

# Four Practical Ways to Prepare for the End of Life

It's a sad and difficult time when a loved one is dying. As the end of life nears, here are some things you can do that will allow you to focus on remembering your loved one when the time comes.

## 1. Arrange for a memorial service.

- If your loved one wants a funeral or memorial service, meet with the director of the funeral home to plan the details.
- The arrangements may include the location of the event, coffin selection, cremation, type of service, transportation, flowers, burial, obituary, and obtaining death certificates. (You will need several copies of the death certificate.)

## 2. Contact your clergy member.

- Will a priest, minister, rabbi, or other clergy member conduct the service? Review what you would like them to include in their remarks.
- If you want other people to speak at the service, the clergy person can help manage that process. Be prepared to provide the names of those who will participate and how. For example, will they do a reading or give a eulogy?

## 3. Arrange for financial authority.

- Consider adding your name to your loved one's bank accounts, credit cards, stock certificates, and other accounts to help avoid unnecessary complications. A

financial advisor or attorney can help with this.

- If your loved one hasn't done so already, designate a person (usually a family member) to have power of attorney.
- Gather financial records and login information for online accounts.

## **4. Plan for notifying people.**

- Create a list of people, along with their phone numbers, to notify when your loved one passes away.
- Ask friends and/or family to help call people when the death occurs. It can be difficult for one person to recount the details many times.
- Write an obituary if you want it to appear in your local newspaper or on the funeral home's website.
- If your loved one has medical equipment that will need to be returned, keep the proper phone numbers on hand so you can have it removed as soon as possible.