



Using Ritual

Ritual may help grieving individuals. You may wish to encourage grieving individuals to create their own rituals or co-create one as a group

Ritual may be defined as: a ceremoniously performed ***series of acts*** with an implied purpose

Ritual may be used as: a ***container*** for the energies, thoughts, feelings, actions associated with the purpose

Ritual may be viewed as: the ***marking and honouring*** of a passage

Rites of Passage are ceremonies that mark a person's progress from one role, phase of life, or social status to another and may involve the

- **removal of the individual from his or her former status**
- **temporary suspension from normal social contact**
- **readmission into a group or community in the newly acquired status**

This transitional process provides others with the opportunity to adjust to the event, as, for example, the death of a loved one, multiple loss, loss of the assumptive world.

Transition

Any change is a new beginning; and by definition the end of something. To mark an ending is to facilitate a beginning. The end is where we start from.

Transition is:

- The process whereby the ***past*** is being left behind
- The process whereby the ***present*** is met with ambiguity
- The process whereby the ***future*** is acknowledged as unknown



Loss applies to transition in three time dimensions in relation to the self:

- **the loss of what was**
- **the loss of what is**
- **the loss of what was possible (probable future)**

Rituals:

- carry cultural meaning and the opportunity to create new metaphors and standards
- may connect to the larger; the metaview, the sacred
- provide structure to assist passage
- act as a vehicle to safely undergo passage
- provide the opportunity to evoke the emotional response accompanying the change
- can restore a sense of control and mastery over the transition (counters helplessness)
- ***acknowledge the three stages in the process of change:***

1. **separation** – the intentional leaving of a connection to meaning
2. **transition** – the old is no longer present; the new is not known
3. **incorporation** – enough of a transformation has occurred to lead to a new sense of self

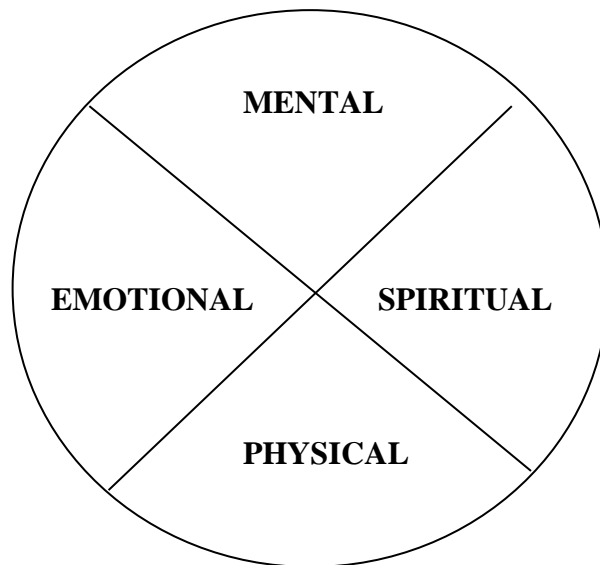
Ritual space:

- facilitates creative expression as a vehicle for transformation; the creativity of an individual is part of their vital timeless life-force and its expression serves to connect with a consistent quality in the self-identity
- is a non-ordinary reality which provides fertile ground for self-transformation



- provides for the articulation of an inner reality which is connected to spirit
- when co-created provides unity in transition and allows for commonalities to arise

The Holistic Health Model can be helpful in ensuring rituals speak to the various aspects of our being





The Five Components Of Ritual (from “Crossing the Bridge”– Sydney Metrick)

- 1. Focus on the goal** Decide what is needed from the experience of this ritual and how that will be of benefit. The more clarity you have as you focus on your goal, the easier the desired outcome will be to achieve

- 2. Plan:** What needs to be in place in order to achieve the goal in terms of materials, symbols activities etc. Consider the practical realities that need to be dealt with

- 3. Prepare:** Relax. Close your eyes and imagine the ritual from the beginning. Participants enter the space you have created. Notice if it feels right. Allow the day to unfold in your mind. Check to see if everything flows smoothly or if there are additional supports you need. Ensure they are in place

- 4. Manifest:** Bring your planned activities into the ritual; work with symbols, writing, photographs, bodies, crafts or whichever medium you feel will best achieve your goal

- 5. Incorporate:** Make meaning from and begin to integrate the experience. Take time to reflect in order to become clear on what has been let go of, what has died, and what may be emerging as a result of the process