

Her tragedy inspired a plan for compassionate actions in the workplace

By Christiana Lilly
New Pelican Writer

Pompano Beach – When Mindy Corporon's father and son were murdered in a mass shooting in 2014 at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City, her world stopped.

But, bills still had to be paid, meetings still needed to be attended, and her other child still needed her. At the time, Corporon was the co-founder and CEO of a wealth management firm and she says the fog didn't lift for another 18 months.

"My compassion changed, my passion changed, and I realized that there was a significant need in the workforce, in the corporate workplace - and just in human life



Mindy Corporon [left] and Lisa Cooper, co-founders of Workplace Healing. [Courtesy]

in particular - to help employers onboard a grieving employee," she says.

"There needed to be more training on the side of the company to help people like me who were so broken and shattered to come back to work and get back involved."

Her own personal tragedy was the catalyst to start the Pompano Beach-based Workplace Healing, which she co-founded with Lisa Cooper in 2018.

For too long, two or three days of bereavement leave - if any at all - has been considered the norm, but Corporon and Cooper want to change that. Especially after experiencing the devastation

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WORKPLACE FROM 12

from COVID. Employees now are reevaluating how they want to spend their 40 hours a week and whether the company they are working hard for is deserving of their time.

"We did a lot of research, qualitative and quantitative research, discovering that over half of employees will consider leaving their job when their employer does not provide support after a loved one's death or a significant life event," Corporon said.

This can include the loss of a pet, divorce, the death of a family member, the rigors of being an adult caregiver, or any

"Research tells us when you have a death in your inner circle of your family, foggy brain lasts 18 to 24 months, and I can guarantee that - I lost my dad and my son."

- Mindy Corporon

life change that can create stress. According to Human Resources Director, one in four employees is experiencing grief at a point in time, which translates to about 30 days of productivity lost - and that

number is from 2018.

Armed with the statistics as well as their own personal experiences, Corporon and Cooper hosted human resources focus groups and workshops. Then, they created "leadership empathy training" software for corporate leaders to create a "heart and head-based" Human Recovery Plan to better serve their grieving employees.

With the plan, leaders can schedule conversations with the human resources department, find out what workload they are able to manage, and provide resources such as survivor benefits, childcare and mental health services. In the "heart" category, the software helps

with sending flowers to the employee, getting a card signed by coworkers, and other actions that demonstrate the company is thinking of them.

Currently, Workplace Healing has six clients and investors have committed almost \$1 million.

"Research tells us when you have a death in your inner circle of your family, foggy brain lasts 18 to 24 months, and I can guarantee that - I lost my dad and my son," Corporon says.

"I was there and I made decisions and I [ran the company] well, but my brain compartmentalized so much stuff to keep me walking and breathing and eating. I can't remember those two years at all."

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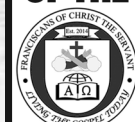
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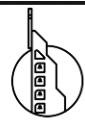
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