

A Message from Annette M. Eckart
author of
Spiritual Secrets About SUICIDE

You have been designed for a marvelous purpose in this world. The point of Spiritual Secrets About Suicide is to provide you with information and equip you to choose truth. Together we can stop the lies.

Bridge for Peace

**SPIRITUAL
SECRETS
ABOUT
SUICIDE**

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Scriptures in this book include direct quotations, as well as the author's adaptations, from various translations of the Holy Bible.

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**Dedicated to
Jesus Christ
the only One
Who saves**

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Tragedy

Pastor Frank stepped around the casket of the eighteen-year-old boy. John had died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. High school students, neighbors, and family members—both local and from overseas—packed the funeral service to grieve and to comfort his parents and sister. Like medics at a disaster site working together to stop the bleeding. We held John’s family tightly, but carefully, in the grip of our communal love.

Boys in the front pews wore football uniforms to honor John, their 6'2" captain whose broad shoulders, black hair, and robust appetite earned him the nickname “Big Bear.” At the beginning of the season the community newspaper quoted coach Shay as saying John’s attitude was “exemplary.” I heard students’ stories of how he intentionally befriended unpopular kids, made himself available to the lonely and the insecure. He was the

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designated driver, whether kids needed a ride for football practice or a party. His father Dennis said, "I used to give him a hard time about all the gas he used and he would say, 'Dad, these guys need a ride, it's so important.'"

My husband Ed and I knew John's aunt and uncle and saw him occasionally at their family parties or at church where he helped out at Sunday school every few weeks. We noted his polite self-assurance, unusual for a boy his age. We heard he recently visited the State University of New York at Cortland with his Dad and arranged for fall semester entry.

Last Sunday, warm March sunshine hinted at a beautiful spring. John attended church solo and returned home to nosh on his favorite bagels, smoked salmon, and onions in the kitchen with his parents. Since his car was in the repair shop, he asked for his Dad's Jeep keys and texted friends to meet him at the local beach. He took the quick drive to the shore. Big Bear ended his life. And then his friends arrived. Whispers spread the shocking news through our community. Neighbors shook their heads in disbelief. *Not again.*

Three months earlier a fourteen-year-old freshman boy, a well-liked varsity wrestler, left his home for a 10 a.m. run and didn't return. Search parties of neighbors and friends scoured the area until the next morning at 8 a.m. when police found his body

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in the woods. Suicide. Two weeks later another local student, a fifteen year old girl, died by suicide.

John's wake took place at the community funeral parlor. Ed and I arrived early, but a line had already formed outside the building. It continued throughout the hours of visitation. The empty space John left was filled with unanswerable questions, numbing shock, and inconsolable grieving.

I heard his mother say, "He slept a bit more than usual last week." But popular, athletic teenagers periodically need extra sleep. Family and friends asked themselves the tormenting question: *Did I miss something?* But John never showed the typical signs that raise concerns about suicide. I listened to men and women repeat the same phrases. "Doesn't make sense." "Incomprehensible." "The pastor is really shook up. Said he never saw it coming." "The son every father would want to have."

I kept silent as they expressed their confusion. I felt the sense of a tragic, irreplaceable loss, but didn't identify with their total bewilderment. Perhaps it was because I had a different experience of the power of suicidal suggestions.

People crowded into the church for John's 10 a.m. funeral. Those with and without religious convictions came. Some held tightly to their faith, others never thought about God. Whether they were Christian believers, disinterested in church, or even opposed to religion, people attended. An uncommon silence in the church became progres-

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sively oppressive. It was as though the emotionally exhausted congregation had unanimously consented to stifle all expressions of grief. High school girls sat stiff in their seats. A boy in a blue and white football jacket, elbows on his knees, face in his hands, wiped his silent tears.

John's father, Dennis, waited in the back of the church. A former New York City fire fighter, he had lost many of his colleagues in the Twin Towers collapse. He helped restore safety after 9/11 and one year later he retired.

The soloist opened her hymnal and the congregation stood. Dennis, assisted by family members, wheeled his son's dark wood coffin down the aisle.

In the middle of his sermon the pastor surprised us. He pointed midway back on the left side of the church. He said, "Have you noticed the empty seat there?" Like those near me, I turned around to look at the pew on the other side of the aisle. A single empty space at the end of the row was unoccupied in the full church. "That was John's usual seat in his usual pew," the pastor continued.

People in attendance from many different towns neither knew about John's usual place in church, nor did we intentionally leave his customary seat empty. Two girls looked at each other and raised their eyebrows as if to say, "This is strange." Others hunched their shoulders as if touched by an eerie chill. Some sensed it was a matter of supernatural

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design, affirming John was still with us. Not in the form we recognized, but among us nonetheless.

The bishop saved his remarks for the close of the funeral service. He stepped forward and looked at us, visibly gathering strength for the task ahead.

“Do not define John’s life by *this* one moment,” the bishop urged. “John is now in the heart of God. He now sees life through the heart of God. John now sees you from that perspective. I want you to think about this. As he looks at you today, what would he say to you?”

Fresh tears filled my eyes. I knew what God’s heart was for me this morning. It was time to disclose what I had been taught. Time to reveal the spiritual secrets about suicide and stop the lies.



When the pastor pointed out the empty seat left of the center aisle as John’s usual seat, I heard a stir in the congregation. From the expressions on different faces, I could imagine reactions and questions. *Okay, so there is an empty place. Coincidence. What about it? Why is the pastor pointing it out? What is he suggesting?*

I was comfortable, even comforted, with the thought of John sitting among us. I know there is a spiritual realm where those who have died continue to live. And they are not the only ones alive in the vast spiritual realm. The deliberate opening

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of my own spirit to an unseen dimension resulted in divine encounters that eventually revealed secret spiritual realities about suicide.

Lies that dismiss the reality of powerful spiritual influences create a dangerous void. Many, tricked by deceptions, have tripped and fallen into dark emotional pits. Many uninstructed in spiritual truth lose hope of escape from despair. I recall a conversation I had with a professional in school administration.

Tricked by deceptions, many have tripped and fallen into dark emotional pits.

She said, “We all received an early morning telephone call advising us to come in and meet in the high school cafeteria. Something had to be very wrong, but we didn’t know what had happened. Everyone was anxious. The administrator announced that another student had committed suicide. It was terrible. This student had been treated medically and was on suicide watch, but it wasn’t enough. No one knows what to do. *I know* this is a spiritual problem, but in school we can’t talk about it,” she said frustrated.

“And we have other students on suicide watch. Plus, we have students with anxiety and panic disorders. Some have home tutors since they cannot attend school. At times, students can be so para-

lyzed with fear that they cannot leave their room at home.”

We agreed that one crucial component absent from the suicide prevention toolbox was knowledge of the spiritual world. Doctors, counsellors, hospital facilities, medications, and early warning symptom awareness are all vital. Health care providers agree that fostering relationships where feelings can be discussed is essential. Still, if we lack spiritual knowledge we are vulnerable. This became obvious to me as I interviewed Americans and Australians who have struggled with suicide.

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Kristin said, “My husband was diagnosed with cancer. He wanted medical marijuana as a treatment. We moved out of state because it was illegal where we lived and I was afraid we would lose everything. He got into a lot of dark stuff. Our marriage got bad. I would drive around with my kids who were two and three years old and I’d hear a voice saying, ‘Drive off the cliff with the kids. End it.’”

Kristin said suicide appeared reasonable, because of her circumstances. Knowledge of the spiritual realm educates us as to why these destructive sug-

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gestions appear good. We will explore that topic in a subsequent chapter. Kristin and other interviewees discovered power to overcome suggestions of self-destruction through spiritual awareness.

The spiritually awake understand war rages in the hidden world where opposing forces battle for human souls. We are born with a plan for a glorious life but wicked forces plot our destruction through any means, including suicide. *Spiritual Secrets About Suicide* can help you to understand hidden truth. May you read by the bright light of inner awareness.



The Light of irrepressible brilliance pierces shrouds of darkness. The Light penetrates through walls of isolation. Tormented souls declare themselves dead inside, but the Light illuminates their inner tombs. The Light has a name—Jesus Christ. He enters in to be with us where we are and shadows dissolve.

For some of us, though our physical eyes have opened and we have climbed out from our beds, spiritually we are in a dead sleep. Only Jesus Christ can wake us. Christ our Light shines within and the unseen is made visible!

Arise to a new dawn. See clearly for the first time. By Christ's light purpose is revealed, power becomes available, and we firmly grasp hope. Christ our Light shows us the many would-be guides sleep-walking on

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paths of destruction, urging us to follow their trails. No longer groping in the dark, we follow Christ, the Light that leads us out of fear, leads us from death to life. We are no longer outsiders, waiting to be rescued, but become bearers of the Light when we welcome Christ to guide us into all truth.

Turn from death to life, from fear to hope, from darkness to Light. Right now, welcome Jesus Christ as your Light. By His light we will journey together exploring Spiritual Secrets About Suicide.