

Ep #62: Discover the Unexpected Healing Powers of Daily Walks After Loss



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With Your Host

Sandy Linda

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Three deaths, 14 months, five miles a day. When grief hit me in 2015, I found healing in an unexpected place, a New York beach boardwalk. Stay tuned to hear how a simple exercise transformed my grief 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, creative humans. Last week, a client called me from her car, and her voice was breaking, and she said, "Sandy, I just left a board meeting. It's been six months since mom died, and I thought I had it together. Then someone mentioned their mother's advice, and I just couldn't." I knew exactly where she was. The space between maintaining professional excellence and honoring raw grief. The place where you're expected to lead teams and make million dollar decisions while carrying the burden of loss.

Welcome to those joining us for the first time. You found a community of high performance women who refuse to choose between professional success and authentic grieving. And thank you to my regular listeners for continuing this journey with me.

Today's episode was born from the most common question in my inbox. How do you do it? How do you run a thriving business while processing profound loss? The answer surprised even me. It's not about time management strategies or breakdown techniques. It's about movement and how a simple routine transformed both my grief journey and leadership.

I'm about to share a powerful tool that has helped executives, entrepreneurs, and leaders navigate loss while maintaining their professional edge. It isn't just another self-care tip, and it all started on a concrete boardwalk in New York.

In just 14 months, let that sink in, just 14 months, I lost my mom, my sister, and my dad. It was like watching the backbones of my world fall one by one. My mom was this incredible spirit who taught me the art of living through our travels together. Every trip with her was an adventure, a lesson in love and curiosity.

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And dad, he was our family's guide, structured, disciplined, but man, did he know how to keep us grounded.

And then there was my sister. And I did a podcast episode if you wanna learn about it, and I'll leave it on the show notes. Sometimes grief is complicated, messy, and shows up when you least expect it. Being the second child, our relationship was well-strained. She carried this resentment about my arrival into the family. And when she passed, I thought I had processed it all. But grief? Grief has its own timeline. It wasn't until three years later, when I found her journal, that the real wave of grief hit me. Funny how words written in the past can suddenly bridge gaps we thought would stay forever.

Grief doesn't just break your heart, it floods your life with chaos. I was overwhelmed with paperwork, legal obligations, and financial decisions, all while processing a tsunami of emotions. Living alone in our family home, I felt suffocated. Then something happened. It was simple, yet it changed everything.

One day, Grace showed up at my door. She worked with my father and lived in the neighborhood. Instead of offering the usual condolences, she made me lace up my walking shoes and led me to Rockaway Beach. That massive concrete boardwalk across the peninsula became our daily ritual. Every day, during the summer and fall, rain or shine, we start at Beach 9th Street. The waves keeping time with our footsteps towards Beach 67th Street. Three miles up, two miles back. Five miles of healing, one step at a time.

I can still hear the rhythm of our feet on that concrete deck. The crashing waves to our right and our voices carried by the ocean breeze. Some days we talk nonstop, other days we just walk. Let the ocean waves do the talking. That stretch between Beach 9th and Beach 67th became my measuring stick for healing, plus a thinking space.

If you're listening and feeling the weight of grief while trying to maintain your professional life, this episode is for you. I'll share how walks along Rockaway Beach became my lifeline, thinking space, and path through grief. Maybe it could be yours too.

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I know many of you are wondering how a leader with a team justifies taking hours out of your day to walk. That's exactly what I wondered too. How walking became my mobile war room and strategic thinking time.

Grief makes you want to curl up, stay in bed, pull the covers over your head and disappear. I wanted to discuss walking as a way to release those emotional storms. What happens when we don't move during our grief? Our minds become a pressure cooker. Thoughts swirling. Emotions building up, but nowhere to go. Studies say, walking for 30 minutes a day can rewire our grief-stricken brains. It can help us to think, feel, and sleep better.

Do you want to know something raw and real? Waking up and showing up in this life feels like a miracle. When you're grieving, it truly is. Each morning you get up and put those walking shoes on, that's a tiny miracle.

People often ask me, clients, friends, and associates, how do you stay sane in this crazy, divided world? How do you find peace? They see me living this fearless life after loss, riding life's roller coaster with grace. My answer is the same. I walk.

Let me be vulnerable. My walking practice saved me from drowning in grief. There were days on that boardwalk with Grace where I just broke down, crying, screaming, letting out all that anger and sadness, and that was okay. Because when you're walking, nobody judges tears. The waves don't judge. The sky doesn't judge. You just move through it. This daily practice became my lifeline.

It wasn't just about the physical movement, it was about gaining awareness of my grief. Walking gave me space to process everything without family expectations or social pressures. It became my movement therapy session.

These walks helped me make one of the biggest decisions of my life. It was leaving my family's home. I needed a change of scenery, but I knew where I wanted to live, in a place where I can have nature walks and be surrounded by trails and hiking. And now that I am in a new area and I get to hike a little bit here, every walk allows me to think clearly, make wise decisions and breathe in possibility.

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If you're stuck in your grief, know this. You don't have to start with five miles or a destination. Just take one step. Walking lets you move at your own pace, both in your steps and healing.

Before I dive into the actionable advice, I have a quick request. Could you take two minutes to rate and review this episode or any other episode? Your feedback helps us reach more people and motivates us to create resonating content. Share one key takeaway from our conversation and let us know how we can continue to support and inspire you. Your input makes a huge difference and we are grateful for your time.

And now let's share some practical tips on starting your walking practice through your grief. These aren't tips I read in a book. These are hard-won lessons from my journey on the Rockaway Beach Boardwalk.

Let's discuss four powerful ways to make walking your grief companion as you stand up as a leader or lead through a professional edge.

Tip number one, schedule walking-like meetings. When Grace first got me walking five miles, I wasn't mentally ready, but I could handle it physically. And get this, it was 5 a.m. with Grace. It was a mobile war room to process the grief before stepping into my professional role. That's not everyone's story, and it doesn't need to be. Some days, you might only make it to your driveway, And that's a victory because grief isn't a race and neither is this practice. Your walk might be five or 45 minutes. The magic isn't in the distance, it's in the decision to move forward step-by-step.

Tip two, walk with others who share your experience. There's power in walking alongside someone who gets it. For me, it was grace. She didn't try to fix my grief or fill the silence with empty words. She just walked. Sometimes we talked about my parents because she knew my family, my relationship with my sister, or said nothing at all. Walking with someone who understands loss, every step becomes a shared language of healing.

Tip number three, create a transition zone. Let's talk about something we high achievers struggle with, and that is the art of transition. You know, those mornings when you're crying in your car before a client meeting, or when grief

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hits during your quarterly planning sessions. That's where transition zones become crucial. Consider your walk as a bridge between your grieving heart and professional presence. One creative transition zone I will offer you is your permission to feel. Crying during your walk doesn't make you less professional, it makes you more real. These transition zones honor both parts of you, the grieving human and the capable professional.

And tip number four, transform movement into strategy. Let me share something surprising. These walks became my most productive strategy sessions. Here's how to turn your walks from exercise into a powerful professional tool. I started walking sprints. The first mile is for emotional release, letting go of what's weighing on your heart. The second mile is for current challenges, the difficult conversations, the stuck project, the avoided decision. The final mile is for vision, letting your mind explore possibilities and solutions. I keep my phone on airplane mode, but I use voice notes to capture insights. My best client solutions came during these walks. Movement unlocks creativity in a way that sitting at a desk can't.

Walking creates a unique space for grief and growth to coexist. You might move from tears about missing your mom, to suddenly understanding how to restructure your team. And that's okay. When we stop trying to separate your grief from your professional lives, you find unexpected wisdom.

So to all my creative souls, as we wrap up today's episode, I want to share with you three powerful truths I've learned from my walking practice through grief.

First, movement creates momentum. When grief feels paralyzing, even the smallest step forward can break that stagnation. Your body knows how to heal. Sometimes it just needs permission to move.

Second, nature is a powerful healer. The natural world has this incredible way of holding space for our grief while gently reminding us that life continues whether it's the rhythm of waves on Rockaway Beach or the whisper of wind through trees.

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And finally, walking isn't just exercise. It's a form of self-care, meditation, and therapy combined. It's a way to honor both your loss and your continuing journey.

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.

If any of those tips I shared with you today, I want to invite you to take two simple actions. Start your own walking practice today. Just 10 minutes, that's all. Notice how it feels. Connect with our community. I love to hear your story and support you. Share your walking journey through my email or my Facebook business page, *Overcoming Grief*.

Until next time, my dear creative warriors, because that's what you are. Keep taking those healing steps, even when they feel small. Thanks for walking this road with me today. You know, as I wrap up my walk this morning, I'm sending you strength for whatever part of the grief journey you are on right now. Remember, whether you're heading to a board meeting or taking that first step outside your door, you're not walking alone. We're in this together every step of the way. Take care of those beautiful hearts and have a wonderful 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.