

Becoming a Companion

Grief counselor and educator Alan Wolfelt describes the concept of “companioning” those who are grieving. Through this lens, you are encouraged to listen, to follow, and to be present with a child or teen’s experience without the pressure of needing to have all the answers or to take away their discomfort. Companioning is about...

- ⌘ Honoring the spirit: it is not about focusing on the intellect.
- ⌘ Curiosity: it is not about expertise.
- ⌘ Learning from others: it is not about teaching them.
- ⌘ Walking alongside: it is not about leading.
- ⌘ Bearing witness to the struggles of others: it is not about directing those struggles.
- ⌘ Being present to another person’s pain: it is not about taking away the pain.
- ⌘ Respecting disorder and confusion: it is not about imposing order and logic.
- ⌘ Going to the wilderness of the soul with another human being: it is not about thinking you are responsible for finding the way out.
- ⌘ Being still: it is not about frantic movement forward.
- ⌘ Discovering the gifts of sacred silence: it is not about filling every painful moment with words.
- ⌘ Listening with the heart: it is not about analyzing with the head.

Companioning Rules



Be Present



Walk in their Shoes



Honour their Spirit



Listen with the Heart



Witness their Struggle



Walk Alongside



Be Silent



Be Still



Respect Confusion



Learn from them



Offer
Compassionate
Curiosity