

Funeral-During-a-Pandemic

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

grandfather, pandemic, funeral, grieve, lonely, family, aunt, lockdown, funeral services, ultimately, understood, family member, alabama, sad, live, daycare, birmingham, home, grief, uncles



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My name is Abigail bar, it is October 7 2021. It is 10:10am. I live in the state of Alabama. One of the hardest parts of COVID-19 has happened around the beginning of it in March of 2020.



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Around that time, my grandfather who was 90 years old at the time, was very sick. And he had been in and out of hospitals, and he was in and out of a nursing home. And we ultimately decided that he needed to come home. He there wasn't anything else anybody can do. And it was just his time. We wanted him to be home in a familiar with familiar people and a familiar environment. So he began living with my family, and I was just me, my mom, my dad and my older sister. Because of the pandemic, we had just started a lockdown in the state. And because of the pandemic, we, we couldn't have a lot of people come visit, to speak with him and give them give us comfort and give him comfort. And we were able to have phone calls. But it just wasn't the same. It was a very lonely environment. Least I felt that way. My grandfather wasn't really aware of his surroundings at the time, but he knew we were there. We had my aunt who is my mom's sister when she came over with her grandkids and, and her and her daughter and her family. And they visited for a little bit. But ultimately, it was just us. And we took a lot of the responsibility of taking care of him. And it got to be a lot with my job. I was working at a daycare in Birmingham, Alabama. And so when you come home at the end of the day, you have to take care of another individual, which I was fine with. I mean, I understood the the circumstances, but it was very tiring. It's, it's still kind of a difficult thing to talk about. But I want I want people to understand what how this pandemic affected us and how lonely it can make you feel and how sad it can make you feel. He passed away at the end of March. And he passed actually passed away on the very same day that I was laid off from my job. Because we had to, because it was daycare and a lot of the parents stayed home and we had to have the lockdown. We only kept the central workers at the time essential worker children at the time. So I was not I didn't have a job at that time. So I just stayed home it was it was good and bad. I was able to have my time to grieve. But I also didn't have anything to distract me. And it was it was a very sad day overall. When it takes when it came time for the funeral, we were only allowed to have 10 people at the gravesite. Well, my immediate family with my mom, my dad, my sister and my aunt and her family. That was more than 10 people. So we decided to have two separate funeral services. One for my family and then one for my aunt's family. It worked out but it was it was difficult because we couldn't grieve together. We couldn't you know, hug each other or hold hands or just be there for each other we It was hard and I couldn't have anybody from my grandfather's side of the family or couldn't have any of my great aunts and uncles and I know they wanted to be there. But it was it just wasn't possible. Looking back, we probably could have filmed it or done a not necessarily a Facebook Live but done something to where they could be there digitally, but we just weren't thinking we were just consumed with grief that we just we didn't know what to do at that time.



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Several months after my grandfather's funeral, a friend of mine had one of her family members die and I asked her how many people were you allowed to have there she said oh, we couldn't have any more than 75 and I was sad glad and a little angry at the same time. sad that I couldn't have more people to grieve with at my grandfather's funeral. Glad that she has a good support system so she could grieve her family member but an angry that this pandemic caused us to be a part it was it was very frustrating. And something I think about a lot and I often think about was he lonely like did he cook was were there times when he understood that there weren't a lot of people around. Ultimately he didn't want to have a big funeral anyway, but we wanted to have everybody there to be able to see him see us and we could all talk about memories with him and and grieve together. And, but the pandemic from COVID-19 could not allow us to do that.