

First, an inspiration:

“Grief expressed out loud,
whether in or out of character,
unchoreographed and honest,
for someone we have lost,
or a country or home we have lost,
is in itself the greatest praise
we could ever give them.

Grief is praise, because
it is the natural way love
honors what it misses.”

— Martín Prechtel

88 Rituals for Loss

1. Making a soul collage
2. Make a mini-altar
3. Going for a long run
4. Painting
5. Yoga
6. Adornment: When I put on jewelry remembering something meaningful
7. Just sitting in my body
8. Burying something in the woods
9. Sit by a fire
10. Light a candle
11. Walking and crying with someone
12. Walking through the city
13. Taking photos along walks in the neighborhood to notice better
14. Writing a song in homage
15. Start singing, making noise again
16. Be alone and still in nature
17. Trekking/Hiking
18. Give thanks for what I have learned
19. Writing my memories for my children
20. Write poetry like I did when I was young
21. Taking classes online so I can keep intellectually stimulated
22. Tai Chi. Breathing in, breathing out.
23. Talking to my parents—often
24. Openly reflect on the beauty of what is represented in the loss
25. Reading the Psalms
26. Recite a prayer
27. Ring bells
28. Reading poetry and pausing
29. Read letters from a lost loved one
30. Drawing, making art of my grief

RITUALS FOR LOSS

31. Crying in the shower
32. Baking bread
33. Write a eulogy
34. Make a playlist that relates to the person lost
35. Lighting sage
36. A fire ceremony
37. Cry during savasana
38. Cry for all of the things
39. Lay down flat on the ground and cry.
(Seriously, it helps!)
40. Letting children lead you in play
41. Dance
42. Dance MORE
43. Dance like crazy
44. Dancing irreverently to a
Richard Simmons dance video
45. Dancing and wailing
46. Allow others to see you grieve
47. Throw a stone in the water for grief
I want to let go of
48. Swear
49. Driving and listening to music
50. Picnic with a loved one at their resting place
51. Imagining a better future
52. Call friends you have lost touch with
53. Cooking shabbat dinner with family
54. Cooking for others who are also grieving
55. Find objects that remind you of what
was lost and care for them
56. Talking to a spiritual advisor
57. Talking to my plants
58. Acknowledge small successes
59. Celebrate
60. Morning meditation with the rising sun

RITUALS FOR LOSS

61. Pick flowers and say hello to the grief
62. Plucking a memory and associating textures, colors, etc. to them, so when I see those physical things in the world, I think of them
63. Spending time with pets
64. Making miniature stone mountains on a hike
65. Naming the loss and writing it in the sand... and then sit and watch as the waves of the sea eventually take it in
66. Laughing
67. Ask a beautiful question
68. Listening to emotive music
69. Eating a childhood food
70. A proper tea
71. Leaving a chair open at the dinner table for those lost to me
72. Scream
73. Bowing in honor
74. Taking three deep breaths before getting out of my car
75. Wearing a specific color that I associate with something meaningful
76. Plant a plant in honor
77. Learning history from a relative
78. Saying goodbye every time, as if I mean it
79. Create a moment of remembrance
80. Participating in a communal remembrance (like the AIDS quilt)
81. Take a gratitude walk
82. Own my own narrative about what happened
83. Looking through old photos
84. Make a toast
85. Find meaning in the situation, then go do something about it
86. Dedicate something to the person or thing I lost
87. Remember every single day: I am alive
88. Choose love, again, and again, and again