

## **Grieving and Honoring a Deceased Loved One While Physical Distancing During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

**We acknowledge the difficulty and isolation that comes from physical distancing requirements in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) to our communities and Elders. When a loved one passes away right now (COVID-19 or non-COVID-19 related), it is difficult to think about how to grieve for them and honor them in traditional ways without physically being with friends and families. This document aims to provide several suggestions of ways we can acknowledge and honor our loved ones who have passed while still following physical distancing recommendations. Here are just a few suggestions:**

1. Connect with your family and community members through social media by:
  - a. Creating a memorial page or group on Facebook to post and/or share memories, stories, and photos of your loved one.
  - b. Create an online photo album through a platform like Google Photos for everyone to share photos and create a slideshow in their memory.
2. Use a video conferencing platform, (such as Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc), to virtually connect with family members and the greater community to host a virtual wake where share songs, prayers, and stories.
3. Use a video conferencing platform, (such as Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc), to connect with a traditional healer or Elder.
4. Join a virtual Talking Circle or counseling sessions to share your experiences and learn from others experiencing the same.
5. Connect with online traditional practices and resources such as:
  - a. Native Wellness Institute's daily Wellness Hour activities:  
<https://www.facebook.com/NativeWellnessInstitute/>.
  - b. Connect with one of Facebook's virtual powwow groups.
  - c. Join a virtual beading/ crafting circles like this:  
<https://www.instagram.com/thebeadingcircle/>.
  - d. Take care of your physical health by joining a virtual yoga session.

### **Additional Resources:**

- Psychology Today: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/bravery-in-bereavement/202004/how-cope-bereavement-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>.
- NIH: <https://directorsblog.nih.gov/2020/04/07/dealing-with-stress-anxiety-and-grief-during-covid-19/>.