

Cruse Bereavement Care



Going on holiday

Updated January 2009

Planning a holiday can take some extra effort when someone close to you has died. In this factsheet we aim to give you an idea of the range of holidays and leisure opportunities available. We also suggest where you can get the information you need to arrange the holiday you want.

You may lack the enthusiasm to do anything much and find it difficult to imagine what kind of holiday would suit you. But some time away in fresh surroundings could give you just the energy and change of perspective you need. There is a vast choice of holidays available these days, from the simplest to the most luxurious, the peaceful to the energetic, for people of a similar age and for people of all ages. While you may have a particular kind of holiday in mind it's as well to be open to fresh ideas and talk over your hopes, and any anxieties, with other people. Be realistic about what you can cope with physically and emotionally without letting that limit you too much.

Holidays that work well for those on their own, and for families who have been bereaved recently, are often based on interests or activities, such as learning photography, playing golf or visiting a part of the country or the world that's always appealed. This provides the opportunity to learn something new and meet people with a similar interest. Some of these holidays offer supervised activities for children and teenagers, such as team games or music making, and perhaps a disco in the evening.

You can get information on all sorts of holidays from travel agents, holiday supplements in national newspapers and magazines, the internet and special offers in the national and local press. See what you can find out from the TV, radio and teletext. If you have a particular enthusiasm, say for classic cars or gardening, look through any specialist magazines aimed at people who share your interest. Public libraries are useful too. They usually stock guides to different parts of the world and various directories, for example on different types of accommodation in the UK and overseas, and on activity holidays and study breaks. Libraries also offer access to the internet.

There is no need to go away for your holiday, or to spend a lot of money on it. Taking time out to join in local activities and explore your own area can be a good way to find out what's going on around you and to meet people more locally. This can be very helpful if you were used to the companionship of the person who has died, or had spent a long time caring for them, and are now beginning to face the outside world again.

Your local tourist information centre would have details of coach tours setting out from your town, local activities and courses, guided walks and so on. Community associations and other local groups often organise holidays and days out, and many schools and specialist organisations run supervised holidays and activities for young people, some of which last throughout the school holidays. And you may want to arrange your own holiday. For example some parents whose partners have died get together, with their children, and go camping every year. They say it is cheap, fun, and a wonderful break from everyday routine!

If you decide to go on an organised holiday, once you have looked through the brochures which take your fancy you can check out the finer details of the holidays with the organisers. This is especially important if you have particular wishes or concerns, for example over the quality of any child-care facilities or supervised activities for children, the choice of food on offer, or travel arrangements.

Below we list some directories and holiday organisations to give you an idea of the range of holidays, activities and short breaks available. The listing of an organisation does not imply that Cruse recommends or endorses its activities. Finally, we suggest some of the financial and practical preparations you may need to make.

Information about activity holidays

Field Studies Council All kinds of courses and activities are online through the website, for individuals and families, including natural history and arts courses:
www.field-studies-council.org

Brightwater Holidays (01334 657155) arrange tours of gardens here and overseas:
www.brightwaterholidays.com

HF Holidays Ltd arrange walking tours and activity holidays (020 8732 1220)
<http://www.hfholidays.co.uk>

The National Trust has a volunteer activity programme where participants learn new skills (01793 817632). Visit the website at www.nationaltrust.org.uk and click on Volunteering on the front page

Saga, for people who are over 50, has a wide choice of tours, holidays and breaks. There are special interest holidays (0800 096 0084) - look for details in the Travel Shop at www.saga.co.uk

Holidays for unaccompanied children:

The Active Training and Education Trust provide holidays for children. You can find out more on the website www.ate.org.uk/ or call 0845 456 1205.

Camp Beaumont runs activity breaks for children. Find out more from the website www.campbeaumont.co.uk or call 01603 660333.

Information for people with a sensory or learning disability, and their carers:

Holiday Care is a charity providing breaks and holidays for people with disabilities and older people. There's information on the website www.holidaycare.org.uk, or call 0845 124 9971

Disability Holidays have a choice of activities and destinations. Find out more on the website www.disabilityholidays.net or call 0845 6345163.

Information on opportunities to explore spiritual issues, pray or meditate:

Spiritual Holidays - for those looking for something more than the usual holiday generally offers, there is information on the website www.spiritualholidays.com or call 0777 6405 140 or 0845 456 100

The Retreat Association is a registered charity. Find out more information on the website www.retreats.org.uk or call **020 7357 7736**

If you can't afford a holiday

If you can't afford to go away for a holiday you may be able to arrange day trips or a short study break, or perhaps follow up some of the other tips mentioned earlier. It is worth checking out free museums, art galleries and local events through your local council and libraries. There is also your local adult education service, which may run practical cookery or DIY courses, for example, as well as languages, arts and crafts courses, where you can learn skills and meet others.

However, if you or your family are in particular need of a holiday, or perhaps young people in the family would benefit from a local holiday scheme, you may be able to get a grant to cover all or part of the cost. This is most likely if the person needing a holiday is elderly, is a child, or has an illness

or disability (see Holiday Care, above, for people with a disability). You can get information on charitable grants from:

- your local Citizens Advice Bureau
- a trades union or professional association, if you belong to one
- your child's school or college, for funding to cover the cost of a holiday or short trip run by the school or college
- *A Guide to Grants for Individuals in Need*, published by the Directory of Social Change, is updated regularly and you can call 08450 77 7707 or find out more on the website www.grantsforindividuals.org.uk. The guide may also be available in Citizens' Advice Bureaux and at some public libraries.

CHECKLIST: some things to sort out well before you go away!

- make sure your travel documents - passport, visa - are in order
- The NHS has information on health care abroad. Go to the website <http://www.nhs.uk> and put "health care abroad" into the search box or inquire at your GP surgery
- check on immunisations and any other health requirements with your GP surgery. If you are on medication, take adequate supplies with you
- make sure you have adequate insurance
- make sure your home is secure while you are away
- leave your contact details with a relative, friend or neighbour

And finally:

- do plan something special for when you get home; you may be glad to be back but you may also feel low and it can help to have something to look forward to
- do make up your mind to have a good time!

We hope your holiday works out well. Please do tell Cruse about it afterwards by contacting the editor at the address below – your experiences and suggestions would be helpful when we update this factsheet.

Cruse offers a range of services for bereaved people. For more information please call.

Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk

Website: www.cruse.org.uk

Or call our helpline number, open working hours: 0844 477 9400