



# Loss In The Workplace –

The death of a co-worker is difficult and can leave employees feeling shocked, sad, confused or numb.

**Each person's experience of a loss is unique and often based upon both past experience and current life events.**

Some people may experience an acute reaction to the loss with significant emotional upset, while others may experience numbness and want to retreat. How the loss is experienced also depends on how well the person was known and the significance of the relationship in the workplace and/or personal life.

**Grief & shock reactions and symptoms can be varied and expressed in a number of ways; physically, emotionally, mentally and behaviorally.**

Typically symptoms resulting from a loss last from a few days to a few weeks, decreasing in severity over time. However, the length of time that one might experience symptoms varies from person to person.

**The following are some of the common reactions people may experience:**

## Physical

Chills, increased sweating, fatigue, nausea or other stomach upset, grinding of teeth, tense muscles, headaches, shakiness, thirst or weakness and increased blood pressure.

## Emotional

Fear, guilt, anxiety, agitation, irritability, depression, sadness, apprehension, numbness, loss of emotional control, feeling overwhelmed, denial and disbelief.

## Mental (Cognitive)

Confusion, intrusive thoughts or images, lack of concentration, hypervigilance, decreased attention span, feeling disoriented, and nightmares.

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If symptoms are not going away or are increasing in severity, contact an EAP Counselor to schedule an appointment.

8:00 – 5:00 Monday through Friday.

800-795-2351 or 415-554-0610



## Behavioral

Trouble sleeping, restlessness, social withdrawing, decreased or increased communication, increased or decreased appetite, increased use of alcohol, and shortened patience.

**This is an important time to reach out to those who will care for you and support you. This is also an important time to engage in excellent self-care.**

**Do** reach out for support – Reach out to those who have a track record of being caring and helpful – Not everyone knows what to say or how to help so choose people carefully and tell them what you need.

**Do** exercise – Exercising (even when you don't feel like it) can help relax you and trigger endorphins, the brain chemical that helps you to feel good.

**Do** eat healthy – Sweet or salty comfort foods are good in moderation. Drink plenty of water and limit your intake of caffeinated drinks and alcohol. Consult with your doctor before you take any medications.

**Do** get plenty of rest – If you have a hard time sleeping, listen to meditation music or a relaxation YouTube or read a book to help you sleep. Watching TV or doing something active will only increase your unwanted restlessness.

**Do** give yourself permission to experience the feelings you have and know that it is a normal reaction to grief and loss.

**Do** structure your time if you feel depressed – This will help you stay motivated and moving forward through your feelings.

**WE'RE HERE** *For You*