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Gia Allemand and Celebrity Suicide: Experts Weigh In



We reached out to several experts who shared their thoughts with us about the recent celebrity suicide of Gia Allemand. Here's what they had to say about this tragic event, and celebrity suicide in general:

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“Celebrities experience much stress to reach and maintain their high levels of achievement and public exposure. This chronic stress depletes the brain of key nutrients, predictably causing depression, fatigue, insomnia, and brain fog. These factors can increase the chance of suicidal ideation and attempts.

When a person is imbalanced because of emotional and nutritional-deficiency stresses, an upsetting event—such as a relationship problem—can be the final straw before a poor decision is made.

Being in the limelight can be mesmerizing and all-consuming. If celebrities don't have a strong foundation of knowing their inherent worth and spiritual nature, any perceived failures can feel devastating and lead to catastrophic actions.“

Mark Pitstick, MA, DC
Expert on holistic health care

“Looking at the beautiful Gia Allemand's photos, it's hard to imagine she had such emotional pain — enough to drive her to take her own life by hanging — a very deliberate and violent method of suicide, and not one usually seen with women, who when they opt for suicide, usually do so with pills. Her image smiles at us from reality TV clips, paparazzi photos, and now, obituary-type news stories. But beauty is not enough to protect people from suicide and while the glare of the spotlight, especially with reality stars, who are unsupported and don't have a lot of role models to help guide them as they muddle through this relatively new life-style, that spotlight and the flash flood of fame can force issues that are more easily repressed in civilian life.

Celebrity suicide is not common as 'civilian' suicide, but reality start suicide is a new niche

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(for lack of a better word). Celebrities who have Hollywood careers are protected in ways that reality stars are not. The latest Hollywood suicide attempt by celebrity actor Owen Wilson after his romance with Kate Hudson ended, was luckily, a failed attempt. But reality stars don't have the same support systems in place that Hollywood affords actors and actresses who become part of the "family" of agents, managers and studio executives, all who are invested in these stars because their careers are interlinked. The Hollywood support system watches out for their investments. Reality stars, conversely, are seen as clawing their way to the top, mostly loners, not sure of the path towards that brass ring, and without gatekeepers to stage interventions and rally the press to shine light where a 5150 involuntary psychiatric hold, that often saves stars like one did for Britney Spears. Reality stars are out there all alone for the most part — not unlike 'civilians' where suicide is much more prevalent and unremarkable.

Men and women write my free relationship advice forum, www.AskApril.com/forums, sometimes desperate for help with a relationship, and considering suicide, or looking for help with a loved one who is. The site is anonymous, and the privacy prompts them to speak frankly to me, a relative stranger — often easier than circling the same rut in a pattern that brought them to the dark place with those in their lives, currently. These people sometimes don't have the money or the know-how to get any other type of help. But we can all help by starting to balance our strength and being tough in life, with the reality that life is fragile, and emotions run deep and are the catalyst for behaviors like suicide. Toughen up — but keep a watchful eye — and if you see someone who's mental health you're not sure about, get help. Be conservative, and pick up the phone, just in case. It's much more likely that someone in your life today is affected by the suicide of a friend, family member, neighbor or community member — than any of us are by the celebrities in the press. Ms. Allemand's tragic death is a reminder to all of us that she wasn't always a reality star. She's more like the rest of us, than like the big stars in the spotlight."

Nicknamed "the new millennium's Dear Abby" by the media, April Masini writes the critically acclaimed 'Ask April' advice column and answers reader's questions on the free Ask April advice forum. Author of four books, including *Date Out Of Your League* (TurnKey Press, 0-9746763-0-6) and *Think & Date Like A Man* (iUniverse, 0-595-37466-2), April has been interviewed for over 2,700 articles and opinion pieces, radio and television shows, including those on FOX, ABC, CBS, MSN, Telemundo and Univision — New York Times, New York Daily News, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, Cosmopolitan, Maxim and USA Today.

"We can't begin to know what was in the mind of a person who commits suicide, but there's no doubt that celebrities, especially, have a tendency to engage in more self-damaging behavior than most people. Most celebrities don't go to the extreme of consciously committing suicide like Gia Allemand, but they are often trying to commit suicide unconsciously.

Abusing drugs, alcohol and other substances are in themselves a way of unconsciously trying to commit suicide. In most cases, celebrities like Charlie Sheen, Robert Downey Jr., and Lindsey Lohan appear to narrowly escape death from abusing drugs, but others like Cory Monteith, Heath Ledger, and Anna Nicole are not so lucky, and finally get their 'wish.'"

Mario Almonte, PR specialist and blogger for the Huffington Post on politics and popular culture.

"No one knows what Gia's life and relationships were like. No one. People tend to judge, compartmentalize, and categorize. The fact is even the most non-judgmental of us is raised with categorizing messages. It is most important to know that a person who chooses a permanent solution to temporary problems sees no way out. They feel hopeless and that there is no person in their depressed lives to turn to. Often, a suicide is triggered by a traumatic event such as a romantic relationship breakup, death of a close loved one, or career/finances gone South. We don't know. America must find it in their hearts to be compassionate and understanding for those who are suffering."