Reach out to others, consider support groups and counseling.
Grieving Is A Sacred Journey

There is a time for all things, 
  a time for feeling sad, 
  a time for feeling happy, 
  a time for being restless, 
  a time for being still, 
  a time for being exhausted, 
  a time for being energized, 
  a time for wandering, 
  a time for being at home.

If you can let your grief go its own way, you will return to the center of your life.

Adapted from Pamela Metz

Dear Friend,

The death of a loved one brings profound sorrow. This sorrow affects our bodies, minds, and lives.

Because grief can be confusing and painful, we sometimes find ourselves not knowing what to do next or where to turn for assistance. This Healing After Loss booklet has been designed to help you through this difficult time.

There may be a need for you to seek assistance at a later date. We invite and encourage you to use the Sutter services listed in this booklet and to contact the staff person involved with you and your family.

Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento
Your grief is unique. No one can tell you exactly how long or in what manner you “should” or will grieve. Different cultures, different religions and different personalities all experience grief differently. You will also experience thoughts and emotions in different ways at different times, at one moment intense and at another muted or washed out. The experience of illness and loss can begin a roller coaster ride of ups and downs and twists and turns. You may find yourself at one moment sobbing and soon after unable to cry at all. You may share in some of the common elements of bereavement listed below. But also know only you can chart your unique journey through grief and healing.

Shock
Your first response to your loss may be one of shock. A kind of numbness may envelope you. Everything may feel dreamlike or unreal. Shock cushions the blow because the loss is too much to absorb at once. You might experience odd physical sensations, a detached feeling, a knot in your stomach, no appetite. Through the first days and later months of grief you may also experience an exhaustion or weariness you have not known before.

Denial
Your shock may be mixed with or followed by denial. You may comprehend intellectually what has happened, but on a deeper level all of your habits and memories are denying death. You may find yourself setting the wrong number of plates at the table or saving bits of news for someone who will never be able to hear them. Though a part of you will always grieve, in time you will adjust to the death.

Anger
Anger is a normal response to loss. You may find yourself angry with the doctors and nurses for not being able to save your loved one, or you may be angry with yourself or feel angry in general. You may even feel angry with the one who died. It may feel like they have abandoned you.

Guilt
Few survivors escape without some feelings of guilt. You may feel guilty because you did not make sure your loved one took care of his health or went to the doctor sooner. A long illness may have led to feelings of resentment, and guilt over the resentment. A sudden or accidental death may give rise to the thoughts of all kinds of “if only’s.” Whatever your situation, realize that guilt and regret are normal.

Silence
Some survivors have felt their co-workers, friends and even family may avoid them or avoid the subject of loss. Often the motive is to protect you from the pain of remembering but this however may increase the pain of loneliness and isolation. Talking about your feelings, speaking aloud stories and memories, naming your losses and sharing your good and bad days is an important part of the healing process. Find a friend, religious leader, professional or support group who will listen and not judge, someone who will allow you to talk about your loss. Some people may be embarrassed or uncomfortable by the presence of your grief. If and when you can, talk and act naturally, without avoiding the subject of your loss. Grief is a difficult road to journey alone.

Be gentle with yourself - allow others to help.
Planning for a Memorial Service

Different cultures and religions engage in a variety of services and rituals to remember and honor those who have died. Families who organize a service or gathering may find it provides a connection to the support of their friends and community. Personal memorial services provide a chance to talk and begin telling the stories about our loved one. Viewing the body may also help bring reality and closure. You may find it meaningful to design a personal memorial service. You, other family members, or friends, may want to share reflections on the life of your loved one. You may want to select a favorite song, scripture reading, or poem.

A memorial service gives us permission to grieve as we acknowledge our personal loss and begin the healing process.

Here are some details to consider.

• Choose a mortuary with consideration of burial or cremation.
• Decide on a time and place of funeral or memorial service(s), if one is desired.
• Make a list of immediate family, close friends, and coworkers. Contact, or designate someone to contact, each by phone.
• Prepare a list of distant persons to be notified by letter and/or printed notice, and decide which to send to each.
• Write an obituary. Include age, place of birth, cause of death, occupation, college degrees, membership held, military service, and outstanding work and a list of survivors in immediate family. Give time and place of the services.
• If flowers are to be omitted, decide on an appropriate memorial to which gifts may be made and include it in the obituary listing.

At times of death, friends and family appreciate the opportunity to offer support and will ask if there is anything they can do. They can:

• Take turns answering the door or phone, keeping careful record of the calls.
• Organize or volunteer for appropriate childcare.
• Coordinate the supply of food for the next few days.
• Prepare a list of people to be thanked for flowers, food, calls, etc.
• Consider special needs of the household, such as cleaning, which might be done by friends.
• Arrange for someone to be at home or watching your home during the service to assure home security.
• Plan where to take flowers after the service (hospital or retirement community).
• If deceased was living alone, arrange for pet care if required, notify utilities and landlord and tell post office where to send mail.
Funeral, Cremation and Memorial Services

All Faith Cremation
105 Arden Way
Sacramento, CA 95815
916-922-0992
allfaithcremation.com

Morgan-Jones Funeral Home
4200 Broadway
Sacramento, CA 95817
916-452-4444
morganjonesfuneralhome.com

River Cities Funeral Chapel
910 Soule St.
West Sacramento, CA 95691
916-371-4535
rivercitiesfuneralchapel.com

Andrews and Greilich Mortuary
3939 Fruitridge Rd.
Sacramento, CA 95820
916-732-2026
eastlawn.com

Mount Vernon Memorial Park and Mortuary
(Mortuary and Cemetery)
8201 Greenback Lane
Fair Oaks, CA 95628
916-969-1251
dignitymemorialmountvernonmemorial.com

Russ Monroe’s Funeral Home
(Cremation and Direct Burial Service)
7960 Winding Way
Fair Oaks, CA 95628
916-961-1265
russmonroes.com

Sierra Hills Memorial Park and East Lawn Mortuary
(Mortuary and Cemetery)
5757 Greenback Lane
Sacramento, CA 95841
916-732-2020
eastlawn.com

Harry A. Nauman and Son
4041 Freeport Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95822
916-452-6157
harryandnaumanandson.com

Neptune Society of Northern California
5213 Garfield Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95841
800-229-0709 or
916-338-1111
neptune-society.com

Sierra View Funeral Chapel
6201 Fair Oaks Blvd.
Carmichael, CA 95608
916-481-1515
sierraviewfuneralchapel.net

W.F. Gormley and Sons
2015 Capitol Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95811
916-443-6513
gormleyandsons.com

Nicoletti, Culjis and Herberger, Inc.
5401 Folsom Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95819
916-451-7284
nicoletticuljis@herbergerfunerals.com

Bridges (A Simple Traditions)
2829 Fair Oaks Blvd,
Suite 200
Carmichael, CA 95608
916-488-2894

All Seasons Burial and Cremation
1321 Howe Ave, Ste 201
Sacramento, CA 95825
916-564-0400
allseasonsburial.com

George L. Klumpp Chapel of Flowers
2691 Riverside Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95818
916-443-7917
klumppfuneralhome.com

Nightingale-Gilmore Funeral Chapel
1030 Del Paso Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95815
2329 Lexington Street
Sacramento, CA 95815
(916) 925-3549

East Lawn Mortuary and Memorial Park
(Mortuary and Cemetery)
9189 E. Stockton Blvd.
Elk Grove, CA 95624
916-732-2031
eastlawn.com

Lind Brothers Mortuary
4221 Manzanita Ave.
Carmichael, CA 95608
916-482-8080
lindbrotherssacramento.com

North Sacramento Funeral Home
725 El Camino Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95815
916-922-9668
northscfuneral.com

Sunset Lawn Chapel of the Chimes
(Mortuary and Cemetery)
4701 Marysville Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95838
916-922-5833
sunsetlawnfuneralchapel.com

Lombard and Company
1550 Fulton Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95825
916-483-3297
lombardcofuneraldirectors.com

Price Funeral Chapel
6335 Sunrise Blvd.
Citrus Heights, CA 95610
916-725-2109
pricefuneralchapel.com

Thompson Funeral Home
3601 Fifth Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95817
916-455-3038
thompsonfuneralhome.com

Miller Funeral Home
507 Scott St.
Folsom, CA 95630
916-985-2295
millerfuneralhomefolsom.net

Reichert’s Funeral and Cremation Services
7320 Auburn Blvd.
Citrus Heights, CA 95610
916-729-2229
reichertsfuneral.com

Evergreen Memorial
3030 Fruitridge Rd.
Sacramento, CA 95820
916-424-3503
evergreenmemorialsacramento.com

Nautilus Society Cremation
2000 Marconi Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95821
916-564-1234
nautiluscremation.com

Affordable Cremation & Burial Center
8366 Rovana Cir.
Sacramento, CA 95828
affordablecremationofsacramento.com

Hold on to hope. Some days you may just seem to exist, but better days will be back.
Angel Care Cremation & Burial
6233 Fair Oaks Blvd. #8
Carmichael, CA 95608
916-442-6435
angelcarecremation.net

Acacia Cremation and Burial Society
1510 Merkley Ave., Suite 5
West Sacramento, CA 95691
916-993-8432

Elk Grove Funeral Chapel
9101 Elk Grove Blvd.
Elk Grove, CA 95624
916-686-1888
elkgrovefuneralchapel.com/

Trident Society
9650 Fairway Dr., Suite 120
Roseville, CA 95678 916-771-5300
tridentsociety.com/location/sacramento-cremation

Moon Memorial Service
(Hmong, Southeast Asian and general public)
8573 Morrison Creek Dr.
Sacramento, CA 95828 916-383-1533

First Hmong Shamanism Co.
6525 53rd Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95828-2101
916-714-3151

Greater Sacramento Area Muslim Cemetery
(Muslim funerals)
6330 Eagles Nest Rd.
off Jackson Road

Sacramento Memorial Lawn
(Buddhist Services)
6100 Stockton Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95824
916-421-1171

Outlying Area Mortuaries

Chapel of The Hills
1331 Lincoln Way
Auburn, CA 95603
530-885-3773
chapellofthehills-auburn.com

Jones Mortuary
115 S Main St.
Lakeport, CA 95453
707-263-5389
jonesmortuary.com

Lodi Funeral Home
725 S. Fairmont Ave.
Lodi, CA 95240-4614
209-369-3564
lodi funeral home.com

Paradise Chapel of the Pines Mortuary - Crematory
5691 Almond St.
Paradise, CA 95969
530-877-4991
paradisepchapellofthepines.com

Lambert Funeral Home
400 Douglas Blvd,
Roseville, CA 95678
916-783-0474
lambertfuneral.com

Roberts' Chapel
458 College St.
Woodland, CA 95695
530-662-4658

Liscombe Funeral Home
116 D St.
Davis, CA 95616-4626
530-758-5500
wiscombefuneral.com

Lassila Funeral Chapels
551 Grass Valley Highway
Auburn, CA 95603
530-885-6271
lassilafuneralchapels.com

Oroville Funeral Home
1454 Montgomery St.
Oroville, CA 95965
530-533-0323
530-533-0822 fax
ramseyfuneralhomes.com

Yuba City / Marysville

Hutchinson & Carnes Colonial Chapel
830 D St.
Marysville, CA 95901
530-749-9277
530-749-9377 Fax
lakesidecolonialchapel.com

Lipp & Sullivan Funeral Directors
629 D St.
Marysville, CA 95901
530-742-2473
lippandsullivan.com

Ullrey Memorial Chapel
817 Almond Street
Yuba City, CA 95991
530-673-9542
ullreymemorialchapel.com

County Assisted Cremation and Burial Services

El Dorado County
530-642-7300

Placer County
Placer County Department of Eligibility
(530-889-7633 Auburn area)
or (916-784-6009 Roseville area)

Sacramento County
916-874-9320

Yolo County
530-666-8100 Ext. 9383

Kraft Brothers
175 2nd St.
Woodland, CA 95695
530-662-4658

Wiscombe Funeral Home
116 D St.
Davis, CA 95616-4626
530-758-5500
wiscombefuneral.com

Sacramento County
916-874-9320

Yolo County
530-666-8100 Ext. 9383

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530-666-8100 Ext. 9383
Suggestions for Helping Yourself Through Grief

Time in and of itself will not heal grief. Healing is a process that takes energy. Treat yourself with the same gentle care you would offer to a good friend in the same situation. Give yourself plenty of time and reassurance. Your grief is unique to you so not all suggestions will be helpful. Choose the ideas that appeal to you.

- Go gently. Don’t take on new responsibilities right away. Don’t overextend yourself. Keep decision making to a minimum.
- Accept the grief. Roll with the tides of it and let the healing process run its full course. Do not try to be “strong” all the time. Take time to cry. Tears can release the pain and sorrow that is within you.
- It is common to feel angry. You may be angry with yourself, the person who died or feel angry in general. Talk about your anger with someone you trust.
- Thinking you are going crazy is a normal reaction. Many grieving people experience lack of concentration, forgetfulness, and loss of control of their emotions.
- Depression and despair are common to those in grief. Be careful not to totally withdraw yourself from others. If your depression becomes severe or you are considering suicide, get professional help immediately.
- Hold on to HOPE. Some days you may just seem to exist, but better days will be back.

- Ask for help. Family and friends can’t read your mind. It is very important to find someone who cares, understands, and with whom you may talk freely. It’s okay to need comforting.
- Accept help and support when offered.
- Read books on grief, if it is understood, it can be a little easier to handle.
- Keep a journal to help you understand what you are feeling and thinking.
- Try to get adequate rest. Go to bed earlier. Avoid caffeine in coffee, tea, and soda if you are having trouble sleeping.
- Moderate exercise helps (walking, tennis, swimming, etc.) It offers an opportunity to work off frustration and may help you sleep.
- You may have physical problems brought on by your grief reaction. See your doctor.
- If weekends, holidays, etc., are especially difficult times, schedule activities that you find comforting into these time periods.
- As time passes plan new interests and learn something new or rediscover old interests, activities, and friends.
- Join a grief support group as they offer understanding, friendship, and hope.
- Seek the help of a counselor, religious leader or a doctor if grief is unresolved.

Roll with the tides of it and let the healing process run its full course. Do not try to be “strong” all the time. Take time to cry.
Suggestions for Helping Yourself Through Holidays and Other Special Days

There are many holidays and special days in our lives: birthdays, graduations, weddings, anniversaries and religious observances. These times, already stressful, may intensify feelings of pain and loneliness. Here are some things which other bereaved persons have found helpful. Choose the ones that will help you.

- Holidays and anniversaries often magnify feelings of loss. It is important and natural to experience the sadness that comes. Running away from feelings requires enormous energy and does not help you heal. On anniversaries and holidays, commemorate your loss. Create a photo album from pictures you’ve been meaning to sort, visit your loved one’s grave, light a candle, plan a special service, spend time with your family.

- As the holiday or anniversary approaches share your concerns, feelings, and apprehensions with a friend or relative. Tell them that this is a difficult time for you. Accept their help. Acknowledge your loss and don’t expect too much of yourself or of the holiday.

- It is OK to be alone. Isolating yourself from others is not recommended, but there are times when solitude is deeply gratifying. Explore being alone and learn what is most healing for you. You don’t need to wear yourself out by attending many social functions. Be selective, saying “no thanks” is okay.

- Create new traditions. You may want to spend special days in new surroundings; take a trip, visit friends, or volunteer in a new setting. Don’t feel obligated to follow tradition, unless doing so comforts you.

- Be aware that you may experience the deepest grief a day or two after the holiday. As friends and family go home and decorations are taken down you may see and feel a sense of emptiness.

- Send holiday cards early. Receiving cards addressed to or mentioning the name of the one who died can be very distressing. Consider sending cards out very early informing others of the death or enclose cards used at the funeral service. Writing cards can be therapeutic.
How To Help a Grieving Child

Children grieve as part of a family. It is important to include them in family discussions, decisions and activities concerning the death of someone who was a part of their life. Children may learn how to grieve from the adults around them. The following are suggestions for how you may help a child that is grieving.

Be honest
- It is important that children be told the truth, even if the truth is difficult.
- Provide information that a child can understand.
- Suicide and murder are especially difficult to explain to children. It may be helpful to consult a professional or read information on this topic.

Share your feelings and encourage children to share theirs
- Talk about your feelings and allow children to talk about theirs as well. Recognize that children may not grieve the same way you or other adults do, and try to not judge their feelings.
- Let children know that it is always okay for them to talk about their feelings; they won't make others sad when they do this, they are already sad.
- You can cry, be angry, or express other feelings in front of children, it helps them to know that it is okay to have these feelings themselves.

Include children in funerals, ceremonies and services
- Encourage children to be involved in the funeral and/or memorial service. Provide opportunities for children to make choices about the service; picking out a song, helping to choose what the person wears, putting something in the casket as a way of saying goodbye.
- Prepare children for what to expect before, during and after the funeral or service, including what they will see, hear, feel, smell, etc, and plan for someone to provide them with support.
- Recognize that it may be difficult for children to sit still and be quiet at this time. Make arrangements for a space where it is okay for children to run, play and be loud.

Keep memories alive
- Share memories of the person who has died.
- Leave photographs out where they can be seen.
- Help each child choose something that belonged to the person who has died, to keep as theirs.
- Talk about the person who has died.
- Acknowledge feelings and special events when they occur.

Create healing rituals
- Sing religious songs, favorites of the person who died, or songs with special meaning.
- Remember and recognize significant dates and events (the anniversary of the death, the person's birthday, etc.)
- Light a candle in memory.
- Plant a tree in honor of the person who died.
- Write letters to the person, expressing feelings, or saying goodbye.
- Create a memory book, or memory box, with photos, written memories, and mementos of the person who has died. Children can decorate the book or box, and choose items to put in it.
Take care of yourself

- Recognize that you have needs too, and that you cannot care for a child if you do not care for yourself.
- Ask for help when you need it. Allow a friend to prepare a meal, clean, or baby-sit.
- Recognize that you will not have the energy for everything. Prioritize. Don’t expect too much from yourself.

Activity ideas

- Read books about death and grief. See the booklist in this packet.
- Offer children physical activities such as play dough, finger paint, a punching bag, etc. Children often have a lot of feelings to express, and need appropriate, physical ways to express them.
- Create a memory box (see above), and spend time recalling memories, telling stories, and looking at photos.

Keep in contact with school

- Let teachers and school administrators know about the death, and tell them what information you would like them to tell others at the school.
- Encourage the teacher to tell the class why your child is not at school, and let your child know what their classmates have been told.
- When your child is ready to return to school, talk to the teacher about what to expect. It may be difficult for your child to concentrate at first. Set up a plan with your child and the teacher for what your child can do if he or she is having a hard time and can’t participate in school.
- Let your child know where you will be during the school day.

Let children know that it is always okay for them to talk about their feelings.
# Children’s Understanding of Death

The following information gives examples of how children of different ages may experience and understand death, as well as suggestions for what may help. Please keep in mind that all children are individuals and their reactions and thoughts may cross over between various groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Children’s Understanding</th>
<th>Possible Related Behaviors</th>
<th>What You Can Say/Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infants</td>
<td>• Mainly react to separation from family members, and parents feelings and anxiety level.</td>
<td>• Crying</td>
<td>• Spend time each day interacting with and holding your child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Crankiness</td>
<td>• Keep child’s daily routine as consistent as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Clinging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool (2-4 years)</td>
<td>• Death is not seen as permanent, but rather temporary.</td>
<td>• May show little sadness or concern.</td>
<td>• Provide simple explanation about person’s death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Death may be confused with sleeping or being away.</td>
<td>• Fear of separation.</td>
<td>• Explain death in concrete terms (i.e. David won’t be here to sleep in his bed, to play with you, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Magical/egocentric thinking may lead children to believe:</td>
<td>• Need to talk about events repeatedly.</td>
<td>• Use terms dead and death rather than:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– They somehow caused the death (by a previous wish, thought or action).</td>
<td>• May return to earlier behaviors (e.g. thumb-sucking).</td>
<td>– Sleeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– They may catch the same thing.</td>
<td></td>
<td>– Taken from us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– They have caused others to behave the way they are (crying…)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– Sleeping in the arms of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Gone away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As these words may confuse children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Age (5-10)</td>
<td>• Child may begin to understand that death is permanent.</td>
<td>• Physical reactions to death (pain, anxiety, etc.).</td>
<td>• Keep routine as consistent as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Child may show interest and curiosity in details of death and funeral.</td>
<td>• Variety of emotions (guilt, caring).</td>
<td>• Explain changes in your own behavior to child (I’m sad that Katie died…).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reasoning is still concrete; may ask endless questions in order to understand.</td>
<td>• Behavior changes (poor grades, separation anxiety, withdrawal).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents</td>
<td>• Understand the full implications of death, may have real concerns about death, and acknowledge life as fragile.</td>
<td>• May express anger and preoccupation with death.</td>
<td>• Provide honest, simple explanation of death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May recognize impact that death has on the family, and may feel insecure about the future.</td>
<td>• While understanding death, may show denial of death by risk-taking behaviors.</td>
<td>• Recognize child’s feelings as important, as well as your own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• May have difficulty expressing feelings around death.</td>
<td>• Involve in funeral planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• May hide emotions so friends don’t see them as different.</td>
<td>Encourage attendance at funeral if child wishes to go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Accept your child’s individual style of grieving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Checklist: What To Do and When

The following list, excerpts from No Lifetime Guarantee by Katie Maxwell, is a guide for dealing with the practical aspects of death, particularly the death of a spouse. However, remember your particular circumstances may warrant a quicker or slower action than this timetable suggests. Use this as a guide and make adjustments when necessary depending upon your financial situation.

First week

- Contact life insurance company for claim forms. Request only the funds you need to live on until you can consult with a financial advisor.
- Visit your bank to open an account for yourself if necessary.
- See an attorney who can explain the terms of the Will, and file the Will with the courts.
- Begin probate proceedings, if necessary.
- Petition the court for appointment as executor (trix.)
- Locate important documents.

Second week

- Begin applying for survivor benefits.
- Send medical claims to the appropriate insurance carriers.
- Consult with a financial advisor about how to request large sum benefits.
- As executor (trix.)
  - Open a bank account to receive money due the estate.
  - Inventory all assets.
  - Collect all monies due the estate.
  - Apply for a tax identification number.
  - File form 56, Notice Concerning Fiduciary Relationship.
  - Send thank you notes and acknowledgments.

Third week

- See an accountant to get a tax projection.
- Review all insurance with your agent to see if coverage is appropriate and adequate.
- Change beneficiaries on insurance policies, retirement accounts, savings bonds, etc.
- Transfer all assets into your name or into trust accounts.
- Make a plan for paying debts and obligations.
- Make necessary decisions concerning deceased’s self-employment business.

After first month

- Contact credit card and charge card companies.
- Change billing name with utility companies.
- Change registration on vehicles by contacting the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- Notify book clubs, record clubs, and other subscription material.
- Contact rental and lease companies.
- Update Will.
- Prepare a net worth statement.
- Make a list of income and expenses.
- Track your expenses to see where your money is being spent.
- Go through old records and files, including cancelled checks for clues to any additional benefits, assets, or obligations.
- Choose a memorial marker.

After the third month

- Create a new budget.
- Apply for credit in your own name.
- Begin gathering information for tax returns.

After the sixth month

- Begin to think about investments.
- As executor (trix)
  - List claims against the estate.
  - Liquidate assets as necessary to pay bills.
  - Prepare tax returns and pay tax liabilities.
  - Disburse assets to heirs.
  - Prepare an accounting for the courts.
  - Advise beneficiaries of the new tax basis for assets.

After one year

- Close probate.
- Make decisions about your future living arrangements.
Death Certificate

The death certificate originates at the funeral home. It is completed by the doctor or coroner and taken to the County Health Department for recording and certification. In most counties it remains at the health department for a one-year period after which it is moved to the County Recorders Office for permanent filing.

Fraudulent use of Social Security numbers of deceased people has increased. Many institutions and benefit programs now require a certified copy of the death certificate for business transactions where they previously would accept a photocopy. The funeral home can obtain any copies needed for a fee. You should know that the County will charge you for all copies except the one required for veteran’s benefits. Below are listed some possible needs:

- Bank accounts
- Credit union accounts
- Franchise Tax Board
- Insurance companies and mortgage insurance
- Lawyer
- Executor of estate
- Pension plan or retirement system
- Real property – 1 copy each
- Social Security
- Stocks and bonds – 1 copy each
- Veteran’s benefits
- Other ____________________________
- Other ____________________________

For death certificates within one year of death, contact:

Sacramento County County Clerk Recorder
600 8th St.
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-874-6334

Social Security

Generally a Social Security death benefit is paid only to a surviving spouse unless there are special circumstances. It cannot be overstressed that benefits are not paid automatically. If you believe that you qualify for benefits, contact your nearest Social Security field office at once. Depending on the type of benefits for which you may apply, some of the following records may be required:

- Proof of death (A certified copy of the death certificate.)
- Social Security card for deceased.
- Copy of marriage certificate.
- Birth certificate of applicant.
- Birth certificate of deceased.
- Birth certificate of minor children.
- Disability proof for children over 18.
- Receipted funeral bill (if applicant is other than surviving spouse.)
- Employment record of deceased (for the most recent nine month period.)
- Proof of support if applicant is parent or husband.

The funeral home will notify Social Security of the death by filing a Form 2872. The family, however, must follow up to determine if any additional benefits are due. You can apply for benefits by calling or visiting any Social Security office (SSA) or by making an appointment through the SSA toll-free number, 800-772-1213. You can also apply through ssa.gov. Public records like your birth certificate and marriage or divorce records must be the originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. Social Security will not accept uncertified photocopies. These certified documents will be returned to you.

Apply for benefits as soon as possible after the death. In some cases, benefits are not retroactive but begin with the application rather than the date of death.
Veterans Benefits

Category I veteran’s benefits apply only to disabled veterans for a disability attributed to their military service. The dependents of these disabled veterans (widows and/or children under twenty-three years of age), should visit their nearest Veterans Administration office immediately upon a veteran’s death to complete a claim form. Category II veteran’s benefits apply to all veterans. A certified copy of the death certificate is required when applying for any veteran’s benefits.

Category I
Disabled Veterans

Department of Veteran Affairs
Regional Office
1301 Clay Street
Oakland, CA 94612-5209
North Tower-12th floor
800-827-1000
va.gov

Category II
Veterans (non-disabled)

Sacramento County Veterans Service Office
2007 19th Street
Sacramento, CA 95818
916-874-6811

All veterans are entitled to the following things:

• Burial in a National Cemetery
• Headstone or Marker
• U.S. Flag

Death certificate and proof of honorable discharge required.

If you have any questions related to either category of veteran’s benefits, please contact the regional office at 800-827-1000.

Apply for benefits as soon as possible after the death.
Bereavement Support Groups

A variety of grief support groups are provided to the community through hospices, hospitals, churches and community centers. Please call the following organizations for further information.

**Sacramento County**
Bereavement Outreach Meeting  
916-557-5882  
VNA and Hospice  
916-388-6255  
griefhelpsacramento.com

**Placer County**
Sutter Auburn Faith Hospices Bereavement Support  
530-886-6650  
Hospices Bereavement Support, Roseville  
916-797-7850

**Other**
Yolo Hospice  
530-758-5566  
Snowline Hospice, Placerville  
530-621-7820

**Children’s Bereavement Art Group**
A bi-weekly support group for children 4-16 years old, grieving the death of a significant person in the last year. Art and creative activities are used to facilitate self-expression.

Children’s Art Bereavement Groups are available at the following sites:  
Sutter Care at Home, Sacramento  
916-454-6555  
Sutter Care at Home, Roseville  
916-787-7174

**Books for Adults**

The Evening Star Library addresses end of life issues with a collection of books and videotapes. Topics include death, dying, grief, communication, completion, spirituality, and other areas of concern to people at the end of life, to their families, loved ones, and caregivers. The Evening Star library is part of the Sutter Resource Library located at:

2801 K Street, Ste. 115B  
916-733-9672  
smcslibrary@sutterhealth.org

Hours: Monday – Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Telephone and email service on Friday

**How to Survive the Loss of A Loved One,**  
*Melba Colgrove*  
Recommended by the American Psychological Association. Ninety-four things to do when there is nothing to be done.

**Mortal Matters: When A Loved One Dies,**  
*Sara Engram*  
Provides answers for those seemingly minor matters that are left to nag the living – the disposition of a body, planning a funeral or memorial service, expressing sympathy and equally important, how to accept it.

**Living When A Loved One has Died,**  
*Earl A. Grollman*  
To help you understand and work through your grief and pick up the pieces of your unique and valuable life

**Grief Recovery Handbook: The Action Handbook for Moving Beyond Death, Divorce, and Other Losses,**  
*John W. James*  

**The Courage to Grieve: Creative Living, Recovery, & Growth Through Grief,**  
*Judy Tatelbaum*

*put balance in your life: Pray, Rest, Work, Read, and Relax.*
Books About Children’s Grief

**Helping Teens Cope with Death**, *Dougy Center*
Explains common grief reactions of teenagers, specific challenges grieving teens face, when to seek professional help, and advice from other parents.

**35 Ways to Help a Grieving Child**, *Dougy Center*
A practical guide for parents and caregivers

**Guiding Your Child Through Grief**, *Enswiler, Mary Ann M.A. M.P.S. and Enswiler, James P. M.A. M.F.D.*

**Breaking the Silence**, *Linda Goldman*

**Bereaved Children and Teens**, *Earl Grollman*

**Preparing the Children**, *Kathy Nussbaum*
Information and ideas for families facing terminal illness and death.

**How Do We Tell the Children?** *Dan Schaffer*
A step by step guide for helping children, ages 2 to teen, cope when someone dies.

Web Resources for Adults

- [medlineplus.gov/spanish](http://medlineplus.gov/spanish)
  Wide array of information in dealing with grief. Among the many topics covered are: Coping with loss, symptoms of grieving, and helping a child deal with death. This site is available in English and Spanish.

- [griefhelpsacramento.com](http://griefhelpsacramento.com)

- [elderhope.com](http://elderhope.com)
  A good resource for understanding adult and children’s grief and helping children to cope with grief.

- [centering.org](http://centering.org)
  Offers grief resources in the form of books, videos, cards, games and activities. It is categorized in a simple way to help focus on the needs of each individual or family, such as “children and grief”, “teens and adolescents”, and “anticipatory grief.” Spanish books also available.

- [dougy.org](http://dougy.org)
  Provides resources for grieving children and families, while also providing support and training locally, nationally, and internationally to individuals and organizations seeking to assist children in grief.

- [griefwatch.com](http://griefwatch.com)
  Provides grieving persons with bereavement resources, memorial products, and links to help them through their personal loss.

- [atimetogrieve.org](http://atimetogrieve.org)
  Information and articles about children and grief, web resources, and books about death and loss that can be used with children.

- [aarp.org](http://aarp.org)
  AARP website provides the grieving persons with bereavement resource links to help them through their personal loss.
Books for Children and Teens

**Children**

The Fall of Freddie the Leaf, *Leo Buscaglia*


Where’s Jess? *Joy and Mary Johnson*

A book for siblings and their families - ages 3 to 6.

How It Feels When a Parent Dies, *Jill Krementz*

Children speak openly about their experiences with the death of a parent - ages 9 and up.

Lifetimes, *Bryan Mellonie*

This author uses beautiful illustrations that provide a visual and safe way to begin explaining death to young children.

Sad Isn’t Bad: A good-grief guidebook for kids dealing with loss, *Michaelene Mundy*

From Elf Help books for kids.

Love You Forever, *Robert Munsch*

A book about unconditional love and growing older, explains the cycle of life. Beautiful for all ages.

The Kids Book about Death and Dying, *Eric E. Rofes*

By and for kids.

Tear Soup, *Pat Schweibert*


The Saddest Time, *Norma Simon*

Explains death as the inevitable end of life and provides three situations in which children experience powerful emotions when someone close has died - age 5 and older.

Healing Your Grieving Heart for Kids, *Alan Wolfelt, Ph.D.*

Simple advice and activities for children after a death.

**Teens**

The Common Threads of Teenage Grief, *Teens Who Know and Janet Tyson*

Written by a middle school counselor and nine teens.

Straight Talk about Death for Teenagers. How to Cope with Losing Someone You Love, *E. Grollman*

This book speaks to teens in a way that acknowledges their feelings, promotes discussion, and offers hope.

Healing Your Grieving Heart for Teens, *Alan lt, Ph.D.*

Practical, simple to use resource for teenagers coping with grief.

Web Resources for Children

Because each family is different and unique, it is recommended that parents or caregivers review these sites for themselves to decide if they meet with their personal approval before allowing their children to access these sites.

rd4u.org.uk

Designed for young people by young people. It is called “RD4U” and is sponsored by Cruse Bereavement Care in the United Kingdom. The main aim of the site is to let youth find their own “road” to dealing with their loss. This site includes games, a message board, and trained volunteers to answer private emails sent in by youth dealing with the loss of a loved one.

kidsaid.com

KIDSAID is a safe place for kids to share and to help each other deal with grief about any of their losses. It is a place to share and deal with feelings, to show artwork and stories, to talk about pets, and to meet with one's peers.
Multicultural Resources for Adults and Children

2-1-1 Sacramento
916-498-1000 or 800-500-4931
211sacramento.org/resources.shtml

Any Language
Info-Line – Referral & Interpreting services for many different languages
916-498-1000

Deaf and Hard of Hearing
NorCal Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Deaf community and hard of hearing; Counseling, referrals and interpreting for deaf and HOH.
4708 Roseville Road, Suite 111
North Highlands, CA 95660
916-349-7500 V/TTD
norcalcenter.org

Spanish
Los Ninos y el Luto
Provided by: All Family Resources
415-209-0502
familymanagement.com

La Familia Counseling Center
5523 34th Street
Sacramento, CA 95820
916-452-3601
TDD 800-735-2929 or 711,
lafcc.org/

Asian
Asian Community Center Administration
7311 Greenhaven Dr., Suite 187
Sacramento, CA 95831
916-394-6399
accsv.org/who-we-are/index.php

Hmong Women Heritage Association
7275 E. Southgate Dr., Suite 306
Sacramento, CA 95823
hmongwomenheritage.org

Asian Pacific Community
Short-term counseling and referral; most Asian languages
7273 14th Ave., Suite 120
Sacramento, CA 95820
916-383-6783
apccounseling.org

Gifts in Memory
Gifts in memory of your loved one may be made to Sutter Medical Center Foundation at 2825 Capitol Ave, Buhler Specialty Pavilion, Suite 420, Sacramento CA 95816.
916-887-7077.

For a supply of pre-addressed envelopes or for more information call 916-887-7077. Credit card gifts may be made online at suttermedicalcenter.org/philanthropy. The family will be notified of the donor name but not the gift amount.

Sutter Medical Center Foundation is a philanthropic organization that supports the programs and services at Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento. Donations help provide programs, services and equipment not covered by insurance and help provide the margin of excellence as well as healing environment for patients and their families. Gifts are used for the service stated by the donor as designated by the Board of Trustees.

Electronic copy available at suttermedicalcenter/spiritualcare