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About a year has passed since the loss of your loved one. Some people refer to this annual anniversary as Remembrance Day. Perhaps you're not certain what happens on that day. It may not be clear to you what you should do that day.

First of all, I think you need to stop, take a deep breath and literally pat yourself on the back. Go ahead: do it! You deserve the pat and lots of applause because you have survived this year of firsts. Take the time to sit back and think of all that you've survived; all those "first's" – birthday, Christmas, start of school, Mother's Day, Father's Day, ball games, Wedding Anniversary, and the list goes on and on. Those are huge hurdles to overcome in the grief journey and you have survived each of them. Kudos!

Still the question begs to be asked, just what do people do on Remembrance Day? Many people want to acknowledge our special person, in some manner. Remembrance Day will also be a special time for your family. Here are some ideas from other survivors along the way:

- ~ Invite a friend to go to the cemetery with you and release some helium balloons.
- ~ Take special day trips to see some of the sights they would have enjoyed.
- ~ One father brought his wife a long-stemmed, silk rose on their daughter's Remembrance Day. She liked that so much he now does this every year. She placed the silk roses in a bud vase and after several years, moved them to a larger vase. The father found it a great way to bring up his daughter's name when they had company.
- ~ Some families choose to eat the favorite meal of their loved one, or go to their favorite restaurant as a way of honoring that person.
- ~ Another family donates books every year to the public library. They have special name plates put in the book in her memory.

You probably have even more creative ideas than the few that have been listed here. Every time I talk to survivors, they stun me with their creativity. Many people choose to make special plans on Remembrance Day. Others choose to spend it alone. Every person grieves in their own special way. Whatever you choose it is your choice to make.

Thinking of You,

Becky Haagsma
Bereavement Coordinator