

Memorial Ideas

In memory of my loved one, I will celebrate his/her life:

1. **Organize a Cemetery Memorial Ceremony in your town for loved ones.** Get permission from the city fathers and contact a few people. Ask them if they would like to be included (honoring their loved ones). Select a date and make this an annual event. (It will grow). What positive things can you do at the graveside to celebrate the lives of these loved ones? If the ceremony is timed in the summer hours when the sun is still in the sky, plan a colorful release of balloons, each one with a name tag of the loved one. Invite a well known local singer to sing one special song. Set out candles (in protective holders) at the graves so that when the sun goes down they are left in vigil. Plan a hot chocolate and cold juice drink to follow. You be the one to organize and pay for the refreshments. This annual event will be a memorial to your loved one (and to many others)!
2. **Put a photo of your deceased loved one on a stamp** (available in Canada, through Canada Post) or as one mother suggested, have a stamp created that can be used when letters or cards are being sent by existing family members, e.g., a rose (as her daughter loved roses).
3. **Buy a birthday gift for him/her each year, and give it to someone in the community** as a "secret pal," e.g., leave it on the doorstep, having it delivered anonymously, etc.
4. **Each Christmas one mother adopts an angel off the tree of a local charity.** She then buys gifts for this living child in memory of "my little boy."
5. **"In Canada", one mother wrote, "we have a country wide trail** and one can buy a section of the trail and dedicate it to the memory of a loved one." Someone did this for that mother in honour of her daughter Krissy and she runs by the memorial pavilion each week.
6. **Live your life for two of you,** time is precious and so are you.
7. **Plant a tree, or put in a flower garden in memory of the loved one.** Plant a flowering shrub. Betty's daughter asked that roses be planted in her memory. (The daughter is dying as I write this). And Susan planted a Lilac tree which "reminds me of Angel's uniqueness, beauty and blue eyes."
8. **Place a single flower on his grave** and when you leave it there leave a promise to work hard to reach your own potential.
9. **Go to a local elementary school and offer your time for an afternoon once per week.** Or donate money to your child's school for supplies. Or donate something needed to his former class room.
10. **One lady wrote, "I ask MOM to 'come' and join me for a cup of tea in the garden.** If the weather is foul, I will have it at my kitchen table, with a cup for me and a cup for her. We

always had tea together when she was alive, and it is a tradition that I have carried on with MY daughter. "

11. **Donate a book (or two) to a school library**, a public library or a College library, in his name every year. His name will live as long as books do. If you choose good books, he will live forever. Check with your public library or local College library. Or think about your child's favorite author and donate books by that author in her name.
12. **Plant a bag of wild flower seeds in your yard**, in a desolate area, or some suitable location.
13. **Release butterflies in honour of your loved one.** There is one butterfly lady at (604) 858 8991. Contact Adele LaRiviere and she will also advise you on how to start your own butterfly garden in memory of your loved one. madamebutterfly@telus.net
14. **Many people have groceries delivered because they can not get out.** Think what a lift it would be if you contacted an organization that does the deliveries and sent along a single carnation to twenty of those people, with a sunshine card (cheery greeting). Then sign it in memory of your loved one.
15. **In Vancouver, B.C. and in a park in Scotland there are park benches with brass metal donor plaques on the bench, saying "In Memory Of".** Check with your city parks department about doing this in your area. Or donate a Memorial bench on the school ground of the school your child attended.
16. **Become a member of a group or organization that seems connected to your loved one.** One Canadian mother started a chapter of Mother's Against Drunk Drivers after her teenage son was hit by a car while he was cycling in a park. The drunk's car left the road and traveled right into the park! Another mother now gives her time to fund drive for cancer research after her child died following a long struggle with cancer.
17. **One woman selected special rocks for her pond and garden in memory of her sister Angel.** The rocks were not ordinary in that they had various inspirational messages written on them. She said, "I saw my perfect choice. There was only one and it had pretty spring flowers painted in the corner and the word "live" painted in big bold letters. I bought it and perched it on the edge of my pond. It sums up in one little word what Angel continues to teach me."
18. **Make or buy small gifts and visit a nursing home and give these out to those patients** who get no visitors or few visitors and stay long enough to talk with them. They too have lost many loved ones by this time and need a friend.
19. **Carol wrote, "when my mother died, to try and deal with my grief** and wanting to do something for her birthday (which was six months after she died), I wrote a two page tribute to her. It described all of her wonderful attributes and characteristics and included as many of the wonderful memories of her that I could think of. I truly paid her a tribute and then I sent a copy of it to my Dad and each one of my siblings. Now my sister and I light a candle for her each year on her birthday and always read the tribute. (She died ten years ago this year). It truly is a way of "celebrating" her life and keeping her alive in our memory. She played an incredibly wonderful part in all of our lives and it would be sad for that memory to fade.

20. **If your loved one was in a sport**, e.g., volley ball, soccer or baseball, football, hockey, then purchase equipment, or whatever might be needed by a peewee team just getting started, in the name of your loved one.
21. **If your loved one was the more intellectual type, contribute a book** or learning tool in that person's name to an under privileged child.
22. **With the help of friends, create a memorial web page**, where other parents can visit and offer encouragement.
23. **One lady wrote: "At the time when my mother was so sick and I knew she didn't have long to live**, I attended a Christmas Eve service and went up to the front and lit a candle and said a prayer for her. I felt very spiritual and am sure God was watching and hearing everything that was in my heart. Also try lighting beautiful candles on the birthday of your loved one!
24. **Have a family birthday celebration** so his little brothers and sisters can always remember, too.
25. **Adopt a child through World Vision.**
26. **Donate "his present" to Santa's Anonymous** each Christmas.
27. **Support your local Music Festival with an award** in the Family Music category.
28. **Establish an annual "Quality Citizenship Award"** at a local Elementary School.
29. **Do something special as a family each year on the week-end** as close to his birthday as possible.
30. **Do a "Celebration of Life" scrapbook album showing for your loved one!** Or help another bereaved mom do up a "Memory" scrapbook of favorite photos, drawings, etc.
31. **One lovely lady wrote me about this expression of love:"** When my cousin Jock drowned, his girlfriend sent Jock's mother flowers on Mother's Day for years. It meant a lot to know her son lived on in this woman's memory!"
32. **If you know what his/her favorite Charity was** or think you know what they would have chosen, donate either some money or your time in his/her name!
33. **Celebrate a deceased loved one's life** by reaching out to someone who you've lost touch with; renew your relationship; we all know that life is too short.
34. **Go for a walk with your memories of them** and later look for opportunities to minister to others who have recently lost a loved one.
35. **Write a poem, song, or instrumental piece** in memory of a beloved child.
36. **Adopt an animal at your local zoo or shelter** in his/her name. Or donate your time to an animal shelter. Also know that often they need pet food, newspapers, litter, old blankets and towels.
37. **Many swimming pools, museums, and parks are in need of financial help**, and many have wall plaques displaying the name plates of the donors. Make a donation and place on it the name of your loved one.
38. **Whenever I donate even a small amount to a worthy cause I do it in honor of my child.** Every year on his/her birthday donate the amount of money of his/her age to a charity. You have a whole year to put some money away for this, in a special jar.
39. **If you live in an apartment building or have nowhere to plant flowers ask around.** At one senior complex a gentleman planted and cared for flowers that were chosen by the

residents. When they blossomed, they picked some of their plants. (A simple name on a stick identified the donor).

40. **The first book I wrote was dedicated to my deceased son.**
41. **Have Birthday Party with family members or a few close friends.** Dig out a photo album and spend fifteen minutes showing pictures of your loved one and traveling down memory lane. (Keep this short). Light candles, perhaps even enough for the number of years you shared with your child. Candles are so spiritual and I'm sure our departed loved ones would know.
42. **Send a hand written note to your other children to tell them how proud you are of them.** One mother who contributed to this list, sent me three pages of ideas. (Her daughter is in hospital dying). She mentioned that one of her daughters felt so left out as everyone constantly spoke of her dying sister. She knew (intellectually) that she was being silly yet emotionally she was a mess. Survivors often suffer when so much attention goes toward the dying. Be aware.
43. **Mentor someone.** Or become a Big Brother or a Big Sister.
44. **Visit a bed ridden person (hospital or nursing home) and offer your services.** Bring reading material and offer to write letters and then mail them (you buy the stamps). If it is allowed take your animal to the nursing homes as they often never see a live cat or dog after they enter. Do check first as some people have deadly allergies to animals.
45. **Look around you. There are people suffering though many hard times.** Take someone out to lunch as a goodness gesture. (In memory of a dad or mom).
46. **Donate a trophy for Special Olympics** in memory of your loved one.
47. **A woman in Illinois wrote a lady in Australia and offered to send up a balloon in memory of James.** And then a woman in California said she would send up balloons, also. So on his birthday, in Australia, Illinois and California, colorful balloons hit the sky as a celebration of the life of James. Maggie, mother of James, suggests you might wish to get something fancy like a butterfly shaped balloon, or something plain with a tag on it bearing the name of your loved one!
48. **Start a Journal about all the Fun times you remember** having with him/her.
49. **Stanford University was built in 1919 from an endowment** in memory of a 16 year old Leland Stanford who died of typhoid fever. Most of us won't be able to donate five million dollars, but it is wonderful to see so much generated because of love for ones child. Just do your best!
50. **Have a star in the sky named after your loved one.**

Like a wall hanging that is completed, the tapestry of their human life has been finished. It now hangs in the living room of God's house. This is a wonderful life that you can celebrate today, tomorrow and forever. All you need to do is use a prayer and poems for deceased friends to remember your connection every day of your life.