

Dead good words

OUR MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE

When someone dies, we 'dispose' of them. That is the legal term still used to describe what happens to our bodies after we die. When we die, we become 'the deceased', losing our gender, identity and personhood. When funeral directors collect us from where we have died, they call it a 'removal'.

This dehumanising language shapes how we treat those who have died.

Together, we can create better ways to talk about death that make people feel respected, cared for and understood. Share what you'd like to change, using #DeadGoodWords

✕ Disposal

This term is still used in law to describe what happens to someone's body after they have died.

Instead, you can describe the options —burial or cremation. Or, at Poppy's, we are trialling a new word that we think works: reposal.

✕ Loved one

As with deceased, calling someone by their name is much more personal.

Loved one also prejudices how someone might feel about the person who has died — relationships are complicated.

✕ Hygienic treatment

No way! It's embalming.

Embalming is an invasive and unnecessary process of replacing a person's bodily fluids with chemicals, usually formaldehyde, in order to delay the natural changes which come with death.

✕ Removal

A funeral directors is not a removal company helping you move house. We are collecting people, not furniture.

It is a collection and we are bringing someone into our care.

✕ Committing suicide

This unhelpful language dates from the time when suicide was a crime.

Instead say died by suicide or took their own life.

✕ Facial

This sounds soothing, but it is invasive and unnecessary.

You can simply describe what happens — the person's mouth is sutured closed and caps are inserted under their eyelids.

✕ Deceased

The person had a name in life which you can still use after death.

If that's not an option, you can simply say: the person who has died, he, she, they, your relative, your friend, your mum/dad/son/daughter etc.

✕ Viewing

You aren't going to look at a flat or test drive a car. You are visiting or spending time with the person who has died, just as you might have done when they were alive.

Poppy's is a funeral directors based in London. We take a fresh approach to funerals. Instead of following rigid and outdated traditions, we listen to what our clients want and need. Instead of hiding behind closed doors, we're open about how we care for the living and the dead.

You can call us on **020 3589 4726** or visit our website www.poppysfunerals.co.uk

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