

## Elizabeth Grady



When **Elizabeth Grady** was let go from her college events job, the first thing she did was throw a dance party: "My five-year-old was the DJ, my eight-year-old was the technician, and my husband happily assisted with silly dance moves. Jokingly, I posted a video to Facebook and called it, "Welcome to Grady Events."

A new business was born. "Our first week in quarantine was spent crafting artsy houses made out of cardboard with our kids, using décor I had in the party drawer," says Grady, who has decades of experience, nationally and internationally, in the special events and entertainment industry. As she watched colleagues lose their jobs, Grady noted the growing trend toward micro-events using video conferencing software enhanced by socially distanced support. "I started to help people celebrate milestones in more impactful, meaningful ways," Grady says. "Celebrating is a powerful life-affirming endeavor that connects us all. My role is now more of a counselor and experience-maker."

Her new business, Grady Events, opens opportunities for meaningful and memorable experiences. "Every moment, every celebration, every protest, every birthday, anniversary, wedding, and memorial service is an opportunity for people to speak to the heart of what matters," she says, citing examples of a Chicago couple who married in the midst of a protest and another couple, who, after saying their vows, donated their reception meal to residents at a homeless shelter.

"It has been refreshing to rethink events from a place of joy and meaning, a needed boost in my morale of not what I do, but with whom I do it, and what really matters," says Grady. "It's easy to forget what stokes the flames of the imagination. We don't have to let moments pass us by; we can and should celebrate them!"