



# What you should know about cremation

## **Memorialising Your Loved One**

### **Focusing on personalisation**

The death of a loved one can be overwhelming. For that reason, it's even more important to slow down, take a deep breath and focus on his or her life and the impact he or she had on family and friends. Relaxation and focus can help provide direction and enable you to organize a service that honours your loved one's life.

Use this checklist to help collect your thoughts and direct your efforts to create a funeral or memorial service that truly reflects a life worth celebrating.

- Some of my loved one's most important accomplishments include...
- Some of my fondest memories of him or her are...
- People who had the greatest effect on my loved one's life are...
- My loved ones favourite music is...
- My loved one's hobbies and interests included...
- Other things that give him or her enjoyment are...
- The causes and beliefs my loved one was passionate about are...
- If my loved one was planning this service, he or she would include...

***"Cremation allowed us to respect my uncle's wishes and, at the same time, plan a funeral boasting his favourite plays as a cricketer. That really meant a lot to our family...and his teammates."***

## Questions to ask

There are a number of questions you can and should ask us to make sure you understand cremation.

1. What arrangements do I have to make prior to the cremation?
2. Who owns the crematory and where is it located?
3. Can I see the crematory?
4. Who supervises the cremation?
5. What are the qualifications of the crematory and the individual performing the cremation?
6. What is the cremation process?
7. How much time is involved with the entire process?
8. What legal documents do we need and who can legally authorize a cremation?
9. Is viewing the cremation acceptable and helpful?
10. How can we celebrate the life of our loved one?

## Memorialisation options and cremation

Families that choose cremation have many options and much flexibility when determining how to best memorialise the life of their loved one. Some families choose to have a viewing or funeral service before the cremation. Others choose a memorial service at the time of cremation or afterward with the urn present, or even a committal service at the final disposition of cremated remains. Often, funeral or memorial services can be held in a place of worship, a funeral home, a crematory chapel or even at a special place of significance to your loved one.

Cremated remains can be interred in a cemetery plot or in a cremation niche in a columbarium. They can also be retained by a family member or scattered at a meaningful location that can be appreciated by future generations. (It is always advisable to check for local regulations regarding scattering in a public place.) Cremation is just one step in the commemorative process – an important step in preparing the remains for memorialisation. How you continue with the memorisation process is limited only by your imagination.

## The more you know, the better the choices you'll make

Take some time to consider how you'd like to memorialise your loved one. Will you have a service or gathering of family and friends prior to cremation? Will there be a public or private viewing? What kind of urn will you select? Will the cremated remains be interred? Like so many other events in your life, being an educated consumer is important.

An excellent resource for learning about all of your options is to talk to our friendly staff. We can discuss many of the specifics relating to cremation and the ways in which cremation can fit into a meaningful funeral or memorialisation service.

## Cremation is only part of the healing process

Some may feel that by cremating a body, they are somehow eliminating the pain associated with their loss. Nothing could be further from the truth. Cremation is not a way of eliminating your grief, but a process of preparing your loved one for his or her final resting place. Like burial, it is only one element of the funeral process and should and should be approached that way. When made part of a meaningful funeral service, cremation can play a vital role in the healing journey.

## Different religions view cremation differently

Most religions accept cremation, however, some faiths express a preference for burial, but they now allow cremations for reasons compatible with religious teachings. Some don't sanction the scattering of remains, however, and prefer the presence of the body during the liturgy, prior to cremation.

## Creating a meaningful experience

When made part of a tribute to a loved one, cremation can give you the flexibility to create a funeral service that is as individual as the life being honoured. Cremation does not – and should not – take the place of a funeral service. Like burial, it is merely another form of disposition. However, by considering all of your funeral options, you'll find that cremation can be an important part of the commemoration process. It helps loved ones to share grief, celebrate the life of the person who died and find healing in remembrance.

Honouring the life of your loved one can include a public or private viewing prior to cremation, if you choose to do so. Many people, grief experts included, believe that the ability to view the body gives friends and loved ones a necessary opportunity to say goodbye. If you choose this option, it is important to note that some funeral homes offer a ceremonial casket that can be rented specifically for viewing prior to cremation. If you choose not to have a viewing, you'll need to select a container in which your loved one will be cremated and a container in which the cremated remains will be stored or buried. Your funeral director will show you what is available.

As part of your personal and memorialised funeral service, you'll also want to have a plan for the cremated remains. A range of alternatives exists - from entombment or burial in a cremation garden to a ceremony at which you scatter the cremated remains. Some families keep the cremated remains in a decorative urn as a keepsake. Our friendly staff can discuss all of these options with you.



## Cost of cremation services

The cost of cremation varies depending on the services and products selected by the family. We can provide an itemised list that includes the costs of the service and products offered.

Making funeral plans in advance is helpful because, in addition to easing the planning process and allowing the family members to know your wishes, it gives you a sense of the actual costs associated with a specific type of service.

If you would like information about cremation, talk to our friendly staff or visit our website for other brochures that provide information and guidance on topics including planning a meaningful funeral service, helping children through their grief, healing after the loss of a loved one and planning your funeral in advance.

*“Mom always loved being surrounded by friends and family. When she died, I don’t think anyone in town missed her funeral. After the funeral service and cremation, we had a small gathering with immediate family at the park she took us to when we were kids. We spread out blankets, ate sandwiches and played the same games she played with our own kids..., which was a wonderful way to remember her.”*





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