

Luce, Luze & Reck

FUNERAL HOMES

Serving the South Dakota Communities of Gettysburg, Faulkton, Eagle Butte, Highmore, Miller

Mandy Luikens-Spilde & Tiffany Pape Hofer
Owners/Funeral Directors
tiffany@luceluzereck.com

"Providing Comfort To Families"

www.familyfuneralhome.net



Chapters

turning the pages through grief

HOW TO BE TOGETHER

...when you're
not together

By
Eleanor Haley
(edited) Courtesy
What's Your Grief
whatsyourgrief.com

...

Copyright 2025
What's Your Grief
All rights reserved.

Oftentimes our loved ones who need us when they are ill, or dying, don't live in the same community, state, or perhaps country. What to do when you can't be together in person? Today's technology makes it less painful to be apart and easier to communicate. Here are several options:

- **Move your phone calls to video calls.** If the person you love is still well enough to take calls, take advantage of FaceTime, or any number of other video-chat services. For those who grew up in a smartphone world, this might be obvious. But if you grew up on a landline (or your loved one did) this might not be your go-to. Give it a try - it is amazing the added closeness that can be there, even through a screen.

- **Hold video family-meals.** If your loved one is still able to eat, set up a Zoom or other group video chat to all eat "together" at the time. It won't be the

same as all being around one table, but you can still all enjoy a meal and share the usual dinner updates, stories, and memories.

- **Find out what you can send or drop off.** If your loved one is in a hospital, hospice, or nursing home, give a call and find out exactly what you are allowed to bring/send. Even if you can't visit, you can still make their space more comfortable, whether it is fuzzy socks, photos, books, items from their home, cards, and letters, or anything else that might bring some comfort. Things big and small can go a long way. Consider all five senses - can you send things that stimulate each of them?

- **Create a playlist (or a family playlist).** Use Spotify or any one of the many other music services out there to make a playlist of music the person loves. You can do this on your own, or you can create a shared playlist and invite others to add songs. This is wonderful to do for the person who is ill, but it

continued...

**JULY
2025**

I exist in two places, here and where you are.
—Margaret Atwood

...continued from front

can also be a great thing to just connect as a family. It can help with boosting mood and increasing connection.

- **Sing and play music together (in real-time) if that's something your all enjoy.** Just because you are in different places it doesn't mean you can't all sing together from wherever you are - using Zoom, Facetime, etc.

- **Record a song as a family for the person who is ill (or with your loved one who is ill).** Now, this requires a family with some musical talent and a little time. But you can put together some pretty impressive songs and videos if you have people each record separately and then edit them together. There are plenty of tutorials on YouTube about how to gather the clips and do the editing.

- **Create an "ethical will" for the person.** This is a concept from Judaism. We learned about from neurologist Lisa Barns, who wrote a book on grieving her husband. The idea is simple. Everyone shares something that they learned from the person that will stay with them forever. This could be anything from small things to largest thing. It could be anything from "be a generous tipper" to "how to make the best stuffed peppers" to "how to be open and accepting of others." You could each record video or audio clips to be spliced together, or share them on a service such as Marco Polo or Facebook.

- **Read to the person.** Whether this is by phone or by sending an audio file, read a book to the person. Whether they are conscious or unconscious, this can allow a way to show them some care even if you are far away.

- **Read a book as a family.** Maybe it is just you who reads to the person who is sick. Or maybe you have multiple people record audio files of different chapters of the book. If you plan this by phone instead, you can rotate each day calling and reading chapters.

- **Have a Netflix watch party.** You might not be able to physically sit with your sick loved one to watch a movie, but you can still watch a movie "together." Netflix Party lets people in multiple locations all join to watch a movie and use a real-time chat thread to talk about the movie as you watch. Visit www.teleparty.com/netflix for details.

- **Create an oral history.** If your friend or family member is still able to talk (and is open to it) use any video or audio service that allows you to record. We often use Zoom, but I am sure there are other options.

The Lessons of Grief

"My feelings about my brother's death are changeable. They go from relief, to anger at him, to missing him. It's been 20 years now. Sometimes it doesn't seem real.
—Helen H.

"**Grief has no timeline.**
You slowly grow to live without that person in your life anymore. Some days will be harder than others and those memories will crash into you at any time. Give yourself time."
—Anna A.

BREAK TIME

*Sometimes the best advice is a break from advice.
Take 5 and enjoy these tidbits of this & that.*

- **In early July**, a period of time called the "dog days of summer" begins. Historically they were observed within Ancient Roman and Greek astrology and were connected with bad luck, mad dog attacks, unexpected thunderstorms, heat, and drought. They gained their name as "dog days" as they were connected with the star Sirius, which is part of the Canis Major (Greater Dog) star system.

- **On July 5, 1946**, the world's first bikini was unveiled in the famous Piscine Molitor swimming pool in Paris. Just in time for the heat of summer, the bikini was modeled by showgirl Micheline Bernardini. While two-piece forms of swimwear previously existed, none used as little fabric as the bikini.



* * *