

A MEANINGFUL FUNERAL

YOUR GUIDE TO A MEANINGFUL FUNERAL

“Meaningful funerals are rites of passage that help us move from life before a death to life after a death. They help families and friends support one another, embrace their feelings and embark on the journey to transcendence.”

- Alan D. Wolfelt

PH.D. DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR LOSS AND LIFE TRANSITION

As you consider the funeral, try to remember that planning the funeral of someone you love is not a burden, but a privilege. Think of the funeral as a gift to the person who passed. It is your chance to think about and express the value of the life that was lived.

In this guide, we will show you the elements and fundamentals of ***creating a meaningful funeral.***



Using Music

Quiet reflection during musical interludes often stimulates acknowledgment of the reality of the death. Music often helps us move from knowing something in our heads to knowing something in our hearts.

What's more, music in funerals is often very moving to family and friends and can provide effective moments in which to think about their loss and embrace and move them toward expressing their own pain.

You should feel encouraged to be open-minded about music at the funeral ceremony and also the viewing and gathering after the funeral.

To find out more how music can help you please [click here](#)



Eulogies

The eulogy acknowledges the unique life of the person who died. It affirms the significance of that life for all who shared in it.

Without a eulogy and/or other personalised means of acknowledging a particular life and death, the funeral often becomes an empty, cookie-cutter formality.

What's worse, it implies that this unique and precious person's life story just wasn't worth gathering for and sharing.

To find out more about Eulogies please [click here](#)

Viewing The Deceased

The viewing is an opportunity for family and friends to spend time with the deceased person's body.

When time is spent with the body, our minds, which so very much want to deny the truth, cannot help but begin the process of acknowledging the reality of the death.

Not only is the dead body "proof" for our logical mind, but it is a means of transition for our searching heart which yearns to still be with that person.

It can feel uncomfortable and painful in the moment but is ultimately helpful and healing.

To find out more please [click here](#)



Readings

It's often said that at times in life when words are inadequate we turn to ceremony. But the truth is, the formal words of the readings we use in funeral ceremonies also have the capacity to bear the weight of our most profound thoughts and feelings about death.

Crafted by master wordsmiths, they capture what we ourselves feel inside but are usually incapable of expressing so eloquently. They are words 'well said'. These do a wonderful job of helping friends and families move forward in their mourning.

For starters, readings that specifically mention death help mourners acknowledge the reality and finality of death and come to terms with it. Each of these personalised readings can be prefaced with a few words about the reading's place in the person's life. This helps funeral attendees remember the person who died.

To find out more about readings please [click here](#)

Symbols

In the funeral ceremony, symbols such as the cross (for Christians; other faiths use other symbols), flowers, and candles provide points of focus for mourners.

They represent a reality that is hard to accept but that their beauty makes more approachable in this moment.

Because they represent such profound beliefs, these symbols also tend to encourage the expression of thoughts and feelings, i.e., the conversion of grief into mourning, and also the search for meaning.

Furthermore, symbols such as these provide the comfort of tradition.

To find out more about choosing the right symbol [click here](#)



Gatherings

Most funerals formally come to an end when the mourners gather to share a meal and to talk about the person who died.

These gatherings can take place anywhere, including the funeral home, a church meeting room, a restaurant, or at a home of a friend or family member.

To find out more about gatherings please [click here](#)

Using Actions

The actions of a funeral provide movement for bereaved friends and family.

Mourners often don't know what to do with their grief.

Finding that everyday words are inadequate, they turn to the rituals of the funeral ceremony.

To find out more about actions please [click here](#)



Choosing The Right Coffin Or Casket

There are many options when choosing a Coffin or Casket. [Click here](#) to view information on helping you choose the right one

How a Funeral Director Can Help You

It is natural to feel overwhelmed or perhaps a fear of arranging your loved one's funeral. [Click here](#) to view information on how a Funeral Director can help you.

Find A Funeral Director

Not to sure on who to choose to organise your meaningful funeral? [Click here](#) for a list of Funeral homes / Directors in your area.

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If you wish for some assistance in creating your meaningful funeral,
we have the tools to help you.

Record your funeral wishes.

Fill out our online plan guide and receive a customised Meaningful Funeral
Guide.

Plan Guide To A Meaningful Funeral



Parts of this information has been sourced from **Dr Alan Wolfelt**. Dr. Alan Wolfelt is the author of many books and resources that are helpful to caregivers, grieving people, and those who want to help someone who has experienced a loss. Please **visit his website** where you'll find helpful books, DVDs and audiobooks.

www.ameaningfulfuneral.com.au

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