



The Good Grief Family Guide

A gentle guide for honoring the life and story of someone you love.

Helping families honor life, preserve stories, and carry love forward.

We're Here to Help

We know that planning a memorial while grieving can feel overwhelming.

There are names to remember, photographs to find, stories to gather, decisions to make, and details that suddenly feel urgent.

You do not have to figure everything out at once.

The Good Grief Family Guide was created to help you gather the information we may need to thoughtfully honor your loved one. Move through this guide at your own pace, ask family members to help where needed, and remember that everything does not have to be perfect.

Our job is to help make this part a little easier.

1. Start Here

Before gathering everything, begin with the essentials.

Essential Details

- Full name of your loved one
- Preferred name or nickname
- Date of birth
- Date of passing
- Funeral or memorial service date
- Service time
- Service location
- Funeral home, if applicable
- Burial or interment information
- Repast or reception information
- Primary family contact
- Deadline for completed memorial materials

Choose One Family Contact

We recommend selecting **one person to serve as the primary family contact**.

This person will communicate requested changes, review proofs, gather feedback from the family, and provide final approval.

This helps us avoid conflicting revisions and ensures that your family's memorial materials are completed accurately and on time.

2. Tell Us About Your Loved One

We want to know more than dates.

Tell us about the person you loved.

What made them *them*?

What made them laugh? What were they known for? What did they cook that everyone requested?

Their Voice & Traditions

What music did they love? What did they say all the time? What traditions did they create?

Their Legacy

What did they teach you? What would their family and friends immediately recognize as uniquely *them*?

These details help us create something that feels personal rather than simply informational.

3. Gathering Information for the Obituary

Consider gathering:

- Full name and nickname
- Birth information
- Parents' names
- Childhood and upbringing
- Education
- Career
- Military service, if applicable
- Marriage or significant relationships
- Children and grandchildren
- Siblings and extended family
- Faith or spiritual life
- Church involvement
- Community service
- Organizations and memberships
- Hobbies and interests
- Accomplishments
- Favorite traditions
- Personality traits
- Favorite sayings
- Special memories
- Loved ones who preceded them in death
- Loved ones who remain to cherish their memory



A Helpful Question: If someone had never met your loved one, what would you want them to know about who they were? Start there.

4. Gathering Photographs

Photographs help tell a story that words cannot always capture.

Consider gathering:

- A favorite cover photograph
- Childhood photographs
- Graduation photographs
- Wedding photographs
- Family photographs
- Photos with children and grandchildren
- Career or military photographs
- Church or community photographs
- Birthday and celebration photographs
- Travel photographs
- Candid photographs
- Photos showing hobbies and interests
- Favorite photographs of your loved one simply being themselves

Photo Tip

Whenever possible, send the **original photograph or digital image** rather than a screenshot from social media.

Original files generally provide better quality for printing.

Don't worry about making every photo perfect before sending it. We can help determine which images will work best.

5. Planning the Order of Service

Your service may include some or all of the following:

01

Opening

Processional · Opening prayer · Scripture

03

Service

Acknowledgments · Obituary · Eulogy · Closing prayer

02

Tributes

Musical selection · Solo · Poem · Family tribute · Reflections

04

Closing

Final viewing · Recessional

Your service does not have to follow a traditional format. We encourage families to create an experience that authentically reflects the person being remembered.

6. Make It Personal

A memorial can tell a story. Consider including:

Words & Voice

- Favorite scripture
- Favorite quote
- Original poem
- Signature saying
- Letter from the family

Life & Story

- Favorite recipe
- Family tradition
- Life timeline
- Favorite things
- Fun facts

Memories

- Special accomplishments
- Children's or grandchildren's memories
- A collection of short family reflections
- QR code to a memorial video or digital collection

Sometimes the smallest detail becomes the thing people remember most.

7. Before We Begin Designing

Please gather as much of the following as possible:

- Final obituary or request for obituary writing assistance
- Order of service
- Cover photograph
- Additional photographs
- Names of service participants
- Scripture, poems, or readings
- Family acknowledgment
- Pallbearer information
- Burial information
- Repast information
- Special design requests
- Preferred colors or theme

📄 Don't have everything? That's okay. Let us know what is still being finalized so we can help you determine what can move forward.

8. Reviewing Your Proof

Your family will receive an opportunity to review the memorial materials before finalization.

Please carefully check:

- Spelling of your loved one's name
- Birth and passing dates
- Family names
- Service date
- Service time
- Addresses
- Clergy names and titles
- Order of service
- Obituary information
- Photograph placement
- Burial information
- Repast information



We strongly recommend having **at least two people carefully proofread the final version.**

Once final approval is provided, materials may move into production.

9. What Happens Next

Our process is designed to make things as simple as possible.

1

STEP 1 — Connect

Tell us what your family needs.

2

STEP 2 — Select

Choose the services that best support your family.

3

STEP 3 — Gather

Use this guide to collect photographs, memories, and service information.

4

STEP 4 — Create

Good Grief Agency transforms your information into meaningful memorial materials.

STEP 5 — Review

Your designated family contact reviews the proof and requests necessary changes.

STEP 6 — Approve

Your family provides final approval.

STEP 7 — Remember

Your completed materials become part of how your loved one's story is honored and preserved.

10. After the Service

Remembrance does not end when the service does.

Some families may want to preserve photographs, written tributes, obituaries, stories, and memories in a more permanent way.



Printed Keepsakes

- Memorial book
- Family memory book
- Printed collection of photographs
- Keepsakes for children or grandchildren



Written Tributes

- Tribute poem
- Legacy letter
- Anniversary remembrance
- Family story or biography



Digital Preservation

- Digital memorial collection

Ask us about **Good Grief Legacy Services** if you would like help preserving your loved one's story beyond the service.

A Gentle Reminder

You are not simply gathering photographs. You are remembering.

You are not simply writing an obituary. You are telling someone who never met them, *this is who they were*.

You are not simply creating a funeral program. You are creating something that may sit inside a family Bible, memory box, photo album, drawer, or keepsake collection for generations.

There is no perfect way to grieve.

There is only the opportunity to honor the life that was lived and the love that remains.

Good Grief Agency

Helping families honor life, preserve stories, and carry love forward.

When we can no longer hold the people we love, we can still hold their stories.