



GRIEVING THE LOSS OF A COWORKER



The loss of a co-worker can feel like losing a family member. We spend so much time with our coworkers, we often share both our work and personal experiences. Managing the loss of a colleague may be even more difficult depending on years worked together, their age and the circumstances of their death.

How one grieves the loss depends on factors, as well as one's personal grieving style. Some people have an "open coping style" and others may use a "private coping style". Those with an "open" style tend to express more and utilize supports and resources available. Those with a "private" style may be less likely to seek out someone to talk to and grieve in their own way.

In the same way people are different in their coping, they may also differ in their feelings, reactions, and thoughts about loss. The following is a list of reactions one may (or may not) experience after the loss of a coworker:

- Feeling overwhelmed
- Disbelief/shock
- Anger
- Guilt
- Sadness
- Fear
- Acceptance
- Resilient
- Distracted
- Frustrated
- Alone
- Helpless
- Hopeless
- Comforted

If you are finding it difficult to manage loss or are looking for some guidance, we suggest the following:

- Acknowledge that your feelings/reactions are normal and understandable.
- Do what feels right. Don't get caught up in the "I should be feeling..." or "I should do..." Grief is personal and different for everyone.
- Talk about it with someone that you find helpful and comforting (keep the **NYC EAP** in mind).
- Be kind to yourself and others.