

# Loved&Lost

## Loved&Lost Participation Guide

My name is Simon Bray. I'm a freelance documentary photographer based in Manchester. I lost my father to prostate cancer in December 2009. When my dad died, it wounded me in the deepest part of my being. The loss shaped the following few years of my life and will continue to do so, but I don't have to let it define who I am. Through this time, it was really helpful to be able to talk about my Dad. I wanted to share with others about the person he was, the emotions I was feeling as I processed the grief, and talk about the influence he had - and continues to have - on my life. Those conversations were often hard and few and far between, mainly because people just didn't quite know how to respond.

This project provides a platform, allowing others to acknowledge their loss, to celebrate the person they love and to show that the loss that they've experienced does not have control over who they are.

As part of the Dying Matters Week I am supporting St John's Hospice by encouraging you to take part in the Loved&Lost project. I hope this will be a positive and restorative process for you and those close to you. Feel free to print out this sheet to take with you on the day.



- First, you need to find a photograph of yourself with a lost loved one.

- Ask a family member or friend if they will go with you to return to the location of the original photograph and fix a date to go together.
- Replicate the original photograph with your camera or phone. You can also take other photographs of the location and of each other. Don't worry about the standard of the photographs; the most important thing is that you have taken the step to return to that place.
- Once you've taken the photographs, find somewhere to sit and talk together (preferably warm with your favourite drink in hand), and give yourselves time to talk, about the day and about the person who is no longer with you. There are some starter questions at the bottom of the page.
- Take your time, it is a chance to think back and remember, for you to tell your favourite stories of the person that you have lost and dedicate some space to remembering how special they were.
- You can then email your photos and a couple of paragraphs about your experience to St John's Hospice: [sophy.horner@sjhospice.org.uk](mailto:sophy.horner@sjhospice.org.uk) or by mail to Sophy Horner, St John's Hospice, Slyne Road, Lancaster, LA2 6ST.
- When sending this email, do tell us about your participation in the project to support your images, such as when and where was the original photograph taken and who you went with? It would also be great to know more about how you found the experience, what did you talk about? What was it like to go back? How did it feel? What memories and thoughts did it evoke? Which of your senses did returning to that place stimulate?
- With your permission, we will share your photos and words in a small exhibition at St John's Hospice during the week of May 13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>, and on the Loved&Lost blog of Simon Bray and social media accounts. You will have a chance to review this before it is made public.

Some starter questions for your time to talk:

- Do you remember the day that the original photograph was taken? Who took the photograph?
- Did you visit there often?

- What was it like to go back there today? Did it feel strange that they weren't there with you?
- If they were with you now, what would they be drinking?
- What were your favourite things about them?
- What's the funniest story about them that you can remember?

If you change your mind, don't feel up to it, or it takes a long time to arrange, that's fine, it's important that you take your time and go when it feels right. Our hope is that the process will bring back happy memories and the experience of returning to a special place will be comforting and positive. It's also good to talk; this is a way to make space to share with those closest to you. If at any point you have any questions, please email [sophy.horner@sjhospice.org.uk](mailto:sophy.horner@sjhospice.org.uk)