

# Grief

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Williams said. While it is easy to feel that the death of a loved one is overwhelming, he said, dwelling on it won't help.

"Definitely getting out and doing something will be more helpful to you," he said. "If you aren't doing what you used to do, you need to force yourself to get back into your regular activities."

Friends of those who have experienced a loss can help in several ways, Williams said. One important one, he said, is physical contact, which he described as being very important to most people at

the time of a death of a loved one.

Another way to help is to continue to express an interest in the person who has died. Williams said most people dislike talking about the subject, which deprives the grieving person of the opportunity to express his or her feelings.

"If you are willing to be supportive of that person, you need to let them know that it is still OK to talk about it even weeks and months later," he said.

Friends should even go as far as bringing the subject up with the grieving person, because many who are grieving don't want to feel they are burdening others by talking about it, Williams said.

"If you're a friend, you will bring it up."

# Wyuka

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propeller prop to mark his grave-stone.

Six Nebraska governors are buried there, also.

The woman who answered the phone at Wyuka's office said she hadn't seen any ghosts, and she knew of no one who'd been killed while in Wyuka. I felt a little comforted, but I was still outside the cemetery.

I felt a little on the edge, as if I was saying to the grand grim reaper, "Hey, w'sup? I'll be sneaking through your village of the dead for a while, trying not to recognize your potential power or my own fears."

The grand grim reaper said nothing. I arrived at the gate and brought the bicycle inside.

I left my bicycle at the curb and began walking across the lightly snow-covered ground. I couldn't read many of the plaques in the cemetery, until I found an unused pack of matches in my pocket from a restaurant in Madison, Wis.

A wave of fear shot through my spine as I looked around and thought about all the dead people I was walking on, so I tried to picture where they were lying and to avoid them.

Many of the tombstones were grouped together by families. "There lies my brother Tom," I said to myself, play-acting, "and my sister Mary, and my brother John." I felt a strange

strange affinity for the family of graves I was standing on.

I remembered that there was a section in the cemetery for infants with a sign labeling it "Babyland."

Everything but the trees was dead, I thought; then I saw a dead tree. It was cut at eye level and had several protruding limbs cut at the base. It looked like a piece of art, and then I saw that it too was a tombstone.

It sounds silly, but I felt everyone there was trying to say something, to live one more moment, to kick his or her tombstone over, to say to the young: Enjoy life while you're alive. Maybe we all have a dead person inside us that speaks to us while in cemeteries.

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# Funeral

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disinfectant.

Morticians use an embalming machine in the process, McQuiston said. It utilizes pressure to push the blood out of the body through the main artery. As the blood is pushed out, the embalming fluid is pumped into the body.

After death, the eyes and mouth remain open, so cosmetic measures are taken to close them, McQuiston said. The mouth is generally sutured shut; and morticians employ a type of double-sided adhesive contact lens to shut the eyes.

As the arteries are pumped up, he said, the body begins to stiffen and settle; so the features must be set before embalming begins.

If the family favors cremation over burial, two basic options remain: direct cremation or a combination of embalming and cremation.

The direct-cremation process only includes sanitization and cremation of the body. The ashes are then placed in a receptacle of the family's choosing. In this case, the body is not embalmed.

According to health department codes, the body cannot be refrigerated for more than 72 hours. After that time, it must be cremated or embalmed.

The option of embalming and cremation allows the family to have a viewing before the body is cremated, McQuiston said.

Cremation is the burning of the body into ashes. The crematory is housed in the basement of the mortuary and basically is a giant furnace designed specifically for that purpose, McQuiston said.

To be cremated, the body must be contained in a receptacle of some kind, such as a box or a canvas bag.

When the burial option is chosen, the family has more choices to make. The deceased must be dressed; and a casket must be chosen. The family may bring any clothes it deems appropriate for burial. Roper and Sons has no requirements regarding dress, McQuiston said.

"We've had pets cremated and buried with the person," McQuiston said.

Casket choices are numerous. The casket's bedding covers an adjustable frame that can be adapted to the size of the person.

"Generally, everyone can fit in the same (size) casket," McQuiston said.