

APA Personal Memorial Guide



Psychological
Awareness
for all

Grieving
from a
distance

Our Condolences

To anyone, reading this at a time of personal loss, APA offers our deepest condolences.

The loss of any life should be marked and acknowledged as a point of hurt. It is a process of acceptance for a change that we can not control. It is a life experience that can remain with us for always and the grieving process is natural and has no pre-set time frame. We will all grieve at our own pace and there is no right or wrong way, that anyone should or should not feel.

The team at APA are acutely aware that during this time, emotions can and often do fluctuate. This can be confusing and before we proceed, APA wish to acknowledge that, any fluctuation in emotions, is natural and should not be seen as a loss of empathy or compassion for the person you are in mourning for.

Grieving from a distance

In 2020, the whole world entered a period of mass grief. The outbreak of the Covid-19 Virus, has created a planetwide human response, unlike anything seen in the modern age.

With Pandemic countermeasures in place across the world, our traditional and established processes and coping strategies around the loss of life have been drastically affected.

APA offers this guide as a way to support those, that are grieving from a distance to their loved ones, their families, their friends, their colleagues. The required restrictions on contact and gatherings will, at this particular time be exceptionally difficult.

APA hopes that having some practical ideas will not only support you at the time of initial time of loss but also provide you and those close to you, some additional comfort in the future.

Immediate Response

Much has been written about the human reaction to news about the loss of a loved one, needless to say APA is not going to repeat or contradict the learned contributions in this area. The moment we receive news that a life has passed, is for many, a moment of natural turmoil and emotional overload. There is no way to predict or manage that moment, and during this time of restricted movement the sense of having no control over the situation, will be greatly amplified.

There is NO 'BEST WAY' to respond in the moment of such news. Your feelings and emotions in this moment are just as valid as in any other situation.

With the rate of UK loss of life, it is likely that some people will be receiving this news more than once. The trauma of such a situation will seem, too much to bear for some. APA advocates, when you are ready, to reach out to those in their own support teams. Family, Friends, Colleagues, Peers, but most of all, Therapeutic Professionals could reach out to their supervisor.

Direct Support

During the conditions of lock down, there are restrictions in place that limit the ability to provide and receive direct support in the ways we yearn for. This does not mean that we can not still provide support or need to feel alone.

The APA Action Plan gives tips to ensure during this critical time, your well-being is considered, while not losing sight, of the empathy and compassion for the memory of the person you have lost.

Desensitisation

As people experience the news of multiple personal losses the risk of desensitisation to grief will increase. It is vital that all professionals are mindful of this.

Action Plan

The greatest challenge faced by anyone in these trying times is the sense of helplessness in response to the loss of a loved one.

Here are some TIPS to help.

- Give yourself a tangible point of reference for your loved one. A Photo or a soft toy that you can affiliate with the person that has passed.
- Write or record a message of condolence to the family of your loved one.
- Write or record a message directly to the memory of your loved one.
- Write or record a favourite memory you hold of your loved one.
- Create a digital memory file that includes all the above and include photos.
- Share the collated memories and messages with the close family.

Where you cannot attend the funeral

- Your shared memory file will help contribute to a digital wake
 - Where possible connect to the Live feed of the funeral.
 - Mark the day with a memorable act. Even if that is a meal in memory of the person you have lost.
 - Write or record a message of Goodbye, this should be a personal memento for yourself.
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Support when you reach for it

It is normal to feel that reaching out is not needed, that we can cope. However, in this time of mass grief, the risk of sliding into not coping, is extremely high. APA is mindful that during this heightened risk, People do reach out before the trauma load becomes too much to carry.

Should you wish to speak to a therapeutic professional during these trying times, you will find the APA Directory useful.

www.ayanay.co.uk/directory

APA's own grief and loss specialist is [Margaret Van Steenlandt](mailto:Margaret.Van.Steenlandt@polychromatic-lifedesign.com) of polychromatic-lifedesign.com

Additional Support is available from Cruse Bereavement Care, who have a National Helpline

National helpline number: 0808 808 1677

Helpline opening hours: Monday - Friday 9.30am - 5pm (excluding bank holidays) with extended hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays to 8pm www.cruse.org.uk

NHS Choices

W: www.nhs.uk

Gives access to find NHS services including hospitals and local doctors and helpful information on a huge variety of health related topics.

Your Choice.

For many people the ability to put things in order and plan for our own mortality, can give a sense of comfort. Just from knowing that in the tragic event, we are directly impacted by death or serious injury, we have taken steps to make the situation as easy, for our loved ones as possible.

An 'IN THE EVENT OF' package

- Writing a 'Last Will and Testament' and having it correctly witnessed and certified.
- Compiling a record of all your Financial accounts and having all the details in one place. Giving written authorisation for 1 or 2 close loved ones to act on your behalf in relation to financial matters.
- Deciding who you would like to be told as a matter of urgency.
- Choosing a loved one to manage any social media accounts, and ensuring they can access those accounts.
- Writing letters to loved ones, hoping to never send.

It has already been set that funeral numbers are restricted. I can help loved ones to know who are your chosen witnesses.

All this can be kept private until needed and dis-guarded if not required. It can be quite cathartic to burn these 'IN THE EVENT OF' packages when the all clear has been given. But to loved ones coming to terms the terrible grief these packages can make the process of grieving from a distance so much easier.

If you ever need to contact APA our details are:

By telephone	Call our service team on 0208 556 4984
By email	info@ayanay.co.uk
In writing	Ayanay Psychological Membership Ltd, Number 10, The Shrubberies, South Woodford, London, E18 1BD
Our Website	www.ayanay.co.uk

APA

Membership

Our Focus

Create, Increase, Provide and Elevate

Create: an effective framework for the sustainable and successful development of best practice within the therapeutic community.

Increase: the positive awareness and use of therapeutic knowledge.

Provide: the therapeutic community with an ever evolving and enhancing level of support.

Elevate: public confidence in the effectiveness and professionalism of the therapeutic community.