# Celebration Day 2025: balancing collective remembrance and personal grief



Celebration Day, established in 2022, is poised to take centre stage once again this bank holiday Monday, aiming to create a cultural moment dedicated to honouring those we have loved and lost. As a civilian counterpart to traditional remembrance observances, it encourages individuals to remember their deceased loved ones through sharing memories, buying commemorative items, and using social media hashtags. The initiative, supported by various charities including Mind and Hospice UK, has drawn mixed reactions since its inception, raising deeper questions about our cultural relationship with grief and remembrance.

The initiative is commendable in its objective to normalise conversations surrounding death, a topic often brushed aside in contemporary society. Despite a growing openness to discussing grief—evident in the rise of grief-related podcasts, literature, and community events—there remains a significant disconnect regarding how we deal with loss. Many individuals, especially those affected by the recent pandemic, feel that their grief has not been adequately acknowledged. Research indicates that those who lost loved ones during the pandemic experienced heightened challenges, notably through the absence of traditional rituals and communal mourning, leaving emotional wounds that linger far longer than society typically allows.

Some critics have expressed discomfort with the concept of a prescribed way to celebrate grief. For example, the notion of celebrating through commercialised symbols, such as star-shaped pins or social media campaigns, may feel impersonal or insincere. This sentiment echoes widely; many find comfort in more intimate, personal remembrances that genuinely reflect the individual's relationship with the deceased. The essence of grief is often deeply personal, with complexities that resist standardisation. As one writer noted, “disenfranchised grief” can strike when the impact of someone's loss is profound despite the relationship's perceived brevity.

Yet, the event seeks to create an inclusive platform for everyone to participate in remembrance. Its foundation as a day of joy rather than sorrow responds to a real need for collective acknowledgment of loss. Participants are encouraged not only to remember but to find ways—be it through art, food, or shared experiences—to bring their loved ones' memories into an active celebration of life. This creative approach has been mirrored in various grassroots movements, like the Projecting Grief initiative, which showcases unique artistic responses to loss. From joyous gatherings to artistic expressions inspired by departed loved ones, these projects highlight that grieving can take many forms, prompting individuals to reflect upon lost relationships in ways that feel true to them.

This desire for authenticity speaks volumes about the wider cultural landscape surrounding grief. The sense of obligation to celebrate collectively, as suggested by figures like Stephen Fry and Prue Leith, can sometimes feel overwhelming and manufactured. However, the rise of personal remembrance practices—whether through family traditions, storytelling, or legacy projects—provides a meaningful alternative to commercialised grief observances.

As the next Celebration Day approaches on 26th May 2025, it remains essential to engage in these conversations with sensitivity. While many may find solace in collective memory, it's equally valid to prefer a more private, personalised approach to grief. Ultimately, the goal is to foster an environment where grief can be openly expressed, regardless of the form it takes. This cultural shift towards acceptance marks a significant step in navigating our complex relationships with loss.

In pursuing methods that resonate deeply with personal experiences, society may gradually create a more profound understanding of grief, one that acknowledges the diverse ways individuals honour their loved ones, both publicly and privately.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/may/25/loved-ones-celebration-day-bereavement-grief-remembrance> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.celebrationday.com/> - Celebration Day is an annual event held on the last bank holiday Monday in May, dedicated to honoring and remembering those who have inspired us. The initiative encourages individuals to share memories and celebrate the lives of their loved ones, aiming to normalize discussions around death and grief. The next Celebration Day is scheduled for Monday, 26th May 2025. The event is supported by various charities, including Mind, Hospice UK, and the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. Participation is open to everyone, with no requirements to sign up or donate.
3. <https://www.celebrationday.com/about/> - The 'About' page of Celebration Day provides detailed information about the origins and purpose of the event. Initiated in 2022 by a group of friends, the day is designed to encourage people to take time out to remember and celebrate the lives of those no longer with us. It emphasizes the importance of keeping memories alive and offers inspiration for various ways to honor loved ones. The page also highlights the event's growth and its aim to create a space for collective acknowledgment of those who have passed.
4. <https://www.celebrationday.com/faq> - The FAQ section of Celebration Day addresses common questions about the event. It explains that Celebration Day is an annual moment dedicated to the remembrance of those who have inspired us but are no longer here. The page clarifies that the event is not affiliated with any political, commercial, or religious organizations and that participation is simple, with no need to sign up, donate, or provide personal information. It also provides information on how brands, organizations, or charities can get involved and support the event.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/may/25/loved-ones-celebration-day-bereavement-grief-remembrance> - In this opinion piece, the author reflects on the concept of Celebration Day, a civilian Remembrance Day intended to honor those we have loved and lost. The article discusses the initiative's origins in 2022 and its aim to encourage people to celebrate their deceased loved ones. The author expresses mixed feelings about the event, questioning whether being urged to celebrate the dead in a specific manner feels authentic. The piece also touches upon the broader cultural challenges in dealing with death and grief, highlighting the importance of personal and meaningful remembrance.
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Day_of_Reflection> - The National Day of Reflection is a UK commemoration held annually on 23 March to remember those who died during the COVID-19 pandemic. Initiated by the Marie Curie charity in 2021, the day includes a minute's silence and various events to honor the lives lost. The event is supported by the Church of England and has been observed since 2021, with the date and format evolving over the years. The page provides historical context and details about the observance, including notable events and figures associated with the day.
7. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pregnancy_and_Infant_Loss_Remembrance_Day> - Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day is observed on 15 October each year to honor and remember the lives of babies who died during pregnancy, at birth, or in infancy. The day aims to raise awareness about the prevalence of baby loss and the intense grief that often accompanies the experience. Individuals, families, and organizations participate in various activities, including lighting candles at 7:00 pm local time to create a 'Wave of Light' across the globe. The page provides information about the history, observance, and significance of the day.