



## Grief & Bereavement Literacy Series Session 10: ***“Grief in the Workplace”***

Presenter:

**June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 12:00pm - 1:00pm**

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION
<p><b>Introduction &amp; Territory Acknowledgment, Objectives</b></p>	<p>Facilitator: <b>Joshua Black, PhD</b></p> <p>Presenter: <b>Laurel Gillespie, MBA, CHE</b> CEO, Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA)</p> <p><u>Learning Objectives</u> By the end of the session participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify different ways in which grief affects employees in the workplace.</li> <li>• Understand the roles played by organizations, management, and employees in supporting a bereaved colleague.</li> <li>• More comfortably engage with and meaningfully support grieving colleagues.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Presentation supplemental points</b></p>	<p>Presentation slides available here: <a href="#">Grief in the Workplace slides</a></p> <p><b><u>Presentation points supplemental to the slides:</u></b></p> <p>Beyond the death of a loved one</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many ways that grief can touch our lives and it is important to be compassionate toward each other. Everyone’s story and experience is unique.</li> <li>• Example of disenfranchised grief can be early miscarriage.</li> </ul> <p>What Impacts Grief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caregiving is a growing role and many of us will be impacted with this in our grief. Important to name and say this.</li> <li>• Some cultures may not speak about grief as it’s believed speaking about it can bring about more death.</li> </ul> <p>How does grief affect the workplace?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is direct correlation between grief and loss of productivity and loss of morale in the workplace.</li> <li>• Grief affects the individual, their colleagues, management and the organization as a whole.</li> <li>• We are more peaceful when we experience connectedness/sense of belonging. This shift in organizational culture can make all the difference for someone grieving.</li> </ul> <p>Bereavement Leave &amp; HR Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National labour laws and each province has its own labour code.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National labour code updated as part of Bill C-220 in 2021 that any federal regulated organization has to provide at least 10 days unpaid bereavement leave. This is a step in the right direction, but we need more support around this.</li> <li>• Taking bereavement leave is punitive for many employees. Most employers are not paying for over 2.5 days of leave.</li> <li>• HR Policies should be flexible and account for different culture/religious practices, different definitions of family/close relationships, offer list of options for what would support an individual best, provide training for senior management on how to interact when an individual returns to work.</li> </ul> <p><u><a href="#">Canadian Compassionate Companies program</a></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting onus on corporate Canada to provide upfront supports.</li> <li>• Better to provide upfront supports, less likely for employees needing to take a larger leave down the road in the absence of good policies.</li> <li>• Getting some interest globally on this.</li> </ul> <p>How can we better support bereaved employees?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember everyone grieves differently and there is no set timeline for grief.</li> <li>• Some may welcome work as a distraction, others need space from it.</li> <li>• Policy should support people, flexibility is key.</li> <li>• Make sure resources are visible and employees know about what is available to them.</li> <li>• Check in on special days/anniversaries if possible. Checking in can help with feelings of isolation.</li> <li>• Ask to share about an individual's loss with the wider organization.</li> <li>• Avoid clinchés (example - they are in a better place).</li> <li>• Build comprehensive and flexible bereavement policies.</li> <li>• Invite a colleague to share about their loved one. Example 'I'd love to hear a story about your grandma if you'd like to share about her sometime'.</li> </ul> <p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need to talk about this more.</li> <li>• Responsibility for organizations to step up and do more.</li> <li>• We are all deserving of a compassionate workplace, particularly for those in healthcare settings where you experience loss of clients/patients as well as losses outside of workplace role.</li> </ul> <p>References</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slides 24 and 25: <u><a href="#">Grief in the Workplace slides</a></u></li> </ul>
<p><b>Discussion</b></p>	<p><b>Participants shared experiences and resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teresa Dellar Palliative Care Residence (Montreal) run a free 4-hr workshop for managers/C Suite roles and provide training for how to support employees who are</li> </ul>

	<p>caregivers and for those grieving. We reach out directly to HR at companies to offer training. Can offer to share materials. <b>For more info contact:</b> Cythnia Lapointe <a href="mailto:clapointe@tdpcr.ca">clapointe@tdpcr.ca</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.bridgect14.org/">https://www.bridgect14.org/</a> (A Network of Peer-to-Peer Connections and Community Supports Through All Stages of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) recommended as a good support</li> <li>• Q: Any specific approaches for co-workers with children? A: Flexibility to do work from home, offering flexible deadlines/work hours, taking time off, asking what supports are available for those unable to work from home, EAP availability With some company benefits with your life insurance you may have life insurance amounts for dependents as well (can help to cover unpaid time away, and other death-related expenses)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p><a href="#">BC Bereavement Action plan</a></p> <p>CHPCA's <a href="#">Canadian Compassionate Companies program</a></p> <p>To connect with Laurel please email <a href="mailto:info@chpca.ca">info@chpca.ca</a></p> <p><u>Upcoming session:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>You Are Missing From Me: the Lifelong Grief of Bereaved Parents</i> Wednesday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (12:00pm - 1:00pm (PST))</b> <a href="#">Registration link</a></li> </ul>