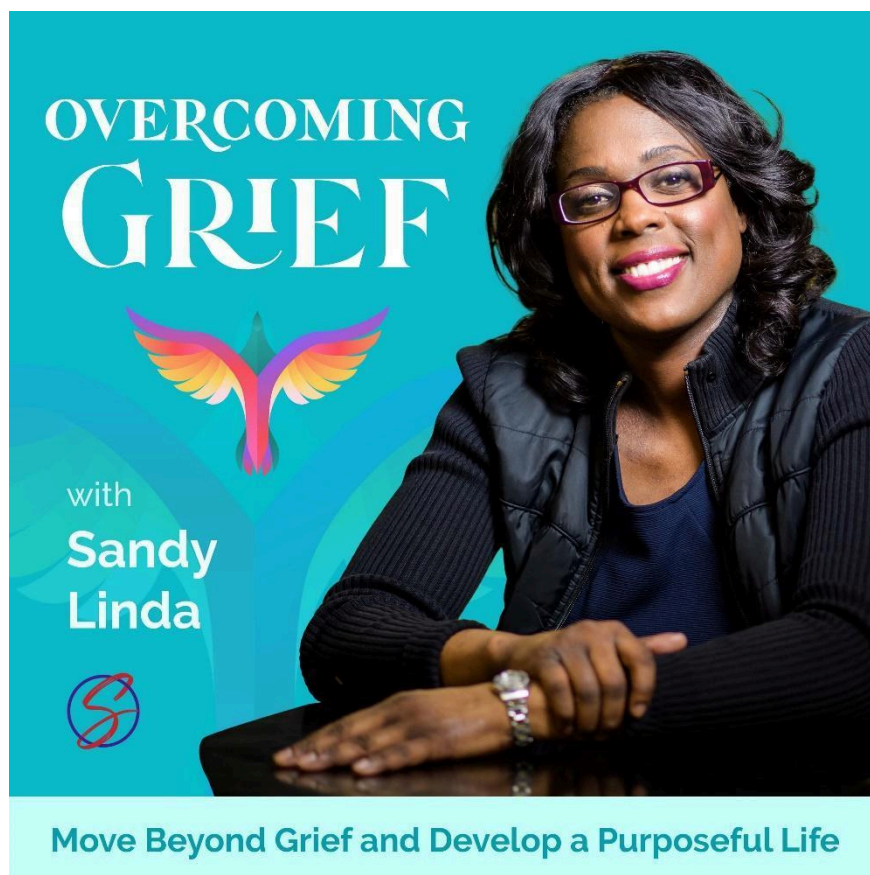


Ep #50: The Art of Letting Go: Friendship Endings and New Beginnings



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sandy Linda

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The most painful goodbyes are the ones that are never said and never explained. Friends are the family we choose, but what happens when grief forces us to let go? Let's explore how to honor friendships that end during our darkest time. 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 humans. How are you all doing today? I hope you are taking care of yourself, especially if you're going through any challenging times. It's interesting how the weather can sometimes mirror our emotional states. Here in New York City, we've been experiencing intense heat waves followed by sudden thunderstorms.

It reminds me of how grief can feel. Sometimes it's an overwhelming, brutal heat that seems to never end, and other times it's a storm of emotions that catches us off guard. Speaking of unexpected changes, have you ever noticed how our friendships can shift during difficult times? Some friends become our shelter from the storm, while others, well, they might drift away like clouds after the rain.

Today, we're going to jump into a topic that explores how friendships can change when you are navigating grief, and what you can learn from these experiences. So grab a cup of your favorite comfort drink, and let's explore this together.

Losing a friend can be as devastating as losing a family member, yet it's a grief that gets overlooked. For those of us who've experienced the heartfelt loss of a parent or sibling, the additional pain of a friendship ending can feel like pouring salt on an already open wound.

Imagine navigating the stormy seas of grief, only to find that the lighthouse you always relied on, your closest friend, has suddenly gone dark. The silence of unanswered texts, the absence at gatherings, the gradual fading away. It's a heartbreak that make us question our worth. But what if this pain, so raw and real, could be turned into something meaningful? What if the end of a friendship

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could inspire you to become wiser and stronger, no matter how tough things get?

Today, we are dipping into this often overlooked aspect of grief. I'll explore how to honor the friendships that have ended, find strength in letting go, and use these experiences to build even stronger, more genuine connections in the future.

If you ever felt the sting of a friend's absence when you needed them the most, this episode is for you. Stay with me as I navigate the choppy waters of friendship loss. Also, discover the hidden opportunities for growth and self-discovery that lies within.

Let me share a personal story about my experience with friendship loss. It centers on a friend I've known for about 10 or 15 years. We started as work buddies, and our friendship grew over time. But when I went through some dark storms in my life, everything changed. My friend's exit was sudden. A quick click to unfriend and block me on Facebook. Unanswered texts also. No explanation, no goodbye, just silence.

The confusion and hurt were overwhelming. How could someone I know for so long just disappear without a word? At first, I couldn't process it. My mind was filled with anger and resentment. I constantly thought about the person, even telling others how badly this person treated me. Looking back, I realized this was a destructive pattern, what I now call a fatal flaw in dealing with grief.

I was angry until it put my health in danger. It served as a wake-up call. I realized that holding on to this bitterness was harmful to my healing process. I had to confront some tough questions. Was I ever a valuable friend? Was my self-worth tied to this lost relationship? The turning point came when I faced my anger head-on. I allowed myself to mourn the friendship, remembering the good times we shared.

Gradually, I learned to honor my past friend's choice to let me go, even if I didn't understand it. This experience taught me valuable lessons about friendship, grief, and personal growth. It highlighted the importance of acknowledging the loss and allowing ourselves to grieve, reframing negative

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experiences as opportunities for growth, and learning from past relationships to build healthier future ones. Now, I'm going to provide some key points and explore why letting go of certain friendships, though painful, can be a crucial step in your healing journey. The first key point I want to share is the hidden grief of friendship loss.

When we think of grief, we often associate it with the loss of a loved one through death. But grief isn't limited to that kind of loss. The end of a friendship can trigger a grief response that's just as real and intense.

Let's take a moment to acknowledge something society overlooks. Friendship breakups are a legitimate form of loss and the pain they cause is valid. When a friendship ends, especially during a time when you're already battling with the loss of a parent or sibling, it can feel like a double blow to the heart.

You're not just losing a friend, you're losing a support system, shared memories, and a part of your identity. This grief might manifest in ways similar to other forms of loss. It's possible that you will deny what is happening and think this isn't real. You might bargain, thinking if only I had done things differently. You might fall into depression, questioning your self-worth, and eventually you might reach acceptance. Sometimes the stages of grief can be misunderstood.

Now, why is this a problem? It's the lack of recognition for this type of grief can leave individuals feeling isolated and misunderstood. When society doesn't validate your pain, it can make the healing process even more challenging. Unresolved grief from lost friendships can impact your ability to form and maintain future relationships. If you don't process this loss well, you might carry fear, mistrust, or unresolved emotions into new friendships. As we navigate this hidden grief, we come across a profound shift in how we see ourselves.

This brings me to our next point, the identity crisis of friendship. Losing a friend can shake our sense of self. It can trigger an identity crisis. This stems from several factors. One of the factors is friendships play a crucial role in shaping our identity and self-perception. When a significant friendship ends, it can feel like losing a part of ourselves.

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Another factor is the end of a friendship forces us to redefine who we are without that relationship. This process can be challenging and disorienting, especially if it was longstanding and lasted a long time. For my high achieving women dealing with the loss of a parent or sibling, this friendship loss can compound existing grief, making the identity crisis even more acute. Understanding these identity crisis is crucial for processing the loss and moving forward.

But here's where things get interesting. What if we could transform this challenging experience into something positive? This brings us to the next point, the growth opportunity in disguise. The potential for personal development that emerges from the ashes of a lost friendship. Reframing friendship loss is an opportunity for healing.

Now, reframing is a powerful tool that can transform our perspective on challenging situation. When we lose a friendship, it's natural to feel hurt and angry. We might constantly complain about the lost friendships to others, attacking our former friend's character. This anger can act as an emotional painkiller, keeping us from feeling the deeper grief of loss.

However, we can reframe this experience. Instead of viewing it as betrayal or failure, we can see it as an opportunity for self-reflection. What can this experience teach me about myself and my relationship? A chance to practice compassion, be a compassionate observer for yourself and the friends who left and a catalyst for personal growth. How can I use this experience to become a better friend in the future?

By reframing the loss this way, we shift from a victim mentality to a mindset of empowerment and growth. We acknowledge the pain, but we don't let it define us. Instead, we use it as a stepping stone to become stronger and wiser. Remember, research has shown that holding onto anger can pose health risks if not addressed in time.

By reframing our experience, we not only promote personal growth, but also protect our mental and physical well-being. As we've explored, the end of a friendship during grief can be profound and complex experience. It challenges our identity, forces us to confront hidden pain, and presents an opportunity for growth.

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Now, let's jump into some practical, actionable steps that can help you not only survive the loss of a friendship during grief, but a motive for personal growth and self-discovery. These strategies are designed to help high achieving women like you find resilience, rebuild your sense of self, and open your heart to new meaningful connections. Are you ready to embark on this journey? Let's explore these powerful tools together.

Number one, journal your feelings to process emotions. Recognize that what you're experiencing is grief, which is your first step towards healing. By doing this, you can grant yourself permission to experience the complete spectrum of emotions that accompany this loss. It's okay to be sad, angry, or confused. It's okay to mourn the end of a friendship, just as you would any other significant loss in your life.

As you mourn the friendships by remembering the good times, appreciate your friend's choice to let you go. It's not going to be a walk in the park, but once you acknowledge this grief, you'll be able to handle your emotions in a healthier way.

Number two, practice self-talk. Here's an example that I would love to share with you that you can say to yourself. I deserve the best. I will find someone that I can bond with again. This helps build self-esteem and maintain a positive outlook.

Number three, set intentions for future friendships by reflecting on what you learned from this experience. Consider what qualities you value in a friend and what boundaries you need to establish. It highlights the need for self-reflection, self-compassion, and a willingness to grow and evolve beyond the loss of friendship.

Lastly, seek support. Reach out to other friends, family members, bereavement counseling, or your fellow grieving advocates. Having a support system can provide comfort and different perspectives on your situation.

As I wrap up today's episode, remember that the end of a friendship, though painful, is not the end of your story. It's a chapter that can lead to an unshakable self-discovery and growth. Through this experience, you can reassess your needs, strengthen your boundaries, and clarify your values in relationships. This

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journey of reflection can transform you into a more discerning friend, one who recognizes and cherishes genuine connections.

As you move forward, carry with you the lessons learned, strength gained, and wisdom attained. Your capacity for meaningful friendship hasn't diminished, it has evolved. Embrace this evolution for it paves the way to deeper, more trustworthy friendships in the future.

Remember, you are worthy of friendships that uplift and support you, especially during life's most challenging moments. Let this friendship loss be a stepping stone towards a more resilient and self-aware version of yourself as you deal with grief. Okay, that was a lot that I unpacked for you about friendship loss. Again, take these insights and turn them to action however you feel is appropriate for you.

Now, here is a bonus journaling prompt for your summer healing journey. Think of a friendship that ended during a time of grief. Reflect on the moments that define your relationship and the impact it had on your life. Write about the pain of the silent goodbye, the farewell that was never said and never explained. Consider the emotions you felt and how they have evolved.

Spend 10 to 15 minutes writing about this journaling prompt and what it represents in your journey of grief and healing. I would love to hear how this journaling exercise resonates with you.

If today's discussion helped you or gave you any insights, please share this episode with someone you know who might go through something similar. Each share brings support and understanding to our listener community. Join us next time as we continue to explore powerful themes that enhance our professional lives and personal growth. Thank you so much for listening and have a beautiful week. 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.