



News Release

For more information contact:

Dr. Gary L. Wood or Dr. Patricia N. Alexander

(813) 870-0392 (Hillsborough County, Florida)

(727) 576-5164 (Pinellas County, Florida)

(800) 870-0392 (Out-of-area)

ANNIVERSARY GRIEF – SEPTEMBER 11

Tampa, Fla. (September 1, 2006) Anniversaries of tragedies such as September 11, 2001 can be difficult for many people and may invoke some strong feelings. Each person has a different memory of and feelings toward a tragic event and as a result will respond differently. Some individuals will isolate and will not want to see or read about anything connected with the event. Others will want to get as much information as possible. Some will talk about it and some will be silent. Some will want to go to a place of worship or to a memorial site. The bottom line is that there are no hard or fast rules to follow in trying to deal with the remembrance of such an event. It is not at all unusual to have members of the same family or group respond in a completely different fashion. Some will be sad, some will be angry, some will be numb, and some will have come to a point of acceptance. Grief does not get processed according to some “set in stone” set of rules.

If you ask someone where they were when a particular event occurred, they can immediately tell you. To some, a date such as September 11 is always somewhere in the memory. Yet, anniversary grief is not so much about a particular date as it is about a period of time. Individuals often begin to feel differently a few weeks before the date and sometimes for days afterward. It is important to be patient with oneself and with others because we can't “read” how someone may be responding to a tragedy.

Sometimes you are doing fine but another family member or staffer or friend isn't doing so well. Be willing to just listen – and say nothing. Don't expect someone else to feel the same as you do, or want to remember or commemorate the same as you do,

Remember that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit available to all employees and dependents of companies contracted with Wood & Associates for providing confidential free professional assistance 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Remember that you or a dependent may contact the EAP regarding any concern that you might have – you don't have to wait until a problem becomes big to seek help. Above all, keep in mind that if you are having difficulty dealing with grief or fear – help is a phone call away.

About Wood & Associates

Wood & Associates is an Employee Assistance Program and behavioral health consulting firm that helps employers maintain productivity, safety and behavioral health in the workplace. Wood & Associates is a pioneer in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) industry and has served employers and employees in the greater Tampa Bay area and nationwide since 1982. The firm's diverse group of clients includes a number of major employers who also contract for its mental health and substance abuse services.

Gary L. Wood, Psy.D., founder of the Wood & Associates consulting practice, is a pioneer in the field of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services. Since 1979, his practice has centered on providing solutions to employee and organizational problems. Wood is a licensed clinical psychologist, a member of the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, and a graduate of Rutgers University, West Georgia College and Mercer University.

Patricia N. Alexander earned a Ph.D. in mental health counseling at the University of Florida. Trained in critical incident stress management through the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, she is a Florida Licensed Mental Health Counselor

and nationally certified counselor. Through her work experience she has addressed all types of critical incident situations, including explosions, multiple homicides, suicides, line-of-duty deaths, serious accidents and robberies. Alexander conducts training on stress management for law enforcement and businesses, and has developed peer support programs for law enforcement and industry. Alexander is an educator and consultant on a wide variety of behavioral health concerns.