



Coping with Anniversaries, Special Days and Christmas



**Farleigh
Hospice**

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www.farleighhospice.org   

Registered charity no 284670

Coping with Anniversaries, Special Days and Christmas

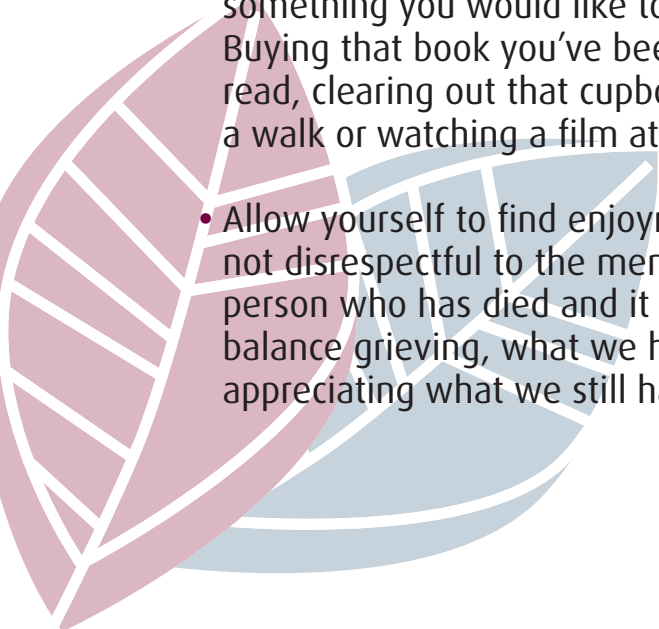


These special days provide an opportunity to take stock, to see where our “journey” has taken us, to review some lessons and plan what is ahead. But they can also be painful reminders of our loss and we might dread their approach, so how can we cope with these milestones?

Here are a few ideas which have been found to help others:

- Begin by planning a departure from your usual activities. Perhaps take the day off, taking time to mourn and remember is actually facing reality much more than avoiding it
- Choose your company. Who would you like to spend this day with?
- Do not wait for someone else to remember. Take the initiative to call your closest friends and family and suggest you get together. Be specific, ask for help by saying you need someone to drive you to the cemetery, join you for lunch, or provide a shoulder to cry on
- Stay in touch with your feelings, but be compassionate with yourself about not being perfect
- Take time to look forward, face the future with hope. Perhaps plan one thing you would like in the future; a holiday, redecorating part of your home or voluntary work
- Also think about the smaller things, something you would like to do for you. Buying that book you’ve been meaning to read, clearing out that cupboard, going for a walk or watching a film at the cinema
- Allow yourself to find enjoyment, it is not disrespectful to the memory of the person who has died and it helps to balance grieving, what we have lost and appreciating what we still have

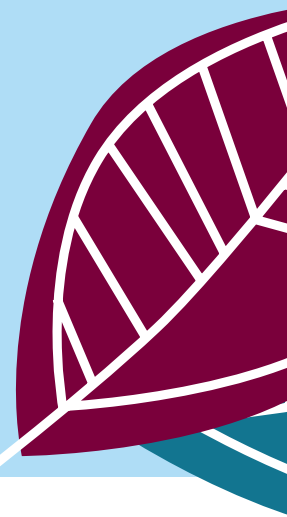
Anniversaries are an opportunity to take stock, to see where our journey has taken us, to review some lessons and plan what is ahead



Do whatever would be meaningful for you. Here are some suggestions for ways to remember that special person:

- Take a special card to their grave or to where their ashes were buried or scattered
- Write a small card or special message on tissue paper and tie this to a helium balloon and let it soar into the sky
- Light a memorial candle and perhaps place it next to your favourite photo of your loved one
- Plant some bulbs or a shrub in a pot or a special place to bring you memories of the person who has died — what was their favourite colour?
- Listen to their favourite music
- Cook their favourite meal and share with friends/family, sitting down to eat it together
- Look through your memory box if you have one, or consider starting one if you don't, holding those things that remind you of the person — photos, cards, glasses, items of clothing, aftershave/perfume
- Ask other people for their memories of the person who died and begin to compile their "life story"
- Write them a letter, a poem or a song. Maybe you could start with something like "if you came back for just 5 minutes, I'd tell you...."
- Participate in one of our Light up a Life events which are held towards the end of each year





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