



## TYPICAL ELEMENTS OF A FUNERAL CEREMONY

These elements are, in general, what you would find in a funeral, celebration of life, memorial, cremation, ash-scattering ceremony – even in a Living Memorial. There are no fixed rules – remove any, repeat some, remove some. They tend to go in this order, but again, each ceremony is unique. Forty-five minutes would be a long time for guests to sit quietly, so watch the time.

It is best to have a Celebrant who is a bit removed from the close family and friends. It takes a special skillset to ‘hold’ the energy, to keep on track, to ensure that all are comfortable and can hear, see, etc. There are professionals who can do this, or consider if you know someone who is a teacher or group facilitator. Finally, encourage many voices – have family and friends come up to read a poem or the eulogy, to sing, and to share.

It’s important to have the subject present: a casket, urn, or at the least, a large, framed photo. This should be near the Celebrant, where mourners can focus their memories and attention.

MUSIC FOR PROCESSIONAL/ENTRY

WELCOME

(remember those who can’t be there too)

CANDLE LIGHTING, CULTURAL OR RELIGIOUS RITUALS

POETRY/READINGS

EULOGY/BIOGRAPHY

REMEMBRANCES FROM FAMILY & FRIENDS

(keep each short and have someone facilitate in case someone goes long or is inappropriate)

REFLECTION, PRAYER or MEDITATION

MUSIC or SOLOISTS

SLIDESHOW

(though popular, these can go wrong. Have a technical person handy and test beforehand. Keep to under five minutes if it is during a ceremony; longer is fine if it is played before or after)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(refreshments, where to proceed to next/committal service to be held at [location])

CLOSING WORDS/PRAYER/BLESSING

MUSIC FOR RECESSIONAL/ENDING