Post-Traumatic Growth in Adults Bereaved by Suicide

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A recent study examined post-traumatic growth (i.e., positive psychological change resulting from struggle with difficult life circumstances) among adult suicide loss survivors. It found that a significant predictor of post-traumatic growth was problem-focused coping, such as seeking information on suicide, reaching out to others for support, and engaging in self-care.

Researchers recruited 307 adults bereaved by suicide to participate in an online survey. Participants shared their demographic information, perceived closeness to the person who died, personality characteristics, help-seeking attitudes, perceived social support, coping strategies, and experience of post-traumatic growth. Important predictors of post-traumatic growth were time since loss, perceived closeness to the person who died, help-seeking attitudes, perceived social support, and problem-focused coping. The positive association between problem-focused coping and post-traumatic growth remained significant regardless of time since loss.

A positive association between problem-focused coping and post-traumatic growth suggests clinical interventions that encourage this coping style may be helpful for suicide-bereaved adults throughout their grieving process.