

## Sharing The Story

The sharing of memories and building a memory box together may initially be difficult.

Sharing your grief together is appropriate. If your child is upset, but you do not share the emotion, this may be confusing for the child. How you show your grief will help them manage theirs.

During the making of the box, sharing the story and handling the items, there may be times we cry because of our loss. The experience, items, photographs and memories may also evoke smiles or even laughter. This is normal, sadness and joy are not mutually exclusive, and you can feel both simultaneously.

Often people who have lost a loved one feel guilty when they experience happiness; if we demonstrate that it is possible to be both joyous and upset these feelings of guilt may disappear.

### Building The Box

*Say the sentences in bold and carry out the activities.*

#### **These are our memories of you**

Decorate the outside of the box.

#### **We remember you fondly**

Unfurl the chosen fabric or item of clothing, move it gently and use it to line the inside of your box.

#### **We like to listen to your music**

Listen to the music chosen. If you have produced a playlist you could play it all. If you have a CD, place in the box, or a list of the tracks on your playlist.

#### **Your smile brings back memories**

Use the photo you have chosen. Spend time looking at the photo. Put the photo in the box.

#### **And so do your things**

Look at the objects you have chosen, handle them, play with them and place in the box. At first the objects may create sadness but, later on, they may promote memories and happier times, or our minds might wander and discover memories not thought of in ages.

#### **We remember all the fun times we had**

Look at the items you have chosen, you may want to talk about these times.

#### **We will never forget you**

Speak their name clearly several times. Their name is placed in the box or fasten to the outside of the box.



## 'Memories of You'

We all have times in our lives when loved ones die. Making a memory box is one way to remember them and understand loss.





## Make It Yours

We all have times in our lives when loved ones die. This could be a relative, a friend or a pet.

Making a memory box is one of the ways to remember an absent person or pet and to build an understanding of loss.

The box ensures a loved one's mementos are kept in a special place. You could use the structure provided under *build your box*, to help celebrate your memories of a loved one or pet in a supported, sensory manner.



## How to Prepare

You will be making a memory box to return to - experiencing the chosen items can help to build understanding of loss. The items you choose will be determined by who you are grieving for.

### *A container/a box*

This could be a purpose bought box, plastic container or a shoe box and items to make it personal.

### *Fabric/Item of clothing*

What you choose depends on you. You could choose black as a symbol of loss and mourning. You could, however, choose a fabric of their favourite colour or an item of clothing that you or they have strong feelings about.

### *Music*

Choose a favourite song of your loved one, or a song strongly associated with them; alternatively, you could produce a playlist.

### *Happy photo of the individual.*

The face is a very important visual experience. Find a photograph of the individual smiling. We have mirror neurons which help us match the emotional expression of others and help us to understand our own emotions and the emotions of others – smiling is contagious. You could put the photo in frame if you choose to do so.

### *Objects to touch and explore*

It is important to choose object/s most precious to the person, or most interacted with or associated with them.

### *Cards/Events*

If you have any cards with messages in them from the person, or tickets to events or photos of you together doing fun things.

### *Name*

It is important that everyone appreciates the necessity of talking about the person who has passed away. Write their name on a piece of paper; this could be decorated and the name celebrated.