

CONTENT WARNING: grief, suicide, death, loss, etc
Recommended for 1-4 players.

READ ALOUD TO ALL PARTICIPANTS, BEFORE START OF GAME:

Disclose as you wish, pass if you must. There are no right answers. Conversations can flow as freely as you wish. All things said during play must not leave the play space.

Grieving is a process, not a solution, it's defined as deep mental anguish in response to an event or situation. It can develop in any form (i.e.: losing a friend or family member or pet to time, distance and/or death, a change in any kind of relationship, loss of agency, etc.)

There is no right way to grieve; everyone's experience processing is different.

Objective: There are no points or score to keep track of. Give yourself permission to feel what you need to feel. The purpose of this game is to give all players a space to think about loss in a way that our daily lives don't allow.

MATERIALS:

- standard playing deck
- Rule booklet
- (recommended for comfort) Soft friends
- (recommended, as needed) Tissue box

SET UP:

- Take out all the face cards in every suit along with the 10 and 2 cards (A, K, Q, J, 10, 2) and separate cards into 6 piles by card symbol. These separated piles do not need to be ordered in any specific way.
- Check the [Translation Guide](#) to convert standard playing cards into questions.

HOW TO PLAY:

- The *recommended* number of rounds are determined by the amount of Players (up to 4). However, Players are free to play for as long or as short as they wish.

# of players	# of Rounds
1	4
2	4
3	3
4	2

- To begin, choose a Player to start.
- Begin the play session with the Introductory Stage.
 - Introductory Stage (answer one at a time):
 - What is your experience with loss?
 - How do you cope with stress?
- After the Introductory Stage, the Active Player decides which stage they would like to explore.
- The Active Player picks up the top card of the selected stage deck, and select a question they want to answer.
- To signal that the Active Player's turn is over, they can flip their card over, or simply say, "I'm done." Check the [Recommended Tips section](#) for more ways to create a respectful and healthy play space.
- Players lay out answered cards chronologically in front of themselves, as a record of the Player's play experience.
 - Unanswered or passed questions are placed at the bottom of its original deck stack.
- Once Players decide the play session is over, proceed to the Debrief Stage.
 - Debrief Stage (answer one at a time):
 - What new goals or priorities have you set since playing this game?
 - How would you take care of yourself during times of distress?

STANDARD PLAYING CARD TRANSLATION GUIDE:

STAGE OF GRIEF	CARD SYMBOL	SUIT	QUESTIONS	QUESTIONS
Shock & Denial	A	♠	Who in your life do you most fear losing?	How do you define loss?
		♥	What did it feel like to lose someone/something?	How has your body/mind protected you from feeling something?
		♦	How does your body react to loss?	Who in your life has experienced loss? How did you react to it?
		♣	What does it feel like to be overwhelmed with emotion?	How have you seen other people react when they're overwhelmed with emotion?
Pain & Guilt	2	♠	Do you associate any specific physical pain with emotional distress?	//what example of physical pain can you imagine?
		♥	What do you most regret doing/not doing with someone that is no longer in your life?	What is the last thing you've said to someone you love?
		♦	When was the last time you felt guilty for being alive?	How do you visualize loss? If you don't, how do you rationalize loss?
		♣	What does it feel like to be sad?	How would you describe emotional pain?
Bargaining & Anger	10	♠	Who have you pushed away because of loss? Why?	How did it feel to be loved by someone whom you've lost?
		♥	What do you think about when you think about people that are no longer in your life?	Do you ever think about your own death? What does that mean?
		♦	Do you blame anyone for the loss you've experienced? If not, why?	What would you trade to have a loved one back?
		♣	When are you at your most irrational?	How do you rationalize your actions under stress?
Depression (reflection)	J	♠	What does it feel like to be loved by someone who is no longer in your life?	What is it like to love someone who is no longer in your life?
		♥	What new priorities have you set since the loss that you've experienced?	Who do you live for most? Why?
		♦	How have you grown from loss? If you haven't, why?	How would you encourage growth from others?
		♣	What are you most grateful learning from someone who has been in your life?	What kind of person would you be if your late loved one was never in your life to begin with?
Reconstruction	Q	♠	What is something you needed to relearn after your loved one(s) left your life?	What is something you've most struggled with in your past that you've conquered or are conquering?
		♥	Who is the first person you reach out to for help? Why?	How would you comfort someone experiencing loss?
		♦	What brings you the most happiness in life?	Who do you bring the most happiness to?
		♣	When was the last time you were truly happy?	When was the last time you made someone truly happy?
Acceptance	K	♠	What do you think reaching acceptance will look/feel like?	How do you think one can reach acceptance?
		♥	What brings you most hope in life?	What do you most look forward to?
		♦	How would you define acceptance?	Have things ever gone back to "normal" since your loss?
		♣	What do you think about when you think about people you have lost?	When was the last time you disclosed loss to someone else?

RECOMMENDED TIPS on creating a healthy, respectful play space:

- All players must agree to any custom rules implemented during or before play.
- The space of play should be free of judgment. Everyone has different experiences. No experience is bad or good, they are just different, even the way we choose to survive and cope can be different.
 - Avoid having spectators observe the game. It is unfair to ask active players to be vulnerable without reciprocation from all participants of the experience.
 - Allow the active player to speak freely and openly without being interrupted or judged.
- Allow conversations to flow as freely as players wish.
 - All players have the right to pass, decline to answer, or provide explanation. Some questions may be too personal or difficult to answer.
- Give players the space to opt out of the game completely and move directly to the debrief stage.
 - For players who need to leave suddenly to pause/collect themselves/breath/reflect/etc say, “pause” to signal this to all players that this player needs space.
 - For players who find this experience too intense and are uncomfortable touch or pick up the Grief card box. This will signal distress to other players.
- To help allow players to feel that they have safely left the play space have everyone stand during the debrief stage.

RESOURCES (for those who need it):

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| • National Suicide Prevention Lifeline | 1 (800) 273-TALK (8255)
1 (800) SUICIDE (784-2433) |
| • Crisis Text Hotline | Text HOME to 741741 |
| • National Sexual Assault Hotline | 1 (800) 656-HOPE (4673) |
| • National Youth Crisis Hotline | 1 (800) 442-HOPE (4673) |
| • National Domestic Hotline | 1 (800) 799-SAFE (7233) |
| • Trevor Project (LGBTQIA+) | 1-866-488-7386 |