



When Additional Support is Needed

If a family member who has additional support needs is facing bereavement and loss, I would be privileged to offer some individual help to prepare for attending a service, or, to find an alternative way to say goodbye, that feels comfortable and right.

I would talk through any ideas that you may have so that together, we can work out how best to help any family member who has special needs perhaps as a consequence of having a learning difficulty or some other type of disability.

Here are some of my own examples. Any of these could be adapted to suit the understanding and needs of the individual.

- δ Introducing myself beforehand, so that we feel that we know each other. I could explain what will happen at the funeral and my role as a Celebrant.
- δ Having an individual conversation, asking about their special memories of the person who has died. Perhaps talking about loss and grief and about how they are currently feeling.
- δ Supporting a visit to the Crematorium beforehand in order to allay the fear of an unfamiliar place and also to answer any questions before the service.
- δ Sharing a video clip showing different parts of the service, filmed in a Crematorium.
- ⊗ If it is not possible to attend the actual service, I can arrange to spend some time together after the service. This could be in a Funeral Parlour, with a very small number of family and friends. The content of this service could be very similar to the actual service, but much less formal, and could, perhaps include lighting a candle, or other simple ritual to help to say goodbye.
- ⊗ Arranging a video call after the actual service, when, again, we could talk about the person who has died. I could describe the service, including some of the words and music that were included, and invite any contributions that feel right.
- ⊗ Once restrictions allow, arranging a walk, perhaps to a special place, again, to allow a more informal conversation about the person who has died and about the service that took place. It may be possible to lay some flowers and say some words of goodbye.
- ⊗ In recognition that it may be helpful to have some follow up contact, I would commit to a further call, perhaps a week or two weeks following the bereavement.

All interactions will be in-line with current Covid-19 Guidelines.

