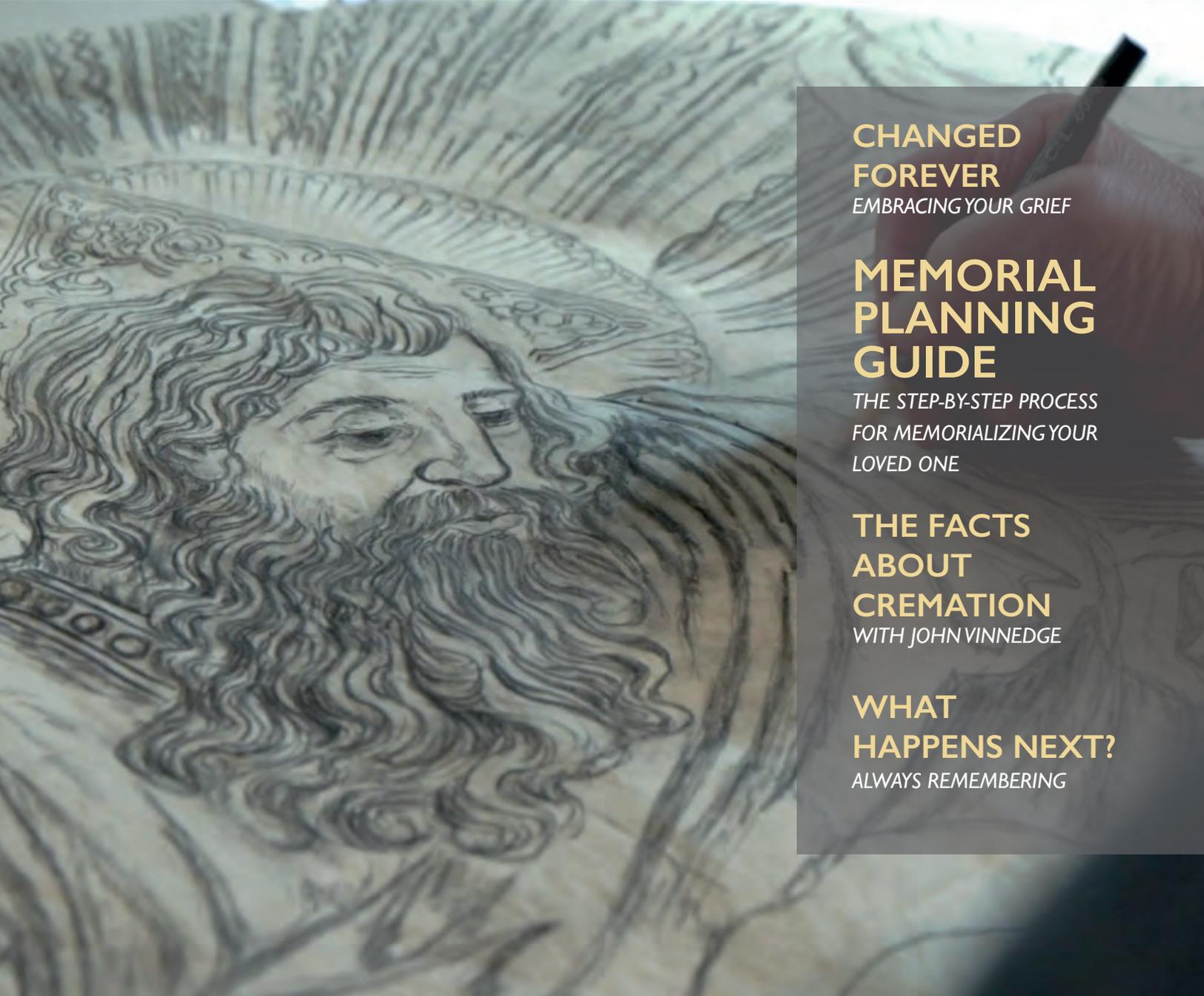


# EVERLASTING MEMORIES



## **CHANGED FOREVER**

*EMBRACING YOUR GRIEF*

## **MEMORIAL PLANNING GUIDE**

*THE STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS  
FOR MEMORIALIZING YOUR  
LOVED ONE*

## **THE FACTS ABOUT CREMATION**

*WITH JOHN VINNEDGE*

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

*ALWAYS REMEMBERING*



**DIAMOND  
GUARANTEE**



**EVERLASTING  
GUARANTEE**

## A PROMISE SET IN STONE

For our clients, we have created America's finest warranty. Dodds Memorials has done everything possible to ensure your complete satisfaction and peace of mind. Our warranty includes the following promises:

### EVERLASTING MEMORIALS PROMISE

- Diamond guaranteed features, plus:
- Protected against vandalism
- Handcrafted "shaped" designs
- Future death date included
- Signed and numbered warranty
- Only the best quality granites
- Cemetery reportability

### DIAMOND MEMORIALS GUARANTEE

- Your memorial will never fade
- Your memorial will never crack
- Your memorial will never discolor
- If you're not satisfied, your money back

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# CREATING A LASTING VISION OF LOVE

*Dear Families,*

Memorialization is so much more than manufacturing a monument with someone's name on it. The process begins in the hearts and minds of family and close friends, drawing from memories and experiences with their departed loved one. It includes grieving – not only allowing ourselves to experience the pain of our loss but also to trudge through the time it takes to adjust to a “new normal” without that person.

Memorialization is also about personal and family legacy – ensuring that your departed loved one is honored for the life they lived and that generations to come can draw inspiration from their life. Memorialization, when we embrace the process, is central to our ability to heal from our loss...and to celebrate and preserve our family history.

This brings me to the purpose of this magazine. We've created this publication from years of working with thousands of families. We've learned from them as well as from clergy, healthcare, and funeral home professionals.

I invite you to use this guide as a starting point in your memorialization process. While we may not know your personal story yet, we know what you're going through – not only from our own experiences but from supporting the many families we've had the privilege to serve throughout the years.

Supporting families like yours is our personal and professional mission – to help you create a lasting vision of love for your beloved. If we can be of any further help, please call us at 1-800-77-DODDS or visit us at a Dodds Memorials location near you.

Warm regards,

Neil Fogarty, President



# CHANGED FOREVER

**Lori Clements, LSW and  
Judy Vincent, LSW, Hospice  
Care of Middletown**

## **Grieving requires a lot of energy...**

The cycle of life is often compared to the seasons of a year. It is easy to compare your life, the loves of your life and the loss of life to these seasons. When we experience loss of life of a loved one, grief can impose itself upon you and it will seem like a season all its own. Like the seasons, there is no precise time table. Summers may seem short, winters long and like a blink of an eye, you might not even

notice that you completely missed a season. Changes are easy to miss when one is grieving.

## **Grieving is unique...**

Each of us experiences grief in a very unique way. Our history plays an important role in our grief journey. Individuals have different values and beliefs, varying levels of family support and different circumstances surrounding the death of their loved one. The intensity and length of a person's grief is not an indication of one's love for the deceased.

Your grief may affect every aspect

of your life. It is possible nothing will feel normal. If this is true for you, don't be alarmed. Trust that in time, you will find peace and comfort. Healing will come.

Common grief reactions may include feelings of sadness, anger, guilt, anxiety, loneliness, fatigue and numbness. Grief affects us physically, spiritually, emotionally and cognitively. We need to express our grief and move toward the pain so that we can be an active participant in our healing journey. Whatever each person experiences is real to them, and needs to be accepted and validated.

The goal is not to get "over it," but

to go through the grief process.  
What is “IT?”

- IT is approaching the first anniversary of the death and reliving it all.
- IT is people forgetting and you cry; it is people remembering and you cry.
- IT is a future of unknowns and uncertainties and emptiness.
- IT is being strong when you really feel weak.
- IT is going to another funeral for the first time and feeling overwhelmed, too distraught to stay, but unable to leave.
- IT is remembering past holidays and facing future holidays.
- IT is everything. Our lives are changed forever.

### **Grieving is a process...**

A crucial part of moving through the grief process is telling your story. Expressing your thoughts and feelings will substantially assist in your healing. It is important to remember that healing looks like being in and out of pain. It can be compared to riding a rollercoaster, with many hills and valleys.

Remembering is an important part of our daily living and healing process on our grief journey.

*“Remembering the person we have loved allows me to slowly heal. Healing does not mean I will forget. Actually it means I will remember. Gently, I will move forward, never forgetting my past.”*  
Alan D. Wolfelt, PhD.

What can you do to remember your loved one? Listed below are a few of the things that will honor your loved

one in beautiful ways:

- Talk about your loved one.
- Write about your loved one. (Journaling is a very effective way to express your feelings if you cannot share with others.)
- Start new traditions.

You may hear that time heals all pain. What time creates is distance from the loss. It is what you choose to do with that time that will make a difference in how you embrace your journey ahead.

### **Groups:**

Finding a support group can be extremely helpful as you take this difficult grief journey. Being with others who are also grieving, allows you to know that you are not alone. It is a safe place to share with others who can relate to what you are going through.

You may at times feel like you are going crazy. Grief support groups allow you to talk about how to slowly integrate the loss you have experienced and the grief that comes with it, into a life that is changed. Hospice of Middletown offers free support groups which are open to the public.

### **Ending:**

*“Death came without my permission. While I know grief is universal, it’s just so hard to contemplate the death of someone who brought meaning to my life. My life is in large part formed by the people around me. Death creates the obvious — living without the presence of someone loved. This dramatic change challenges my character, my personhood.*

*Learning to survive my changed life draws upon all my resources. I am still capable of being loved and cared for. I am still capable of living a life of purpose and meaning.”* Alan D. Wolfelt, PhD.

The goal is to find joy and meaning in our life; to find purpose.

*“Love inevitably leads to grief. You see, love and grief are the two sides of the same precious coin. One does not and cannot exist without the other. From the moment we are born, we say hello to love in our lives. We must also say hello to loss and grief in our lives. The hurt we feel is the consequence of the love we were privileged to experience”* - Alen D. Wolfelt, PhD.

### **About the Authors and Hospice of Middletown**

Lori and Judy have nearly a decade of experience in hospice care. Hospice Care of Middletown offers Spring and Fall grief support groups. The “Healing a Heart” groups are 6 weeks in length and are offered in the afternoon and evening. The groups focus on peer support, grief education and development skills. They are open to the public and free of charge. Hospice Care of Middletown understands that the “Price of Love” is the “Pain of Grief.” Healing comes through telling your story and sharing your grief journey with others.

Company Information:  
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3909 Central Avenue  
Middletown, Ohio 45044  
513-424-2273  
[www.yourhometownhospice.org](http://www.yourhometownhospice.org)

# CREMATION

## Interview with John Vinnedge

As of 2018, cremation is the most popular method of body preparation following death. Greater than one half of families now choose cremation for their loved one. Because this trend will likely continue, Dodds President, Neil Fogarty sat down with John Vinnedge, a CANA certified crematory operator and regional expert in cremation. John has worked in the funeral services industry since 1998 and is currently serving as an instructor at the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science.

**Q:** With more individuals than ever choosing cremation, how do you see memorialization changing or being impacted?

**A:** Culture is rapid paced. Death is very inconvenient. Because people are in a hurry to transition from one thing to the next, then a lot of the time the memorialization might be something that gets lost in the shuffle or relegated to an afterthought. What rush is there to do anything? The thing about cremation is you have the ability to put things off.

**Q:** Why are cremated bodies looked at differently than embalmed bodies in terms of ceremony and memorialization. Why is there a disconnect?

**A:** It's a very visceral thing in humans that they see something that doesn't look like a body, they have a very difficult time equating it with a

body. [Cremation and Embalming] is preparation and should be considered in the same way. Anything less is disrespectful. Cremation is not disposition, it's preparation for final disposition. For what's next.

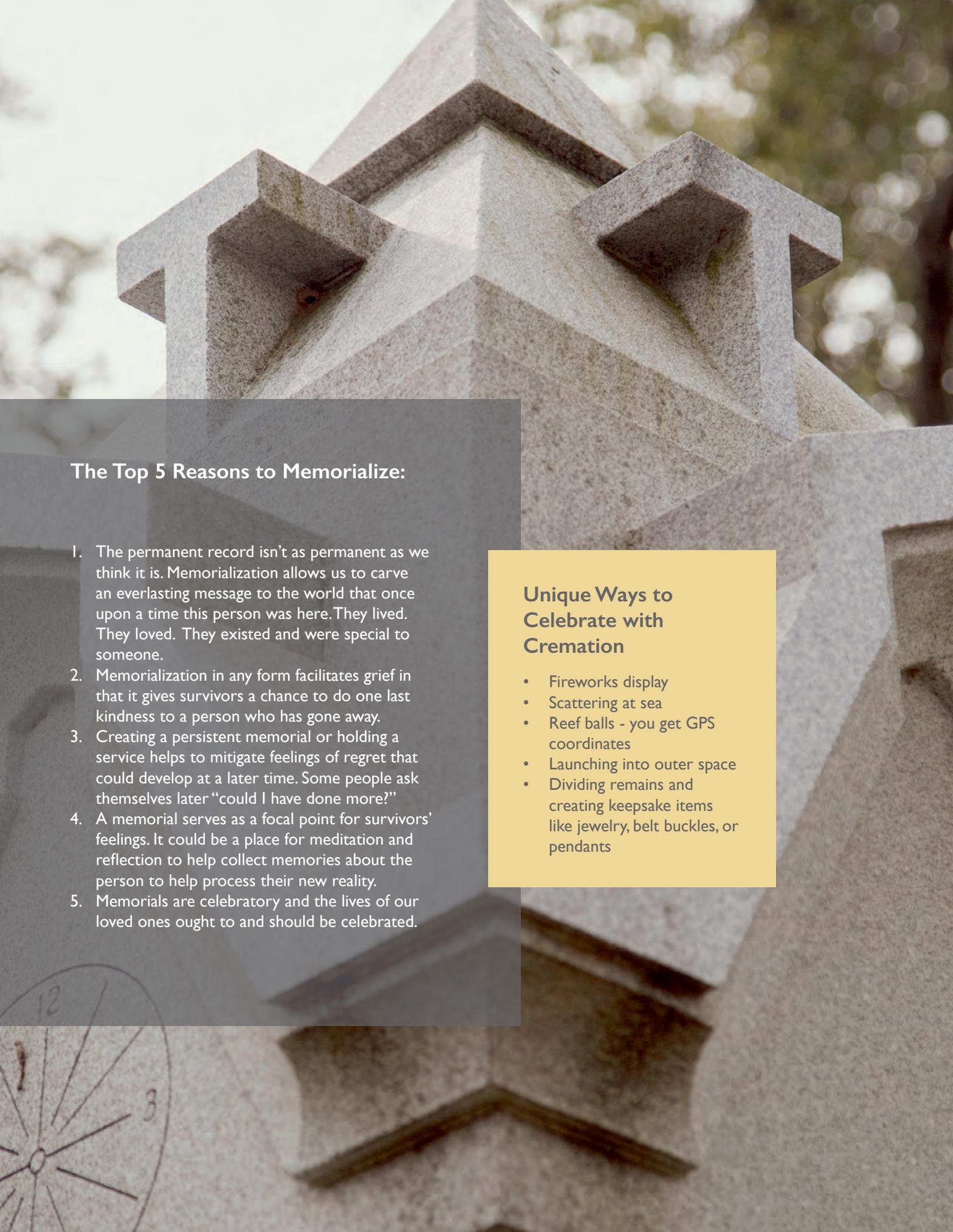
**Q:** If any, what are the downsides to not memorializing?

**A:** There are many downsides. Not memorializing may cause loss in the permanent record. Digital and electronic is not permanent! People who are grieving need to be working toward something, channeling their energy toward doing something for the lost loved one. Memorialization is important because it allows the process to move forward instead of stalling out. When you lose somebody, if you have something to pour your energy into that is constructive, that's definitely the way to go. This avoids self-destructive

behaviors or behaviors that don't benefit them in their grieving.

**Q:** Are there adjustments that you have seen in the funeral industry that have happened as people move away from traditional burials and services?

**A:** The "nones" (no church affiliation looking for a meaningful services that doesn't involve organize religion) may involve a celebrant, rather than clergy. It is every bit as impactful and every bit as meaningful to them. The era of funeral director as an event planner, is now here. Providing facilities, scheduling the facilities, ordering the catering, like a jazz trio or somebody to play in the corner while everybody comes to visit. Takes the role of the traditional church. Funeral directors can fill the void for spiritual yet non-religious by being a celebrant or facilitator.



## The Top 5 Reasons to Memorialize:

1. The permanent record isn't as permanent as we think it is. Memorialization allows us to carve an everlasting message to the world that once upon a time this person was here. They lived. They loved. They existed and were special to someone.
2. Memorialization in any form facilitates grief in that it gives survivors a chance to do one last kindness to a person who has gone away.
3. Creating a persistent memorial or holding a service helps to mitigate feelings of regret that could develop at a later time. Some people ask themselves later "could I have done more?"
4. A memorial serves as a focal point for survivors' feelings. It could be a place for meditation and reflection to help collect memories about the person to help process their new reality.
5. Memorials are celebratory and the lives of our loved ones ought to and should be celebrated.

### Unique Ways to Celebrate with Cremation

- Fireworks display
- Scattering at sea
- Reef balls - you get GPS coordinates
- Launching into outer space
- Dividing remains and creating keepsake items like jewelry, belt buckles, or pendants



## A PARTNERSHIP SET IN STONE

Dodds Memorials is proud of their affiliation with Rock of Ages Corporation. Dodds is one of the largest and most respected memorial retailers in the state of Ohio. While Rock of Ages is one of the largest quarriers and manufacturers of granite in the

world, they own and operate the oldest and largest quarries in the Barre, Vermont area and across the United States. The gray granite from Vermont has always set the standard for quality. This business association allows Dodds Memorials' continuing access to

the very highest quality granites, which Rock of Ages reserves for its national network of authorized dealers. Dodds is the exclusive memorial retailer for all Rock of Ages branded products in southwest Ohio.

# TESTIMONIALS

Gina Scheff

Gina Scheff was referred to Dodds Memorials' Springfield location by Littleton and Rue Funeral Home. Her husband, Dave Scheff, had passed away and she was looking for a memorial that would honor his legacy. Gina provided photos and some of the specifics of what she wanted on the memorial such as a 4-leaf clover, a heart, and the phrase "suck it up" because that was Dave's motto when he was fighting cancer. "He said you have to do your fullest every day," Gina said. Her granddaughter picked out the location that the memorial was to be placed.

Dave and Gina met at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland. When Dave asked her out on a date, she thought he was kidding. He wasn't, and came back to her a week later informing her he was mad because she hadn't gone out with him. That was the beginning of their love story.

Dave served in the Airforce until 2004. "His dream was to be on Air

Force I and he made it happen," said Gina. Dave served under two United States Presidents: Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

On his Airforce retirement, Dave and Gina knew exactly where they wanted to move: to Springfield, Ohio. Over the course of their early life together, the couple had often visited Springfield, as it was Gina's childhood home, and they had a shared love of the West Liberty flea market and festival. Dave took a chance and purchased a Springfield farm online. They named the farm Davina, a combination of both of their names. As the years went by, Dave and Gina's grandchildren would come and visit them on their farm and Dave would plan out visits to make sure fun was had by all.

Gina wanted the memorial to be a lasting tribute to her husband. "I loved the Presidential Seal and the Presidential Hawk that is at the top of the memorial." She loved the memorial was so tall and that it had the High Flight poem on it. "He always said when he passed away his spirt animal was going to be an Eagle."



# TESTIMONIALS

*Carl Fritschi*

When Carl Fritschi and his son Eric came into Dodds Memorials in Milford to begin the memorial pre-planning process, they were looking for a memorial that would not only honor Carl, but his whole family. Carl's grandparents were buried at Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati and they wanted to draw inspiration from their memorial.

Carl's family has a proud German heritage, so they also requested the memorial be influenced by German architecture and that it feature the Spruce and Fir to represent the Black Forest in Germany.

Dodds Memorial Designer Rick Meyer researched German architecture and designed a stunning memorial complete with German-influenced straight lines, setbacks and a cap piece. Carl and Eric selected American Granite from Rock of Ages for the memorial to come to life.

Carl passed away halfway through the selection process, so Eric finalized the memorial with his uncle, Carl's brother Bruno.

Carl and Bruno's father came over from

Germany during the 1920's. He was an engineer. Originally, he came to New York, then Pittsburgh and then lived in Cincinnati for a bit. He returned to Germany, but things were quite bad over there, so he decided to come back to the US. He met their mother on the boat on the way back to the United States. She was over in Germany for a year of music schooling. She was an American and happened to live in Cincinnati. They married in 1935. Their parents were cremated and are now resting in the Fritschi plot at Spring Grove along with Carl. The memorial and the foot markers were erected for their parents, all four of their children and spouses and the grandchildren and their spouses. There are 11-foot markers in total with each couple on a marker. It is definitely a lasting tribute to those who have passed and those who honor the lives that came before them.





# WELCOME TO THE MEMORIAL PLANNING GUIDE

This portion of the magazine is to help guide you through the memorial planning process.

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*I think we dream so we don't have to be apart so long. If we're in each other's dreams we can be together all the time.*  
– A.A. Milne  
(Winnie the Pooh)

# THREE WAYS TO BE PRESENT FOR GRIEF

There's no formula for grieving. We are each affected differently because we bring our own unique personality, experiences, and beliefs with us. These differences are why we struggle to know how to be helpful when our friend or loved one is grieving – or when someone is trying to be helpful to us. This is also why the most important consideration when supporting someone is to simply be present with them. This means that our focus is on remaining comfortable with silence as we listen and sit still.

This is often hard to do – we believe being helpful includes directing or advising. We feel like we should be “doing” something. Yet, it's often more helpful to offer an empathetic ear and our calm presence. The suggestions that follow are just a starting point. It's hard for us to know exactly how to prepare for death and how to help people cope with it. The most underestimated gift we have to offer people is our time and presence. By practicing these skills today, you will be prepared for when you're needed the most.

## **Acknowledge the perspective and feelings of others.**

Our greatest hurdle to helping is our own perspective. We must be able to acknowledge our limitations of fully understanding someone else's pain. We can recognize that they are having their own experience, feelings, and perspective on what has happened. This requires us to see their hurt, acknowledge its powerful reality, and offer a safe space for them to process their pain.

## **Understand their grief without passing judgment.**

We often struggle to support someone when they make decisions we don't understand or agree with about what is best for themselves and their family. These decisions cover a range of issues from how they handle memorial services to when and how they choose to socialize. We might think they are moving on too quickly or not soon enough. When people do things we don't understand, it often leads to conversations of condemnation and condescension. It is our responsibility to listen,

learn, and support them as they go through their process of grief without judging them.

## **Commit to them long-term as they find a “new” normal.**

After crisis moments, life may never fully return to normal – or “the way things were.” We need to allow people the time to establish their new normal. We can often create more stress for our loved one by sugarcoating the present or by pushing for a return to life as it was before their loss. Our responsibility is to be constant in our love and care through the transition to this new normal. Perhaps we can begin by offering to take care of practical, everyday things – cooking them dinner, doing their laundry, or mowing the lawn. Once they return to doing these tasks, we can turn our attention to longer term support – checking in on a consistent basis and engaging in face to face time with that person. We can remember to be there for them as holidays, anniversaries, and birthdays come – their first experiences without their loved one.

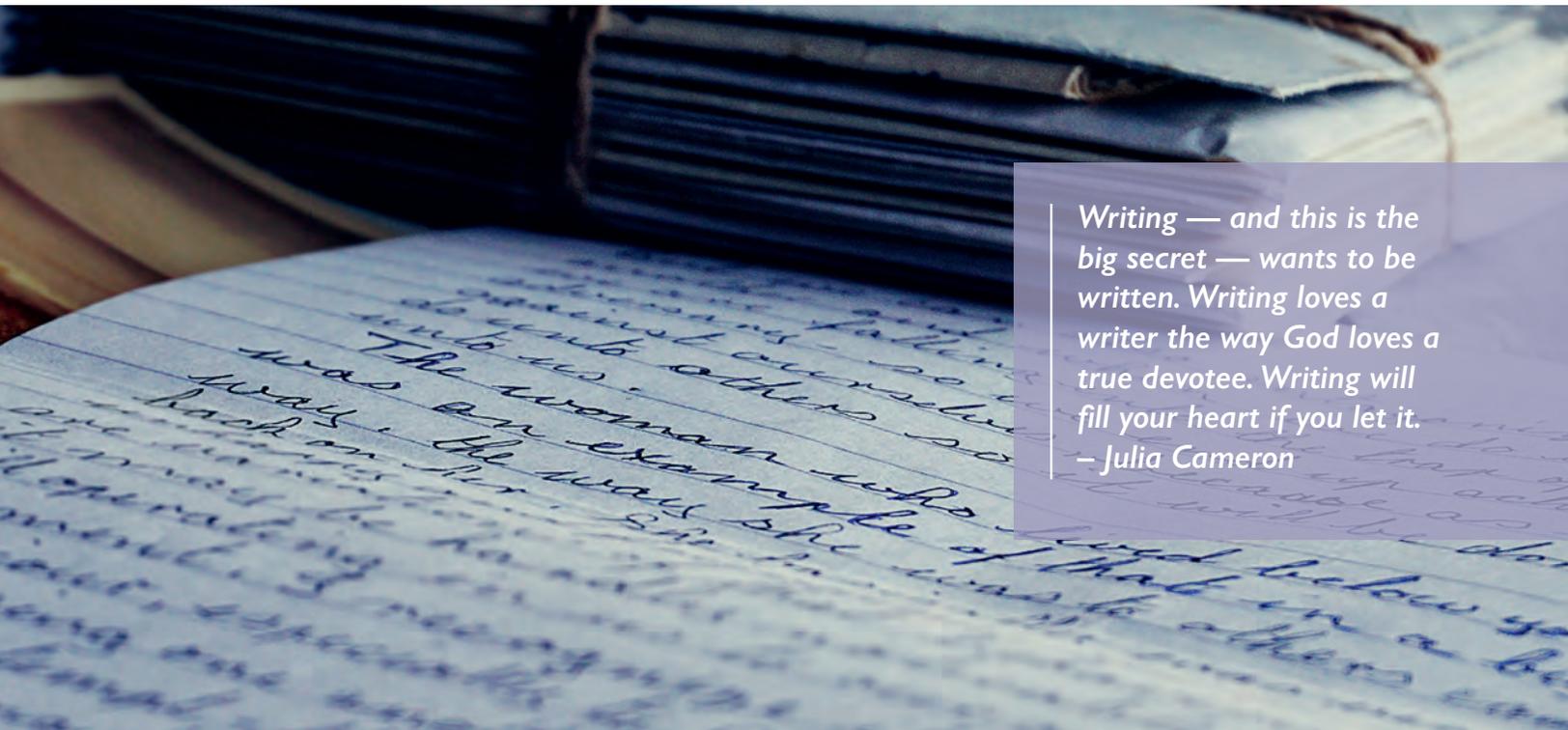
# WRITING LOVES A WRITER

Many of the families we've worked with have chosen to write a letter to their loved one. This can be especially helpful for children when they've lost a close family member. Either for yourself or another member of your family, we recommend this as a way to cope with the range of thoughts and feelings you may be experiencing through this loss. Please remember there is no wrong way to do it. This is an opportunity to express yourself in a direct way. It may also be meaningful for your family to do something special with the letters.

Some ideas include:

- Place them in your loved one's casket if they are to be buried.
- Gather the family for a remembrance dinner and have each family member read their letter out loud.
- Collect your letters in a jar that you've decorated in honor of your loved one. Keep the jar on your mantel and re-read them when you miss your loved one or need inspiration.
- Hold a ceremony outside and place them in a small fire.

Throughout history, across many cultures, fire has been a symbol for the transition from life to death. This can be a way for your family to send their love and prayers to your loved one. Of course, there are as many ideas for how to best honor your loved one as there are families. Choose what will work best for you.



*Writing — and this is the big secret — wants to be written. Writing loves a writer the way God loves a true devotee. Writing will fill your heart if you let it.*  
— Julia Cameron

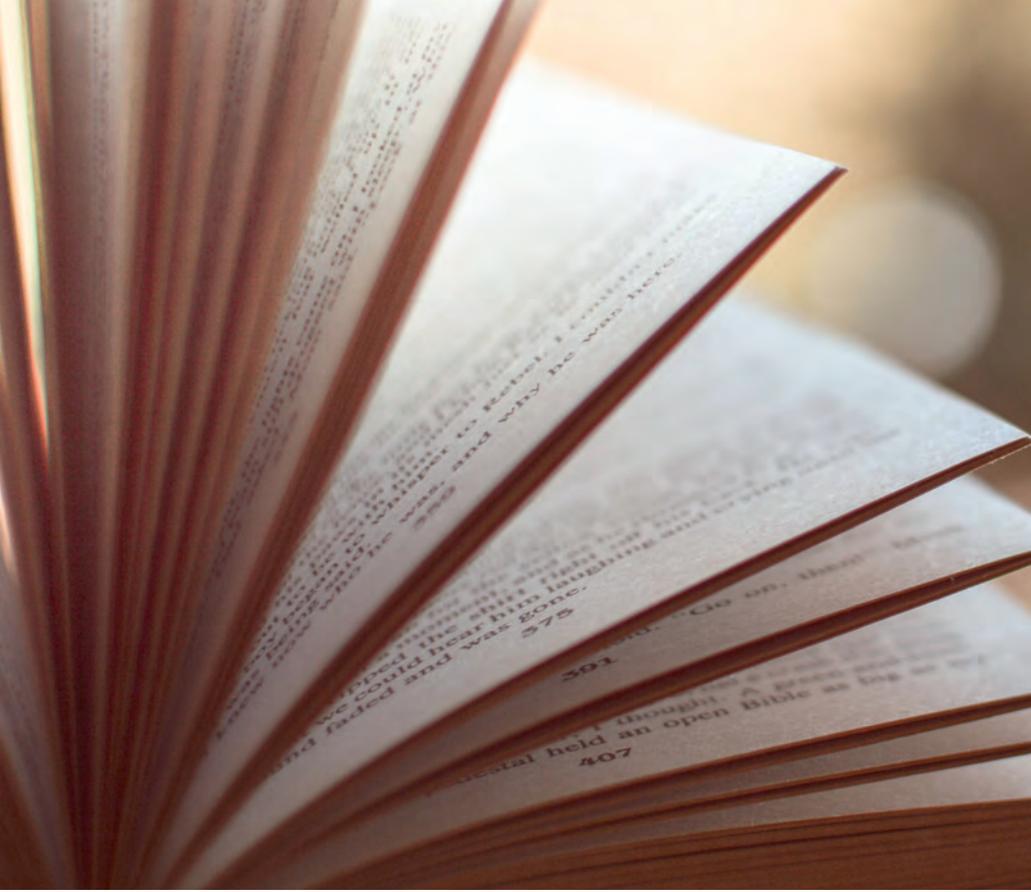


## REMEMBRANCE FOR TODAY... AND FOR GENERATIONS

As you begin the process of planning the memorial service, think about what you and your loved one would like – the words, music, and other considerations to make your loved one’s service memorable and in honor of who they are and what they’ve meant to those around them.

The following questions serve as a meaningful start for what you’d like to include at the memorial service as well as other considerations, such as designing your loved one’s monument or other memorial.

- How should they be remembered? Were they known for their volunteerism or community activism? Did they serve in the military? Are there hobbies that defined who they are? Did they have a distinguished career? What did they want to be known for?
- Was there a defining moment in their life that should be recognized?
- Is there a favorite charity or cause that you want people to donate to in their honor?
- Who had the biggest influence in their life? Is there a way you’d like to honor that person?
- Did they have a favorite author or musician? If so, are there special quotes, passages, or lyrics you think should be included in the service?
- Who should speak at the memorial service? Are there dear friends or particular family members who your loved one would want to speak in their honor?
- Are their particular religious or spiritual passages that would best honor your loved one?



Excerpt from *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams

*“What is REAL?” asked the Rabbit one day, when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender, before Nana came to tidy the room. “Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?”*

*“Real isn’t how you are made,” said the Skin Horse. “It’s a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but Really loves you, then you become Real.”*

*“Does it hurt?” asked the Rabbit. “Sometimes,” said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. “When you are Real you don’t mind being hurt.”*

*“Does it happen all at once, like being wound up,” he asked, “or bit by bit?”*

*“It doesn’t happen all at once,” said the Skin Horse. “You become. It takes a long time. That’s why it doesn’t happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get all loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don’t matter at all, because once you are Real you can’t be ugly, except to people who don’t understand.”*

# STORYTELLING

Family and friends gathering to tell stories is one of the most important and powerful ways we can grieve and heal from loss. Storytelling can be formal, such as selecting key people from your loved one’s life to tell a story at their memorial service or it can be ongoing, informal stories as life moves forward. Take the time to identify your loved one’s favorite stories and the stories about them that mean the most or illustrate who they are.

## Stories and books they loved

Is there a favorite book or story they read to their children? That they liked to hear during holidays? **Stories about your loved one**

List some of your favorite stories about your loved one – you may choose to write out the full story or, for this planning guide, simply write down a few words to remind you of the story.

...And who should tell them? Are their particular friends or family members who experienced these stories?

# RAINDROPS ON ROSES AND WHISKERS ON KITTENS

Many of us are familiar with Julie Andrews' most famous role as Maria from "The Sound of Music." During a particularly bad thunderstorm, she sings to the children to calm their fear. Her universal message is that when we think about our favorite things, we won't feel as bad as we did. For memorial planning – and to help our family through their grieving process – it may also be helpful to think about and gather our favorite things around us.

## Places and Activities

For both your loved one and members of your family, list the

places and activities that were favorite things to do.

From walks in the park to favorite restaurants to playing music – or social or sporting events – making plans with your family to enjoy some of these things can inspire meaningful family time for storytelling or just being together in support of each other.

## Belongings and Keepsakes

It can be healing to offer one of your loved one's favorite things to family members and close friends. It can be a way for them to process their grief

while feeling connected to them.

Is there a favorite shirt or other item of your loved one's that a family member would wear to help their grieving process? Are there important items that can be made into a shadowbox? For instance, if your loved one was a cook, you can use their favorite wooden spoon, a recipe page, and their oven mitt and frame in a shadow box.

Hang it in your home, or the home of a family member who would benefit from such a gift.



# LIFE CELEBRATIONS

You've now written letters. You've identified how you want your loved one to be honored and the stories that are important to tell. Now, we want to dedicate a page to planning what you want your loved one's life celebration to include.

When we talk about creating a lasting vision of love, we think of that vision as all inclusive – from how we grieve to how we gather together in their honor, to how we choose to memorialize our loved one for this and future generations.

## Gathering

Do you want a large group of family and friends or a more intimate setting? Formal or informal? When should the celebration happen – right away or later on? These are just a few questions you may want to consider in your planning. Use this space to write down your ideas

and preferences.

## Food, Music, and Activities

What sort of food would you like to serve? Family recipes? A particular cuisine your loved one enjoyed? Catered or potluck? Live music or CDs of your loved one's favorite musicians? Any special songs or hymns? Here, you can write down your ideas for what would work best to create the right celebration for your loved one.

## Location

Indoors or outdoors? At your home or a rented space? Should it be decorated with a formal tone or more relaxed?

Is there a theme that best expresses your loved one's life and legacy? Write down your ideas and wishes for where to hold the memorial celebration.

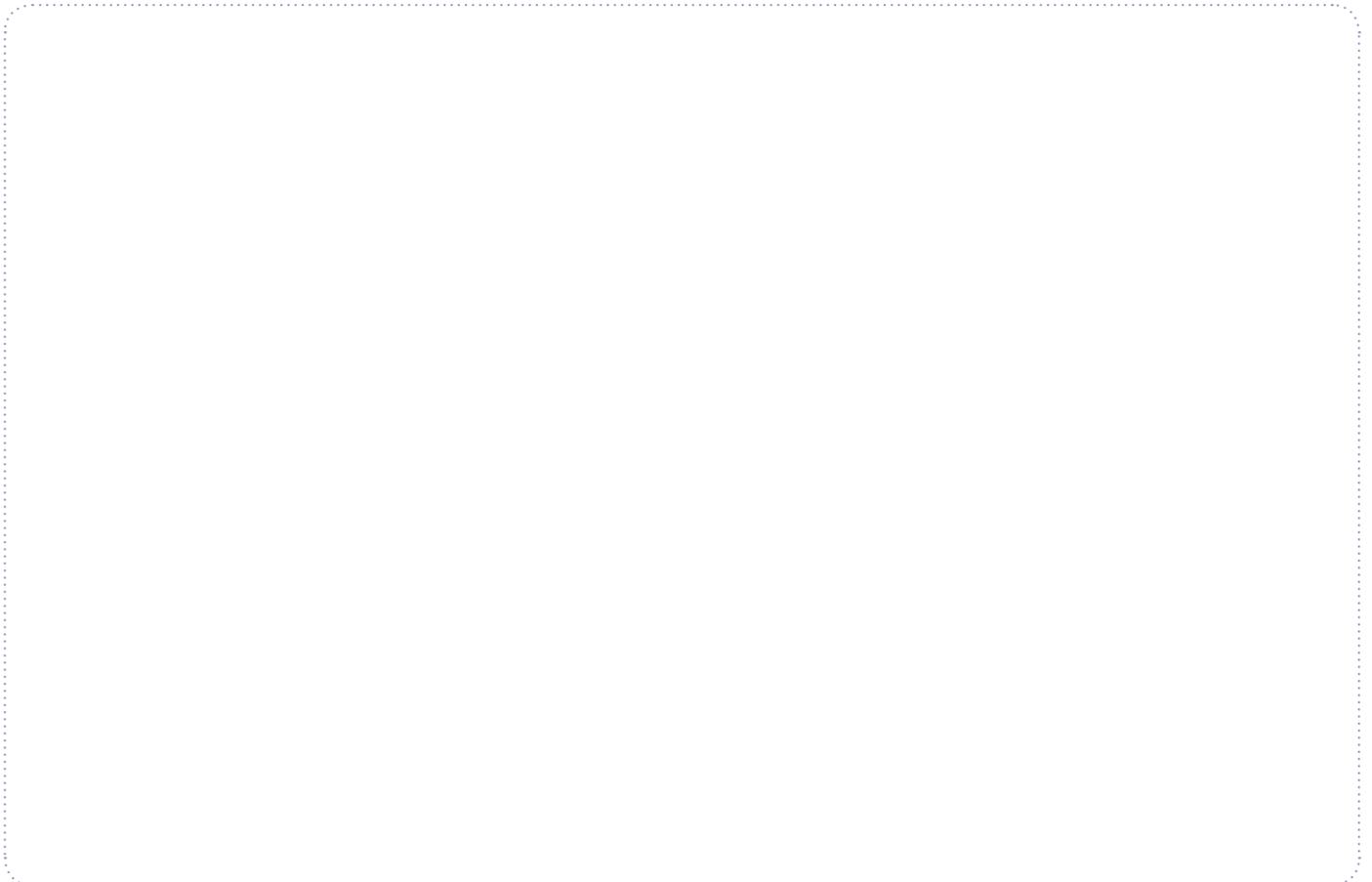


# DESIGNING YOUR LOVED ONE'S MEMORIAL

Please use this page to sketch ideas for what you envision for your loved one's memorial. Use a pencil and consider the shape of the monument. Think about what you'd like written on it and any images you'd like added – such as a religious

symbol, a military designation, a favorite pastime or other image that represents who they are and how they lived. You may choose to design a monument with a custom shape. Sketching your ideas is a great way to generate ideas and will help you

work with a memorial designer when the time comes. Be sure to bring this Memorial Planning Guide with you when you visit your local Dodds Consultant.



# THE YEARS AHEAD: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

How do families continue to draw inspiration from and remember their departed loved ones?

At Dodds Memorials, we work with many families through some of their most difficult times, grieving the loss of a loved one. Yet, families who create ongoing opportunities to honor those loved ones experience inspiration and strength from these life events.

## Benefits of Connecting to Our Departed Loved Ones

- Draw strength and inspiration from a loved one's character and life.
- Bond with other family members around storytelling.
- Celebrate your loved one's favorite pastimes and activities.
- Create family traditions that

deepen your relationships.

- Experience the wisdom and love you received from them in times of need.

For every family, there is a different and authentic way to honor the legacies of their loved ones. Some ideas to consider include:

- Naming an annual event after your loved one, centered around one of their favorite pastimes such as a day of fishing, a poker game, or golf.
- Visiting your loved one's grave on the anniversary of their passing as a family or with a group of their dear friends. Include storytelling or a special prayer.
- Plan an annual dinner with friends and family, honoring your loved one.

Again, the possibilities are numerous and we encourage you to talk with other family members or close friends to decide what works best for you.

For more ideas, please visit the Dodds Pinterest page to see what other families are doing to honor their loved ones. We would love to hear from you if you already have a tradition or other approach to honoring your departed loved – email or call us today with your story; we'd be honored to include your observance on our Pinterest page. In some cases, we ask families to tell their story for publication on our blog or in our annual magazine.

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