

Consolo

B E R E A V E M E N T S U P P O R T N E W S L E T T E R

Losing a loved one is a difficult experience, and arranging their funeral can be especially tough. At Tovey Bros we are here to help you through this challenging time and choosing floral tributes is often part of this process.



You may be wondering which flowers are appropriate, and while traditional funeral flowers like white lilies, roses, chrysanthemums and carnations are often chosen for their symbolism of love, sympathy and respect, the most important thing is to select flowers that reflect your loved one's personality and preferences or the overall style and tone of the service. A florist can help you create a meaningful arrangement, and we are always happy to help connect you with a local expert.

Some families like to plant bulbs or seeds, or even a tree, in the months after a funeral, as a way of remembering their loved one. Historically, flowers and candles were used at both funerals and weddings for their pleasant aroma. While that may no longer be the primary reason, the tradition of funeral flowers continues, imbued with rich symbolism. Of course, flowers

play many other roles in our lives, from brightening our homes and celebrating new arrivals and achievements, to offering apologies when words or actions have caused offense.

Funerals can sometimes be a source of friction among grieving families as they navigate both their loss and the necessary arrangements. This newsletter offers coping strategies for dealing with family friction after a bereavement, along with further information about the symbolic meanings of various flowers, helping you express your feelings through the language of blooms.



James Tovey

Grief alone is tough enough to deal with but sadly, for some families, a death can strain interpersonal relations to breaking point, further compounding distress.

When someone dies there is often a hope or even an assumption that everyone in the family will be able to support each other or even heal relationships which were struggling.

Occasionally, however, instead of pulling together to deal with all the difficult tasks and administration after someone dies, families can find themselves in the midst of emotional arguments and disputes. Grief can be raw, especially in the early days, and each person will be feeling different things at different times. When people are 'out of sync' in this way, it can be difficult to support each other.



In some cases, families have tensions and disputes that go back for many years and it's unrealistic to expect these to always go away after a bereavement. They're more likely to be heightened by the feelings of loss, and the practical issues that may have to be faced.

People can disagree on what kind of funeral to hold, whether to have a cremation or burial, how much to spend and who pays – which is why having a funeral plan in place is so important. Dealing with someone's possessions can also be a sensitive topic. Some people feel that they need to move on and clear things out quickly. Others can't bear the idea of making changes or letting go of someone's clothes and possessions.

Particularly vulnerable are those who find themselves isolated from family members who are in charge of the funeral arrangements, some of whom find themselves excluded from the event entirely.

Disputes over possessions and property may involve money which some family members may rightly or wrongly have been counting on. There are also secondary losses involved in loss of a home or shared possessions which can be very painful, especially in cases of blended families. Even items with no financial value can sometimes have great emotional significance.

If disputes do arise then there are a few things which sometimes help.

- *Try where possible to remember that people show grief in different ways, and that everyone is almost certainly hurting and experiencing difficult emotions. When a disagreement happens, you may need to take some time apart and come back together when things feel less raw.*
- *If possible do try to keep talking and seek mediation - many disputes arise because people don't know what's happening, feel left out of the arrangements, or feel too much is put on them.*
- *When talking about difficult topics, try to focus on how you feel rather than what the other person has done. Use 'I' rather than 'you' statements when trying to*

after a bereavement...

explain why you are upset. For example, 'I'm finding it very difficult and emotional that I can't keep some of mum's clothes' rather than 'How could you be so cruel and thoughtless to get rid of everything without me?'

If you are reading this before you've been bereaved, the best way to avoid very painful disputes is to deal with as many issues as possible before someone dies. Preparing a will and a funeral plan and making your wishes known can help head off the guesswork needed if someone dies without telling anyone what they want.

If you didn't talk beforehand, in the first hours and days after someone dies there is still a chance to sit down with the key people involved. You can work out together who's going to tell people, what, if anything, you're going to share

on social media (and when) and make a plan for the upcoming days and months. If some issue is very important to you, make sure you tell people as soon as possible.

It's really important that everyone is invited to the grieving process. So, if you do find yourself in this situation, make your desire to come to the funeral and pay your respects clear. And if reaching out yourself doesn't feel manageable, ask a third party to enquire about funeral arrangements and how you can pay your respects.

If you need practical advice, you can contact The National Bereavement Service. They have a helpline and can help you decide if you need legal advice. Your local solicitor will be able to guide you in writing a will or setting up a power of attorney. For funeral plan advice, please contact kim@toveybros.co.uk

Dr Bill Webster returns to Wales...

**Seminars both for the bereaved
and for professionals on
Thursday 20th March –
see separate flyers for details.**





Join Tovey Bros Usk at The Big Welsh Brew Wednesday 19th March!...



St David's
Hospice Care

Bringing care home

Become a Hospice Hero and help to make a difference to palliative, end-of-life care in your community by coming together for a good cause!

The Big Welsh Brew is an event being hosted by Tovey Bros Usk to raise funds for St David's Hospice Care – please join us at our Usk Funeral Home, Maryport Street, for a cuppa, cake and a chat, at any time between 11am and 4pm. Refreshments are free, but any donation is welcome.

Your support through taking part will make a vital difference - helping St David's to continue providing care and support to over 3,500 patients, and their families, across South East Wales.

The language of flowers...



- **Lilies** are the most popular choice for funerals in the UK. White lilies, especially, symbolise sympathy and compassion. Oriental lilies represent eternal life, and peace lilies suggest a rebirth following death.
- **Roses** and their meaning differ depending on the colour. Red is believed to symbolise grief and sorrow, and yellow roses are often given by friends as a sign of the depth of their friendship.
- **Chrysanthemums**, like roses, have a meaning that changes according to their colour, red for love and white for innocence. But in general, they represent trust, friendship and loyalty. They're called 'mums' for short too, so often appear in funeral tributes for mothers.
- **The Poppy** is a symbol of consolation for a death in the family, peace in death, resurrection and eternal life and for remembering the fallen of various wars and armed conflicts.

● **Forget-Me-Nots** symbolise true love, memories and respect. They represent a promise that you will always remember them and will keep them in your thoughts.

● **The zinnia flower** has several meanings including thoughts of absent friends, goodness and lasting affection.

● **The daffodil** symbolises rebirth and new beginnings. It's one of the first flowers to bloom at the end of winter, announcing the beginning of spring and signifying the end of the cold, dark days. Less commonly, daffodils may also symbolise resilience, forgiveness and vitality.

● **Purple hyacinths**, which are often seen in funeral arrangements, represent regret and sorrow and blue hyacinths convey sincerity and the expression of genuine, heartfelt emotions.

● **Rosemary** has long been associated with remembering the departed and fidelity to a friend and has been used since Roman times for funerals.

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