

Remembrance

“I remember...” Memory is a powerful thing. We carry it in many parts of us – our thoughts, our senses, our emotions.

Melinda Worth Popham wrote: “I don't avoid pain by not remembering something; I try to remember. Memory is empowering, and it's what gives you your sense of continuity in the world.”

Remembrance is not just the things that go through our minds. It also involves doing things that will result in holding on to the memory of the person who died in a special way.

Remembrance can be a formal ritual, or it can be spontaneous and intimate. Acts of remembrance help us discover new ways to keep the reality of our loved one alive in a way that we can use our five senses to engage. This book is a remembrance for me, as it is intended to help me keep the stories and the sensations of my loved ones fresh in my experience, in a form that I can hand down to my children and their children. Your remembrances may involve music, art, stories, favorite activities, formal rituals, or anything that fits within your culture and the life of the one who died.

The death of someone we love creates a powerful paradox in which life co-exists with the knowledge of death. Remembrance honors that space in which all survivors ultimately must stand: Suspended between life and death, preparing themselves for the inevitable release of the pain and sorrow caused by the ending of a life, while embracing the memories, treasuring the knowledge that they have grieved because they have loved.