

FUNERAL PLANNING ESSENTIALS

Prior to choosing a funeral director

1. Consider what is important to you in making funeral arrangements. Perhaps it is service, price, options available, payment terms, or little things you have in mind for the funeral service. Make sure your funeral director is able to deliver all of the important aspects of the funeral service. Remember little things are important, because they hold meaning for you.
2. In considering important aspects of the funeral service, imagine that you have decided not to include them and project yourself forward 6-8 weeks. How are you feeling?
3. Choose a funeral director with whom you feel comfortable. Trust your instincts.

The days between death and the funeral service

4. Prepare what you plan to wear to the funeral to avoid being stressed on the day. Check that clothing is clean and ironed and if you haven't worn it in a while, that it is comfortable.
5. Postpone any appointments for yourself that are not important. Also remember to cancel any appointments that the person who has died, may have had. This will avoid you receiving a call when the appointment is not met.
6. Avoid anything that you know will stress you. Peak hour traffic, crowded shopping centres and public transport are top of the list.
7. Keep your mobile phone charged. With that in mind, do try to plan half an hour where you can turn it off, and take some time for yourself. Walk around the block, take the dog if you have one, or even simply stand under a refreshing shower and let the water flow over you. The planet can handle a once-off long shower, if it helps you to calm and focus. Whatever it is you choose to do, leave distractions behind.
8. Although you will probably not have an appetite, try to keep yourself hydrated and reasonably nourished. It will help you to cope with all the emotions you will experience, both at the funeral and in the days and weeks following.
9. If you are going to take your own car to the funeral, ensure that it has sufficient fuel so that you will not need to fill up on the day of the service.

The day of the funeral

10. If you are driving your own car, make sure that you allow enough time for unexpected traffic snarls. If you are running late, you will be stressed and frazzled at the service. Even if you are a little early, you may find a place where you can quietly sit and gather your thoughts before moving to where the funeral is being held. This could be a park nearby, or a coffee shop or even the cemetery grounds.
11. Ensure that your home is locked and pets are secure prior to setting off. Make sure that you have your house keys with you before closing the door.