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**Künstlerische Leitung
und Kuration**
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The ABGs of Grief. A Glossary

Accept The first one is a difficult one, but it holds great power. It's difficult to admit that it's over, that it will never be the same again, that change is the only constant and there is no way back. But acceptance is the master key, that will unlock and lock the doors of grief. So don't be surprised when it comes at last.

Break To break free, you will first break down. So go down and deep. And then invite the light in, so you can see through the darkness. Shadow work is a lot of work, but it will break the chains and its taste of liberation is like no other.

Courage You will need lots of it to make many moves in the Game of Grief. Do whatever it takes to find and keep it. Grow with it. Then glow with it.

Care Be gentle to yourself, take long walks, take a bath, eat well, try to sleep and breathe, do things, that give you comfort, that give you pleasurable feelings.

Denial It is part of the Game of Grief; we have mechanisms and reflexes that at first don't want to believe in the cause of our grief, so we deny it. It's okay for a moment, but then try to face it, courageously take imaginary walks around the cause, look at it, and try to embrace it.

Drama Don't dwell there. Don't drill there. Don't get sucked in there. Just stay away from it because it will waste your energy and cloud your mind. Stay with your grief, but don't make a drama out of it. And don't victimize yourself.

Elevate Your talking points. Expand your perspectives to see new points of view emerge. Let yourself see things from higher up. It's clearer and makes way more sense from the top.

Endure Look for the long-held wish for enduring love that goes beyond time and space. Hold on it.

Find healthy ways to cope. Leave your phone at home and take a long walk outside. Smile at strangers on your way. Try hot showers or hot

chocolate. Try dancing, fasting, lifting weights, plate throwing (or breaking, if it tickles your taste). It will shift your attention and make you feel better. Find out what works for you. Don't judge yourself. Don't explain yourself. Just be gentle in your ways and on your body.

Grieve The ABG's come home with the letter G. Grief is a shockwave. It will send you into fire and back. So give yourself the space and time to grieve. Learn the language of grief so you could understand and unlock its secrets. Know that it can and will change you. So don't resist it. Let it take you through the A's to Z's at your own pace, and then find the way back to P(eace).

Garden Plant a garden of memorial like Derek Jarman did for all his friends and lovers whom he lost to HIV. Each circular bed in his garden is a dial and a true lover's knot – planted with lavender, helichrysum, and santolina.

Heart Grief is bottled up love, and love is the language of the heart. So send love to all the parts that need it. Then enjoy watching them grow like flowers in spring.

Hug yourself, let yourself be hugged. It will give you comfort – although you might feel like you want to reject it. Hang in there, in your own arms, and in those who care for you.

Hope is the thing with feathers, as Emily Dickinson wrote. Turn your grief in something imaginative, absurd, and joyful.

Involve your flings and followers, your better halves and half-siblings, your pets and friends, angels and anyone who will give you an ear, a hug, or a word that helps you out of this situation.

Joke Invite laughter in. Make it loud. Let it sound. Score jokes on YouTube. Go to a standup show. Seek funny friends. Let the joke make your jaw drop. You'll thank us later.

Keep a diary of how you feel and all the plot twists in your story of grief. A diary will take matters out of your mind and then help you free up

space for what really matters. Also, you might return to these pages later when you need to draw the dots and finish the lines.

Let go Grief is really all about it. Let your grief become your guru. And then let it go. It's only after you've let it go that it will let you grasp its teachings.

Move your body. The Mind-Body connection is real. Trust your body to change your mind.

Memory takes passion of the body. Leave the body open for the moon to break into. Let the beams of moon light shine on your memories.

No You might find yourself saying it a lot, especially when the conversation turns to forgiveness. Say what you may, but there is nothing that can completely transform your grief journey like forgiveness – for, but most importantly for yourself. There's so much wisdom behind its veil. So, go for a yes, unless you reeeeeeally have a good reason for no.

Open your mind to another way of telling your grief story. What if it's not about you? What if there is something you are failing to see? Try to zoom out to see the bigger picture. Then see what changes in the story.

Peace Fighting your grief will not make it go away. Instead, learn from A to make peace with it. What will eventually happen is, that you will end up making peace with yourself.

Question your intentions. Your ego will want to have its say. Go where it wants to take you to, entertain its possibilities, but make sure to come back to the reason in your heart.

Requiem Reposes the souls of the death. Compose your own mass and celebrate it.

Rage It will come and it will destroy everything and everyone in its wake. And it's ok. But know that your rage is also another great teacher: what bugs you burns within you. Try going behind your web of anger and untangle its motivations. Learn its ways so that you can learn your lessons.

Sing It will bring some joy and ease your resistance. And you need both.

Tears They will just come, mostly when you expect or want them the least, don't suppress them, let them flow, cry yourself a river, it's purifying.

Ten Count to ten when you panic. Slow your breath at each count. Continue to count backwards if needed.

Universe with capital U. The Universe (or whatever fills your blank). Trust that it's vast and out there and has your back. So lean on and listen in.

Verify Some people will speak to you in volumes. Others will speak to you in silence. Verify both in your wells of judgment and drown out what's not good for you, even if it's good.

Wait It will take time and lots of waiting to let it out and see it through. But in Spanish to wait comes from to hope. Try remembering this every time your grief tests your mettle.

Waves Or as Joan Didion writes: «Grief has no distance. Grief comes in waves, paroxysms, sudden apprehensions that weaken the knees and blind the eyes and obliterate the dailiness of life.»

X Draw an X around all that has run its course, all that is past and not in your future. Get bold markers to enjoy the X-ing process. Tear the X's into many pieces and throw them in bins and a big fire. And then, walk away and turn the page.

You Taking care of your grief means taking care of yourself. Just know that you will eventually grow out of there. And there will be a bigger and better you waiting for you on the mainland.

Zigzag Grief is never straight and your road to Z is not a line nor a list, but a zigzag of ups, downs and U-turns. So, rub your back against this circle and make yourself comfortable around its round corners.