



Final Passages

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“The beauty of a home funeral is that it has a graceful flow and continuity when participants are willing and able to follow the natural progression it creates. The presence of love is palpable and opens the heart beyond imagination. Quite often a theme emerges, emulating the personality of the deceased, helping everyone to feel connected and all parts of the event to feel authentic.”

—Jerrigrace Lyons

Components of an Ideal Home Funeral

1. Death at home — First steps

Allow time to begin integrating the death — breathe and stay open
Gather support from those who desire to and are invited to participate
Create sacred, uncluttered space for preparing the body

2. Environment — Creating the ambiance for the Vigil or Wake

Remove hospital equipment and other clutter
Personalize the surroundings — searching for ways to maintain connection
Music, candles, what feels natural, normal, gentle and loving

3. Preparation of the body for Vigil, or a Wake

Preparation — ritual of washing, anointing and dressing the body
Preserving the body with some form of ice or coldness

4. Ceremony — Formal or informal gatherings

Rituals and other activities that assist the grieving process
Decorating of casket
Other activities for participants

5. Filling out and filing of paperwork

Death Certificate and Disposition Permit filed at your local district OVR

6. Participation in the Disposition — cremation or burial

Final preparations and transference of the body to a casket
Driving to the crematorium or cemetery
Signing an authorization for cremation form (if cremation is desired)
Witnessing the cremation, placement of casket in cremation chamber
Graveside participation, service, lowering the body and filling in the grave