

Funerals

Shock gets us through the impossible: burying our child. Denial keeps back reality so we can function somewhat back into society . . . like a non-ending bad dream we continue to live on without our child, but with an elusive thought that we will wake up to find it really was just a bad dream.¹

~Mitch Carmody

Funeral Helps

The funeral marks a time of finality. Before the burial or cremation you can still imagine that it is all a dream, a dream you will wake from. Once the funeral is over that is not so easy to do. Some families find delaying the funeral for a few weeks helpful to give them time to think, rest, recover from a traumatic birth, and put their thoughts in order.

Other families would rather have the funeral sooner so they can move on.

Organising the funeral comes at a time when the mother may still be in hospital because of complications of the birth.

The week following the death of the baby is difficult because you want to grieve but there are so many details to organise. The husband bears most of the burden of organising these details; he takes most of the phone calls, visits with funeral directors and morgue attendants, all while grieving.

So we need to remember the dads. If possible, they need plenty of time off work. John had four weeks leave arranged before Grace was born. We were thankful this had been organised in advance because we needed him at home. However, his boss still phoned to pressure him into coming back to work only days after Grace's funeral. He wanted to know if I could be looked after by someone else.

Planning a funeral with some sort of meaning is quite difficult while you are still in shock. So it may be helpful to delay until you are more able to organise the funeral. Another option is to have a private funeral and then a memorial service much later. We wanted to take over all control of the funeral, so the funeral director had minimal duties to perform. However, if you are not up to organising all the details (we had family taking on most of the organisation), a funeral can be as simple as just phoning the funeral director you are using and the funeral home will do all the rest.

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