



# Responding to a Campus Loss

## Suggestions for SUPPORT STAFF

### What to KNOW . . .

<b>Common reactions to trauma may include</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>shock/disbelief</i></li> <li>• <i>anger or irritability</i></li> <li>• <i>confusion</i></li> <li>• <i>anxiety</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>fear</i></li> <li>• <i>shame</i></li> <li>• <i>sadness</i></li> <li>• <i>denial</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>guilt</i></li> <li>• <i>relief</i></li> <li>• <i>apathy</i></li> </ul>
<b>It is important to keep yourself informed</b>	<i>Rely on published information only.</i>		
<b>Showing that you care goes a long way</b>	<i>Even if you feel that you are at a loss for words.</i>		
<b>Students may continue with their normal routine</b>	<i>Even though they are in distress, and may be greatly helped by small gestures of support. Attempt to make their wait-time for an appointment as short as possible.</i>		
<b>You may observe</b>	<i>The student crying, appearing as though they have been crying, or looking flustered/disorganized.</i>		
<b>Students may need help connecting</b>	<i>With the Care Support Services for additional academic support. If the student appears in distress, work to get them connected with campus support (Care Support Services, Counseling Center) as soon as possible. If they are on the phone, ask them to come in as soon as possible to get connected with support.</i>		

### What to DO & SAY. . .

<b>Validate their varied responses to trauma</b>	<i>"The feelings you have are understandable."</i>
<b>Avoid a focus on rumors</b>	<i>Refer to communication disclosed by the school for the most accurate information.</i>
<b>You do not need to have all the answers</b>	<i>"I do not know what to say, but I care."</i>
<b>Do offer support</b>	<i>If they have an appointment, ask if they would like to reschedule it for a later time. If you make an appointment for them, write it down as they may be disorganized during this time."</i>
<b>Make them feel comfortable</b>	<i>Offer tissues</i>
<b>Don't be afraid to ask how they are doing and if they need help</b>	<i>"Care Support Services can help provide you with academic relief during this difficult time."</i>

**Need further tips on how to support students after a campus tragedy? Contact W&M Counseling Center at: 757-221-3620**