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**For Immediate Release**

**CRUSHING THE CANCER CURVEBALL  
A Playbook for the Newly Diagnosed,  
Their Family and Friends**

By Joelle Kaufman

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**CRUSHING THE CANCER CURVEBALL** “serves as an important guide to help women navigate the complex landscape of breast cancer risk, treatment, and recovery.”

*–Dr. Laura Esserman, internationally recognized breast surgeon, breast oncology specialist, and visionary in personalized medicine, Director, UCSF Breast Care Center*

“Joelle’s passion for living, even in the face of breast cancer, is infectious. She shows us how positivity and perseverance can convert a challenging and terrifying experience to one of personal growth, relationship strengthening and appreciation of life.”

*–Dr. Merisa Piper, UCSF Assistant Professor, Reconstructive Surgery*

**OUTSPOKEN CANCER SURVIVOR JOELLE KAUFMAN DEMYSTIFIES  
THE CANCER EXPERIENCE IN NEW BOOK,  
CRUSHING THE CANCER CURVEBALL**

**Memoir and Handbook Combined, Kaufman’s Guide  
Empowers The Newly Diagnosed And Their Loved Ones  
To Take Control Of The Path Forward**

When Joelle Kaufman was 13, her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. This “curveball” changed the course of Kaufman’s life as she managed the role of caregiver both to her mother and subsequently her sister; the need for vigilance in the face of her own cancer risk; and finally, her own diagnosis. Kaufman brings her experience and passion for helping others navigate the breast cancer journey to her new book,

**CRUSHING THE CANCER CURVEBALL: A Playbook for the Newly Diagnosed, Their Family and Friends** (January 2025). Both a no-holds-barred memoir and a hands-on

toolkit, this life-affirming guide demystifies the cancer experience, empowering those with cancer to take control of their path forward – and shows family and friends how they can help.

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“My passion is supporting cancer patients in finding their voice, taking control of their journey, and reducing the chaos and terror. As my family says, we’ve seen the movie. We know how to write a better ending,” says Kaufman. While one in eight women in the United States will be told they have breast cancer, most will go on to live long, fulfilling lives. Kaufman’s experience will teach them what to ask, do, and anticipate at every stage of the cancer journey, supported by personal stories from twelve other women she interviewed about their approaches as well as her own.

**CRUSHING THE CANCER CURVEBALL** provides insights and lessons learned across the five phases of cancer: prevention, diagnosis, treatment, surgery, and recovery. The chapter names build on the baseball analogy, and all are chock full of real stories and hard-won advice — not unlike having an experienced friend holding your hand through your journey. If you are a family member or friend, you will gain insight into your loved one’s experience, enabling you to provide the support they truly need.

**Prevention:** “For goodness’ sake, *touch your breasts regularly*,” urges Kaufman. She details the available screening tests and the recommendations for those like herself who are at increased risk. She also opens a window into her own complex and intensely personal choices regarding genetic testing and preventative surgery. Fundamentally, she stresses the importance of knowing your own body and advocating for yourself: if her sister Tracey hadn’t insisted that the lump her doctor said was “nothing” be removed, that cancer would have continued to grow.

**Diagnosis:** “Cancer is not called “the Big C” for nothing—it’s a life-altering diagnosis, even when treatable,” the author writes. Kaufman describes both her experience when her mother was diagnosed and her own, addressing challenging issues including how to tell your children and share with your wider circle. She chose to do the latter via a CaringBridge account. “Posts from CaringBridge became an outlet where I illustrated how I turned my cancer curveballs into hits,” she explains. She also addresses the complex emotions that will inevitably arise with a cancer diagnosis, laying out the kinds of support that are available—from psycho-oncologists to online support groups like Peloton Breast Cancer Survivors—and how to determine what’s right for you.

**Treatment:** Cancer is a team sport, but you must be the captain. No one can advocate for you better than you. “Find an oncologist you trust. Breast cancer is stressful enough without being uncomfortable with your doctor or medical team. Research and talk to more than one oncologist, if possible. Follow your gut,” Kaufman writes. From determining the appropriate medical strategy to managing the often long and arduous course of

treatment, she leaves nothing out. This includes managing medical side effects, from anti-nausea treatment to technology to prevent hair loss; dealing with economic challenges such as high treatment costs, insurance limits, and loss of income; finding “Happiness Tripwires™— simple, yet powerful practices to spark positivity, even on the most challenging days; and embracing help from your community. For Kaufman, the latter included asking her children for playlists to listen to during chemotherapy, weekly letters for encouragement, intense exercise with friends, and accepting meals on chemo days.

**Surgery:** “If you can meet multiple surgical teams, cast your net widely,” the author advises. She emphasizes the importance of having a team that works together doing your type of surgery regularly, clearly explains their surgical philosophy, and listens thoughtfully to your concerns. Her surgical team checklist includes all this and more. Kaufman also discusses organizing a postsurgical support team, prepping your home for postsurgical supplies and limitations, and preparing for incidental findings. Finally, “If something doesn’t feel or look right, escalate to your medical team sooner rather than later. Complications can happen, and they know what to do,” she writes.

**Recovery:** Kaufman openly addresses the challenge of becoming comfortable with your new body and urges setting flexible goals for post-surgery recovery. She also encourages diligently participating in post-treatment monitoring and discusses the possibility of recurrence. “Whatever you feel when you reach the end of treatment is exactly right. I felt joy, so I danced. Others may feel anger, exhaustion, or relief. Embrace what you feel and go with it,” she writes.

For anyone who has just heard the word “cancer,” **CRUSHING THE CANCER CURVEBALL** is a lifeline—a guide and resource that will be with you every step of the way, helping you to avoid unnecessary suffering, build deeper connections with loved ones, and make treatment decisions you feel good about. “While there’s no one-size-fits-all cancer story, you *can* learn to craft yours from a place of power, not fear. It can mean the difference between merely surviving cancer and emerging with a renewed zest for life,” Kaufman declares. Offering guidance for navigating cancer with courage, strength, and compassion—and doing it on your terms — Kaufman’s new book is a must-read for both the newly diagnosed and for anyone close to them.

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## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Joelle Kaufman is the author of **CRUSHING THE CANCER CURVEBALL**. Her life has been shaped by breast cancer since age 13, culminating in her own 2023 diagnosis—the fourth in her immediate family. As CEO and Founder of [GTM Flow](#), she combines cancer-forged resilience with cutting-edge go-to-market leadership strategies. Joelle’s expertise spans healthcare and business, earning her positions on the UCSF Patient Experience Council and the Advisory Board of USC’s The Pink Test. Her insights have been featured in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Fortune Magazine. You can learn more at [www.joellekaufman.com](http://www.joellekaufman.com).