



HEAL WITH RITUALS

I found many more ritual ideas online.

Below is a list of the ones I like to use in art therapy sessions and my own life.

Make "memory boats" out of large pieces of bark decorated with moss, twigs, flowers, feathers and scraps of paper on which you and others can write messages to your loved one. You then set the little boat(s) adrift on the river as a visual expression of releasing and letting go. **(Please only use natural material that won't harm the environment.)**

An **"altar"** can be a small table in the corner of any room, and on it, you can place anything you like that connects you to the essence of your loved ones.

You can use photos of your loved one, some of their objects, healing stones, flowers, hand-written messages... anything at all. Light candles on this altar whenever you feel moved to connect. It can be a yearly birthday or transition day, or every day, as you see fit.

Be mindful of **moving the objects on the altar around from time to time** or exchanging them for new items. You don't want this place to become stale and heavy.

Many grievors find birthdays, Thanksgiving and the winter holidays a time of great sadness because their loved ones aren't present in physical form. But instead of focusing on their absence, consider focusing on their presence by inviting them to the festivities. It is not such a bizarre idea.

On birthdays, bake your loved one's favourite cake and gather friends for an "earth birthday" celebration (if your friends think you're crazy for doing this, it's time to find new friends (smile)).

On Thanksgiving, light a candle for your loved one, and have everybody at the table share a remarkable memory of them.

