

# Write a Eulogy in 7 Steps



## BEFORE YOU START

### About writing a eulogy

Eulogies to honor a departed loved one don't have to be grand, wise, long, tearful or epic.

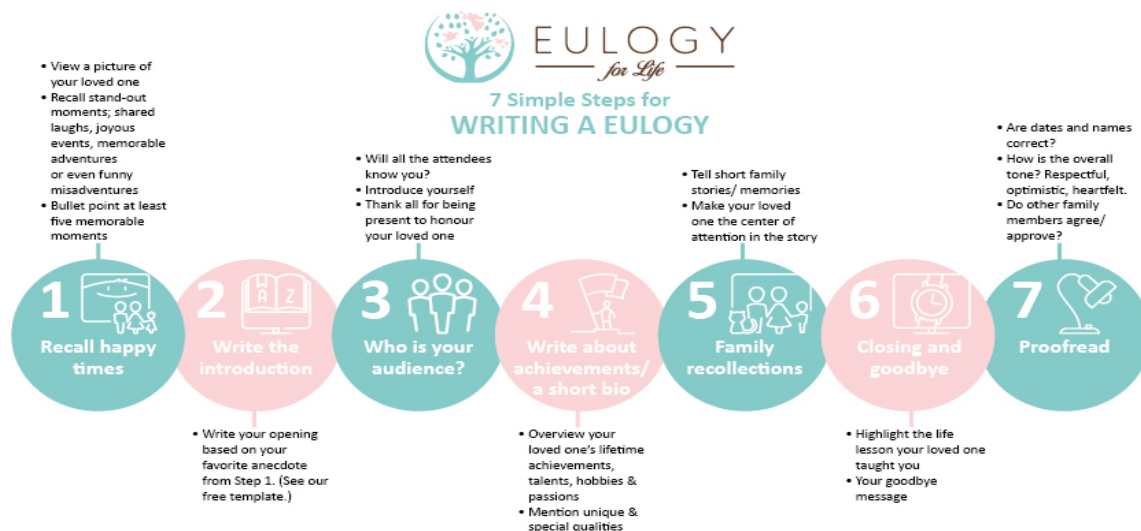
The **best eulogies** are **true, sincere** and **heartfelt**. If the words **capture the essence** of your departed loved one's life, all those listening will feel the emotion and energy within.

We recommend:

- **target** writing between **500 words** (3 minutes) and **1000 words** (7 minutes), and
- **include anecdotes** (interesting short stories that capture your departed loved one's personality and your relationship with them).

Eulogies can also read as brief as a short quote or longer than 1000 words. We suggest the word limit because research shows **seven-minutes speaking** time (1000 words) is the **maximum** time for audience **concentration**. After that, listeners get restless.

By using our **simple 7-step eulogy writing template**, you'll have a 500-word eulogy written in no time. After which you can add or delete content until you have a final draft.



### Throughout this template



This icon appears throughout the template. It indicates information to help inspire you.

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# Step 1: Biographical information & anecdotes.

## Biographical information



There is no need to begin your departed loved one's eulogy with their birth and recount their history until the day of their passing. However, collecting this information is useful should you use some or all the details.

(Type in the spaces provided. They will expand.)

<b>Title</b>	
<b>First &amp; middle name(s)</b>	
<b>Surname (nee)</b>	
<b>Surname (married)</b>	
<b>Date of birth</b>	
<b>Suburb</b>	
<b>State or territory</b>	
<b>Country</b>	
<b>Number of children in the family</b>	
<b>Name of mother and father</b>	
<b>Education details</b>	
<b>Other information</b>	

## Anecdotes

### 1. Positive anecdotes



Many people include additional historical information in their loved one's eulogy. We don't recommend this. The risk is the eulogy sounds like a history lesson instead of memorializing the most important person – your departed loved one.

Our major eulogy writing rule is: place the focus on the departed loved one and nothing else.

The best way to do this is by retelling positive stories that create an emotional impact.

Always keep in mind this is your eulogy. You're honoring your departed loved one according to your recollections. There is no right or wrong – only what is in your heart.

Using heartfelt stories will paint a picture and add insight into your relationship with your departed loved one. This alone is the secret to touching people's hearts and honoring your departed loved one in a truly memorable eulogy.

#### 1.1 What story is most famous in your family about your loved one's school years?

(If you're not sure, read our example eulogy on page 5.)

#### 1.2 What story is told every Thanks Giving about something your loved one said or did when you were growing up?

(If you're not sure, read our example eulogy on page 5.)

#### 1.3 What story about your loved one's school years is your favorite?

(If you're not sure, read our example eulogy on page 5.)

#### 1.4 What story about your loved one's life / career / raising a family is your favorite?

(If you're not sure, read our example eulogy on page 5.)

**1.5 What story about your loved one’s life paints a picture of their personal desires and passions?**

(If you’re not sure, read our example eulogy on page 5.)

**1.6 What life wisdom did your loved one leave you with?**

(If you’re not sure, read our example eulogy on page 5.)

**1.7 List more positive stories about your loved one?**



Ask family members and relatives to contribute their positive recollections. You may discover new insights to delight and comfort your broken heart.

## STEP 2: The eulogy opening

### 2.1 Choose your favorite anecdote from Step 1 as the opening.

(Start with our first sentence or create your own. See our example below)

\_\_\_\_\_(years/weeks/months/days) ago \_\_\_\_\_(name) said/did \_\_\_\_\_



#### Eulogy For Life example

*Two years ago, the police stopped Mom and me. Yes, I was driving slowly. The officer asked if I had been drinking. Before I could ask, “Was my driving that bad?” mom leaned across me, looked up at the officer and said, “No, she hasn’t been drinking, but she’s got pot in the trunk.”*

*To this day I still laugh about my car being searched for illicit drugs. The astonished look on mom’s face was priceless. Mom was famous for omitting words – often with hilarious consequences.*

*But for all those who knew mom, her love for gardening was as legendary as her green thumb. She welcomed new plants into the garden with as much excitement as a newborn grandchild.*

*On the day my car was searched, mom was only trying to share her ‘potted’ plant joy with the officer - not alert him to a daughter with a secret career in drug trafficking.*

*That was my Mom; always looking for a way to add sunshine to someone’s day.*

## STEP 3: Who is your audience?

### 3.1 Introduce yourself because not all attending the service may know you.

(Start with our sentences or create your own. See our example below)

For those of you who don't know me, I'm \_\_\_\_\_'s (name) daughter/son/wife/husband.

\_\_\_\_\_ (name) touched the heart of all those she met, and I thank you all for being here to honor her/him.

At such a difficult time, it's essential to take comfort from the happy memories we all have of \_\_\_\_\_ (name).

I'm sure \_\_\_\_\_(name) would remind us all to take comfort from these memories.



#### Eulogy For Life example

*For those of you who don't know me, I'm Jenny, Dorothy's third daughter and youngest child. Although I sometimes wonder. Unlike mom, I'm a plant torturer.*

*Mom – Dorothy – touched all our hearts in her own special way. I thank you for being here to honor her. I'm sure mum is looking down from heaven's garden saying thank you too. But she would also remind us to take comfort from the happy memories we share. She won't want us to feel sad.*

## STEP 4: Write about your loved one's achievements/ a short biography.

- 4.1 **Choose** the best starting point on your loved one's timeline.  
(Review Step 1 information).
- 4.2 **Highlight** the biographical events that best reflect who he/she was and the life he/she lived.
- 4.3 **Expand** on events (but keep in mind your word limit). For example, include additional information about your loved one's school, university, career, family, community, sport, and retirement achievements.

(Start with our sentences or create your own. See our example below)

\_\_\_\_\_ (name) was grew up in \_\_\_\_\_.

As a warm, compassionate woman/man who always \_\_\_\_\_ people naturally \_\_\_\_\_.

With a passion for (life, art, sport, practical jokes), \_\_\_\_\_ (name) became known for \_\_\_\_\_.



### Eulogy For Life example

*Mom grew up in a small house in Miami with her mother – having lost her father when she was two. Although times were difficult, mom was raised knowing right from wrong. And like all women of her era, she also learnt to cook, sew, knit and embroider. She was a one-woman domestic miracle. But in her heart was the dream to become a concert pianist.*

*While childhood financial hardship denied mom the opportunity to realise her dream, she didn't give up. Instead, she adjusted and trained as a middle school music teacher. That is where she met and fell in love with my dad.*

*Mom left teaching to raise her family — us. Mom made us her world. Every night she drew a heart shape on our palms and whispered, 'My love is with you. Sweet dreams.' Mom was my source of courage, strength and inspiration from day one. And it breaks my heart she is no longer with us.*

*But as I stand here, I know mom is saying I am now the source of courage, strength and inspiration for myself and my children.*

## STEP 5: Family Recollections.

**5.1 Recall** a short positive anecdote that captures your loved one's character and their role in the family.

**5.2 Expand** on the heartfelt anecdote here (but keep to your word limit).

(Start with our sentences or create your own. See our example below)

Everyone's experience of family and growing up is different. But the time I treasure most is when \_\_\_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_\_\_.



### Eulogy For Life example

*Mom and dad met, married and parented as a team. Music and laughter filled our formative years, along with a healthy dash of tears and tantrums. But the year mum insisted she give a Thanks Giving piano concert in our front yard is legendary.*

*Word spread. Neighbors, friends of neighbors, friends of friends, ex-students, former work colleagues, tradespeople – over 150 people gathered that day to listen to mom play. Back then there was no Facebook, yet the network of people who knew and admired mom was astonishing.*

*It's collective moments like mom's piano concert in the front yard that make my memories of her so special. Mom was selfless, hardworking, funny, generous, forgiving and most of all inspirational. Not only could she work magic in the garden, but her music opened doors in children's minds and uplifted all those who stopped to listen.*



## STEP 6: The Closing Goodbye.

**6.1 Recall** a short positive anecdote that captures your loved one's character and their role in the family.

**6.2 Expand** on the heartfelt anecdote here (but keep to your word limit).

(Start with our sentences or create your own. Revisit your answer to Q1.6 or see our example below.)

It's hard to say goodbye; to let go - to move on. But if we keep beautiful memories in our hearts, we can find comfort in our minds knowing \_\_\_\_\_ (name) will always be with us.

As \_\_\_\_\_ (name) always said, "\_\_\_\_\_"

\_\_\_\_\_ (name) may you \_\_\_\_\_.

We all love you and will miss you dearly.



### Eulogy For Life example

*It's hard to say goodbye; to let go – to move on. But I know if I keep beautiful memories in the forefront of my mind, I will find comfort because mom will always be in my heart.*

*As the framed quote on top of mom's piano reads, "Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength while loving someone deeply gives you courage."*

*Mom - may you forever nurture pot plants and play piano concerts in heaven.*

*We all love you and will miss you dearly. God bless you mom.*

## **STEP 7: Proofread.**

- 7.1 Check** all the dates and names mentioned are correct.
- 7.2 Assess** the overall tone. Is the eulogy respectful, optimistic, heartfelt?
- 7.3 Ask** a trusted family member or friend to read the draft eulogy.
- 7.4 Approve.** Do all family members agree with/approve of the content in the eulogy?
- 7.5 Read** the eulogy aloud and **time** how many minutes it takes to read.  
(Don't rush the reading. Take your time and add pauses. See our example on page 5.)
- 7.6 Practice** reading the eulogy aloud.  
(See our example on page 5.)
- 7.7 Print** for reading.  
Note our layout on page 5. Shorter line lengths and 1.5 line spacing make the eulogy easier to read when speaking at a podium.



**Eulogy For Life example: 500 words.**

Reading time: 3 to 4-minutes

Font: Arial

Point size: 14

**Dorothy Jean**

(Mom's Eulogy)

[Steps 1 & 2]

Two years ago, the police stopped Mom and me. Yes, I was driving slowly. The officer asked if I had been drinking. Before I could ask, "Was my driving that bad?" mum leaned across, looked up at the officer and said, "No, she hasn't been drinking, but she's got pot plants in the trunk."

[PAUSE A MOMENT – ALLOW LISTENERS TO ANTICIPATE WHAT COMES NEXT]

To this day I still laugh about my car being searched for illicit drugs. The astonished look on mom's face was priceless. Mom was famous for omitting words – often with hilarious consequences.

[PAUSE A MOMENT – ALLOW LISTENERS TO LAUGH OR NOT]

For all those who knew mom, her love for gardening was as legendary as her green thumb. She welcomed new plants into the garden with as much excitement as a newborn grandchild.

On the day my car was searched, mom was only trying to share her potted plant joy with the officer – not alert him to a

daughter with a secret career in drug trafficking.

That was my Mom; always looking for a way to add sunshine to someone's day.

[PAUSE A MOMENT – ALLOW LISTENERS A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON THE MOMENTS SHE MADE THEM SMILE.]

[Step 3]

For those of you who don't know me, I'm Jenny, Dorothy's third daughter and youngest child. Although I sometimes wonder. Unlike mom, I'm a plant torturer.

Mom – Dorothy – touched all our hearts in her own special way. I thank you for being here to honor her. I'm sure mum is looking down from heaven's garden saying thank you too. But she would also remind us to take comfort from the happy memories we share. She won't want us to feel sad.

[PAUSE A MOMENT – ALLOW LISTENERS TO CHECK-IN WITH THEIR EMOTIONS]

[Step 4]

Mom grew up in a small house in Miami with her mother – having lost her father when she was two. Although times were difficult, mom was raised knowing right from wrong. And like all women of her era, she also learnt to cook, sew, knit and embroider. She was a one-woman domestic miracle. But in her heart was the dream to become a concert pianist.

[PAUSE A MOMENT – THIS MAY BE A FACT LISTENER'S ARE UNAWARE OF]

While childhood financial hardship denied mom the opportunity to realise her dream, she didn't give up. Instead, she adjusted and trained as a middle school music teacher. That is where she met and fell in love with my dad.

Mom left teaching to raise her family — us. Mom made us her world. Every night she drew a heart shape on our palms and whispered, 'My love is with you. Sweet dreams.' Mom was my source of courage, strength and inspiration from day one. And it breaks my heart she is no longer with us.

[PAUSE A MOMENT – TAKE A BREATH AND EXHALE]

But as I stand here, I know mom is saying I am now the source of courage, strength and inspiration for myself and my children.

[PAUSE A MOMENT – ALLOW LISTENER'S TO THINK ABOUT THAT]

[Step 5]

Mom and dad met, married and parented as a team. Music and laughter filled our formative years, along with a healthy dash of tears and tantrums. But the year mum insisted she give a Thanks Giving piano concert in our front yard is legendary.

Word spread. Neighbors, friends of neighbors, friends of friends, ex-students, former work colleagues, tradespeople –

over 150 people gathered that day to listen to mom play.

Back then there was no Facebook, yet the network of people who knew and admired mom was astonishing.

It's collective moments like mom's piano concert in the front yard that make my memories of her so special. Mom was: selfless, hardworking, funny, generous, forgiving and most of all inspirational. Not only could she work magic in the garden, but her music opened doors in children's minds and uplifted all those who stopped to listen.

[Step 6]

It's hard to say goodbye; to let go – to move on. But I know if I keep beautiful memories in the forefront of my mind, I will find comfort because mom will always be in my heart.

As the framed quote on top of mom's piano reads, "Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength while loving someone deeply gives you courage."

Mom - may you forever nurture pot plants and play piano concerts in heaven.

We all love you and will miss you dearly.

God bless you mom.

## CUT & PASTE



**Cut and paste** the **content** you've written for **steps 2 to 6** here.

Now you have your first 500-word draft. Remember, you've got this.

Truly memorable eulogies speak from the heart and radiate sincere emotion.

You don't need to be a professional writer or speaker to do your departed loved one proud.

SHARE YOUR EULOGY WRITING EXPERIENCE WITH US AT

<mailto:info@eulogyforlife.com.au>



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