

God's purpose was that the body should not be divided but rather that all of its parts should feel the same concern for each other (1 Corinthians 12:25). Numerous people receive credit for the quote, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Regardless of who the original author is, the statement is true.

The following resource(s) are designed to CONNECT the dots of Care Ministries!

Top Five Objectives for Maximum Care (specifically for those grieving the death of a loved one)

## **1. Pray**

Pray for them in their absence.

Pray with them in their presence.

When connecting with people who are grieving, prayer communicates "solidarity" in their mourning and true "awareness" of their circumstances.

## **2. Express Grief**

Verbally communicate your concern for them.

Talk with them specifically about their loved one. Utilize the loved one's name.

Tell those grieving when you have missed their loved one. "I know it's nothing like what you have dealt with but I really miss 'person's name.'" Share memories.

## **3. Display Compassion**

Write down the six mo. and one year anniversary of the person that has died. Send a card/gift on those anniversary dates to the grieving person.

Keep including the grieving person in social invitations and outings.

Sit with the grieving person at church.

Most churches are excellent in supporting the grieving family immediately following the death and during those first few days of grief. Most churches provide meals to take to the home and also support the family with a lovely funeral dinner.

Keep in mind, once the funeral is over, calls have stopped, the doorbell ceases to ring, and food is no longer delivered, the person grieving is left alone. At this point, grocery certificates, restaurant certificates and social invitations are important.

Be sensitive to their paradoxical need of "space and closeness."

## **4. Share Hope**

While never judging a person's grieving process, intentionally lift up the hope we have in Jesus.

Give the grieving person the gift of your presence.

## **5. Involve Others**

Multiple touches from various individuals are a kind gesture.

"Carrying" the grieving person through all the "firsts" of the first year is huge.

### **From the Heart ...**

**I was 26 years old when my father died. He was quickly ushered into heaven following a surprise fatal heart attack. The night of his death was on a Wednesday and my parents were driving to church when my father suddenly shifted residences. We were pastoring a small, loving church. My parents attended the church that we pastored so most of the congregants were at the funeral on Saturday. On Sunday, the day after the funeral, my husband, myself, our two little boys and our baby who was 9 months and 2 weeks ... still in the womb ... attended church. My husband preached that morning. It seemed surreal. During the course of pre-service activities, Sunday School, church and post-service activities not one person mentioned my father to me. Over the years, as I have reflected on that strange occurrence I have concluded that those precious people "said nothing" not because of insensitivity but because they believed I would be "less" grieved if the topic of death was ignored.**

### **Reflections ...**

**The grieving person desires that others talk about their loved one.**

**The grieving person doesn't want to burden others with their grief. However, their silence does not indicate a desire for immediate closure.**

**One of the most difficult places for a grieving person to "fit back in" is their church. Many times feelings of disconnect and uncertainty will rob the grieving person of security in what was once routine for them.**

**The dynamics of grief are significant. People in the church who minister through care are part of God's healing process for those who are hurting.**

**Resource "All Our Losses, All Our Grief's" Mitchell/Anderson**