

### *Suggestions to Aid a Grieving Co-worker*

- Your presence is the most valuable thing you can give.
- Sit near your grieving co-worker. Hold their hand, give a hug, pass a tissue, cry with them, and listen to them.
- Do not struggle with finding the “right” words to say. A simple “I’m sorry” is enough.
- Give private time to your co-worker, but never let them feel like they are alone. Feeling alone increases feelings of emptiness and despair.
- If you do not know what to do, ask yourself, “What would I like done for me under these circumstances?”
- Directly ask your co-worker what s/he needs.
- Talk if your co-worker wants to talk. Keep silent if your co-worker prefers silence.
- Focus on giving rather than receiving. Grieving co-workers need much help and rarely have much to give in return.
- Bring food to the home. Help with household chores.
- If you are unable to tolerate extremely painful mourning, help from afar; share their workload, donate your sick/vacation time. Do not tell a grieving co-worker not to cry because you are not able to bear it. Weeping is essential.
- Share your own grieving experiences but use good judgment. Only share that which will offer hope and survival.
- Include grieving co-workers in social invitations. Allow them to freely accept or refuse.
- Use good judgment in how long to visit. Grieving co-workers will be grateful you are there, but not comfortable asking you to leave.
- Acknowledge the loss. This can be said simply and directly or send a note, flowers, or a donations to charities in their name.
- Sharing spiritual beliefs that are uplifting can give great support. Do not push your beliefs on your grieving co-worker. Praying together can create a sense of unity.
- Do not withdraw support too quickly after the funeral. This could create another sense of loss.
- If your grieving co-worker does not seem to be recovering or is taking an inordinately long time grieving, it is appropriate for someone to suggest that your co-worker consult a professional counselor. Everyone is different even though there are similar needs.