from taking about “it” with friends or counselors. They are just not ready to share their feelings with others.

If you or someone you know are coping alone, there is something you can do that will help you weather your storm – pray. The Psalmist wrote “Hear my prayer, LORD; let my cry for help come to you.” (Psalm 102:1)

Why is prayer powerful during this time? First, prayer is private. In the privacy of your mind and heart, you can “pull up a chair with God” and pour your heart out assured that it’s just between the two of you. Second, prayer is personal. The Psalmist wrote, “…let me **cry** for help….” “God can handle your doubt, anger, fear, grief, confusion, and questions. You can bring everything to him in prayer.” (Rick Warren, whose son committed suicide) Finally, prayer is practical. Prayer allows you to grieve in your own way and at your own pace. During all the emotional setbacks, painful reminders and “what ifs”, you can know that God will always be there.

Ultimately, we need the support of others. And over time, you or your friend may find the strength to share your feelings with a friend, a family member or counselor. Until then – pray!

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