The role of faith and religion in conversations about suicide and mental health concerns

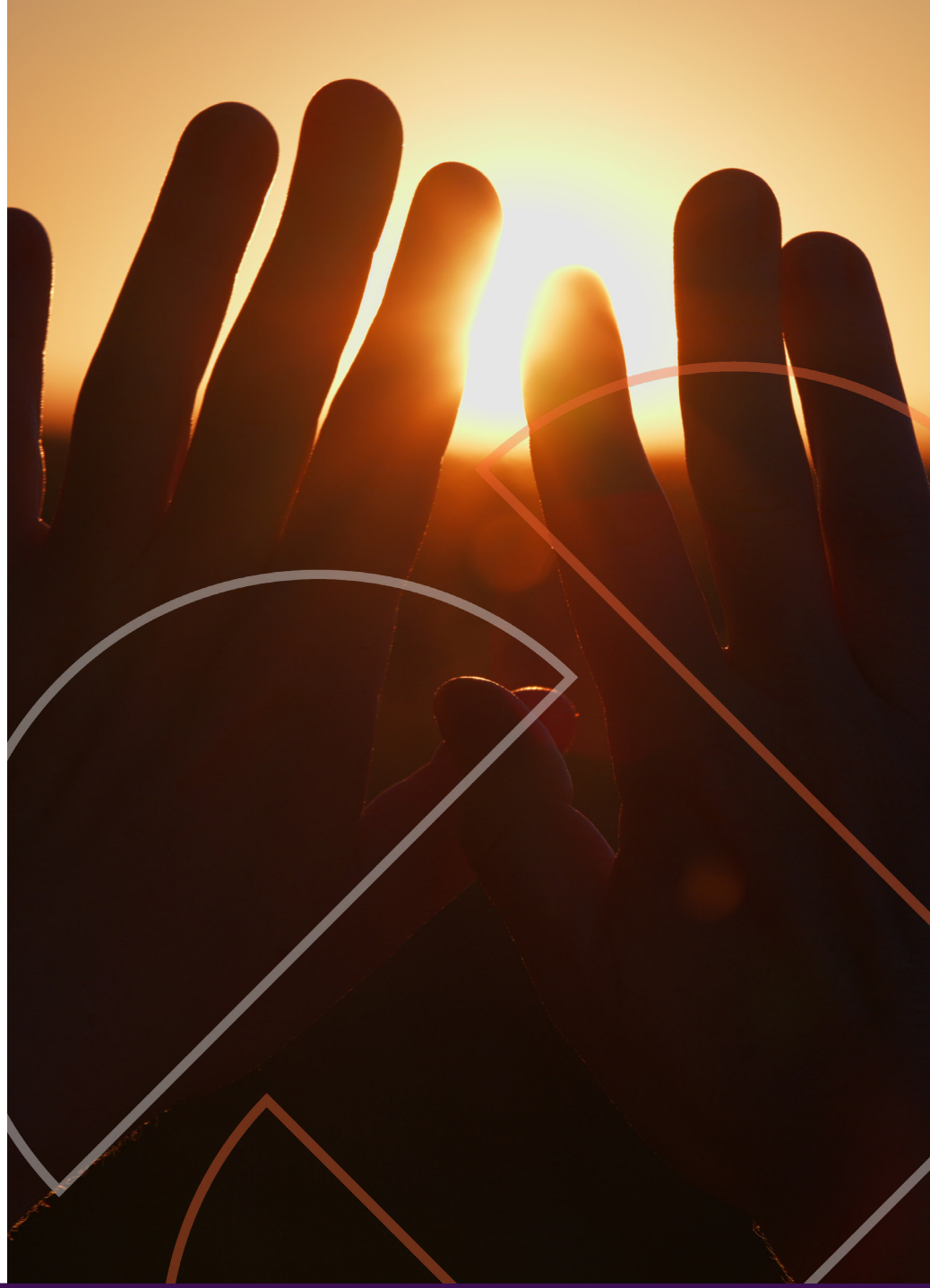
Faith and religion play an important role in the lives of many Australians, and can shape how people make sense of suicide and mental health concerns.

For some, their beliefs provide comfort, strength, and a sense of connection. Many people find hope, belonging, and purpose through their faith communities. Faith can be a source of strength.

For others, certain teachings or expectations can make these topics harder to talk about or seek help for.

Some people feel they can't talk about mental health concerns or suicide because of fear, shame, or misunderstanding.

In some faith settings, long-held beliefs about moral or spiritual failure can make it even harder to speak up.



The role of community broadcasters

Community broadcasters play a key role in helping people hear that it's okay to ask for help and that having conversations about suicide and mental health concerns can be supported within faith communities.

One way to do this is to invite local faith representatives onto your program to discuss these topics and share messages of compassion, understanding, and hope.

Another way is to highlight great examples where mental health and suicide prevention programs have been supported within faith and religious communities.

What next?

Read through the other topics and considerations for your broadcast and then use the template to write down your ideas.

Further resources on this topic

The Lombok Declaration

A landmark agreement developed by representatives of over 400 religions to present a unified global religious stance on suicide and mental health concerns. It highlights the influential role of religious leaders in reducing stigma, promoting help-seeking, and supporting culturally sensitive mental health care at both community and policy levels.

Read more: A unified religious stance on mental health and suicide at the G20: the Lombok Declaration

Voices of faith

Voices of Faith by Roses in the Ocean is an interfaith initiative that brings together leaders from diverse religious traditions to explore how suicide and emotional distress are understood and responded to within their communities. It highlights the important role faith leaders play as trusted supports, while identifying stigma and cultural barriers to help-seeking, and promoting collaboration to strengthen culturally responsive suicide prevention.

Read more: Voices of faith - Roses in the Ocean