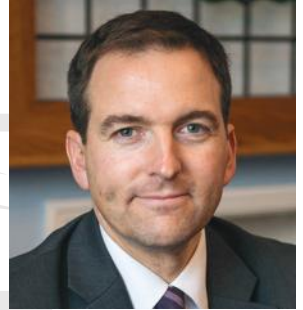




Consolo

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

As the clocks go forward this March, we find ourselves stepping into a season that often feels at odds with the landscape of loss. While the world outside begins its rhythmic shift toward renewal and longer, brighter days, the weight of grief can make that extra hour of light feel more like an exposure than a gift. The contrast between nature's rebirth and the internal stillness of mourning can be a difficult path to navigate.



Spring is traditionally a time for “spring cleaning” – a chance to open the windows, shake out the dust, and clear the air. However, when you are grieving, the act of “clearing out” carries a much deeper emotional charge. It isn’t just about tidying shelves; it is about navigating the physical memories and the weight of what has been left behind.

In the following piece, we explore the intersection of memory and minimalism. This is the gentle, proactive practice of decluttering your life to ease the future burden on loved ones. Beyond its practical purpose, this process can unexpectedly offer peace and clarity in the present. A core tenet is ensuring family members are not left to triage a lifetime of accumulated paperwork and random odds and sods.

Modern spring cleaning can also include organising digital legacies – logging passwords and deciding how social media accounts should be handled. While these tasks can feel daunting, they are acts of care. If you need support navigating this journey, please reach out to the STEPS programme or join us for a TLC coffee morning in Newport or Usk. You don’t have to do this alone.

James Tovey

1860 2010
150 YEARS
A family concern



The thought of organising our lives for the inevitable end can seem morbid. Yet, the Swedish tradition of döstädning offers a profoundly practical, thoughtful, and even healing approach to managing our possessions and preparing for the future. Far from being a gloomy task, this intentional paring down of belongings can be a meaningful practice, providing clarity to our present lives and acting as a final, loving gift to the loved ones we leave behind.

The Burden of the Inheritance

For those who have experienced the loss of a close family member, the logistical and emotional task of clearing out a home while navigating intense grief is a heavy burden. Many bereaved individuals describe the process of sorting through a lifetime of accumulated items as “torturous” or “gruelling,” with every object carrying the weight of a memory or an unresolved emotion. The sheer volume of “stuff” – from unworn clothes and outdated paperwork to countless mementos – can transform a time meant for grieving and remembrance into a period of overwhelming stress and decision fatigue.

This is where the philosophy of döstädning offers a path to peace. The core principle is simple: clean out unnecessary belongings to spare your family the emotional and practical distress of having to do it while they are grieving. It is a conscious decision to lighten their load, demonstrating an act of care that extends beyond one's own lifetime.

A Process for the Living, Not the Dead

It's primarily about living more intentionally. The process encourages a deep reflection on what truly matters in life – relationships, experiences, and core values – rather than

material possessions. By mindfully deciding which items to keep, donate, or discard you are not just tidying a physical space; you are clearing mental clutter and gaining a sense of control and calm that can improve your current well-being.

Margareta Magnusson, the author who popularized the concept in her book “The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning”, suggests starting the process at any age, not just in old age. The benefit of starting early is that you can tackle the process gradually, allowing time to make thoughtful decisions without feeling rushed or overwhelmed by a health condition or imminent life change.

Navigating the Emotional Landscape

The emotional work of döstädning is its most challenging yet rewarding aspect. As you revisit items, memories – both good and bad – will surface, which is also true as you navigate a loved one's belongings after their death – often difficult when you are still processing your loss. We have to realise, sometimes, that it is okay to let go of items, even gifts or heirlooms, that no longer serve a purpose or don't resonate with you. Memories reside in our hearts and minds, not in the physical objects themselves. Beyond physical items, gather important paperwork, legal documents and digital account information into a clear, accessible system for your family, which prevents significant stress later.

A Legacy of Ease

Ultimately, Swedish death cleaning is an act of proactive love. It transforms the potential chaos of sorting through an estate into a curated legacy, allowing your family to focus on their grief and cherished memories rather than logistical challenges. It is about ensuring that the memories you leave behind are of love and

ing Power of Letting Go: ORGANISING G CLUTTER...

thoughtfulness, not an avalanche of practical problems.

By embracing *döstädning*, you gain a lighter, more focused life now, and leave behind a final act of kindness, making a difficult time for your loved ones just a little bit easier.

Many people also find comfort in preparing for the future by drafting a will with a solicitor or

arranging a funeral plan with their funeral director. While these steps can feel like a significant undertaking, they are truly acts of care that provide immense peace of mind. Taking the time to organise these details now ensures that everything is in order, offering a sense of calm and clarity for both you and your loved ones.



Following the success of our TLC (Tea, Laughter, and Cake) coffee mornings in Newport, we are pleased to announce the launch of Usk TLC. These gatherings provide a relaxed space for those experiencing grief to share stories and connect with others who have also suffered a bereavement, all are welcome:

When: Third Thursday of every month
(Starting 21st May 2026)

Time: 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Where: Sessions House, Maryport Street,
Usk, NP15 1AD

Newport TLC continues every month at the
Ridgeway Community Centre on the first
Saturday of every month, between 10.30am
and 12.30pm.

Please just come along or for further information you are welcome
to call 01633 266848 or 01292 625000 and speak to Kim or Diane.





Keeping a Memory Alive...

These ideas offer diverse ways to honour a loved one, allowing for personalisation based on their unique personality and the preferences of those who are grieving.

Recipe Book: Compile the person's favourite or signature recipes into a book to share with family and friends, honouring their memory through food and shared meals.

Digital Memorial: Create an online memorial page or website where people from anywhere in the world can contribute stories, photos, and videos, building a rich, collaborative archive of memories.

Memory Bear or Quilt: Repurpose the person's clothing (e.g., a favourite shirt or uniform) into a comforting, tangible item like a quilt or a teddy bear that family members can hold.

Memorial Jewellery: Create a piece of jewellery, such as a locket, a pendant with their fingerprint or a gemstone made from a small portion of their cremated remains, to keep them close.

Planting a Tree or Garden: Create a living memorial by planting a tree or a garden in their honour. This growing tribute provides a peaceful place for reflection and symbolizes the continuation of life.

Annual Dinner: Make it an annual tradition to gather with loved ones and share the person's favourite foods and drinks, celebrating their life in a warm, connected way.

Memorial Landmark: A bench in a favourite park or a plaque at a meaningful location offers a permanent tribute where loved ones can sit, reflect, and remember.

Putting Together a Memory Box: Curating a memory box is a heartfelt way to preserve a

person's legacy, bringing together cherished mementos, photographs, and handwritten notes that capture the unique essence of their life and story.

Scattering Ashes in a Special Location: Scattering the ashes of a loved one in a location that held deep personal significance transforms a final farewell into a lasting, meaningful tribute to their life and legacy. Please do ensure you have the landowner's permission before scattering any ashes.

Listening To Their Favourite Music and/or Watching a Favourite Film: Listening to music or watching a film are two of the most powerful ways to feel close to someone who has passed. They tap into sensory memory, often triggering emotions and specific recollections more vividly than looking at a photo. Listening to their favourite artist, the album they played on repeat, or the song that defined a special event (like a wedding or a party) creates an immediate sense of their presence. Many people create a digital playlist of songs that remind them of their loved one. This can be shared with family, allowing everyone to contribute and listen together on anniversaries. Music provides a safe space to process grief. A specific melody can offer the "permission" to cry or, conversely, an upbeat tempo can remind you of their joyful energy.

Memorial Headstones: A lasting tribute used to mark a grave and provide a place for remembrance. They are highly personal and vary widely based on materials, shapes, and the inscriptions used to honour a loved one.

To receive 'Consolo' via email please contact: info@toveybros.co.uk



TOVEYBROS
FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Newport Funeral Home 9-11 Cardiff Road Newport NP20 2EH
Usk Funeral Home Maryport Street Usk NP15 1AB
Telephone: (01633) 266848 or (01291) 625000
Email: info@toveybros.co.uk Website: www.toveybros.co.uk