

Ep #5: Moving Beyond Grief: Boundaries



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With Your Host

Sandy Linda

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In the midst of heartache and pain, it can be incredibly tough to strike a balance between self-preservation and maintaining relationships. We often fear that setting boundaries might lead to rejection or guilt, making an already difficult situation even more complex.

But here's the thing. Boundaries aren't about shutting people out. They're about persevering your well-being and finding a path to healing. So stick around if you're grappling with unresolved grief and loss and wondering how to set healthy and appropriate boundaries. We got some valuable insights and strategies coming your way.

Welcome to *Overcoming Grief*, a show for women experiencing profound grief and looking for support in healing and transforming their lives. If you are ready to heal after loss, create a new self-identity, take responsibility to do the hard things, and get massive results in your life, this show is for you. Now, here's your host, Master Grief and Life Coach, Sandy Linda.

Hello, fabulous folks. How's everyone doing today? I recently attended a virtual mastermind event focused on something some of us grapple with at some point. The theme of this virtual mastermind event was called how to feel harder and suffer less. It opened my eyes to the true essence of emotional strength, and how sometimes it's not what we think it is.

Emotional strength is understanding what an emotion is and not becoming a good fighter of emotion. Let me tell you, these insights were like little golden nuggets that helped me embrace my flaws and limitations instead of just sweeping them under the rug like unresolved grief or emotional baggage.

As someone who's walked the path of people pleasing for most of my life, avoiding conflict and giving in were my default modes. It's only later that I regret not standing up for myself. However, as I journey through the aftermath of loss, grief, and profound life changes, I discovered the word boundaries. Plus I was presented with *The Book of Boundaries*, which I will leave you with the information on the show notes. Boundaries were going to become a lifeline for my survival.

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Setting boundaries and indulging our illusion of control is a delicate dance, a two winged process that gracefully balances freedom and grief. When you are struggling through an unimaginable, painful event, do you have the mental capacity to set the limits and still be loving? Do you fear setting boundaries with others because of rejection or guilt?

If you're struggling with unresolved grief and loss and trying to find a way to set healthy and appropriate boundaries, you're in for a treat. I will provide you some practical tips and strategies to help you navigate the guilt and get into a boundary setting pro.

So let me define boundaries as I found on this quote. Boundaries you know are like the invisible lines defining who we are. They show us where I end and you begin, like our personal property lines, right? This quote really helped me realize how crucial it is to set boundaries for ourselves.

It's not about keeping people at arm's length, but rather finding a way to interact with others while persevering our peace of mind and balance. Boundaries are the guidelines you set for yourself and what limits you feel are appropriate. You and the other person know what is acceptable within that relationship. It's not a way to control other people that would separate us from others. It's about protecting your fragile mind, body, and soul after experiencing a life altering event.

After a heartbreaking loss or change, some people cannot support your unexpected grief. If some will say unwelcome comments that you suddenly withdraw from inexperienced folks that opening to feeling harder. They are hesitant to have tough conversations about loss and change.

As someone who has witnessed a life altering event, friends went on with things as normal as I had to navigate the depths of my despair. Upon reflecting, I realized I needed to reevaluate my relationship to myself. Establishing a grief support system does require effort.

I've been in relationships where things got messy because I didn't have these boundaries in place. I was a people pleaser addict. I could not say no and said

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yes to everything, even if it meant sacrificing my needs and desires. At first, it seemed like I was being super accommodating and selfless.

But as time passed, I started feeling this growing bitterness and resentment. I did not even realize that friends and families were pushing my boundaries because I never set any. I kept suppressing my own feelings and wants just to keep the peace. It led to this constant frustrations, like my needs didn't matter. Has that ever happened to you?

When wrestling with multiple profound losses, I experienced a significant relationship shift. It was as if, in the wake of these tragedies, some of the friends and family I have leaned on for support just vanished into thin air. I remember one friend I've been close to for years who suddenly blocked me on every form of communication as if erasing me from their life entirely. It was a painful and baffling experience.

Another time a family member, perhaps overwhelmed by their inability to comprehend my grief, wantonly told me to move on, leaving me feeling utterly alone in my sorrow. Then there was the friend who, despite promising to be there for me, gradually faded away, making excuses, and eventually disappearing completely, even from our video calls on Zoom.

These moments were like salt in the wounds of my already aching hearts. They taught me that grief, for some, is an uncomfortable and unfamiliar territory, and that everyone knows how to navigate it. It was a difficult lesson, but it also highlighted the importance of finding the right support system during the darkest times of our lives. It was a wake-up call to realize that I must start setting boundaries to protect my mental and emotional well-being.

Faced with rejection by families and friends, it was time to sit alone with a river of misery including loneliness and grief outbursts. It was challenging to be stranded alone on the road to navigate my grief journey. It took some time to adjust without my loved one's presence. The time alone in the wilderness consists of therapy sessions, reading, and writing. After a series of wakefulness in the dark, it was time to reenter the world with love and offer you some lessons on boundaries.

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Why do boundaries matter most in times of grief? When we are grieving, we get vulnerable. Stuff that we always kept hidden or avoided suddenly becomes exposed. It's time when we need to take care of ourselves. It can also demand a lot of strength and hard work in new ways. We need to recognize and respect this hard work and give ourselves plenty of space to do it. Don't wait for someone else to protect you. You are the protector now.

It's going to take a lot of work. You may worry that asserting your needs will lead to conflict or rejection. But you know what? It won't. In fact, it leads to healthier, more authentic relationships where you feel valued and understood. Boundaries are essentially an expression of our core values. You are respecting your needs, emotions and thoughts and affirming them to family and friends. Place your hand to heart and walk away with a sense of peace and love as you create healthier boundaries.

So, are you ready? Here are five tips and strategies for setting new boundaries as you move beyond your grief. Number one, discover who you are. Start by establishing who you are, what you stand for, and what truly defines you. This self-discovery is key to setting meaningful boundaries.

Number two, embrace saying no. Remember, boundaries aren't walls. They're bridges to better connections. It's okay to say no when you need to. Imagine saying hey, I care about you, and I want you to be there, but right now I don't have the mental capacity. Can we wait until I'm fully present? Try that.

Number three, be mindful of your changing needs. Understand that your needs will fluctuate during this journey. Be open to the ebb and flow of your emotions, and allow yourself to adapt your boundaries accordingly. Number four, protect your time and prioritize. Guard your time like a precious resource. Don't overcommit yourself. Instead, choose wisely how you spend your time focusing on what truly matters to you.

Number five, evaluate your relationships. Take a moment to reflect on your relationship. Are they respectful of your boundaries? Are you giving more than you're receiving? Surround yourself with people who generally support your wellbeing. Setting boundaries, especially after experiencing grief and loss, is a challenge. However, these tools can provide mental clarity and help you

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establish healthier boundaries. The reward is experiencing more joy and fulfillment in life.

For me, setting boundary was a transformational experience. Now I'm all about creating boundaries from a place of self-love and kindness, fostering authentic relationship without holding grudges.

So let me just recap. In this episode, we explore the art of setting boundaries after experiencing grief and loss. Boundaries we learn are an expression of our core values and self-respect. We discovered the importance of understanding who we are and embracing the power of saying no when necessary. We discussed the ever changing nature of our needs and the significance of protecting our time.

Evaluating our relationships became a vital part of ensuring they support our well-being. Setting boundaries isn't always easy, especially after a loss or a change, but it can lead to greater joy and fulfillment in life when done with love and kindness.

So, there you have five crucial lessons on setting healthy boundaries after the storms of grief. Remember, it's a process, and taking it one step at a time is okay. Now let's put these lessons into actions and navigate the path to healing better and healing together as we continue to move beyond grief and develop a purposeful life. Thank you so much for listening, and I'll catch you on the next one. Bye.

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