

Ep #27: Death Anniversaries and Celebrating Milestones in Grief



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sandy Linda

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February is the month of love, heart, and women's friendships. You have Valentine's and Galentine's day. Can a Hallmark holiday and a day of grief coexist in the same month? Tune in to find out.

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 beautiful souls. How are you feeling today? I am currently healing and enjoying delightful walks in my hometown. Though the weather has been cold, the sunny days make it warm and pleasant to be outside. These walks have been an excellent source of relief and allow me to develop creative ideas and recover from my recent surgery.

By the way, have you signed up to be part of my community insider? You will only know certain updates that I only share through email. I wanted to keep you in the loop on exciting highlights coming up. All you need to do is go to my website, hit the subscribe button, and join. As a thank you for joining, you'll receive a free gift, the mourning journaling workbook. I have received feedback from people who are enjoying the emotional processing. We'll leave all that information on the notes.

Also, I would greatly appreciate it if you could rate and review my show. Your feedback is invaluable as it helps me reach and support more individuals who, like you, are looking to move beyond the pain of grief and develop a purposeful life. By sharing your thoughts and experiences, you are precious to our community. You are helping us all grow and live with intentions. Thanks for being a part of it. Now back to our show.

So it's February. Love, hearts, and laughter, right? But what if February holds more than just rom coms and chocolates? Can a month filled with love and laughter also have a space for grief and reflections? Special occasions like birthdays, holidays, and anniversaries, and now death days, can be challenging, but they also present an opportunity to reflect on the love and memories we shared with those we've lost.

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Most of us don't know what to expect when these special occasions start to creep up on us. While it's understandable to feel overwhelmed and unsure of how to cope, these moments can impact a grieving person. So do you want to know more about reaching milestones and what the heck death anniversary means?

In this episode, I wanted to discuss the complexities of facing difficult anniversaries and milestones while the world seems to celebrate. I will define death anniversary and what we can expect on these unseen calendar dates. I will untangle the layers and understand the significance of these moments marked by absence. I'll explore some practical and heartfelt strategies to navigate these days. Because, let's face it, it's not always easy, but we're in this together.

I have some creative ideas to celebrate the memories of our loved ones on these special days. Keep a listen out for some special message to help those who are grieving. The right words can really make a difference. This episode is for the ones who miss and still want to smile.

So February showers us with love hearts, but for some it's also a time marked by loss. Can any holiday ever feel the same again? Every year when the flowers sink and the weather changes. I'm consumed by the huge wave of grief. The sun reminds me of a time when everything felt dark and hopeless, and it still dared to shine brightly. It's like it didn't even care about what I was going through.

I have to say that grieving is some of the hardest work you and I will ever do. The moment you and I have reached our lowest point. Grieving is different for you and me. What is likely not so different is that our grief heightens at certain times throughout the year.

February, for me, and this is going on the early stages of my grief. February is the month with a minefield of emotions. The first year without my family, and February just suddenly creeps up in me, I have these unexpected occasions to deal with. It was my sister's birthday. Then on February 20th is the day that my father left the physical world.

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Now trying to navigate these events with a heavy heart was not an easy task. I was lost and confused about remembering those I love in unexpected ways. Can we find our way back to celebrating milestones without feeling like traitors? It's a question that echoes in the hearts of many who've faced unexpected waves of grief.

Handling these emotions takes a whole lot of work. Believe me, I've been there. The term death anniversary wasn't in my vocabulary until I experienced the heartache of losing a loved one. Let's be real. Grief is a touchy subject for some. It's like this unspoken language that we're all trying to learn. Thankfully, there are incredible grief advocates out there slowly unraveling the stigma. But hey, there's still work to do to get the message out.

Grief is a human experience, a universal journey that most will eventually face at some point in our lives. So Sandy, how do we navigate this journey? How do I turn the page and celebrate those I've lost without feeling like I betrayed their memory?

Dealing with the anniversary of a loved one's death can be challenging regardless of whether it has been one, five, or 10 years since the person passed away. Each year new feelings may arise making it difficult to cope with the grief. So let's kick it off this exploration into the heart of handling grief and rediscovering celebration.

So let's define death anniversary. Now, the reason why I decided to do this particular episode and on this month is because it's relatable to this topic, and I want to offer you if it doesn't resonate that's okay because it does reflect on other holidays that will allow you to get a sense of how you can cope on this death anniversary that comes up. The day of remembrance that most people will talk about.

So when the word death anniversary came into my world, it is a day of mourning where loved ones gather to honor and recall the passing of someone dear, it's a yearly embrace of shared memories. A day where hearts unite to mark the life that once graced our world.

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For many, which I've Google searched, the first death anniversary is often called the ultimate anniversary, a deeply emotional milestone to take time for reflection and remembrance in a way that brings closure and comfort to grieving hearts. It can be you attending a service, visiting a grave site, or sharing cherished moments with family and friends. This day holds a unique space in our hearts.

Unlike a joyous or wedding anniversary celebrating love, a loved one's death anniversary becomes an expression of fond memories. It's a collective moment for family and friends to join hands in reflection. Now, what to expect on a loved one's death anniversary because I know when this came to me, I did not know what to expect. Here I am, your grief advocate, to support you and give you some ideas on what to expect.

Losing a loved one is never easy, and the anniversary of their passing can be an emotional time. It's completely normal to feel a range of emotions from deep sorrow to fond memories and everything in between. During this time, it's important to take care of yourself and honor the memory of our loved ones in a way that feels best for you. Whether that means visiting the grave site, ordering a special bouquet, or simply taking a quiet day to remember them, know that your feelings are valid, and that you are not alone.

On the day of remembrance, the way you remember your loved one will depend entirely on what is meaningful for you and your family. So here are some heartfelt strategies to cope with the day of remembrance that is marked by absence. So if you can, consider taking the day off. It's hard to know how we will feel until the day arrives. That's why you might want to think about taking the day off work if you can. It can help you feel less pressure and stress by giving yourself some time and space away from your usual responsibilities.

Another is a visit to their final resting place. Be it a grave or a spot where their ashes found their way. It's a traditional but a powerful way to honor the one you're missing. Whether you brave this journey solo or roll deep with family and friends, it creates a sacred space for reflection.

Yes, it can stir up some tough emotions and bring back those waves of pain. But on the flip side, it provides a certain comfort. A feeling of connection with the one you're yearning for. Another heartfelt strategy is taught to people who

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understand you. Reach out to those who know the deceased and can relate to your grief. Friends or family members can provide comfort, support, and shoulder to lean on during these emotional moments. Please be sure to ensure that they are your grief advocates.

Now here is some celebration toolbox for you to honor where I took from bereavement counseling. One of them is making a favorite meal in their memory. Cooking and sharing meals can be a powerful way to pay tribute to a loved one who passed away. It can offer a comforting and meaningful way to honor their memory and their legacy.

Remember that desserts and drinks can be included too. Sweet memories can make for great tributes. So whether it's following a family recipe or observing a particular custom, take the time to reflect on happy times and how much your loved ones meant to you.

Another celebratory activity is to go on a solo meditative walk. Sometimes words cannot adequately describe the complex emotions of grief and mourning. Take some time to be alone, listen to music, or sit in a peaceful environment that brings forth all the beautiful memories shared in your life.

Again, you know I'm a nature walker, and I love walking in nature because it has healed my mind and my soul. The next celebration is to travel somewhere special. I've been doing this. This is fun. There are many ways to work through the grieving process. You can honor your loved one who passed away by picking a special place with some personal connection to travel.

So find that special destination that is allowing you the space to honor that loved one's presence. I've done this with my mom. I always honor her day by going to the special place that we usually frequent, and it still allows me the space to heal and grow and learn through my grief.

Now I want to share some suggestions for those who want some words of inspiration to help their grieving heart family or friend to heal. Offering words of comfort is a simple action to support your grieving heart friend. I want to share an example of one who reached out and sent a card to me because knew that my father's death was coming up.

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“Hi Sandy. Your father was one of the most amazing men I ever had the pleasure to meet and work with. What an extraordinary life he lived. We're thinking of him and everything he accomplished on this day. Love Joe.” This is one of my father's coworkers that reached out, got my information or something, and received a beautiful card which was so helpful.

Here's another one that I want to share with you that you can share and you can text it to people. One year has passed, and we are all thinking of your father and his warmth, kindness, and wonderful sense of humor today. Please know that you are all in our hearts and minds. So whatever message you send, your loved ones will surely appreciate the gesture and thoughts.

Well, there you have it, lovely souls, our guide to navigating the twists and turns of love, laughter, and loss, for me for February. For you, it could be any other month. But I want to make it this day and to actually expand on it and express how you can cope through those special days of remembrance of your loved ones.

So can Valentine's and Galentine's Day peacefully coexist with grief? I believe they can. When it comes to coping with grief, the anniversary of a loved one's passing can be very tough. Although it's not a sudden ambush, it can still be a challenging experience. As we navigate through life complexities, let's hold space for healing. Always remember, you're not alone on this journey. Until next time, keep smiling through the waves of love, laughter, and, yes, even loss. For those who are going to celebrate Valentine's and Galentine's day, have a wonderful and a beautiful day. 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.

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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.