

End of Life Essentials:

A guide to assist you with what to consider after a death.

DeathCare Redefined Ceremony Relmaged

Independent & Locally Owned



CREMATION™
BURIAL
CEREMONY

Led by Women

Where do I start?

Generally, one of our first thoughts when someone dies is that we must immediately have the body moved and we behave as if in a state of emergency. **Although there may be a feeling of urgency, there is no rush.** This statement may come as a surprise to many, as well as learning that you do not need to immediately have your person's body moved. Instead, you can actually take a moment to be with your emotions, be with your dead, and let the new state of being sink in. In fact, at KORU we encourage it.

Once you've had a chance to be with the new reality of the death of someone close to you, know that you have options that you can be in control of.

There was a time when we were fully in charge of caring for our dead, often with the help of neighbours and other community members. Few of us realize that those opportunities still exist today. Hiring a funeral provider (funeral home) is the option we are most familiar with, but know that you can choose the extent of their involvement.

Who should be informed first?

1. By law, the deceased body may not be moved into anyone's care until permission has been provided by the executrix / executor or legal next of kin. **The exception to this is if the Coroner's office or police are involved in the situation.**

2. If the death was accidental (ie: motor vehicle or a work-place accident) or otherwise completely unexpected, **911 must be called** and emergency responders and a coroner will attend.

3. If the death was not accidental and was expected, **do not call 911.** Instead, you can contact the family doctor or a registered nurse who was familiar with the deceased person in life to pronounce the death.

Remember, working with a funeral provider and funeral director should be collaborative and the focus should be on you and your deceased, not the other way around. At KORU, we will work to look after and respect your needs and timelines.

After death has been pronounced

After the death has been pronounced by the doctor, registered nurse or, in special circumstances a family member or caregiver (possible through the Expected Death at Home Protocol), you can take some time to think about where and when you would like your family member's body to be moved.

Some things to consider:

- **Do you want the body to be moved to a funeral provider or would you prefer that she/he stays at home or be moved to a family home?**
- **Is there anyone who isn't present but who may want to come to say goodbye before moving the body into the funeral provider's care?**

When you have made a decision about the "where" and the "when, feel free to contact KORU to discuss your choices at 604-324-8285 or 604-770-1471 or info@korucremation.com

Below are some of the things we will talk about when you first call.

- What is the full, legal name of the person who died?
- Where did he or she die? Is that where his or her body is currently?
- When would you want KORU to arrange for transportation?
- Would you like one of our KORU team to come help bathe and dress the deceased body before being moved?

- Who is the executrix/executor or next of kin and what is their contact information?
- What is your name and your contact information (if you are not the executrix/executor or next of kin)?
- How can we help you?

***Remember, if the person who died had a Will, the executrix/executor will be named in the Will. If there is no Will, then we follow the gov't guide to determine the legal next of kin (see the last page to view guide).**

Start planning for Cremation, Burial and Ceremony

The best way for our KORU team to learn about your values and needs is to engage in in-person or remote consultation meetings. We will include the executrix / executor and other family members in the discussions of how to start planning for cremation, burial and ceremony. There are several documents which are required to be signed by the executrix / executor that we will prepare for you. All of this can be accommodated at our KORU office in Vancouver, at your residence, at an alternate location of your choosing, or through secure electronic document platforms. We're here to fit into your needs.

If having a home vigil / home funeral is intriguing but intimidating for you, consider an "hybrid" partnership between KORU and your family to achieve the benefits of reclaiming these ancient practices without having to worry about all of the logistics in our modern world.

Vital Statistic Information

During the consultation meeting we will ask you to provide personal information about the deceased to register the death with Vital Statistics BC (a necessary step for all). This information includes:

- Social Insurance number (SIN)
- Personal Health Care number (PHN)
- Date and place of birth (city, province and/or country)
- Parents' names (including mother's maiden name) and their places of birth
- Marital status and spouse's full name (even when there is a divorce or the spouse has already died)

- Occupation information
- Executor / executrix or legal next of kin, if there is no Will, and their contact information

***You will also be asked to provide the deceased's Canadian Birth Certificate or Canadian Citizenship Certificate, or other Canadian gov't issued ID.**

We will help you determine the number of original death certificates that you will need and provide them to you.



Other Considerations:

- Provide clothing to dress the deceased.
- Provide personal items to place with the deceased.
- Provide a recent photo for identification and / or for an obituary.
- Consider DNA collection and preservation.



- Scatter ashes in our great outdoors – back country wilderness to chartered boat experiences.
- Create a “Living Reef Memorial” with the ashes.
- Choose locally crafted memorial jewelry and urns for ashes.

Physical care of the deceased's body is an extremely important conversation to have. We will guide you through the options of essential care to embalming. We encourage discussions around natural and green body care practices whether there will be a viewing or not.

End of life planning with a focus on Cremation | Burial | Ceremony

CREMATION



Cremation (flame-based cremation) is one of two legal forms of disposition for the deceased in British Columbia. Cremation can be part of a series of sacred and meaningful rituals that create opportunities to mourn and celebrate the person who died as well as honour the impact their death has on the lives of those left behind. Or it can be a simple act separate from what you consider a fitting goodbye ritual or gathering. You may choose to participate in the cremation, just as with burial, by inviting family and friends to be present or witness it and say a final goodbye in a profound and meaningful way. ***Whatever this cremation is for you, we can help.***

BURIAL

In-ground whole body burial and aboveground entombment are established and respected practices, which many still choose today. If other family members have been buried or entombed in a mausoleum, it can be reassuring for the surviving members and future generations to know that their family tradition continues.

While KORU will be able to help with the planning of the burial, the plot will need to be purchased directly with the cemetery of your choice.

In recent years, there's been a resurgence for burial as people learn about green burial options over conventional burial or cremation. ***Green burial provides a meaningful choice to those for whom minimizing their impact on the earth and leaving a lighter footprint is important.***

Green Burial

Green or natural burial is when the body is returned to the earth in as natural a state as possible, allowing the earth to decompose the body, contributing to the renewal of the environment.

When it is chosen, the body is prepared without embalming before being placed into a biodegradable casket made of natural fibre (wicker or untreated wood) or wrapped in a biodegradable shroud.

In the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island, green burial options available to any member of the public (i.e. no residency restrictions) are found at:

- Mountain View Cemetery, Vancouver
- Heritage Gardens Cemetery, Surrey
- Royal Oak Burial Park, Victoria
- Yates Memorial Services, Parksville

For more information about green burial please visit:

www.greenburialcouncil.org and www.greenburialcanada.ca



**KORU is certified with
the Green Burial Council**

CEREMONY



Ceremony can take on all different forms, from being traditional in a church to being more free form.

Thoughtful ceremonies create connection and meaning and support you to be with the reality of death. Whatever your culture, circumstance or challenge, we're here to help you care for, remember, mourn and celebrate your family members and friends.

Our perspective is that any activity carried out with intention forms a ritual and can be incorporated into a ceremony or indeed be the basis

of a ceremony: lighting a single candle, writing a poem, making special food, or putting together a slideshow of photos. Some of you will find solace in a traditional funeral mass or an intimate graveside ritual that rekindles stories told to you by your grandmother. If you're a hands-on, DIY type of person, you may find meaning in the act of bathing or dressing the deceased or perhaps in spearheading your family to build a casket.

KORU works in collaboration with a celebrant and an event planner to provide exceptional, personalized ceremonies. Together we are ***The Hummingbird Project***. After consultation with you, we will look after all of the details to create, plan and carry-out the ceremony, or we can provide you with a detailed plan so that you can take the reins into your own hands while still having that initial guidance and support. You can decide and we will make it happen. Call us to discuss your options.

When planning for ceremony, consider the following.

- **Location of the ceremony** – this can be at your church, a public or private garden, an event venue, in a park or at your home and shared with friends and family around the world through virtual technology. ***Ask us how we can manage a Virtual Tribute for you.***
- **Who will “lead” or “carry” the ceremony?** A family member, friend, clergy person or a trained celebrant or officiant?
- **What day and time is best?** Keep in mind that weekends are popular no matter where your ceremony is and it is not always possible to have it on the weekend immediately following the death. Be prepared to have a back-up date and time.
- **Did you want the burial, cremation or entombment to be woven into the ceremony, either on a different day or on the same day?**
- **Are there personal touches that would make it special** (through video, photos, memorabilia, music, art, written and spoken word, to name a few)?
- **Does having more than one ceremony to accommodate different needs make sense for you?**
- You can place an obituary notice on the KORU website (no fee) or a newspaper (fees applied).

Celebrants are specially trained in ceremony. They not only carry the service, but spend time meeting with you, learning about your family member who has died and writing a personalized ceremony that fits your vision of how to memorialize, pay tribute to and honour your dead.

After the Service

This is the time when the reality of your loved one's death really starts to sink in. The busyness of the immediate after-death services has come to an end and now the everyday living begins. Don't be afraid or embarrassed to reach out for support at this time. You will need it. Whether it comes from professional grief counselors or therapists, your network of family and friends, or a combination of these groups, it is important to realize that your life has forever changed and the wisdom and kindness of others may be your lifeline back into a new way of living.

Be gentle with yourself. Take the time you need. Pay attention to your physical needs, as they are often a reflection of our inner workings.

Our team at KORU can provide referrals to you for other professionals who we know and trust, such as naturopathic doctors, grief therapists, estate lawyers, professional organizers, financial advisors, death educators, celebrants and more.

When there has been a death, we are available by phone 24 hours a day.

All meetings by appointment only.

For general inquiries, please call between 10 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday.



Ms. Ngaio Davis
Founder, Managing Director

Our centralize KORU office is located in Vancouver at:

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“KORU” defined....

REBIRTH NEW BEGINNINGS
SPIRITUAL REJUVENATION **PEACE**
HARMONY ENDLESS MOTION
RETURNING TO THE POINT OF ORIGIN
AWAKENING **GROWTH** NURTURING

A Practical Checklist

KORU is all about providing user-friendly, transparent information for our clients and the general public. We recognize that while there is a great need for end of life information to be shared with all, many are too overwhelmed, uneasy or simply in denial about death care choices in B.C. The brave few who do contact us, however, will often ask for an easy-to-follow guide that will help people with their own end of life plans or for others. While we've tried to summarize some of those steps in the previous pages, we know for some, having a visual checklist is practical and helpful.

- a) Hire a funeral provider to take care of transportation, physical care of the deceased body, administrative needs, management of disposition (cremation or burial) and / or ceremony planning and guidance.
- b) Alternatively, the surviving family can look after all or some of the above, possibly in tandem with the funeral provider.
- c) Gather the vital statistics information and gov't issued identification (pg. 3).
- d) Locate the will and determine who is the executor (if there isn't a will, see pages 2 & 7)
- e) Have any end of life related services been pre-paid? Cemetery? Cremation? Funeral?
- f) Will the disposition be cremation or burial? If burial, is green burial the right fit?
- g) If cremation, do you want to choose the cremation date and be present for the start of the cremation (called a "Witness Cremation")?
- h) Will there be a home vigil / home funeral? If so, do you need help to provide the physical body-care? How long will the vigil be for? Will the deceased go directly to the crematorium or cemetery for burial or go to a funeral provider for safe shelter?
- i) If the funeral provider looks after the physical care of the deceased body, what do you prefer; natural, non-invasive, essential care only; bathing + dressing; embalming?
- j) Do you want DNA collection and preservation services?
- k) Does anyone want / need to see the deceased person? Where do you want that to take place: at a private residence, at the funeral provider's location, church, elsewhere?
- l) Will there be a ceremony with the deceased body present (in the casket)? If so, where?
- m) Will you build your own casket or make a shroud or purchase one? *Caskets are mandatory for cremation and for burial in most cemeteries. Some cemeteries accept burial in a shroud.
- n) Will you provide an urn / vessel for the ashes (handmade or family supplied) or purchase one from the funeral provider?
- o) What other ceremony plans do you have and when?

Who is the “legal next of kin”, according to BC law?

THE CREMATION, INTERMENT AND FUNERAL SERVICES ACT (excerpts):

CONTROL OF DISPOSITION

5 (1) Subject to this section and section 8 (3) (b) (i) [*requirement for authorization before funeral service or disposition*], the right of a person to control the disposition of the human remains or cremated remains vests in, and devolves on, the following persons in order of priority:

- (a) the personal representative named in the will of the deceased;
- (b) the spouse of the deceased;
- (c) an adult child of the deceased;
- (d) an adult grandchild of the deceased;
- (e) if the deceased was a minor, a person who was a legal guardian of the person of the deceased at the date of death;
- (f) a parent of the deceased;
- (g) an adult sibling of the deceased;
- (h) an adult nephew or niece of the deceased;
- (i) an adult next of kin of the deceased, determined on the basis provided by sections 89 and 90 of the *Estate Administration Act*;
- (j) the minister under the *Employment and Assistance Act* or, if the official administrator under the *Estate Administration Act* is administering the estate of the deceased under that Act, the official administrator;
- (k) an adult person having a personal or kinship relationship with the deceased, other than those referred to in (b) to (d) and (f) to (i).

(2) If the person at the top of the order of priority set out in subsection (1) is unavailable or is unwilling to give instructions, the right to give instructions passes to the person who is next in priority.

(3) If, under subsection (1), the right to control the disposition of human remains or cremated remains passes to persons of equal rank, the order of priority

- a) is determined in accordance with an agreement between or among them, or;
- b) in the absence of an agreement referred to in paragraph (a), begins with the eldest of the persons and descends in order of age.

(4) A person claiming that he or she should be given the sole right to control the disposition of the human remains or cremated remains may apply to the Supreme Court for an order regarding that right.

DEFENITION OF SPOUSE

Spouse means a person who:

- (a) is married to another person,
- (b) is united to another person by a marriage that, although not a legal marriage, is valid at common law, or
- (c) has lived and cohabited with another person in a marriage-like relationship, including a marriage-like relationship between persons of the same gender, for a period of at least 2 years immediately before the other person's death.