

Dealing with the Anniversary of Your Loved Ones Death

It has almost been one year since the death of your loved one. Although the passage of time has put distance between you and the days that your loved one spent together, your memories of these moments may be as vivid as if they happened yesterday. Over the past year you have had to move forward with out this person, but you have not forgotten them. It is likely that you also have not forgotten the pain you felt at the time of their death or the profound grief you may have felt in the days, weeks, or months to follow.

The anniversary of a loved ones death can bring up a mix of feelings; and just as we all deal with grief in different ways, people also choose to deal with the anniversary of a death in different ways. Some people may choose not acknowledge this day at all, where as others may have had it in the back of their minds for months. Some people choose to use the day to memorialize or remember their loved ones, where as others choose to engage in activities that allow them to take their mind off of the loss.

On the following page you will find a list of possible things to do on the anniversary of a loved ones death. Whatever you chose to do though, please take care of yourself. It is common to experience feelings of sadness and loneliness around this time, so please find someone to talk to whether you find that in a friend, family member, support group, mental health professional, etc. You may also call the Living Legacy Foundation's Family Service Coordinators at 410 242-7000 if you would like talk or if you have any questions.

Your Loved One Lives In Your Heart

Many tender memories soften your grief,
May fond recollection bring you relief,
And may you find comfort and peace in the thought
Of the joy that knowing your loved one brought...
For time and space can never divide
Or keep your loved one from your side
When memory paints in colors true
The happy hours that belonged to you.

~ Helen Steiner Rice

Things to do on the anniversary of your loved ones death:

- Create a positive ritual to celebrate the life of your loved one. Chose a ritual that can be repeated in the years to come.
- Do something your loved one would have enjoyed.
- Release helium balloons with a message inside to your loved one. Release them in a place that was special to that person.
- Reminisce and tell your favorite stories or memories about the person who has died.
- Plan a remembrance or a memorial service.
- Take flowers to the grave site, memorial site, or location of the tragedy
- Make a charitable donation to an organization in the person's name.
- Build a memorial with portraits, personal goods, clothing, favorite foods, or possessions of the loved one.
- Make a toast or say a prayer or blessing at the start of a family meal.
- Listen to their favorite music.
- Light a candle for them.
- Look at old photos or videos.
- Plant a tree in their name.
- Consider establishing a scholarship in their name.
- Write journals to the loved one to express your feelings.
- Plan a distraction, such as a weekend away or a visit with friends or relatives.
- Celebrate the strengths you have developed as a survivor of loss and tragedy.
- Remember what is still positive about life.
- Gather pictures for a photo album or scrap book.
- Make a keepsake box of things that remind you of your loved one.
- Finish a project that the person was working on.
- Continue to work toward a cause or activity he/she was involved with.
- If your loved one was a donor, request updates on how their recipients are doing.