

GRIEVING **FROM A *DISTANCE***





WELCOME

TO OUR WORKBOOK,

GRIEVING FROM A DISTANCE.

Throughout these pages you will receive numerous helpful tips on how to cope with facing a personal loss; how to demonstrate your love and support to family and friends who have experienced a loss, when you were unable to attend the funeral and grieve in community.



WAYS TO SHOW LOVE/SUPPORT FROM A *DISTANCE*

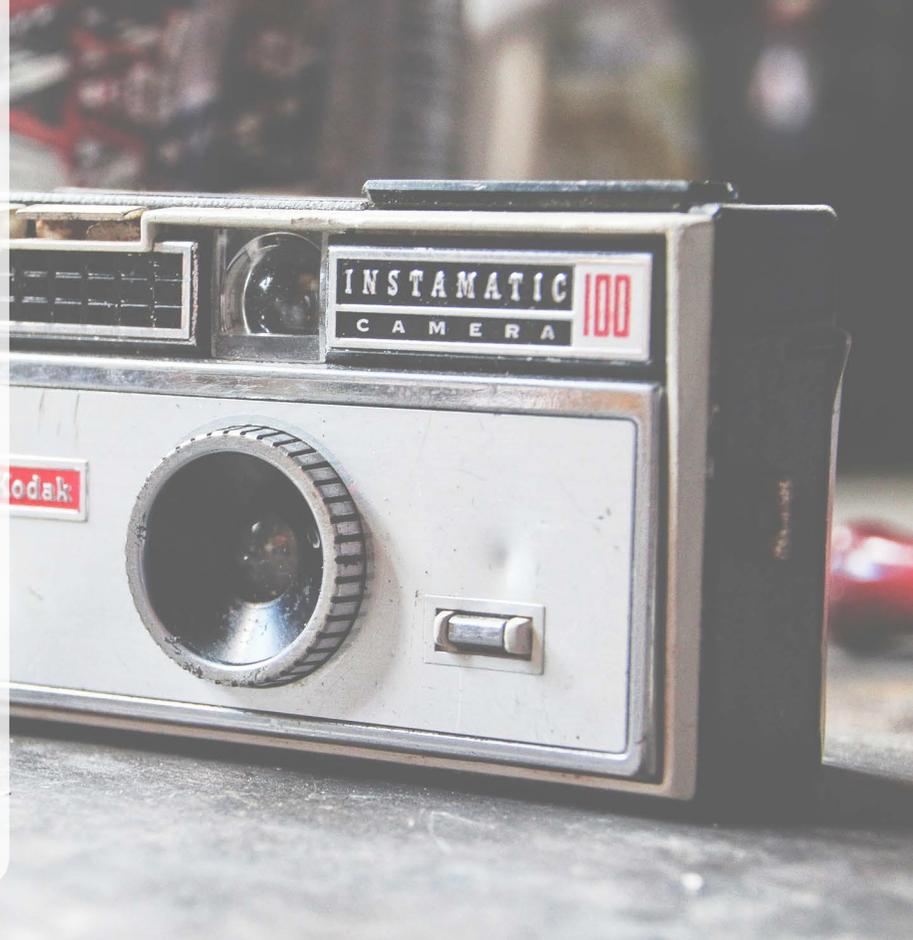
In these unprecedented times, by practicing safe social distancing, you are neither able to attend a funeral nor be in close proximity to those grieving. There are still many ways to show your support. Let's use the example of the death of a distant relative. It is important to pay your respects to the core part of your family facing the loss of their loved one. It is also essential to support and extend your condolences to your nuclear family. The relationship that has been lost may be more impactful to them than it was to you. For example, you may have lost an aunt, but your parent has lost a sibling. Consider gifting them with something to demonstrate your sympathy, such as a photo of the two of them together, or a phone call asking them to share specific fond memories of their sibling.

It will be much harder when the death is of an immediate family member, and you are unable to attend those funeral services. See if there will be a livestream of the funeral service or if it will be handled at a later date. Seeing the funeral, even through a live video, will help in acknowledging the death and beginning the grieving process. Additionally, consider writing something that can be read at the service if possible, so that

FAVORITE MEMORIES

(TO BE READ AT FUNERAL)

One of the most meaningful things you can do when a loved one has passed, is share your memories at their funeral services. If you are unable to attend the services in person, you can still write your memories down, and enlist someone who is there to read it on your behalf. If that is not possible, you can mail or email your memories to your other family members or friends so that all of you can reminisce together. Below are some starter sentences to get your memories moving.

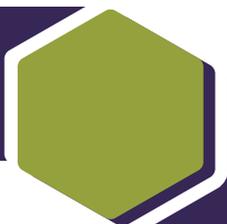


I First Met (Deceased) at _____

I laugh the hardest when I think about the time we _____

The worst trouble we ever got into was _____

The things I will miss the most about (Deceased) are _____



HOW TO GRIEVE

(YOU YOURSELF)

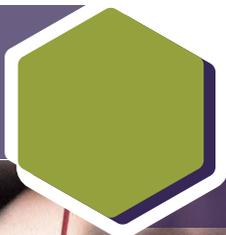
There are many things that help you to realize the finality of your loved one and really begin the grieving process when you physically attend a funeral. You hear readings, participate through singing hymns, are surrounded by your friends and loved ones and maybe view an open-casket. You may not realize this, but all those things do help in preparing you to grieve, seeing the end of a life lived, seeing it celebrated.

A nice alternative for not being able to attend is to watch a live-feed of the funeral service or memorial. However, in cases where that is not possible, it is still important to set aside time to begin the grieving process.



Here are some ideas ...

- In memory of your loved one, light a candle, or buy yourself a plant or memorial gift.
- Hold a moment of silence. Invite your friends to share in this moment with you.
- Read a few scriptures or poems. You could even ask which readings will/have been done at your loved one's service.
- Make a donation to your loved one's preferred charity.
- Write a letter (no need to send it) or post an online tribute to their obituary.
- Spend a few hours, or even the whole day, celebrating your loved one's life. Do what they loved most.



Don't hide

It may feel uncomfortable, however, telling a friend or close co-worker what you are going through will make a difference. You don't have to do this alone!

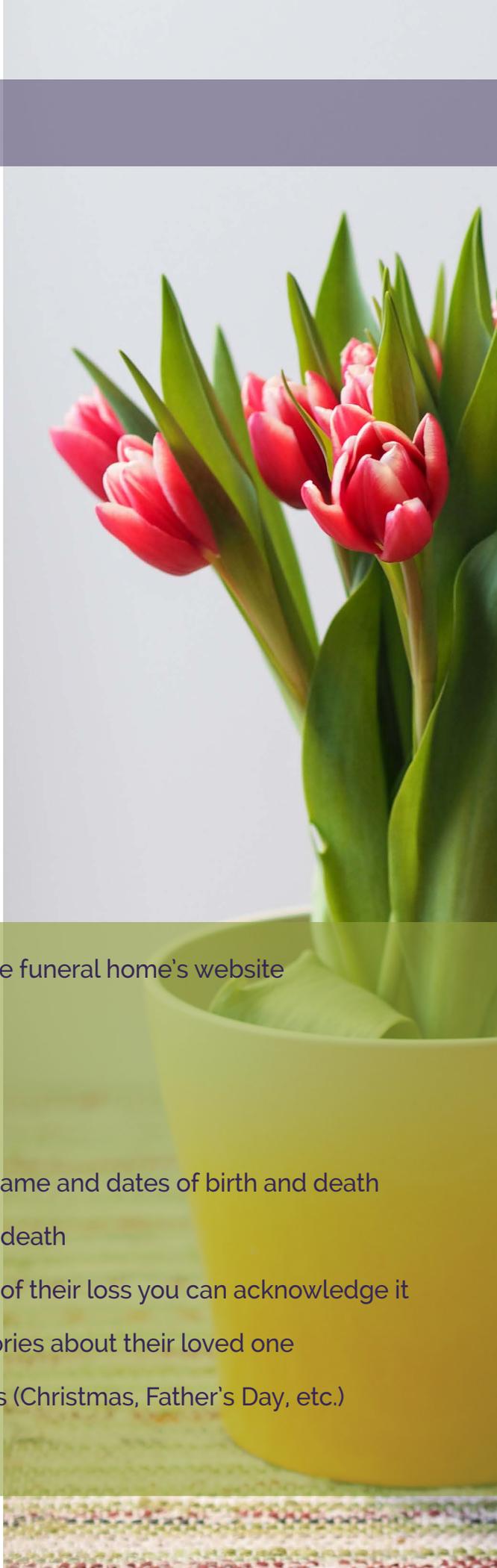


SIDE - GRIEF

(PEOPLE WHO NEED YOUR SUPPORT)

There are various ways you can support and uplift your family or friends who have experienced a death, while being unable to attend the funeral in person. Consider the following scenarios: Your boss' spouse dies, your best friend's father lives and dies in another state, your child's best friend loses a grandparent, your brother-in-law's sibling dies. These are all real world circumstance that happen every day.

Below is a list of suggestions on ways to show your love and support - check the ones that would make you feel the most comfortable.

- Write an online condolence on the obituary, on the funeral home's website
 - Send flowers to their house
 - Mail a sympathy card
 - Donate to a charity in the deceased's name
 - Purchase a small keepsake with the deceased's name and dates of birth and death
 - Prepare and deliver a meal in the weeks after the death
 - Mark the date of death so that on the anniversary of their loss you can acknowledge it
 - Call and ask your person to share their favorite stories about their loved one
 - Show additional love/support around the holidays (Christmas, Father's Day, etc.)
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FORGOTTEN MOURNERS

(PEOPLE WHO NEED YOUR SUPPORT)

Through the use of social media we are more aware of our friends and family experiencing a loss. These people will know that you know that they have experienced a loss, and as a part of their community seriously consider reaching out to them in some way. Furthermore, think back to funerals you have attended in the past. The majority of support shows up for the spouse and adult children who have experienced the loss. Who is showing up to support the grandchildren? Their contemporaries are most likely in school. So have your child support their classmates who are experiencing a death by sending them a message through various forms of social media or by mailing a letter.



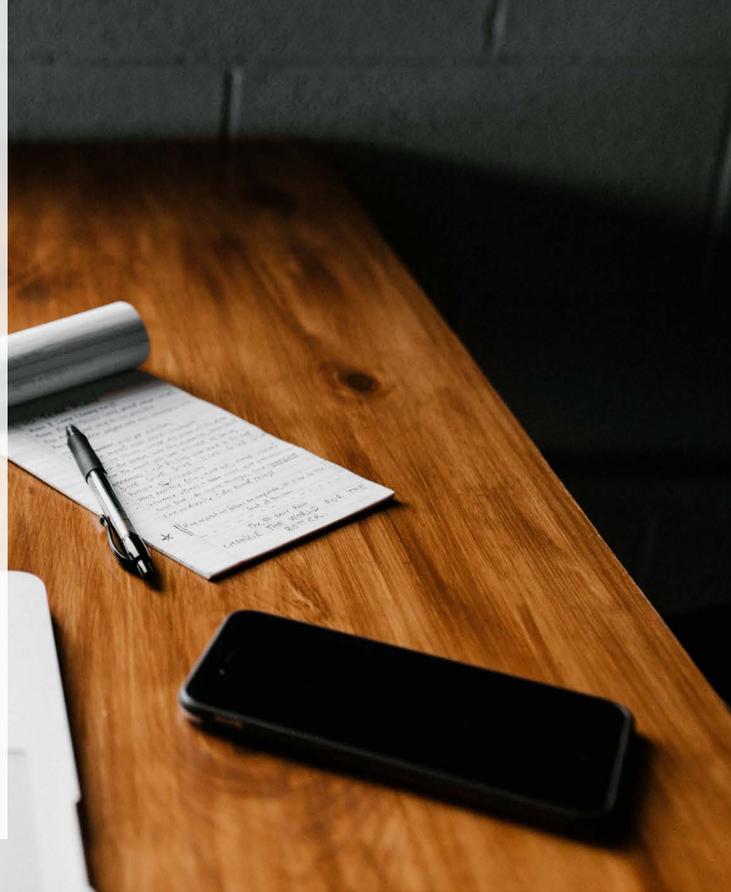
Look to your social groups - who may be experiencing a loss that needs support from you?



Cousins
Long-Distance Friends
Coworkers
Children's Peers
Business Acquaintances
Church Friends
Grandchildren
Inlaws
Teachers/Mentors
Neighbors

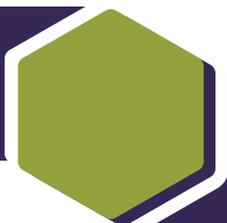
PREPARING IN ADVANCE

There are times when death is unpredictable. It comes with no warning and you are completely unprepared. However, in some cases looking ahead can create a much smoother transition, and may even enable you to attend the funeral service. For example, when a loved one is diagnosed with a terminal illness, you could plan ahead to respect their final wishes. Consider the following affirmative scenarios that you may use when dealing with death at a distance, then write down some solutions that may work for you.



- My loved one has been placed on hospice care, so I will start putting money aside to pay for additional expenses.
- My loved one is sick and has weeks/days to life, I am going to talk to my boss about who can cover my job responsibilities while I am gone.
- I am going to start a savings account with \$____ per paycheck, so that when I need to take time off of work I can.
- I know that I will not be able to attend my loved one's funeral, so I am going to start journaling my thoughts and feeling about their death to help my grieving process.

Additional solutions that might work for me are: _____



THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to complete this guidebook. Although you are not able to attend a funeral, as you have seen in the previous pages, there are numerous ways to show love and support to those who need it, as well as addressing your own grief. It is our hope that you have found some inspiration to help you deal with grieving from a distance. Please, share this knowledge with your friends and family, so that they may gain insight into creating a community culture of support for those who are experiencing a death during these trying times.

