

Mourning During Social Distancing

One of the greatest challenges we face is not being able to gather to mourn the loss of a loved one. Funerals are modified or suspended for now, robbing us of the opportunity to comfort one another in traditional ways. Here are some ideas for you to consider during this time of social distancing to help you mourn the loss of a loved one.

Naming and Observing the Loss: The custom of gathering to remember a loved one at the time of death is a very real need in the mourning process. Some alternative ways to attend to your loss include:

- Use the phone and technology to talk with those you find most supportive.
- Take every opportunity to speak of your loved one.
- Name aloud or in writing by journaling or letter writing how you are feeling. The expression of feelings of grief is an essential part of the mourning process.

Share stories, pictures and traditions: Here are some suggestions for honoring your loved one:

- Display photos of your loved one.
- Share stories about your loved one with family and friends.
- Play favorite songs; do family activities your loved one particularly enjoyed.
- Establish a special memorial space in your home where you light a remembrance candle.
- Ask for friends and loved ones to share their favorite memories with you.

Funerals: Ask the funeral home what is possible:

- Ask about small group visitations with social distancing.
- Inquire about a photo/video montage of your loved one to share online.
- Include a request in the obituary for cards and letters to include a memory or photo of your loved one, gathering those from near and far.
- Ask about clergy or chaplains who are trained, comfortable and willing to conduct “virtual” funeral services online. Contact one of them to plan and lead a service online.

Planning a Future Memorial Service: Begin to think about a memorial service to be held in the future once social distancing restrictions have eased.

- Where would you like this to occur?
- Who would you like to lead this service?
- Who should be involved?
- How can the service best honor your loved one?

Bereavement Resources Online: Here are a few helpful resources during this time:

www.griefhaven.org

www.grief.com

<https://www.centerforloss.com/>

