



Companioning vs. Treating . . . Using Empathy to Ease Grief

By Dr. Alan Wolfelt: Center of Loss and Life Transition

1. Companioning is about honoring the spirit; it is not about focusing on the intellect.
2. Companioning is about curiosity; it is not about expertise.
3. Companioning is about learning from others; it is not about leading.
4. Companioning is about walking alongside; it is not about leading.
5. Companioning is about being still; it is not about frantic movement forward.
6. Companioning is about discovering the gifts of sacred silence; it is not about filling every painful moment with words.
7. Companioning is about listening with the heart; it is not about analyzing with the head.
8. Companioning is about bearing witness to the struggles of others; it is not about directing those struggles.
9. Companioning is about being present to another person's pain; it is not about taking away the pain.
10. Companioning is about respecting disorder and confusion; it is not about imposing order and logic.
11. Companioning is about going to the wilderness of the soul with another human being; it is not about thinking you are responsible for finding the way out.