

## Dealing with Grief, Part III

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Last time, we talked about how you can cope when going through a loss. Now, let's go over how you can help someone else going through a loss, specifically a co-worker. You learned in last week's e-tip, some of the common reactions to a loss and the suggested coping strategies. Knowing about the grief process will help you support your co-worker.

Often we spend as much time, or sometimes more, with our co-workers than our family and friends. Consequently when they are grieving, we are often one of their main supports. This is complicated by the fact that you and your co-worker have a job to do. The grieving co-worker may not be as productive or need to be out of the work environment. This may cause stress for you or your other co-workers. Remember to care for yourself as you are helping your co-worker.

How do you help your co-worker? Everyone responds differently so there is no one right way to help. However, the following are possible ways you might be of help during this stressful time:

- Listen - this is the greatest gift you can give someone who is grieving.
- Accept all feelings.
- Avoid "clichés" and easy answers, i.e. "I know how you feel" or "God won't give you more than you can handle" The best response may be "I'm sorry" or "I don't know what to say"
- Help the person find support and encouragement
- Make specific offers of help, i.e. "I can do that report for you"
- Suggest professional help if appropriate, your EAP is a wonderful resource.
- Respect individual needs
- Be patient
- Talk to your supervisor or other appropriate person if the work situation is becoming difficult.
- Remember that often the person needs assistance after months pass by. The initial numbness that "protected" the bereaved person wears off and the real grief work begins.
- Don't forget to get support for yourself as you help your co-worker.

If you would like to talk about this or any other issues, please call Solutions Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for free, confidential assessment, short term counseling and referral when needed.

**Call Solutions EAP at 1800-526-3485 for assistance for all of life's challenges.**

**It's free, confidential and open to family members**

**Check us out online at [www.solutions-eap.com](http://www.solutions-eap.com)**