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What is a celebration of life? How does it differ from a traditional funeral service? And what should you expect if youve been invited to or plan to arrange one in the future? Celebrations of life have become extremely popular, and as specialists in this field, we receive similar questions surrounding this topic every single day.So, we thought wed compile a list of commonly asked questions and answer them right here. Read on as we explore all you need to know about a celebration of life. A celebration of life is a ceremony typically held after, or instead of, a traditional funeral service. It aims to celebrate the life of a loved one in a positive way, focusing on the good times and memories made.Families that hold a celebration of life generally choose a direct cremation for their loved one beforehand. Instead of focusing on grieving and the sadness of saying goodbye, they then use the celebration of life as a unique send off.A celebration of life brings happiness, usually with an activity that concentrates on the deceaseds personality. It's about highlighting the joy they brought to others during the time they lived. Traditionally, funerals arent pleasant services to attend by any means. Theyre gloomy, sad, and dispiriting, focusing on mourning rather than celebration.While its good to mourn and honour your loved one respectfully, many now choose to do so in a more upbeat fashion.Some decide that both a funeral service and celebration of life will be held in honour of their loved one, but a growing number of people are now opting to leave the traditional funeral behind.This is where a direct cremation comes in. A direct cremation takes place before the celebration of life, allowing you to celebrate your loved ones life at any time and place that suits you. Many even choose to bring the ashes along.A celebration of life is also not held at a crematorium or church like a traditional funeral will be.But how does a celebration of life compare to a memorial service? A memorial service typically takes place without the deceased present. This means that no body or ashes remain at the service. The service can take place at any time after the burial or cremation and be held anywhere, just like a celebration of life.Memorial services tend to be serious and more formal. Whereas, a celebration of life is less formal and more celebratory. Each and every celebration of life is different. Thats the whole point of the arrangement. Its supposed to be unique to your loved one, without the traditional procedures.One thing that goes for every celebration of life though is that there are no formal arrangements. It is entirely up to you and your family what happens at your loved ones celebration of life, but they typically resemble a party atmosphere with food, drinks and a good time. Again, this is entirely up to you and your family. Celebrations of life can last as little as one hour, or can be made to last an entire day. In fact, you could even plan a full weekend of celebrations if you wanted to. Youve probably got the gist of this now. Yet again, its up to you. Thats the beauty of choosing a celebration of life.Some may decide the ashes will be present at the celebration, while others may not.You can even scatter the ashes as part of the celebration.Perhaps your loved one cherished a particular spot in a local park? Either way, scattering your loved ones ashes in a place of importance to them could be something you wish to do. Unless stated otherwise, most celebrations of life avoid the colour black. Youre not attending a traditional funeral service, so why dress up like you are?Instead, opt for lively colours such a blues, greens, yellows, or pinks. After all, it is a celebration.On a similar note, also bear in mind your choice of footwear. If youre planning a walk or any other activities, flipflops may not be the most sensible option. When it comes to planning the event, there are a number of steps you should take to make sure everything is covered. Here are six steps to planning a celebration of life:Invite ideas from close friends and family Those who loved the person they lost can often find comfort and closure by helping arrange a celebration of life. Be sure to invite and encourage ideas from close friends and familiy, discuss the finer details and welcome their suggestions. Just like yourself, they are grieving too.Decide on a place for celebration There are endless options for a celebration of life venue. It could be held at a private residence, a community space, a place of worship, wherever. One thing we will say on this matter though, remember to consider any audio-visual needs, food preparation, parking, and accessibility. These are all very important when it comes to finding a venue that can cater for your celebration of life wishes.Determine who will be invited and when the celebration will take place Its important to work out who will be invited to the celebration of life, whilst making sure to consider any venue limitations. Also think about choosing a convenient weekend if guest from out-of-town are expected. 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And when you get that invitation to a celebration of life, you might feel a mix of emotions sadness, of course, but also a desire to celebrate the incredible person you knew.If you want to be there to honor their memory, but you're unsure about the etiquette for a celebration of life, this guide is for you.Consider it a roadmap to navigating this event and showing your support in a way that truly reflects the life being celebrated.What is a Celebration of Life?A celebration of life is a gathering to honor the life and legacy of a loved one. Unlike a traditional funeral, it's a more personal and uplifting way to say goodbye.It celebrates the life lived, the joy brought to others, and the cherished memories. Heres what makes a celebration of life different from a traditional funeral:The feel of the eventCelebration of life: The mood is entirely dependent on those organizing it. It can be a lighter mood if they want, or more reflective.Funeral: Funerals are traditionally more somber events. There's still space for cherished memories, but the focus is often on respectful goodbyes and quiet reflection.Structure of the ceremonyCelebration of life: The format is flexible. It can incorporate some elements from a traditional funeral, or leave them out entirely. Some events require participation, but you will usually get a heads-up about whats involved.Funeral: Funerals typically follow a set structure with religious readings, hymns, and a eulogy.The locationCelebration of life: The location could be anywhere special to the person who has passed away a favorite park, a cozy cafe, or even their own backyard. It creates a more personal and intimate atmosphere.Funeral: Funerals are usually held in churches or funeral homes, creating a more formal setting.What happens at a Celebration of Life?While the specifics will vary, here's a general idea of what you might encounter at a celebration of life event:Welcoming and gatheringGuests are greeted by family members or close friends. This can be a casual meet-and-mingle or a more structured receiving line, depending on the overall feel of the event.Some celebrations of life incorporate memory tables or areas where guests can browse photos, memorabilia, or leave written messages for the family.The main eventTheres usually some time for heartfelt reflections on your loved one's life. Readings may include poems, religious passages, or excerpts from their favorite writings. Family members or friends may also share personal stories that highlight the legacy and impact of the person who passed away.The ceremony might include instrumental pieces, hymns, or even favorite songs of the person. In some cases, there could be performances.Time for sharingSome celebrations include an open mic portion where guests are invited to share their own stories and memories of the person. This can be a heartwarming and intimate way to collectively remember their life.A visual slideshow or video montage is usually a popular way to showcase the life of the person. Photos, home videos, or even short clips shared by friends can create a touching and memorable experience.A reception or meal togetherCelebrations of life often include a meal or refreshments for guests. This can be anything from a casual finger food spread to a full sit-down dinner, depending on the time of day and family preferences.Alternative celebration of life eventsCelebrations of life can be as unique as the person they honor. Here are some alternative event options that are now more common:Themed celebrations: If the deceased had a particular passion or hobby, the celebration could be themed around it. For example, a nature lover might have a tree-planting ceremony or a casual gathering outdoors.Activity-based celebrations: Some families may choose to incorporate activities the person enjoyed into the event. This could involve a hike in their favorite park, a game of their favorite sport, or even a dance party with their favorite music.Virtual celebrations: Technology allows for virtual celebrations of life, especially for geographically dispersed loved ones. A live-streamed ceremony or an online memorial page can be meaningful ways to connect and share memories.How long does the event typically last?Celebration of life ceremonies can vary quite significantly in length, depending on the family's wishes and the structure of the event. Here's a general breakdown:Shorter celebrations (1-2 hours): These events may focus on key elements, such as a few speeches or readings and shared memories. They might be followed by a light reception or refreshments.Longer celebrations (2-4 hours): More elaborate celebrations may incorporate a wider range of elements, including multimedia tributes, open mic opportunities for guests to share stories, creative activities, and a longer reception with a full meal.It's always a good idea to check the invitation or program for details about the estimated duration of the event.What tone should you expect?The overall tone of a celebration of life is one of remembrance and gratitude. As a guest, you can expect the atmosphere to be welcoming and comforting.There will likely be moments of sadness and reflection as loved ones share stories and memories, but the focus will be honoring the positive impact and joy the person brought to the world.What should you wear?Unlike traditional funerals with formal dress codes, celebrations of life tend to be more flexible in terms of attire. However, it's still important to dress respectfully and appropriately for the occasion.Attire recommendations for menAim for smart casual: A good rule of thumb is to dress somewhere between casual everyday wear and a formal suit. Khakis or dress pants paired with a collared shirt, sweater, or polo shirt are all appropriate options.Consider the location: If the event is being held outdoors or in a more casual setting, you can opt for a slightly more relaxed look, like a pair of jeans and a button-down shirt.Focus on neutrals and subdued colors: While brighter colors aren't necessarily out of the question, it's generally best to avoid overly loud or attention-grabbing attire.Attire recommendations for womenSmart casual attire: Similar to men, women can choose business casual attire. This could include skirts or dresses with a sweater or blouse, dress pants with a tasteful top, or a jumpsuit.Consider the location: As with men, the location can influence your outfit choice. If the event is outdoors, opt for something more comfortable and weather-appropriate.Subdued colors and styles: While a touch of color is ok, avoid overly flashy or brightly colored clothing. Opt for classic styles and more muted tones.Shoes and accessories: Heels are acceptable, but flats or wedges might be more comfortable for a longer event. Keep accessories simple and tasteful, avoiding anything too loud or distracting.Remember, the most important thing is to dress respectfully and comfortably. When in doubt, err on the side of being slightly more dressed up than underdressed.Should you bring something?Theres no obligation to bring something to a celebration of life, but a thoughtful gesture can be a great way to show you care.Here are a few things you can bring:Sympathy card or note: A heartfelt message expressing your condolences and cherished memories of the person is always appreciated by the family.A donation in their memory: Consider making a charitable donation to a cause they cared about in their name.A dish to share (if potluck): Some celebrations of life might be potlucks. If the family has requested this, be sure to bring a dish to share in accordance with their instructions.Should you bring flowers?Flowers are a traditional way to express sympathy at funerals, but celebrations of life offer more flexibility. If you arent sure about whether theyre appropriate, here's what you can consider:If the family has expressed a preference regarding flowers (e.g., donations to a charity instead of flowers), it's best to follow their wishes.A small, intimate gathering might not have the space for a large floral arrangement. Consider a potted plant or a smaller bouquet if the celebration is held in a private residence.A thoughtful gesture, however you choose to express it, is what matters most.Celebration of Life etiquette: Dos and dontsHere are some etiquette tips to keep in mind:Do:Dress respectfully: While attire is typically more relaxed than a funeral, aim for modesty and avoid anything overly casual or revealing.Offer condolences to the family: Express your sympathy and share a fond memory of the deceased.Sign the guestbook or memory board: Leave a message for the family to cherish.Share memories during open mic segments: If there's an opportunity to share stories, do so in a respectful and positive way.Be sensitive: While it is a celebration, people will be grieving. Be mindful of others, avoid loud conversations, and turn your phone on silent.Don't:Arrive late: Be on time to show respect for the family and the program.Dominate conversations: Focus on listening to others' memories and sharing your own stories briefly.Gossip or speak negatively: Use tact and sensitivity when choosing your words.Leave abruptly: If possible, stay after the program to greet the family and offer your support.Next stepsWe hope this guide helps you navigate the etiquette for a celebration of life event that honors the memory of your loved one. If you want to help plan out a memorial event like a celebration of life, consider using Meadow.At Meadow, we understand the weight of this moment. We offer a more compassionate and meaningful way to celebrate a life well-lived with customized memorial planning services.Our team of caring memorial planners partner with you in this tender time to create an occasion as remarkable as the life it honors.With our licensed team, you can expect:A weight off your shoulders: Our memorial planners will take care of every detail, and theyll be in the background at your memorial, ensuring everything runs smoothly.The perfect location: Our planners help you find the perfect location, whether thats an idyllic beachfront, your loved ones favorite restaurant, or the comfort of your own home.Transparent pricing: Our cremation services start at $1,295, and for those who wish to include a viewing or memorial service, additional fees range from $1,970 to $3,900+, depending on the specific arrangements.The personal touch: Our memorial planners will ensure your loved ones presence is felt throughout the occasion.Explore our Custom Memorial Services. 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Well talk all about life celebrations and what to expect. With this information in mind, youll be better prepared before you attend one.Lets explore together.So, what is a celebration of life exactly? Essentially, a celebration of life is an event that focuses primarily on the life a loved one lived, and the legacy that they leave behind. Sometimes even with a party-like atmosphere, a celebration of life tends to be just that a celebration. The focus is on happy memories of the deceased rather than on the sad fact that theyre no longer with us. If youre thinking that this is not too far off from a funeral service, well, youre probably right. Its a term that can mean different things to different cultures or to those who live in different parts of the country (or world).Sometimes, a life celebration occurs instead of a funeral. Other times the family may wish to hold a traditional funeral service and then a reception that they call a life celebration.In other words, you can expect a much less sad and somber affair than the funeral; it will be an event where family and friends can remember together happier times spent with the deceased.Now that weve defined it, we can further explore the differences between a life celebration event and other more traditional services.It helps to know that a memorial service typically takes place without the decedent present. This means that there is no body nor cremated remains at a memorial service. A memorial service could therefore take place any time (soon, or much later) after the decedent has been cremated or buried.The focus of a life celebration is one of joyful remembrance, and not necessarily feelings of sorrow. So its plausible that the one you attend could also technically be a memorial service, if no remains are present.So a memorial service may tend a little more toward being formal and serious, whereas a life celebration is often less formal and more celebratory. This leads us toA funeral is a service where the body is present. Thats the main difference between a funeral and a memorial service, by the way the memorial service, as mentioned above, does not have the body present.So difference between a celebration of life and a funeral is again that emphasis on life rather than death; joy rather than sorrow; lets raise a glass in memory of rather than let us pay our respects toMore: Everything Different Between a Celebration of Life & Funeral ServiceSince its a celebration that focuses on the persons life, there will most likely be sharing of memories and stories among family and friends. There may be singing or joyful worshiping, or there may be a playlist on featuring the deceaseds favorite songs.You may hear poems read or excerpts spoken. You might encounter karaoke, an open bar, a potluck, photo booths with props, blowing bubblesThe point is, life celebrations can be highly, highly personalized, from order of service to the food right down to the decor.Each event is different. Thats primarily because each person is different. The whole idea is to veer away from the norm and do something unique.Its also worth noting that some families and cultures use this term interchangeably with the term funeral. But because the focus will be on celebrating life, you can generally expect the atmosphere to be positive.And of course, its perfectly normal for there to still be feelings of sadness even at a life celebration. To celebrate life isnt to deny the reality of death and sadness, but rather to shift the emphasis from the dead to the life they lived and the legacy they left us.When it comes to proper etiquette at a life celebration, when in doubt, go into it just as you would a traditional funeral.Dressing well is always in style Show up a few minutes early Pay your respects to the family (heres what to say) Consider bringing flowers, a card, or a small sympathy gift Sign the guestbook Participate as needed in the service (prayers, silence, singing, standing/sitting, etc) Attend the receptionIf you know the family already, you may already have an idea of their personality as a whole and therefore a clue into how theyll be running the service.Otherwise, consider it a traditional funeral until you arrive and get a feel for the atmosphere. You dont want to walk in there with a big smile and cracking jokes when thats not what the family intended, after all!Just like for a funeral, when it comes to gifts, its most likely perfectly fine to bring a gift or sympathy card with you to give to the family. You could also send flowers before the service, unless the family indicates a preference in lieu of flowers.Gestures like these are thoughtful no matter how you look at them, so unless the family has specifically instructed NO GIFTS, a gift or card is entirely acceptable.See here for some meaningful sympathy gift ideas.Again, when in doubt, you cant go wrong by simply wearing what you would normally wear to a funeral. But keep in mind that its also possible that the family has a preference as to dress code.Check the invitation. Maybe their loved ones favorite color was blue, and theyve requested that everyone wear blue to the life celebration. Or maybe the decedent had a bright and bubbly personality, and theres just no way he or she would have wanted dark and drab colors at their service.To reiterate, the dress code its simply all up to the family. If they dont mention anything, assume that they are expecting traditional, conservative funeral attire.Note: Even if you miss a dress code memo and look a bit different from others around you at the service, try not to worry about it too much. The important thing is that you have showed up to show your support for the family as they prepare to commemorate the life and legacy of their loved one. Thats what theyre going to remember.To help you learn more about celebrations of life and what they entail, here are just a few more links that you may find interesting: Share this article Copied! This page may contain affiliate links. If you choose to interact with or purchase from another business, we may receive payment. Learn more. When it comes to ceremonies and rituals after losing a loved one, there are a lot of terms that can be confusing. Celebrations of life are a popular way to memorialize and celebrate the life of a loved one and an alternative to a traditional funeral or memorial service.What is a celebration of life service?A celebration of life is similar to a funeral or memorial service, but generally is less rooted in tradition and focuses on celebrating the life, impact and achievements of an individual, instead of mourning the loss of that person.This celebration is also often an event that holds a tone of celebration and joy, instead of a somber memorial event. Often times loved ones are encouraged to share their favorite stories, photos, memories and moments with the person who has passed away. Joining and being in community with others who have lost this special person can be incredibly healing for those who are grieving. If you're struggling to raise funds to cover the cost of a traditional funeral service, a celebration of life is a wonderful alternative that can save you money. Additionally, if you choose to hold a celebration of life, it does not mean that you cannot hold a traditional memorial service as well. Celebrations of life can be held along with a traditional memorial service, that's completely up to the family.A celebration of life can happen at any time after losing someone; whereas a funeral or memorial service generally occurs within a few weeks of someone passing.Celebrations of life are often more creative and focus on activities, food and drinks that the person who passed away enjoyed. Its common for guests to be asked not to wear black and to come ready to share favorite stories. Some things you might encounter at a celebration of life include:Inviting friends & family to share their favorite memories and stories about their loved oneHolding the event at a place special to the deceasedAsking attendees to wear or bring special items or pieces of clothing to the celebration of lifeLarge celebrations that include many laughs, joy, and excitementA celebration of life themed around something special to the person who passed away (such as a celebration of life held on a boat for those who loved to sail, or one held in the forest for nature lovers)This is in contrast to most funerals which generally serve as somber occasions, rather than a celebration of a loved ones life.What happens at a celebration of life ceremony?Celebration of life ceremonies usually include a section where the family or loved ones get up and share stories or a eulogy about the deceased. A memorial slideshow or video may be played and the audience might be asked to participate in a reading or prayer. Celebration of life ceremonies can vary widely and can be more conservative and serious, but still celebrating the life of the deceased, or they can be large lively parties and get togethers that focus on joy and exuberance in celebration of a life well lived.What to say at a celebration of life serviceWhile a celebration of life is a memorial service meant for celebrating the life of the deceased, its still an event that requires tact and respect. When giving condolences to the family, youll want to express your condolences at the loss of your loved one and relay your sympathy to the family. At the same time, keep the tone of the event in mind when giving your condolences. Its a good idea to bring up positive memories and stories you have about the deceased as well as the positive impact the person had.When chatting with others and with the family at a celebration of life, here are some themes you can focus on:Keep the focus on memories that were positive, joyful, exciting, or full of the person's personalityShare moments or times you spent with the individual who had passed that were inspiring to you, or affected your life in a positive mannerBring up communities or individuals that were positively affected by the decedent's presenceShare something you learned from the decedent or an important life lesson they shared that changed your life for the betterCelebration of life etiquetteCelebrations of life do not follow any hard rules when it comes to etiquette, unlike traditional funeral services. A celebration of life can vary from a small gathering at a park to a large party at a venue; it depends on the family and the deceased.Celebrations of life are not funerals and while you may be distraught over the loss of a loved one, it was likely the wish of the family and the deceased to hold a celebration of life where they prefer for the life to be celebrated rather than the loss to be mourned. If you feel that youre too emotional or are on the verge of having an emotional moment, it may be best to excuse yourself so as not to bring down the mood of others at the event. Celebrations of life, while focused on celebration, are still fraught with emotional rawness and are sensitive events, so you shouldnt feel bad if you need to take a moment.What to wear to a celebration of lifeSome celebrations of life ask for attendees to wear certain colors, outfits, or bring certain items along with them to the party. If theres no guidelines or attire mentioned, its generally advisable to still show up in a relatively put together outfit (such as a button down shirt and nice pants) rather than something more casual or messy.Celebrating someones life doesnt only have to be done at an in-person event. Creating a memorial website is a great way to invite friends and family to share their favorite memories, comment on others stories, and join each other in remembering a loved one. Create a memorial website Want to see more articles like this? Like us on Facebook: Last updated March 26, 2023 What is a celebration of life? How does it differ from a traditional funeral service? And what should you expect if youve been invited to or plan to arrange one in the future? Celebrations of life have become extremely popular, and as specialists in this field, we receive similar questions surrounding this topic every single day.So, we thought wed compile a list of commonly asked questions and answer them right here. Read on as we explore all you need to know about a celebration of life. A celebration of life is a ceremony typically held after, or instead of, a traditional funeral service. It aims to celebrate the life of a loved one in a positive way, focusing on the good times and memories made.Families that hold a celebration of life generally choose a direct cremation for their loved one beforehand. Instead of focusing on grieving and the sadness of saying goodbye, they then use the celebration of life as a unique send off.A celebration of life brings happiness, usually with an activity that concentrates on the deceaseds personality. It's about highlighting the joy they brought to others during the time they lived. Traditionally, funerals arent pleasant services to attend by any means. Theyre gloomy, sad, and dispiriting, focusing on mourning rather than celebration.While its good to mourn and honour your loved one respectfully, many now choose to do so in a more upbeat fashion.Some decide that both a funeral service and celebration of life will be held in honour of their loved one, but a growing number of people are now opting to leave the traditional funeral behind.This is where a direct cremation comes in. A direct cremation takes place before the celebration of life, allowing you to celebrate your loved ones life at any time and place that suits you. Many even choose to bring the ashes along.A celebration of life is also not held at a crematorium or church like a traditional funeral will be.But how does a celebration of life compare to a memorial service? A memorial service typically takes place without the deceased present. This means that no body or ashes remain at the service. The service can take place at any time after the burial or cremation and be held anywhere, just like a celebration of life.Memorial services tend to be serious and more formal. Whereas, a celebration of life is less formal and more celebratory. Each and every celebration of life is different. Thats the whole point of the arrangement. Its supposed to be unique to your loved one, without the traditional procedures.One thing that goes for every celebration of life though is that there are no formal arrangements. It is entirely up to you and your family what happens at your loved ones celebration of life, but they typically resemble a party atmosphere with food, drinks and a good time. Again, this is entirely up to you and your family. Celebrations of life can last as little as one hour, or can be made to last an entire day. In fact, you could even plan a full weekend of celebrations if you wanted to. Youve probably got the gist of this now. Yet again, its up to you. Thats the beauty of choosing a celebration of life.Some may decide the ashes will be present at the celebration, while others may not.You can even scatter the ashes as part of the celebration.Perhaps your loved one cherished a particular spot in a local park? Either way, scattering your loved ones ashes in a place of importance to them could be something you wish to do. Unless stated otherwise, most celebrations of life avoid the colour black. Youre not attending a traditional funeral service, so why dress up like you are?Instead, opt for lively colours such a blues, greens, yellows, or pinks. After all, it is a celebration.On a similar note, also bear in mind your choice of footwear. If youre planning a walk or any other activities, flipflops may not be the most sensible option. When it comes to planning the event, there are a number of steps you should take to make sure everything is covered. Here are six steps to planning a celebration of life:Invite ideas from close friends and family Those who loved the person they lost can often find comfort and closure by helping arrange a celebration of life. Be sure to invite and encourage ideas from close friends and familiy, discuss the finer details and welcome their suggestions. Just like yourself, they are grieving too.Decide on a place for celebration There are endless options for a celebration of life venue. It could be held at a private residence, a community space, a place of worship, wherever. One thing we will say on this matter though, remember to consider any audio-visual needs, food preparation, parking, and accessibility. These are all very important when it comes to finding a venue that can cater for your celebration of life wishes.Determine who will be invited and when the celebration will take place Its important to work out who will be invited to the celebration of life, whilst making sure to consider any venue limitations. Also think about choosing a convenient weekend if guest from out-of-town are expected. Its always a good idea to ask your friends and family for a few convenient dates before settling on arrangements.Think about the refreshments People arent expecting a 5-star three course meal, but some sort of food and drink and arrangements should be provided.Dont forget music and readings A celebration of life should be meaningful for everyone attending, and music, readings, and remembrances from friends and family helps this. Playing your loved ones favourite music is always favourable, or even if someone attending the celebration can perform.Select photos or videos of remembrance A great way to spark memories and celebrate the life of our loved one is through a photo/video display. If this is something you think your family would appreciate, be sure to ask for their input on selection and if they have any photos or videos to submit for the display. People celebrate the life of their loved ones in many ways. Some can be a simple home gathering. Others may include a religious ceremony. Whatever you decide, make sure its what your loved one would have wanted.Coming up with a celebration of life idea is easier said than done though. So, heres a little inspiration to help you plan the perfect send-off:Host a family gathering at home with party food, drinks and musicHave a barbeque in the gardenSpread ashes in your loved ones favourite locationHave ashes sent to the surface of the moonPlant a tree in your loved ones nameGet friends and family together for a walkLight up their ashes in the sky with a firework display When it comes to proper etiquette at a celebration of life, when in doubt, act as you would with a traditional funeral.Make sure youre not late to the celebration of life. Show up a few minutes earlyConsider buying flowers, a card, or small giftSign the guestbook if there is onePay your respects to the familyDress wellIf you know the family already, the chances are you know what to expect. This will give you a good clue into how the celebration of life will be run. Were called celebration of life for a reason. As Britains best value direct cremation provider, we allow the nation to celebrate their loved ones lives starting at just 1,195. Whether youre looking for a fully inclusive funeral plan, or want a simple, fuss-free direct cremation service, we can support you every step of the way.If youd like to find out more about our direct cremation service, or just want some advice from our friendly team, contact us today. Were standing by 24 hours a day and would love to chat. Give us a call if you need to organise a collection of the deceased. We're available 24 hours a day. Contact us My only rule is to make it a reflection of the person you are honoring, says Anne Murphy, a life-cycle celebrant in St. Paul, Minnesota. You should have a really good idea of how they lived and how they impacted our lives by the end of the service. If you dont, it can feel really empty. Gather memories, stories and mementos such as photos and letters from family members and friends. To coordinate planning, Murphy suggests using a shared online document that all involved in the service can see and comment on so everyone is comfortable about what is to be shared. Jeff Baron, a playwright and childrens book author, has led numerous services for friends and family in the past 20 years. I think about it the way I think of putting on any show. I make it meaningful and engaging for the intended audience and for the deceased, he says. His tips include having a rehearsal for speakers, as well as offering to read remembrances for those who are uncomfortable speaking in public or out-of-town. Offer livestreaming Randy Anderson, a funeral director in Alexander City, Alabama, and past president of the NFDA, has arranged more than 100 services witha livestreaming optionin the past few years for older family members who cant travel and for those in the military unable to come home. One of the reasons Anderson began offering an online option was his own experience as a remote attendee at a friends funeral. You couldnt see the congregation of people there, but you really felt like you were a part of that group. It made me feel better because I was able to support my friend and his family. As part of planning, let all those who will read or perform know in advance that the program will be streamed, he says. If a person who cant attend wants to say something, someone else can readtributes or even better, Anderson says, a video recording can be played. While I could read a letter from someone whos deployed, he says, I dont have the same body language that they have when theyre reading it. Its been a blessing to be able to widen the circle of comfort and care for bereaved families, says Bernstein, who has presided over several hybrid gatherings. Resources The NFDA has a page with information onplanning a serviceas well as tips onwriting a eulogy. This article was originally published May 11, 2020. It has been updated with more recent data on cremation as well as information on livestreaming services.

What is a celebration of life memorial service. What is the difference between a funeral service and a celebration of life. Is a celebration of life a funeral. What is a celebration of life service.