



*With cremation, there can be more options available to families than there are with traditional in-ground burial. The key is to plan ahead and put all wishes in writing so that when a death occurs, the family doesn't have to worry about which options to choose.*

*The purpose of the funeral or memorial is to help us face the pain of our loss, acknowledge the reality of the death, receive the support of our loved ones, and remember and honor a life that we have cherished.*



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I JUST  
WANT  
TO BE  
CREMATED





### “I DON’T WANT A FUSS”

As more and more people plan ahead, we hear from many individuals that they don’t want a big “fuss” when they are gone; they “just want to be cremated.”

Cremation is a versatile option because it provides ample time for the family to gather, it allows for easy transportation of the remains, and it makes for a simple means of disposition.

However, the notion that there shouldn’t be any “fuss” is simply a misunderstanding of the reason we have funeral and memorial services in the first place. We want to—indeed, we need to—make a “fuss” when we lose someone we love.

### THERE ARE THREE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS TO A HEALING AND HEALTHY FUNERAL EXPERIENCE:

**A public gathering.** A gathering allows family and friends to give and receive love, comfort, and support to one another. Opening this event to the public multiplies its effectiveness. A public gathering helps the family mark an important occasion and transition from life before the death to life after the death.

### A service with religious or spiritual overtones.

A ceremony helps us honor the person who has died and understand the reality of the person’s death. Adding the appropriate religious or spiritual elements offers hope to the grieving family and aids us in our search for meaning.

### A procession to the final resting place.

A procession is a strong symbol of unity, support, and acknowledgement that something important has occurred. A place of final rest for the cremated body helps provide a point of closure, an understanding of the finality of death, and a place to go in the future to search for further meaning.

As we plan ahead, we need to consider the needs of our family as well as our own preferences and desires.

### HERE ARE A FEW CONSIDERATIONS WHEN IT COMES TO CHOOSING CREMATION:

- Cremation may be carried out before the memorial service or afterward.
- The body may be dressed and present in a ceremonial casket to allow friends and family time to say their final goodbyes. This can be especially significant if the death was sudden and unexpected. Sometimes we have to see with our own eyes to really begin to get over the shock of a death.

*What you want and what your family needs can be two very different things. When planning ahead, it is important to consider the needs of family members for closure and healing.*



• The service may be a simple, informal gathering of close family or a public honoring of the deceased.

• If the memorial service is held after the cremation takes place, it is important to have the urn present. The urn is not merely a container for the cremated body; it is a memorial of the deceased and a focal point for the service.

• An alternative container is required for the actual cremation. Containers must be suitably rigid to hold the body and, of course, must be made of combustible material. The family may choose between a number of options for alternative containers, or they may provide their own.

• The cremated body may be kept at home in a memorial urn, scattered in a special place, buried in a cemetery, or placed in a niche at a columbarium. A portion may be placed in cremation jewelry as a constant reminder of the lost loved one.

• When cremation takes place, it is important to remember the significance of permanent memorialization. Generations from now, family members will want to be able to visit a permanent memorial. A gravestone, grave marker, or plaque should be considered.