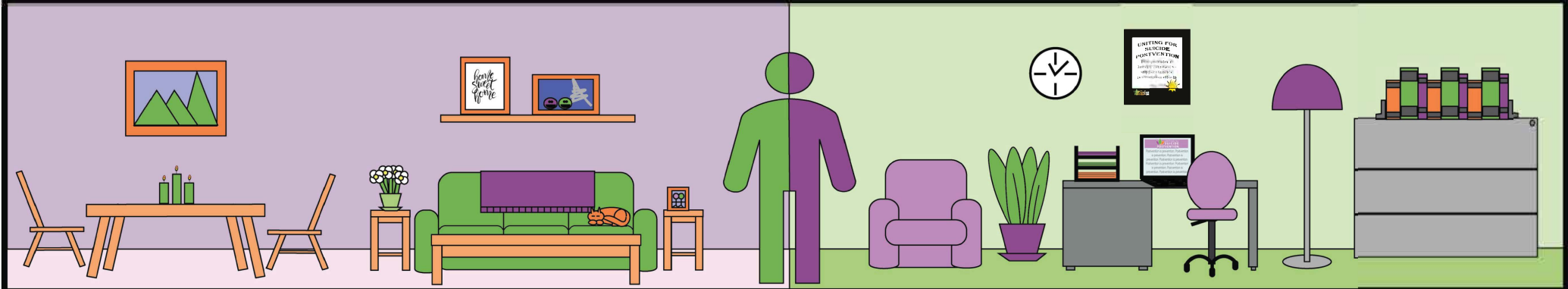


Losing a Patient to Suicide: When Personal and Professional Converge



Although not often talked about, losing a patient to suicide is common. Following a patient suicide, a provider may experience concurrent personal and professional impacts, a phenomenon called twin bereavement.

Given the therapeutic relationship between a patient and provider, it is natural and expected that a provider will experience grief after the loss. Along with this grief, providers can also experience professional self-doubt, challenged therapeutic assumptions, and fear.

As shown in the image, as a provider experiences twin bereavement, the personal and professional impacts overlap and interact. Accepting this convergence is critical to healing after suicide loss. Seeking support and allowing time and space to process these responses are recommended approaches to promoting personal and professional growth.