Grief Rituals

Grief rituals can help with honoring a loved one’s memory and can be a powerful comfort to a bereaved individual. Rituals can help maintain the connection with a deceased loved one, create meaning for the loss and foster healing and peace. No one ritual will work for everyone—even in the same family. It is important for individuals to create a ritual that will have the most meaning and healing for them.

Some ideas that have been helpful are:

- Buy a special candle and light it at times that are special to honor your loved one’s memory (birthday, anniversary, Mother’s Day).
- Create a scrapbook to give to someone in the family or to share memories.
- Plant a tree or shrub in memory of your loved one.
- Make a donation to a loved one’s favorite charity.
- Offer a scholarship in a loved one’s name.
- On birthdays, holidays or other special days buy your loved one a gift and donate it to an agency, hospital, nursing home.
- Have / serve a loved one’s favorite recipe / food.
- Visit / take flowers to a loved one’s grave.
- Place a single flower in a bud vase in a prominent place in the person’s memory.
- Encourage children to draw pictures or create gifts that remind them of the person.
- Have a birthday party on his / her birthday.
- Write a letter or note to your loved one.
- Have a “memory “gathering where everyone shares pictures and favorite stories.