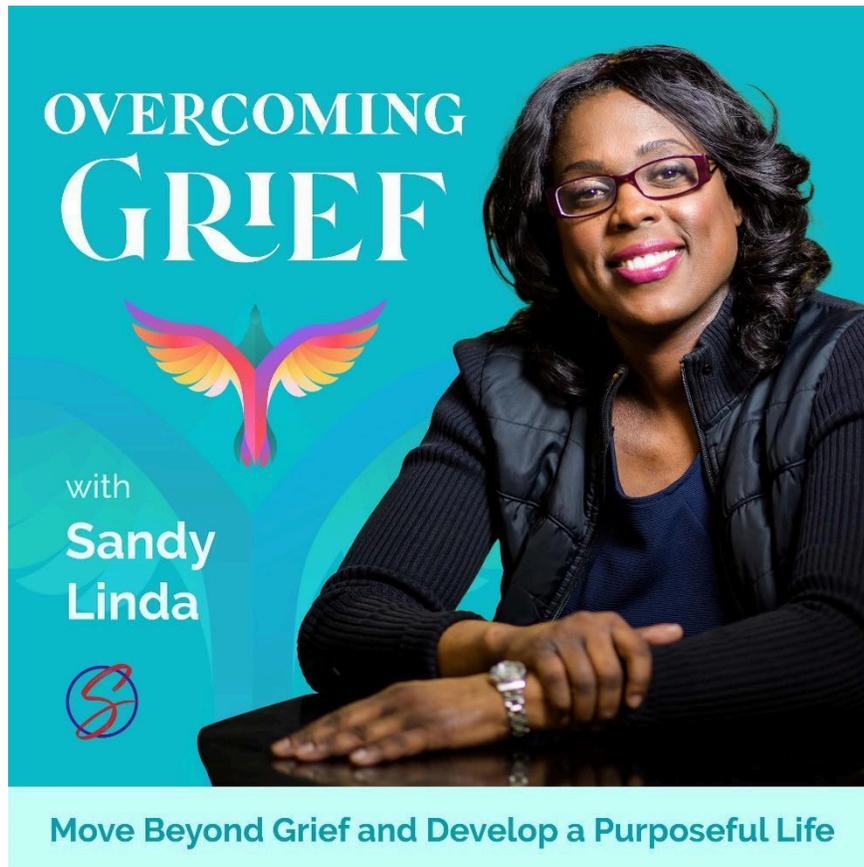


Ep #42: Turning Pain Into Purpose: Publishing My Grief Journals to Help Others



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sandy Linda

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Grief doesn't define you. Unleash the transformative power of publishing your grief journals and make a difference in the next episode. Stay tuned.

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, creative souls. How are you all doing today? If this is your first time here, welcome to the show. I serve as your guide providing valuable tips for overcoming grief and empowering your personal and professional wellbeing. If you have recently lost a loved one, I send you healing thoughts and blessing as you walk on this path to healing through your grief. Thanks for popping in on the show.

So we are coming to the end of May, which concludes Mental Health Awareness Month. I hope you found value in the past episodes about the importance of engagement for emotional wellbeing, especially the loneliness epidemic. Achieving this is possible through journaling, taking nature walks, or receiving support from a grief advocate on your healing journey.

On Sunday, I took a part in a walk to show my support for women's health and child and adolescent mental health. I was informed about the stats on that approximately about 20% of children have some kind of mental health issue, but only some receive treatment, which is about five to 7%, I think.

But Cohen's Children Medical Center here in New York is working to change that by pioneering a fresh approach. Yes, they have the behavioral therapy, but they're going to have additional writing sessions, which will be offered to children and adolescents, allowing them to effectively process their emotions through journaling. The practice of journaling can assist people in handling their mental health and expressing their thoughts and feelings about hardships.

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It was so inspiring to see the community come together to support mental health awareness. As someone who has struggled with depression, anxiety, loneliness, I know firsthand how important it is to feel seen, heard, and understood. Events like this walk help break down the stigma around mental illness and send a message of hope and empowerment to those who are struggling. There is light at the end of the tunnel. With the right support, resources, and community, we can move through the darkness and come out stronger on the other side.

Mental health is just as important as physical health. By speaking up, sharing stories, and being there for one another, we can build a society where no one has to suffer alone. There is hope. Recovery is possible. We're in this together.

So for me, in 2015, I experienced an unimaginable loss. My father passed away just months after I had lost both my mother and sister. I felt completely alone in my grief. Even a Google search provided little comfort that anyone else had gone through something similar.

Now, my story with grief was something that was unheard of. Healing was slow but quick to anger. How to become friends with my grief? It was challenging for me, but I had a trusted friend and advisor. To cope, I started journaling daily as a way to process my emotions. The journaling was therapeutic. Over time, I had filled multiple notebooks with reflections on my grief journey.

Eventually, I realized my writing could help others experience profound loss, find hope, and healing. This led me to organize my journal entries into a part memoir and self-help, which I recently published as my first book. So in this episode, I'll share my journey from journaling to inspire others through publishing my story.

I recount how this simple act of writing not only saved me from self-destruction, but also led to the creation of my self-published book. I'm going to discuss writing as therapy, deciding to publish, and offer you hope and healing. I want to inspire you to journal your heart out and look for a way to publish your book.

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Welcome to the show. Yes, I have finally published my book, and I am going to discuss little bits and pieces, but I also want to give you some valuable inputs. Now, writing is a tool that saved me from self-destruction and allows me to rationalize irrational thoughts.

The daily act of journaling became such a therapeutic process for me during that difficult time after my loss. Putting pen to paper allowed me to pour out my jumbled emotions, untangle anxious thoughts, and begin to make sense of my grief. In the privacy of my journal pages, I let myself fully express feelings like anger, fear, sadness, things I often felt I had to suppress around others. Of course, when you're around others, you do get vulnerable.

But through writing, I took a step back and examined my emotions more objectively. The journal was a space where I gave myself permission to fall apart when I needed to. I could write letter after letter to my mother, dad, and my sister who had passed. I could get all things I wish I had said to my family members. It helped ease the pain of feeling there were things left unsaid.

In this journal entry, let's give you an example. I started with dear mom and said today was really hard. I'm really bummed you're not here. I miss your wise input. I wish I could spill the beans about. I'm not going to go too much into details, but I just want to give you some context of what putting out your emotion means, like writing a letter to that person.

Now, having these chats really helped me feel better when I was grieving. Journaling also helped ground me when my mind was racing. The act of writing slowed down my thoughts and brought clarity when I was overwhelmed. Rereading entries helped me track my progress through the ups and downs. I can see while grief is not linear, healing does happen.

I found journaling to be very healing. It helped me process my grief and work through my emotions. I wrote every day, filling up a notebook. Eventually, I realized I had written a book's worth of material about my journey through grief and healing. People I've met encouraged me to turn my journal entries into a

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memoir to help others experience loss. So I spent months and years organizing and editing my writing into a book.

It was difficult revisiting some of those raw journal entries but also cathartic. In the end, I was proud to my story and hopefully inspire others dealing with grief. After filling multiple journals with my raw thoughts and emotions during the grieving process, I realized I had written extensively about navigating profound loss. Even my fellow grieving advocates suggested my writing about grief could comfort and inspire others dealing with a loss.

This encouragement made me realize if my journal entries resonate with my friends, I could support others experiencing loss as well. I felt compelled to organize my journals into a book to provide a roadmap for navigating grief that I wish I had.

While revisiting those journal entries was emotionally difficult at times, the editing process also felt cathartic and gave a new purpose. It turned my personal journey into something that could help others down the road. My motivation was to share my story openly and honestly in hopes it will lead you, my fabulous listeners, dealing with the loss of a loved one and to feel less alone.

I wanted to provide hope that even after devastating loss, you can find your way back. It just takes time, compassion for yourself, and small steps forward. Publishing this book allowed me to turn my pain into purpose. If my story can inspire just one person in the throes of grief to keep going, then exposing my vulnerability will have been well worth it. My wish is that readers find comfort knowing someone else has walked a similar road and emerge feeling empowered to heal.

So there is my short stint on expressing about the process. Now let's break down some steps you can take on your journaling journey. What I want you to do first is start small and consistent. Begin by setting aside a few minutes each day to write. You don't need to pen an essay. Even a few lines can help process your emotions.

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Number two, be honest and unfiltered. Let your writing flow without judgment. This is your safe space to express your deepest thoughts and feelings. Number three, reflect on your entries. Periodically reflect on your past entries. This can provide insights into your healing progress and highlight recurring themes or emotions.

The last one, consider sharing your journey. If you feel ready, sharing parts of your writing with trusted friends, a support group, your fellow grieving advocates, or even a broader audience can be incredibly empowering and validating. Turning your journal into a book can be a profound step also.

I want to share with you some of the ways that you can approach it. I have three steps that you can take from journaling to book. What you can start with is edit and expand. Refine your writing and add context or reflections to create a narrative story.

Number two, seek feedback. Share your manuscript with a trusted friend, mentor, or writing group to get constructive feedback. Number three, publish a work. Whether you choose traditional publishing or self-publishing, the act of putting your story out into the world can be a powerful act of healing. In closing, I hope sharing my personal journey from journaling to publishing my memoir slash self-help provides encouragement to anyone dealing with grief and loss.

I wish for you to know that you are not alone. Healing is possible with time and writing can be a helpful tool to guide you through the darkness. While everyone's grief journey is unique, my story shows that you can channel the pain into something purposeful. Turning raw journal entries into a published book allowed me to help others find comfort in my words.

Here are some of the key takeaways that I want you to walk away with. Writing can be incredibly therapeutic for processing emotions and trauma. Journaling helps you externalize grief rather than letting it fester internally. Your intimate thoughts can become a gift and a source of healing for others. If it feels right for you, don't be afraid to share your writing with a wider audience. Your story matters and can provide hope even if you don't see it yet.

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Now, I love to hear from you. Email me info at [sandy linda.com](mailto:info@sandy linda.com). If you relate to any part of my story, please share it. Your vulnerability can help someone else who needs this. If you want to continue the conversation, you can find my book *Overcoming Grief: Champion Through Multiple Losses* on my website or wherever you purchase books. It contains many more stories and lessons from my personal grief journey.

At the end of the book, you'll find my 21-day mourning journaling prompt. This will get your mind to free write whatever you want in the privacy of your pages. Believe in your ability to heal as you navigate your way to healing through those devastating storms.

Now here is a bonus journaling prompt tailored to your grief writing journey. Journaling is an effective activity for navigating the landscape of grief in personal and professional areas. Take a moment to ponder this journaling prompt. How has writing or journaling helped you through difficult times? Spend 10 to 15 minutes writing about this item and what it represents in your journey of grief and healing.

I would love to hear how this journaling exercise resonates with you and how this exercise affects you. Emotionally, processing, and personal growth can be facilitated through writing. Join us next time as we continue to explore powerful themes that enhances our professional lives and personal growth. That is all that I have for you. Have a wonderful, beautiful week, and we'll talk next time. Bye.

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.