

Ep #14: Grief & Giving Thanks



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sandy Linda

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During this season of giving thanks, how do we discover gratitude in the bottomless grief? To all my friends who find themselves mourning, I want you to know it's okay not to feel thankful when the world expects you to. It can be tough to spot a single silver lining in the storm. But here's the thing, you're allowed to grieve and seek gratitude in your own time.

Have you ever wondered if you can find a glimmer of gratitude in the core of your grief? I know my high achieving women who have faced heart wrenching losses, your journey is filled with strength and resilience. But how can gratitude play a role in this journey? Can it coexist with the pain of grief? Stay tuned for the powerful intersection of gratitude and grief. It might just change the way you view your own journey.

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 wonderful listeners. How's everyone doing today? I've been busy working on some exciting updates, including a website redesign coming your way by the end of November. If you were on my email list, you've already had a sneak peek and shared some fantastic feedback. Thank you to my loyal subscribers. You are greatly appreciative.

Recently, I caught up with a dear friend and a business associate, Scott. We've been in talks for a while, and it's official. We're hosting a special webinar on November 29th. We will be diving deep in the topic of navigating grief during the holidays. If this sounds intriguing, or if you have a friend or family member, please show them the registration link which will be located in the show notes. So don't miss it.

So now let's talk about gratitude and grief. Can gratitude protect us from the storms of sadness, grief, and anger? Well, not exactly. But it has the power to gently ease your emotions and provide us with a wider view of the purpose of life and the profound beauty that still exists within it.

Ep #14: Grief & Giving Thanks

Grief is a challenging journey, as all of you who have experienced it know. As we approach the holiday season, it can be even more discouraging. Finding gratitude when your heart aches from the absence of a loved one can seem like an impossible task, especially during Thanksgiving. But you know what? Grievers are some of the strongest, most resilient souls I know. We'll explore this fascinating relationship between grief and gratitude.

Now grievers do the hard things. What I want to offer you is the understanding, the coexistence of grief and gratitude. Gratitude and grief can go hand in hand. Studies show that when we intentionally name the things, people, situations, and nature that we appreciate, it can help us feel less emotionally stressed. Doing so clears pathways in our hearts for healing that would otherwise be blocked by our worries, fears, pain and sorrow.

If you have experienced the loss of a loved one, shattered relationships, you may have encountered several new and challenging situations. One of these tasks might be learning how to coexist with grief and gratitude. So I want to provide you and give you an understanding how these seemingly opposite emotions, grief and gratitude, can coexist and work together to create something beautiful to foster personal growth and healing.

So here's what we are going to cover. The art of balancing grief and gratitude. I will discuss how it might sound like an emotional tightrope walk, but gratitude can become a lifeline during grief. Learn how it doesn't erase the pain but it can help you cope and heal.

Embracing emotional complexity. High achieving women often have a drive for perfection and discover how embracing the complex of gratitude and grief can lead to personal growth and resilience. The next one will be on creating new rituals. Explore how developing gratitude rituals and practices can become a healing process, and how it can be customized to fit your unique journey. The last is empowering your narrative. Find out how recognizing your grief and embracing gratitude can empower you to take control of your own story rather than letting it control you.

Ep #14: Grief & Giving Thanks

So let's start with step number one. Life bittersweet symphony, the art of balancing grief and gratitude. Have you ever felt like life's complex dance between gratitude and the rollercoaster of emotions, like sadness and anger? It's a delicate balancing act, a journey that can't be rushed. You can't force gratitude. It emerges organically once you have made room for acceptance by working through past traumas.

Take a moment to consider my story. Before the untimely loss of my family members, life was an exciting journey. I had some great jobs and not so great jobs, cherished family vacations, countless activities because I am a beach goer. So we always head to the beach or go out to the Caribbean. I also had an incredible circle of friends. But when tragedy struck, a tidal wave of grief flooded me, leaving me feeling overwhelmed and utterly drained.

In the months that followed my dad's passing, each day became a tightrope walk. It was a delicate balancing act, wavering between the abyss of my grief and the need to move forward. It was a journey through landscapes of sadness, anger and profound loneliness.

Over time, I found myself beginning to appreciate the deep love my family had given me. In the past, I encountered unwelcome comments about how grateful I should be for my loving parents while they were alive. These remarks left me confused, but they also pushed me to examine what gratitude genuinely meant in the midst of my grief journey.

One day I stumbled upon a simple but profound phrase, life is too short. It hit me like a ton of bricks making me realize that tomorrow is never guaranteed. Life is too short to be defined solely by grief. It's a voyage of healing and personal growth. I came to understand that gratitude was my lifeline. It didn't erase my pain, but it offered me the strength to cope and heal. It allowed me to see the beauty in life, even in the face of profound loss.

Every day, I now have a ritual of sharing something I'm thankful for, no matter how small. So that's my journey to mastering the art of balancing grief and gratitude. I learned that these emotions could coexist. Gratitude became the

Ep #14: Grief & Giving Thanks

bridge that allowed me to honor my family, celebrate the life we shared, and find hope for the future all while I carried the weight of grief.

Step number two, embracing emotional complexity. Now for my high achieving woman, we are often drive for perfection. So have you ever felt like your emotions are in shuffle mode, jumping between grief and gratitude? You're not alone. As a high achieving woman, I understand that the emotional complex is not a weakness but a source of strength. It's through embracing these complexes that we find personal growth and resilience.

Again, gratitude doesn't diminish the pain of grief. It helps us navigate it gracefully. Emotions aren't just simple reactions to things that happen in our lives. They are actually pretty complex, and are affected by different things like our thoughts, beliefs, and experiences. Emotions are all around and related, which means they are made up of several parts that can affect each other. So it's not just one emotion. It's a whole bunch of emotions that are all connected.

When we go through moments of sadness, it's not as straightforward as feeling just one emotion. It's like opening a treasure chest of feelings where you might find grief, anger, and loneliness all twisted. These emotions are like old friends, always there to influence each other and add layers of complexity to our experience of sadness.

To truly master your emotional complex, developing a strong sense of self-awareness is crucial. This will help you gain a deeper understanding of your emotions and make purposeful decisions. Don't shy away from your emotions. Embrace them confidently and express yourself assertively with love and grace.

Step number three, crafting your gratitude ritual. Now, the idea of developing gratitude rituals may not exactly jump at you, especially if you've recently gone through a heartbreaking loss. I get it. But hey, let me introduce you to a little trick. We can customize this to fit your unique journey.

Now, have you ever heard of a gratitude journal? It's like your secret weapon in dealing with all those swirling grief emotions. It's not a marathon. Think of it more like a quick joy-focused exercise you do once a day. A little emotional tune

Ep #14: Grief & Giving Thanks

up, if you will. This gratitude journal, my friend, can become a healing process. It's like the hot chocolate of emotional self-care. So grab your favorite pen, find a cozy spot, and jot down one thing that brings a hint of joy to your day. It might be a memory, a simple pleasure, or a heartwarming moment.

Step number four, empowering your narrative. Now let's talk about the incredible power of your story. Your story is like a storm wind. Wild, powerful, and uniquely yours. Storytelling is the gusty wind that sweeps through the landscapes of your shared existence, carrying the echoes of your individual tales.

It's not merely a plot, but a storm, a force that swirls and dances winding the storm of your shared human experiences. Each narrative is a blow, stirring the air, creating ways that twist to form the ever shifting, powerful narrative storm we call life. When you open up and share your personal story, it's like dropping a heavy backpack you've been carrying for too long. When you lend an ear to someone else's tale, you're offering them a hand to lighten their load.

Now, here's the thing. Telling your story of loss isn't just about recounting what happened. It's about healing. We humans have this almost magnetic pole to retell our stories, to piece together the puzzle of our grief. With each retelling, we discover new shades and shapes. We make it a part of who we are and who we are becoming. So let's embrace the power of storytelling. It's your story, your strength, your connection to a world of shared experiences.

So there you have it. Four nuggets of wisdom on the dynamic duel of grief and gratitude. They're not just neighbors. They're like Wonder Woman and Super Girl of personal growth and healing. So are you ready to dive in? Start by embracing the emotional roller coasters, crafting some cool new rituals, and unleashing your inner storyteller.

So what I want to offer you is that some people may feel I'm forcing gratitude, which does not quite cut it. I realize it's not about slapping on a happy face or pretending everything is sunshine and rainbows. Now, for me, it's about something deeper. It's about zooming in, getting up close and personal with life and looking at it with a clear gaze. It's about facing the truth of what is no matter how challenging that may be, and being open to the lessons that hide within.

Ep #14: Grief & Giving Thanks

Many of us drift through life in escape mode, so far removed that we miss what truly matters. But here's the beautiful thing about this practice: it lets us hold multiple truths at once. We can be grateful for what we have while still reaching for more. We can acknowledge the things that broke us without feeling the pressure to be thankful for them.

This practice isn't an all or nothing deal. It's far from being rooted in judgment or shame. Instead, it grounds us in our own truth, wraps us in self-compassion, and invites us to explore the deepness of our curiosity. This isn't gratitude as you always know it. It's the kind that shapes you, empowers you, and allows you to embrace the fullness of your journey.

Now, I'm not grateful for many things in my life. So here's the deal. I won't dish out gratitude for the curveballs life threw at me. The unexpected losses, friendships that cracked, financial roller coasters, and the job disappearing act. It's a lot, and it stirs up some serious sadness. These events are not checkboxes on a get over it list. Nope. They're a part of my journey. I am navigating through with a mix of grace, relief, and a dash of patience.

My gratitude practice, it's been a rockstar mentor, reminding me that I can be my own champion through the heavy stuff. I've learned to soothe my soul armed with tools from therapy, healing adventures, and a good dose of self-awareness. The real magic of grateful living, it's not about being thankful for the tough times. It's about the growth that grows from the mess. That, my friend, is where the glory lies.

So let's journey together through this gratitude practice, which lets you be genuinely you relentlessly. This is your playbook to tackle hidden grief, wave hello to gratitude, and strut into a brighter, more resilient you. Thank you for joining me on this exploration of grief and gratitude. Your time and presence mean the world to me. Remember, you're not alone on this journey. Until next time, take care, be kind to yourself, and keep embracing the fullness of your story. Bye everyone.

Ep #14: Grief & Giving Thanks

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.