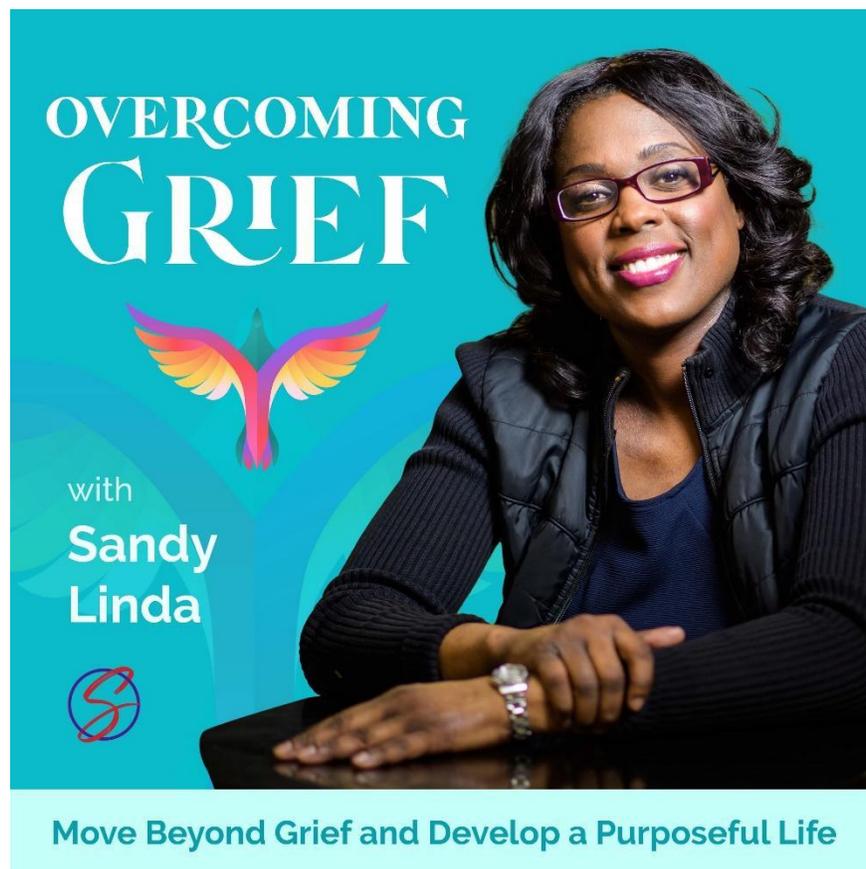


Ep #9: Emotional Eating and Grief: Post-Grief Wellness (Part 2)



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sandy Linda

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Have you ever turned to a pint of mint chocolate ice cream when you're feeling down only to realize it can't really fix what's making you sad? I know I have. Are you familiar with emotional eating to comfort those sad and lonesome moments?

Join us in this episode as I untangle the deep and complex connection between emotional eating and grief. Discover how understanding this complicated relationship can help you heal and find healthier coping methods. Stay tuned for an illuminating journey through the emotional landscape of post grief wellness.

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, fantastic listeners. How's everyone doing today? Well, here in New York City, we had quite a soaking last week. I mean talk about a heavy downpour. The rain came pouring down, and it felt like the whole city was drenched, leaving us with about eight to nine inches of water in places. Flash flood warnings lit up our phones and many cars found themselves unexpectedly taking an oceanic detour through the streets. Picture that.

Fortunately, I managed to escape the floodwaters but couldn't escape the lingering stench as water bubble out of manhole covers. That's the uncertainty of life in the city, right? But hey, it gave me some extra time to prepare for today's episode of post grief wellness.

Last time, we dove into the fascinating science of grief, exploring how it can have emotional and even physical impacts on our bodies. I talked about how grief can tug at our heartstrings, literally remember the broken heart syndrome, and influence our mood. We also touched on something many of us have experienced, changes in our eating habits.

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Yes, grief can lead to emotional eating, but it can also do the opposite and make you lose your appetite entirely. Today I will go through the complex relationship between grief and our eating habits.

So here's a question for you. Have you ever found yourself reaching for comfort food when you're grieving? Or perhaps you struggle to eat at all because your heart feels too heavy. I'll explore why grief can affect our appetite in such profound ways. But more importantly, I will arm you with practical strategies to navigate these emotional eating triggers.

As always, I will share real stories of individuals who have conquered emotional eating during their grief journey. So grab a cozy spot for your favorite beverage and let's embark on part two of post grief wellness together. It's a journey through the heart and the stomach. And I am here to support you every step of the way. So this is part two on emotional eating and grief.

Now, grief and eating often go hand in hand. Now losing a loved one can make it hard to eat. Some people may feel like they're not hungry and eat less while others may find comfort in eating snacks more than they usually do. You might feel like food has lost its appeal, as if it's become an uninvited guest at the dinner table of your life. These reactions are perfectly normal and understandable.

However, it can be challenging when it feels like you're no longer in control, and your eating habits are negatively affecting both your physical and mental wellbeing. Now let's look at why your eating habits may have altered and how you can change them.

I'm gonna go into experiencing a loss of appetite when you're grieving. Now, if you've recently gone through some heartbreaking losses, you might eat less than usual. I remember this one client who shared her experience of losing her appetite while grieving. It all started when she lost her beloved grandmother who meant the world to her. Her grandmother was her guiding light, and her passing left a void in our heart that was impossible to fill. It's tough to lose someone you love, and she felt the weight of that loss.

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But on top of it all, life kept throwing more and more challenges her way. She faced a sudden and unexpected job loss, leaving her with financial instability and a sense of meaninglessness. Then to make things even harder, she found herself navigating the painful territory of shattered friendships. It was like the world was turning against her, and she struggled to keep her head above water.

When the storm hit, it changed the way she looked at food. She used to find comfort in her favorite dishes whenever she was feeling down or stressed. But then something unexpected happened when she was grieving. Instead of turning to food for comfort, she lost her appetite altogether. The thought of eating felt like climbing a mountain, and the flavors that she once loved tasted flat and dull. It was like her grief had taken over her appetite and made it even harder for her to cope.

Now, here are some reasons this can happen. Now, food doesn't appeal to you. Studies have shown that grief can cause you to lose your appetite. You may have no desire to eat, and it becomes a chore. Another thing, the motivation to cook well, that can go MIA too. Especially when you're knee deep in grief, even boiling water for pasta can feel like an Olympic feat.

So if you find yourself not eating because you lack the motivation to cook or even order in, know that you're not alone in this, it's totally understandable if you lack the motivation to eat or cook. Just planning and buying ingredients can feel like a lot. So don't be too hard on yourself.

Another reason why we lose our appetite while we're grieving is sometimes we forget to eat. Grief can have you so deep in thought that you actually forget to eat. Seriously, it's like your mind's a million miles away, and the basic needs like food just slip your mind. This is especially true if you're busy with things like arranging a funeral and handling your loved one's affairs. You got so much to think about that it's easy to forget basic needs like food.

Food is super important for both our bodies and our brains. It gives us energy and helps our minds work properly. But when we're going through a tough time

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like grief, losing our appetite is common, which can really mess with our mental health.

As I worked with my client, she began to unpack the layers of her grief and understand that it was okay to feel the loss and seek help, her appetite for life began to return. It wasn't an overnight transformation, but a gradual process of healing and self-discovery. She realized that nourishing her body was essential to her journey towards post grief wellness.

So what can you do when your appetite decides to ghost you during grief? Here are a few practical tips. Set reminders to eat. Now, your phone can be your best friend here. You can set up daily alarms for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. It's like having a friendly nudge to keep up with your meals. Another strategy is craft a well-structured daily routine routines can be a lifesaver. Eating at a set time can help you avoid the mental gymnastics of deciding when to eat. Follow the grief and soon it will become a habit.

Now, let's talk about the flip side. Some folks find comfort in food during grief. You know those times when you turn your favorite snacks for a bit of emotional TLC? Yeah, that's comfort eating in distress. Why do we do it you ask? It's totally normal to feel overwhelmed with grief and turn to food for comfort.

If you love food and find happiness in it, it's only natural to end up overeating and putting on some extra pounds while coping with loss. So I'm going to provide you a list of reasons on why we comfort eat when we're grieving. First off, eating releases dopamine, that feel good chemical in our brains. It's like a tiny mood booster. When you're dealing with grief, a little comfort goes along the way. Food can temporarily ease your pain and make you feel better when you're going through a difficult time after losing a loved one.

Another reason is over indulging in fatty foods when feeling sad. There's a science behind it. Fatty foods like pizza or a scoop of creamy ice cream can actually help ease sadness. They give you a temporary mood lift. So it's not just in your head. Your favorite comfort foods really do have a soothing effect.

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My journey began with profound loneliness. I had experienced the loss of my family members, and my closest friendships were shattered. It was as if my world had crumbled, leaving me feeling utterly alone. In those moments of isolation, I found comfort in familiar tastes of my food. Especially my favorite fast food treats the crispy, salty goodness of McDonald's French fries, and the sweet creamy indulgence of an iced caramel latte became my lifeline.

Those foods provided me with a temporary escape from the overwhelm sadness. The act of savoring each bite and sip offered a brief break from my grief, a short lift in my spirits. While comfort foods can provide temporary relief, they're just one piece of the puzzle.

Now, another reason you find comfort food while grieving is you might feel like nothing matters anymore. Following a healthy diet might seem pointless when your world's been turned upside down. I get it. You might think you're over eating, but the thought of following a strict diet. Well, it can feel like climbing Mount Everest.

Now, if you're looking to dial down the comfort eating, here are some strategies. Now I want to just let you know that it's totally normal to turn to food for comfort when you're feeling down, but sometimes over eating can start to affect your health and well-being. If you think your eating habits might be getting out of control, don't worry. There are things you can do to get back on track. Here are some tips to help you cut back on over eating and making healthier choices.

Number one, identify the triggers. Start paying attention to what situations trigger your munchies. Write them down in a journal. Once you know your triggers, you can be more aware and work on avoiding them. Number two, feel your feelings. Instead of turning to food to numb your emotions, how about you sit with your feelings. It can be tough, but it's crucial for healing. Try journaling or talking to a grief advocate about what you're experiencing.

Number three, while having a meal, it's possible to avoid TV. It's easy to lose track of what's going into your mouth when you're glued to the TV. So separate

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mealtime from screen time. Focus on your food. Be intentional about it. You might even want to try mindful eating techniques.

Number four, discover other activities that bring you happiness and satisfaction. When the urge to munch hits, try different activities to keep your mind occupied. It could be hanging out with friends, taking a soothing bath, or even just going for a leisurely stroll. Make a list of these alternatives so you can pick one when the craving strikes.

So number five, treat yourself with kindness. Grief is a tough journey. How you speak to yourself during this time can make a big difference. Many people struggle with grief and over eating. So treat yourself with the same compassion you offer a dear friend. Now you got this.

That's a wrap for part two of our post grief wellness series. It was quite an emotional journey. Do you agree? We talked about how grief can affect our eating habits, and why it's totally normal to experience changes in the appetite when we're grieving. Some of us may find comfort in food while others may struggle to eat at all. We share some practical tips on how to cope with these emotional triggers and find healthier ways to deal with our grief.

Remember, everyone's journey is different, and there's no right or wrong way to grieve. But I hope that by sharing our experiences, we can help you find peace and healing on your path. I shared stories about myself and the client, and there's no one size fits all approach to dealing with these challenges. Each person's grief journey is unique. What works for one may not work for another.

What can we do to break this cycle? How can we navigate the relationship between emotional eating and grief in a healthier way? I want to offer you one crucial step is to become aware of your emotional triggers and acknowledge that feeling these emotions is okay.

When you feel the urge to emotionally eat, take a moment to pause and ask yourself what am I truly feeling right now. Identifying the underlying emotion can be the first step in finding healthier ways to address it. Grief is a natural

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response to loss. Letting ourselves experience it is vital. There's always hope on the horizon, and there are ways to navigate the complex landscape of grief.

As we conclude this episode, I invite you to embrace the spirit of transformation and renewal. In our next series of post grief wellness, I will dive into the topic that will fascinate you. This will be part three healing through physical activity. That's right. It's Halloween season, and we got something special in store for you.

I will explore how movement, whether it's a peaceful walk in nature, a heart pumping run, or a meditative flow of grief yoga. Yes, there is such a thing as grief yoga that can offer relief and release. So stay tuned for part three where I'll explore the magic movement and its transformative power. Whether you're a seasoned athlete or new to the exercise world, something enchanting awaits you.

Until then, let the Halloween spirit infuse your days with a sense of wonder and possibility. Take care of yourselves. Remember just as ghosts and ghouls of Halloween find their way home, you too can find your way toward healing. Keep moving forward one step at a time. Have a beautiful and wonderful day or evening wherever you are. Have a good one. Bye.

If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, you can follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. If you haven't already, I would really appreciate it if you could share the podcast with others who you think would benefit from it and leave a rating and a review to let me know what you think.

It doesn't have to be a five star rating. Although I sure hope you love the show. I want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome podcast that provides tons of value on the show. Visit www.sandy linda.com/podcastlaunch for step by step instructions on how to follow rate and review.

Thanks for listening to today's episode of *Overcoming Grief*. If you're ready to move into a new, rewarding life experience, and want more information about how to work with Sandy, visit www.sandy linda.com.