



Thursday | October 14, 2021 | 4:15 – 5:15 p.m. | Concurrent Session – Block 3

Workplace Support through Change and Loss

Maureen Desmond – Founder, Navigating Through Loss

Dana Hutson – Founder, Cancer Champions, LLC

We are experiencing a culture shift in America's workplaces. Companies are moving to flexible schedules and new office layouts; some offering perks to lure people back, such as daily meal kits that workers can take home to prepare dinner and \$1000 monthly car allowances to help with auto payments.

But there's another culture shift we must not ignore: mental health and wellness, grief, care for others. As a society, we've endured and continue to experience significant change and losses due to the pandemic. A survey of 3500 adults, administered by the Office of National Statistics, concluded 1 in 5 report having experienced depression since COVID compared to 1 in 10 previously. Even before the pandemic, A 2011, Gallup-Healthways survey concluded that more than 1 in 6 American workers also act as informal caregivers. That is about 17% of U.S. full-time workers. They reported missing an average of 7 work days per year amounting to 126 million missed work days each year. One third of working caregivers are working professionals, and another 12% are in service or management roles.

Caregiving has shown to reduce employee work productivity by 18.5% and increase the likelihood of employees leaving the workplace. How can companies' acknowledge and support their workers through these challenging times? Our program will not only raise awareness of mental wellness support in the workplace, but also elevate the conversations you can have with your employees, acknowledging the very human side of loss, change, grief and the personal responsibilities they are facing at home. By unveiling supportive tools to manage through this new normal, the value to your employees and your company overall may lead to longer retention rates, a more productive work environment, employees feeling buoyed by companies caring culture, and a safe and valued work environments.

This session will cover:

- Identifying the many types of loss, and why that matters.
- Understanding the signs of a grieving employee; what to look for and how to address sensitively and supportively.

- New tools and resources designed to help employees navigate complicated life experiences leading to a richer employee experience.
- Understanding the journey of a griever; and how each loss experience is different.
- Identifying challenges associated with implementing caregiving benefits.

About Maureen Desmond



Maureen educates and supports companies and their employees through significant change and loss as smoothly and as humanly as possible. Having experienced several losses in her immediate family that wracked her, as well as her own cancer journey, Maureen understands how grief shows up in different ways at different times. And she knows how to compassionately move through it, both honoring the loss and acknowledging our fears and struggles to talk about it.

Prior to her work here, Maureen was an executive in media sales at both Gannett Company/USA TODAY and Bloomberg Media, where she supported many of her colleagues through their own grief and loss journeys; enough times to know that there is a great need for grief support in the workplace.

Maureen is Founder, Navigating Through Loss, and works with businesses to educate and support their management staffs through workshops that elevate the conversations, using techniques that can be utilized immediately, as well as resources and tools for the longer haul. You can learn more about her work at: <https://www.navigatingthroughloss.com/>

About Dana Hutson



Dana Hutson is Founder of Cancer Champions, LLC helping individuals and families gain clarity in the confusion of a cancer diagnosis. She compassionately consults, educates and facilitates for individuals and their loved ones as they navigate a complicated healthcare system empowering them to make life-altering decisions with confidence. Prior to founding Cancer Champions Dana amassed a wealth of oncology expertise over a 25 year career within the BioPharma industry. She combines her unique knowledge of the healthcare system with her compassion for people experiencing a disruptive diagnosis to provide private medical navigation and educational seminars.

Dana is a Care Partner Project speaker, Past- President of the National Association of Women Business Owners Greater DC and serves on the boards of Sahasara Deepika Foundation for Education and Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington.