

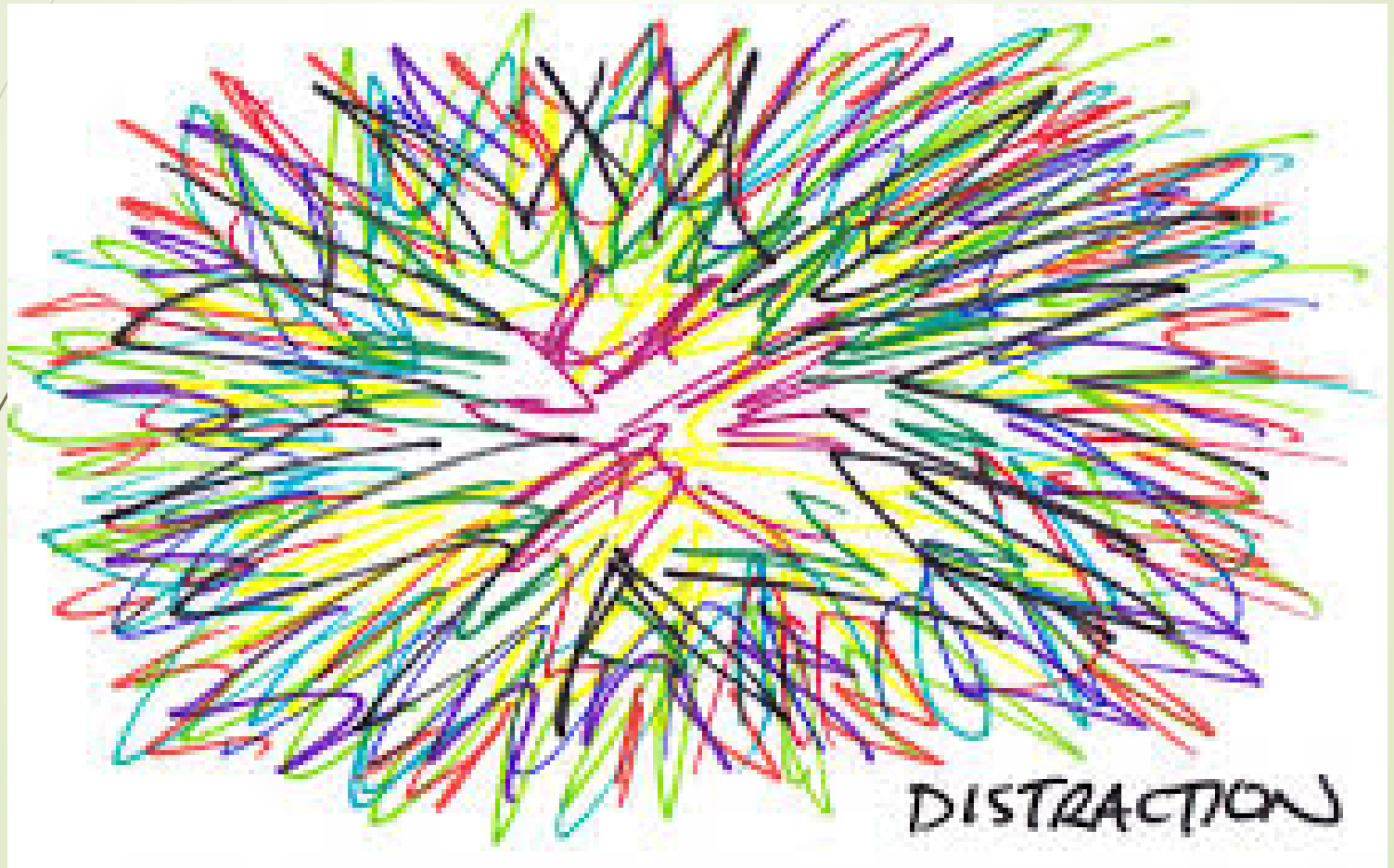


# Supporting Co-workers who have experienced a personal loss



Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, CHPCA  
Hospice of the Western Reserve


# Impact of grief in the workplace



# Impact of grief



- Fatigue/sleeplessness
- Irritability/mood swings
- Less attention to detail
- Personal changes
- Withdrawal from others
- Decreased productivity
- Decreased motivation



**Co-workers who bubble with  
support over a broken arm fall  
silent when confronted by  
grieving.**

*Workplaces Can Be Tough for Grieving  
Employees*

Sue Shellenbarger

# Supporting Employees


- Provide Information
- Review attendance policies
- Communication
- Acceptance
- Returning to work





# Supporting Grieving Co-workers

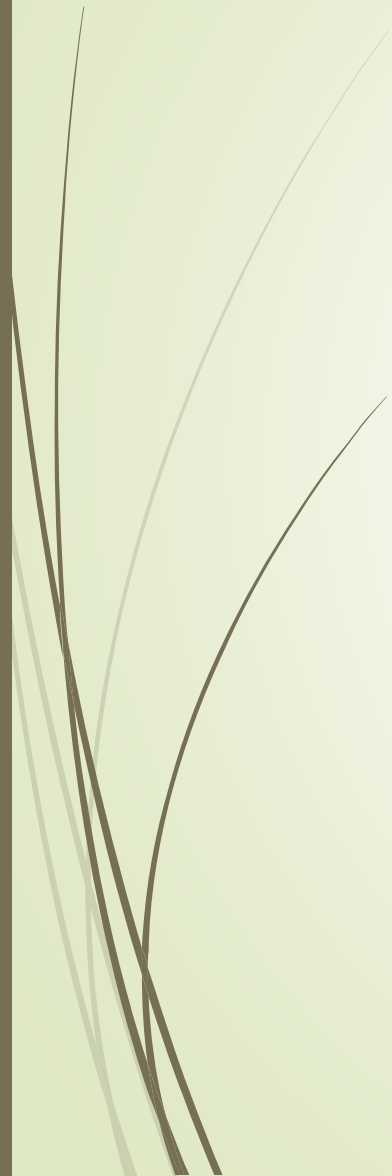




# Coming back to work after a death

- Be realistic about your expectations
- Ease into work
- Prioritize your work
- Ask for help
- Know your limits
- Create a place to take a breather
- Utilize EAPs (if available)







# Wounded Healer

“We cannot heal someone else until we know how to heal ourselves... We start by acknowledging our own woundedness. We enter that woundedness and work through it. By entering that woundedness and working through it, we learn how to heal ourselves and we learn how to assist in the healing of others.”

Being a Wounded Healer:  
Douglas Smith

# Challenges managing grief in healthcare setting

- Prior coping strategies not effective
- Ambivalence/numb/compassion reduction
- Over-identification
- Impact of Role
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Coping strategies needed “in the moment.”
- Multiple Losses



# Four Essentials

- 
- ➡ Rest
  - ➡ Physical activity
  - ➡ Healthy eating
  - ➡ Social connection

# Self Compassion

- Shift from self judgment to compassion
- Provide active self comfort
- Acknowledge mutual suffering
- Use Affirmation


“This is a moment of suffering  
Suffering is part of life  
May I be kind to myself in this moment  
May I give myself the compassion I need.”



Mind Full, or Mindful?



# Mindfulness

- Notice feelings without judgment
  - Pay attention to here and now
  - Allow pain to be present
  - Notice and release
  - Awareness of body, mind and thought
  - Focus on being not solving
- 





# Taking Care

- Notice tension
- Ground yourself
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Smile
- Breathing exercises
- Hold position of power
- Massage
- Yoga
- Aromatherapy
- Reiki



# Find a support partner



# Questions & Comments

