



WISDOM FOR THE CAREGIVER

Unemployment (from Carolyn)

- Don't read too much into emotions. They happen for a number of reasons. Recognize that your emotional reactions may be quite different from, or similar to, your spouse's.
- Accept each other's behavior as valid considering all the circumstances. Don't call your partner's feelings "wrong" just because they seem uncomfortable or inappropriate to you.
- Communicate your own fears or concerns, but balance them with hope.
- Commit to your spouse to do the best you can to support his or her own search efforts.
- Express appreciation for the support your partner has given you, acknowledging that it may have been rough for both of you.
- Help your spouse assume complete responsibility for his or her career and life. Don't blame others for your situation. When either of you chooses to act like a "victim," consciously reenter a power state in which you both feel confident and in control. It may be uncomfortable, but you must confront each other whenever you resort to blaming others.
- Ask to be involved with your spouse's job-hunting efforts and demonstrate that you're confident he or she will succeed.
- Let as many people as possible know that you're looking for a job. The grapevine is a powerful networking device.
- You don't know where, how, or when the right job will appear, so it's best to keep your options open. Even if you have a terrific job and are both committed to remaining exactly where you are, allowing your partner to interview for out-of-town jobs helps strengthen his or her interviewing skills. And who knows? For the world's best opportunity, you might decide to relocate.
- Finally, help your partner develop his or her resume and job search plan. Love and accept your spouse for who he or so is (not who you might like him or her to be) and enthusiastically reinforce positive actions while forgiving the dysfunctional behavior that drives you crazy. Keep your options open. Love and support each other, and never give up. Best of luck!

For additional wisdom: see pages 219-226 in **The Compassionate Congregation available through Amazon.com or via our website at www.WisdomoftheWounded.com*