

*You may have discovered that the balance between grieving and living is an ongoing process. You are working to find a new normal while also continuing to remember your loved one.*

Though they are physically absent, you still have a relationship with them. Only now, it's changed. Looking at photos and thinking about the advice they would give can be helpful and keep them alive in your hearts. There are many ways of remembering your loved one: lighting a candle, having a favorite meal in their memory, or gathering with family and friends for a beloved activity.

Expressing oneself in gratitude can be cathartic. You can write a letter to your loved one, thanking them for what they mean to you and how they have affected your life. Have you tried journaling? It's a great way to understand what you are feeling and thinking.

It may be helpful to consider how you cope with stress. What has worked for you in the past? How do you cope with stress now? Are these methods adequate for you or do you need to find new ways to relieve some stress? Exercise, spending time outdoors, reading, praying or meditating are all excellent ways to reduce stress and reset your body.

How you take care of your physical health helps your mental health be strong as well. It's a good idea to check in with your doctor to make sure all is well with you. It is easy to forget when you're in the middle of grief, but getting enough sleep, eating balanced meals, and staying hydrated are part of the path to healing your heart.

**Please know that we are here to support and encourage you. We have support groups and grief counselors available, free of charge, and we are always happy to help.**

*Walking with you,*

-Bristol Bereavement Team