

Creating Memories

If you have been diagnosed with a serious illness, you may worry that you will not recover. Some people like to find ways to help their children to remember them in the future.

There are various ways that you can do this including:

- Making a memory box
- Writing letters
- Making a memory book
- Putting photographs in an album
- Buying a special gift

Whilst some parents might find it very helpful to prepare something for their children, others may find it too difficult and distressing, or be too tired and unwell to undertake this.

Making a Memory Box

• This can be done by you on your own, or together with your children. It is possible to buy boxes specifically designed for the purpose but in our experience, children are often just as happy with a box from a stationery shop, a decorated shoebox, plastic box etc.

Things to put in a memory box could include:

- Photos
- Documents such as a passport or driving licence
- Souvenirs from family holidays
- Cards, letters, drawings and poems
- Items of clothing e.g. scarf, cap, tie
- Favourite perfume or aftershave
- Items of jewellery
- Sporting memorabilia
- Favourite CD / DVD / book
- Tickets from special events e.g. visit to theatre, theme park, sporting event

Making a memory book

This can be done by you on your own, or together with your children. You can use a scrap book or something more formal if you prefer.

Things to put in a Memory Book could include:

- Details of your childhood and adult life, including school days and career
- Photos
- Cards, letters, drawings and poems
- Tickets from special events e.g. visit to theatre, theme park, sporting event
- A Family Tree
- A list of your likes and dislikes e.g. favourite and least favourite food, favourite TV programme and music, best and worst subjects at school, hobbies etc

Writing Letters

Writing a letter can be a way of telling your children:

- more about yourself,
- the way you feel about them
- the special memories you have
- things you wish for them for the future

Some parents write letters for their children to have immediately after they have died, whereas others write them for when their children are older.

It is helpful to keep your wishes for your children fairly general. For example, "I hope when you grow up you have a fulfilling career" rather than "I hope when you grow up you become a Doctor".

If your wishes are too specific, your children may worry that they have let you down if they are not able to fulfil them, or feel compelled to make choices that are not right for them.

It is also worth considering when your messages may be read, and the impact that the timing may have. For example, writing birthday cards for future birthdays could mean that a happy day becomes one of sadness as the parent's absence is emphasised.

Call us: 0118 934 2604

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Compiling a Photograph Album

This could contain photographs from your childhood, your adult life, of you with the children, and of family occasions. You might want to add comments or details to the photographs about the people or events they show.

Buying a Special Gift

- Gifts could include:
- a photograph frame with a special photo in it
- a soft toy
- a piece of jewellery
- an item that holds a particular significance

If you would find it helpful to discuss ways that you can prepare something for your children, please contact Daisy's Dream on 0118 934 2604 to talk to one of our Therapeutic Practitioners.

Not all parents wish to, or are able to, prepare something to give to their children. It is a very individual decision. At Daisy's Dream we often help children to make a memory book or memory box after the special person in their family has died.

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