

LIFELINE

A PUBLICATION OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR PERSONAL RESOURCE PLANNING (APRP)SM

The Process of Grief

Whether it is a funeral, memorial, or celebration of life, people often seek occasions to express the love, respect, and grief after the loss of a loved one. These occasions lead to important steps toward emotional healing after loss. The aim of the bereaved is to create a meaningful experience that may bring peace of mind.



If you take the lead in planning your own service, you and your loved ones can create the most meaningful experience that speaks to the uniqueness of your life. Your favorite meal, a vacation that you loved, what are those favorite memories would you like to share?

Traditional, 'green,' or virtual, there is more than one way to prepare a funeral or memorial. Personalize your funeral by having music you enjoyed played during visitation or provide an album of family photos. That is a great way for family and friends to reminisce about years gone by. Are you someone who enjoys the sport of surfing, and would be interested in a paddle-out? Do you love to paint? Wouldn't it be just like you to have your artwork displayed for your loved ones to see?

Recently a young man died while playing in a volleyball tournament. He was buried with his volleyball, signed by all his teammates. His jersey was retired and presented to his family at the grave site. Could his friends have expressed their love for him this way if the family, funeral director and minister had not offered to share in the planning?

During a service or celebration of life, family and friends have the opportunity to relate to each other at the deepest levels and turn toward a collective strength. The choices you have in funeral services are unlimited and are as personal as you wish to make them. Planning ahead of time alleviates the burdens on those left behind and ensures final wishes are met. To better understand the choices you have, contact your local funeral establishment.

Revolutionary Self-Care

Caregivers offer much needed care and support to family members or friends during time of need. But self-care should not be neglected. If you were the principal caregiver of a person that as passed away, there is a great chance you are not only grieving the loss of them being gone but are also grieving the *loss of direction*.

A caregiver is an important and defining role. Whether it was for an extended or short period of time, a caregiver's routine is often dictated by taking care of that special person in your life.

The experience of death can have long- lasting effects. There is no shame in seeking support and caring for yourself if you are having a difficult time.

Here are 5 tips to help:

- Take time to journal your thoughts and feelings
- Practice stress reducers such as yoga, meditation, or prayer
- Take a mental break from social media
- Engage activities that bring you joy. This may include learning a new recipe, reading, or spending time with friends
- Prioritize rest

Meaningful Support

It can be hard to know how to help when a loved one is grieving. Here are some tips on offering support.

A simple, empathetic expression of, "I'm sorry for your loss," can go a long way. Don't try to come up with profound statements about life and death. It isn't necessary. Avoid saying "I know how you must be feeling." People do not react to grief in the same manner. Show the person you care with a hug, a handshake, or a gentle pat on the shoulder, or a listening ear.

Listen whenever and wherever your friend needs to express their feelings. Sometimes they may need to work through their emotions. You don't have to have all of the answers. They may feel anger or sadness. It's just important they take the first step in resolving their grief.

You may offer to help with daily activities, such as laundry, preparing meals, or running errands. Extend invitations to help them change their environment. Sometimes grief can be overwhelming, confining, and isolating. Ask your loved one out for a quiet dinner or stroll. Don't be forceful or offended if the invitation is refused. Just keep asking, and be there to lighten the load.



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The Association for Personal Resource Planning (APRP)SM is an association dedicated to providing education and exploring programs for seniors to address their final expenses which may include a funeral.

Your local funeral service provider can offer advice and guidance to preplanning.

Getting Through Loss

Prioritizing yourself during the grieving process can make all the difference.

Grief is distinct journey for everyone. It can be formidable and emotional, with many ups and downs. However, there are some actions you can take to better navigate the journey.

- If you have a normally busy life, rearrange it. Make an effort to create a more balanced schedule, one that works for you.
- There is power in the word, 'no.' Lighten your commitments and allow yourself time to rest.
- In addition to mental and emotional stress, physical health may also suffer. Make eating well a top priority. Plan time to exercise. It may help introduce a more positive energy and outlook.

