

# Tips for Colleagues and Friends of an Individual Grieving a Major Loss

Your colleague may be a family member or close relative of someone who has passed away and is grieving this loss. While loss is normal and grief is a normal reaction when faced with significant loss, substantial health problems may surface over time. We can help prevent such negative impacts through support.

## DO'S:

Recognize that for some the loss may be very significant and the grieving process may be quite difficult (especially if the death is sudden or the result of a criminal act), while for others it may have less impact. For each of us, grief will be expressed in our own way.

Ask how you can be helpful to them at this difficult time.

Offer your sympathies to them: "Please accept my sincere condolences".

Listen to them as they process their thoughts and feelings. Give them time to find the right words. Talking can help to relieve pain and facilitate the process of grieving and eventual healing.

Plan as a group to send some representatives to attend a funeral service if possible and safe.

Send a card, flowers or a contribution to some charitable organization as suggested by the family on behalf of the organization or the team.

Prepare food and have it delivered to the home of the grieving worker.

## DONT'S:

Don't share clichés such as: "Time heals", "It is God's wish", "It will pass."

Don't avoid talking about it with the person or avoid the person.

Don't change the subject when the person is crying or very sad.

**Remind them that confidential help is available 24/7 by calling their EAP:**

**1-800-268-7708** or  
**1-800-567-5803** (for the hearing impaired)