

No Hugs, No Funeral, No Goodbyes

"The coronavirus has completely changed my life. How can I take care of my kids by myself? How am I going to pay the bills if I lose my job? I can't even see my family. I feel so alone. I wish my husband was with me right now." - CBC Participant

The impact of the coronavirus on grieving individuals is only beginning to be understood. Quarantine, physical distancing, and isolation have created painful obstacles for griever as they mourn the death of their loved one. As Children's Bereavement Center transitioned its grief support groups to online, our participants own testimonies of isolation, financial burdens due to job loss, and extra childcare responsibilities due to the coronavirus have intensified their own feelings of grief and loss as they no longer have the support of their loved one during these challenging times.

If you yourself are currently grieving the loss of a loved one, you too may be struggling with the impact of the coronavirus on you and your family's grief. Although physical distancing remains one of the best ways to slow the spread of the virus, you may now have lost the ability to physically connect with your loved ones and plan a funeral or memorial service for your loved one—things that we all need in our time of mourning. So, when hugs, funerals, and goodbyes become unattainable, how can you get the support that you need? Below, we provide some tips and strategies to help with your grief during the time of coronavirus.

Get Support. Now, more than ever, no one should grieve alone. Although physical distance is recommended as one of the best preventative measures to spreading the coronavirus, finding support at this time is critical. For those with a support system, reach out to family and friends by scheduling times to talk or video chat through your computer or phone.

For those interested in participating in CBC's free virtual grief support groups, see details below or click [HERE](#).

Accept Help. Just because people cannot be together physically, does not mean that those in your life are unwilling to help. As you reach out to your support network, don't be afraid to ask for the help you need during this time. Perhaps a family member or friend would be willing to go to grocery shopping or run errands for you and leave your packages at the door. People may also want to set up food delivery for you, so you don't have to worry about cooking. Thinking creatively to get the help you need is key at this time because those in your life will be willing to help out—you just need to ask!

Continue the Bond with Your Loved One. In grieving the death of a loved one, maintaining a sense of connection with that person, despite their physical absence, is part of a healthy grieving process. In the field of grief and bereavement, we call this "***continuing bonds.***"

Although continuing bonds is important for any grieving person, the way in which you decide to maintain your relationship with your loved one can vary from person to person. Some ideas could include, creating a digital photo album or scrapbook, creating a music



playlist of songs that remind you of your loved one, cooking your loved one's favorite meal, or planting a tree/bush/flower as a physical reminder of your loved one. However you decide to do it, what is most important is that you feel a sense of connection to your loved one and remember that, although they are no longer physically here, they will be with you forever.

Create a Virtual Memorial Service. Although it may not be possible to have a traditional, in-person memorial service or funeral at this time, a virtual memorial service can serve as a temporary solution until it is safe to be in physical spaces with large groups of people. Virtual memorial services can be an opportunity for those who knew and cared about your loved one to come together, remember, and celebrate their life and memory. In a virtual memorial service, you can play music, share photos, and share memories and stories of your loved one that can provide the much-needed sense of closure and healing needed after a loved one dies.

Reframe Your Guilt. As we all take cautious steps to keeping ourselves healthy and safe, feelings of guilt can arise. For those grieving the death of a loved one, not being able to be physically present during your loved one's last days and wishing we could do more for our loved one's who are grieving or for those who are currently sick can create feelings of guilt inside of us. In times such as these, where we are left with few available options, guilt is a normal reaction to experience. However, we encourage you to be self-compassionate towards yourself and challenge the feelings of guilt that arise within you. Doing the best you can, given the circumstances, is all that we can ask of ourselves. There is nothing selfish about keeping yourself healthy and safe. Instead of focusing on what you did not do, try to think about the things you have done and continue to do. You may surprise yourself and find out that you are already doing so much.

Practice Self-Care. In times of grief, it can be easy to forget to take care of our health and well-being. From a place of self-compassion and self-love, find times to take care of yourself and replenish your emotional and physical health. Meditation, relaxation exercises, sufficient sleep, healthy eating, and exercise are but a handful of ways that you can practice self-care.

We hope that the tips and strategies provided above are helpful to you and your loved ones who are grieving during this challenging time. As a grief organization, which believes in the transformative power of social support, know that you are not alone during these difficult times.

For those interested in attending a virtual grief support group, Children's Bereavement Center is currently offering weekly virtual groups for adults (English & Spanish), high school students and middle school students. We will also be working with our art and music specialists to provide activities for our elementary-aged participants.

PLEASE CALL 888-988-5438 to register for FREE grief support groups or [fill out this form](#) and we'll call you back. Registration is required, participants must live in Miami-Dade, Broward or Palm Beach Counties.



childbereavement.org

888.988.5438
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