

Handling the Anniversary of a Loss

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1. Be mindful of expectations about the day and its meaning.
The significance of the day may provoke complicated emotions. Not only will the day bring remembrances of a difficult event or of a person who died, it can also stir feelings and reactions related to the original event.
2. Plan ahead for the day. Include everyone involved – colleagues, children, and parents – in the decision making. Plan activities and events that provide structured options for different choices.
3. Consider how different options for memorialization fit your needs.
Decide if you prefer to be part of a large public gathering or engage in a more private event; if you want to be involved in traditional ceremonies such as a community service, or something personally created. Anniversaries provide the chance to decrease isolation and feel supported by those who have had a similar experience.
4. Be with friends and family and use all resources available. Enlist the help of others to be available or “on call” if needed to support yourself or as a help to children in your care if things begin to feel unmanageable.
5. Be prepared for changes. Plans may be put in place and as the day draws closer, feelings may change. Being flexible and making new plans may be necessary.