

**Talk Topics with Gail Rubin**  
**Certified Celebrant, “The Doyenne of Death”**  
**Author of The Family Plot Blog and *A Good Goodbye:***  
***Funeral Planning for Those Who Don’t Plan to Die***

**Funny Films for Serious Conversations (45-60 min. or longer as needed)**

Funny film clips provide an effective way to start serious conversations about funeral planning and end-of-life issues. Using selected clips from independent films, major motion pictures and television programs, Gail informs, entertains and moves your audience to action. Gail can create a unique program for you or choose from these talk topics:

- “Funny Films for Serious Funeral Planning Conversations”
- “Ashes to Ashes, Dust in Your Face – Cremation, Comedy and Creativity”
- “Doctor, How Long Do I Have?”
- “The Viking Funeral on Film”
- “The Funeral Director on Film”
- “Lessons from *Six Feet Under*”
- “Jewish Funeral Traditions on Film”

**Everything You Wanted to Know About Funerals \***  
**\* But Were Afraid to Ask (30-90 min.)**

Just as talking about sex won’t make you pregnant, talking about funerals won’t make you dead – and your family will benefit from the conversation. From cremation to caskets, obituaries to obesity, religions to receptions, Gail Rubin brings light to what many consider a dark subject.

**Consumer Funeral Planning by the Numbers (15-25 min.)**

Americans tend to avoid funeral planning, which affects life’s other plans. A funeral is one of the top five expenses a family will incur. This upbeat outreach talk covers these numbers:

- One life to live
- Two events - the similar elements of weddings and funerals
- Three or more reasons people avoid talking about death and funeral planning
- Four important reasons to pre-plan a funeral
- Five things to know NOW before someone dies
- Six questions to ask yourself before talking to your local funeral director

**We Can Do That? New Trends in Death Care (30-45 min.)**

The modern funeral is changing. Learn about Certified Celebrants, alkaline hydrolysis, at-home/DIY funerals, QR codes, and creative celebrations of life in this eye-opening talk!

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### **Jewish Funeral Traditions (with or without film clips) (60-75 min.)**

Jewish traditions regarding death and dying, the funeral, the treatment of the body, burial, mourning, and annual remembrances are very different from Christian practices. This talk illuminates the differences and similarities of these funeral traditions – highly beneficial for interfaith families. Scenes from two comedic films from Mexico, *My Mexican Shivah* and *Nora's Will*, can be shown to illustrate Jewish funeral, burial and mourning traditions.

Gail Rubin is a member of the *Chevra Kaddisha*, a society of volunteers who wash and dress the bodies of Jews for burial, and she also serves on the cemetery committee for her synagogue, Congregation Albert in Albuquerque, NM.

### **The Newly-Dead Game™ (15 min. per game)**

Funerals almost always seem to be a surprise, and that's why most people are unprepared when they happen. But according to Gail Rubin, author of **A Good Goodbye: Funeral Planning for Those Who Don't Plan to Die**, playing a little game can increase your chances of avoiding emotional and financial disaster. The Newly-Dead Game, based on elements of "The Newlywed Game" TV show, tests how well couples know their partner's last wishes. She will emcee this fun, upbeat way to get the conversation started.



**Gail Rubin**, The Doyenne of Death™, is the author of **A Good Goodbye: Funeral Planning for Those Who Don't Plan to Die**. She is a Certified Celebrant and an engaging speaker who talks to groups about ways to start funeral planning conversations.

Rubin has spoken at, planned, and attended hundreds of funerals and memorial services. She is a member of the Association for Death Education and Counseling and the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association. She is also the author of **The Family Plot Blog** (<http://thefamilyplot.wordpress.com>), a chipper online resource to provide the information, inspiration and tools to pre-plan a healing and meaningful funeral or memorial service.

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