

# LIVING GRIEF

Let's talk about grief...

## Information about funerals

It may not be possible to hold the exact plans you had in mind for your funeral at this current time.

The information in this leaflet will give you an idea of what to expect when making funeral arrangements.



## Information about funerals

Restrictions may be in place on attendance at funerals. It is possible you may not be able to attend yourself or have the support of people around you during the service and afterwards.

These restrictions may be in place whether the person died of coronavirus or not. Funeral services are likely to be delayed and much shorter than usual and the service your family member may have planned for themselves, or you may want for them, may not be possible. This may be very distressing.

In normal times, funerals serve a number of important purposes after someone dies.

- They can help to make the death seem real.
- They offer people a chance to share thoughts and feelings about the person who has died and to say goodbye.
- They bring families and friends together to support one another.
- They give people a focus at a time when so many things seem out of a person's control.
- They can be an important part of our grieving and healing process, to be together with and support others, to give thanks, pay our respects, do what we feel is right.

All of these functions may be disrupted if the funeral is delayed, shortened and if friends and family, even close relatives, cannot attend.

## What might help?

Whilst many people will be unable to be at funerals which, in other circumstances, they would have been able to attend, it may be possible to still feel part of the event to an extent. Most funeral directors and crematoria are offering live streaming for funeral services. This means that, whilst only a few people may be able to attend in person, the extended grieving community can still see the service and feel part of it.

You may be able to write or record a message to be read out or played at the funeral, or ask for a particular letter or object to be placed in the coffin. Please talk to your funeral director about what is on offer. They will be glad to help you.

You could set aside the time while the funeral is taking place (or later) to hold your own act of memorial at home. You could look at pictures, play some of the person's favourite music, write a message to them, light a candle or follow any of your own cultural rituals. There are lots of prayers, readings and poems online which may be helpful or you may find the following service useful.

If other people were able to attend, ask them to call you afterwards so that you can hear their account of the event and take the time to share your memories of the person.

If the funeral is delayed or reduced to a very short service, you could still set some time aside to have your own private goodbye including any of the ideas above.

We will not be under these restrictions forever and, at some future point, you may be able to hold a formal or informal memorial to those who have died.

# How much **does it cost?**

All emotional and spiritual wellbeing services at St Elizabeth Hospice are free. St Elizabeth Hospice is a registered charity and relies on gifts and donations to carry out its work. Because of people's generosity we are able to offer bereavement support free of charge to the relatives and friends of hospice patients.

## **Tell us** what you think

Hearing about your experience of St Elizabeth Hospice can help us to improve our services and provide better care and support for those who need it.

To make a comment or complaint, or to compliment us on something we've done well, please write to us or visit [stelizabethhospice.org.uk](http://stelizabethhospice.org.uk)

## Contact **us**

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