



The Death and the Service

I first realised something was wrong when

As the illness progressed the next thing that happened was

I realised how serious it was when

My family and friends

The healthcare workers

The death itself



After they died

What made it so hard

Usually when someone passes we have time to prepare and arrange for a funeral or service that affords us some sense of closure. With Covid deaths that often does not happen.

What follows is a list of things that we might consider under normal circumstances please read through and then consider what you would have planned had you been able.

- **A public celebration.** Allowing all mourners to attend the service lets them show their support for the family while handling their own pangs of loss.
- **Rituals.** Rituals are well established ceremonies that accompany events. Most of us find them soothing because they're familiar and we know what to expect. Rituals needn't dictate what happens at a funeral. But they can give structure and solace. Lighting candles, reading familiar verses or the playing of "Taps" may all serve the purpose.
- **Music.** Music creates an overall mood and facilitates the expression of feelings. It may include religious hymns or contemporary pieces that were meaningful to the deceased. Interspersing music with eulogies, sharing and remembrances helps mourners have time to access their feelings, then back away for an emotional reprieve.
- **Beauty.** While funerals aren't meant to be productions, they can supply an important aesthetic quality that is pleasing to attendees. Funerals can be held in traditional settings, such as synagogues or meeting halls. Or they may be conducted at the beach or along a favorite trail. Either way, a soothing, serene environment will be much appreciated.



- **Readings.** Specially selected readings have the power to connect with the intense feelings of the bereaved. Verses from spiritual texts, contemporary poets or hit songs are all appropriate if they have special meaning for the family and the deceased.
- **Eulogizing.** Eulogies are best performed by those most closely associated with the deceased. Even when speakers aren't trained in public speaking, their heartfelt words and emotions connect with everyone who hears them.
- **Involvement of family and friends.** Everyone who was close to the deceased brings a unique perspective to the service. Incorporating all ages and relationships deepens the impact and lets participants feel special.
- **Gathering.** Joining together following the service cements the profound experience the mourners have just experienced. Hugging, crying, eating and connecting remind all attendees they are members of a larger, common family. It also serves as a powerful reminder that the survivors are still living and that their needs must be addressed.

If it was possible to go back I would have done these things:
