

TWELVE WAYS TO DEAL WITH YOUR GRIEF

by Kelly Baltzell M.A. &
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Rituals are a beautiful and powerful way to honor and remember a loved one who has died. Rituals can give meaning and richness to your life and enhance the memory of another person that has been near and dear to you. During rituals, it is possible to enter into a sacred space that helps with healing. Meaningful rituals can provide reassurance of the continuation of life's cycles, and can bring purpose to the grieving process while giving peace and hope.



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1. **Light a Candle:** A candle can be placed in a window or by a special chair and lit every night. View this as a symbolic form of love's light continuing.
2. **Plant a Tree:** Place a tree in your yard or in a favorite place your loved one liked to visit. Planting a tree gives a constant, growing reminder of the continuation of life and it's many cycles.
3. **Write in a Journal:** Buy a special book for journaling. Express yourself by recording feelings and releasing grief. Journaling is secret, safe, and healing.
4. **Make a Memory Box:** Take a shoebox or a small box. Decorate it with items that hold memories. Inside the box put things that remind you of your loved one. You might want to add a little note why this item is so special. Keep it for yourself, or pass the memories on to a person that might enjoy them.
5. **Plant Flowers:** Planting favorite flowers or plants, either in your own yard or at the burial site, can help heal grief and create beauty. If this is not possible, donate flowers to a park, school, or public place in memory of your loved one.
6. **Tell a Story:** On special anniversaries and holidays tell a story about your loved one that had impact and meaning to you. Stories help you treasure the memories and pass on important messages to others of all generations. Love shines through unique tales.
7. **Make a Scholarship:** Give money to a local school in the name of your loved one. See the joy it brings as each year a student receives a scholarship in your loved one's name.
8. **Sing a Song:** On the anniversary of your loss sing your loved one's favorite song(s) with other family members and friends. Music helps heal pain that normal words can't touch.
9. **Give to a Charity:** Each year make a donation to your loved one's favorite charity in their name. If you prefer donate a book to your local library.
10. **Celebrate with a Meal:** On the eve of your loved one's birthday make their favorite dinner and invite friends and family over to share. Tell stories about your loved one, or pass around pictures of times you enjoyed together.
11. **Sharing with the Children:** After sharing stories or photos with children or grandchildren, ask them to draw a picture about it. Frame the pictures or place them on the refrigerator with magnets. Draw a picture yourself. Let the child in you come alive.
12. **Volunteer your Time:** Do volunteer work on an issue or cause that held special meaning for your dear one and dedicate that service to their memory. Or, do a walk or run for a worthy cause as a memoriam.