

## Tenets of Companionship the Bereaved

Reprinted with permission from "Death, Grief and Mourning: Essential Principles and Practices" by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. For more information on grief and healing and to order Dr. Wolfelt's books, visit [www.centerforloss.com](http://www.centerforloss.com).

### **Tenet One**

Companionship is about being present to another person's pain;  
it is not about taking away the pain.

### **Tenet Two**

Companionship is about going into the wilderness of the soul with another human being;  
it is not about thinking you are responsible for finding the way out.

### **Tenet Three**

Companionship is about honoring the spirit;  
it is not about focusing on the intellect.

### **Tenet Four**

Companionship is about listening with the heart;  
it is not about analyzing with the head.

### **Tenet Five**

Companionship is about bearing witness to the struggles of others;  
it is not about judging or directing these struggles.

### **Tenet Six**

Companionship is about walking alongside;  
it is not about leading or being led.

### **Tenet Seven**

Companionship is about discovering the gifts of sacred silence;  
it does not mean filling up every moment with words.

### **Tenet Eight**

Companionship is about being still;  
it is not about frantic movement forward.

### **Tenet Nine**

Companionship is about respecting disorder and confusion;  
it is not about imposing order and logic.

### **Tenet Ten**

Companionship is about learning from others;  
it is not about teaching them.

### **Tenet Eleven**

Companionship is about compassionate curiosity;  
it is not about expertise.

*"In your journey through grief, seek out the support of those who naturally adopt a "companionship" attitude toward you and avoid those who don't."*

Dr. Alan Wolfelt, "Understanding Your Grief"