

Needs of a Survivor of a Homicide Victim

1. A non-judgmental listener to hear the details over and over and over. This helps break through denial and begins the process of accepting reality, as well as helping to start rebuilding trust.
2. Validation of feelings. What we feel is normal.
3. Understanding by others that there are "NO SHOULDs", and "NO TIMETABLE".
4. Clear, accurate information. Has a right to know what's going on.
5. Sharing of memories. Use of the loved one's name. TEARS ARE OK.
6. Sensitivity at the times of anniversaries and holidays.
7. Balance of activity and TIME ALONE.
8. Sometimes human presence. Not to chat; just someone to be there.
9. Supports, not criticism, (i.e., don't criticize the survivor for going to the cemetery too little or too often, keeping mementos such as victim's clothing, creating home shrines etc). Letting go is a long process.
10. Patience from others.
11. Recognition that sometimes the normal tasks are too much, such as driving, because of lack of concentration, lack of energy, or fear.
12. Someone to be cognizant of changes in health, i.e., extreme depression, isolation, weight loss, insomnia