

## Ep #68: Grief vs Mourning: How Knowing the Difference Helps Healing



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Sandy Linda**

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Sandy Linda: Hello, creative humans, and happy holidays. I hope you are finding joy with friends and family this season. However, I know this time of year can also stir up the pain of loss. So how do we navigate grief and mourning during a season meant for celebration? This week, I am resharing an episode that deeply resonated with many of you. One I believe is especially meaningful now. In it, I explore the difference between grief and mourning and how understanding this can help you grow through loss, even during the holidays. I hope it brings you comfort and insight. Enjoy, and I will see you next week with a brand new episode. Be well, everyone.

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.

Sandy: Hello fabulous listeners. How are we all doing? I am in New York City and we are experiencing more heat waves before the cold weather sets in. Recently, I went to Rockaway Beach to walk along the boardwalk. I enjoy walking as it helps me build up my physical and mental stamina. While I walk, I usually listen to podcasts or books on Audible, which activates my brain and allows me to brainstorm. I am limiting my walks to two miles because I used to do five miles as I'm recovering from a recent surgery. After my walk, I stretch on the boardwalk while listening to mindful meditation music. Mindfulness is about paying attention to what's happening in your head, heart, and environment and staying focused on the present moment instead of getting lost in your thoughts. It has been a game changer for me since I started doing this. Previously, I used to go home and stretch, but now I find stretching more effective while enjoying the calmness of the waves breezing by. It helps me soothe my mind and better focus on setting my intentions for today.

When I got home, I prepared myself for the day ahead. I had a coaching session today with a fabulous client and she asked the question, what is the difference between grief and mourning? It's such a great question because people often confuse the two that are often used interchangeably, but they refer to different experiences. We as humans can come to terms with loss through mourning,

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which involves actively and purposely processing our grief. And so I decided to do this episode on the difference between grief and mourning.

So grief is the feeling we experience within ourselves when we experience a loss, while mourning is the outward expression of that grief. It's normal to feel sadness when we lose someone or something significant in our lives. Mourning is the process of dealing with that grief. Therefore, grief is what we feel within us, while mourning is the action we take on the outside to manage those emotions.

So why does this matter? Well, sometimes even if someone seems to be holding it together on the surface, they may still be stumbling with grief deep within. Healing often begins when we start mourning. That's when we actively deal with our grief. It's crucial to recognize the difference because it's okay to be still grieving, even if you're not visibly mourning.

Let's explore the emotional effects of grief, including sadness, anger, guilt, and confusion. And these feelings and thoughts are a normal reaction from a recent loss to the death of a loved one, a divorce, or a significant life-changing event. Sometimes we need to feel a lot of different emotions to really heal and grow. It's a bit like going through a roller coaster of emotions. It can be unsettling, but sometimes it's the only path to grow. Our capacity to grieve is deeply connected to our ability to give and receive love.

Now, grief is like the internal narrative we construct when we experience a loss. It's how we make sense of what we're going through, and it can hit us like a tidal wave. Mourning is taking that internal grief and expressing it externally. It's when you share those painful emotions with others, allowing yourself to be vulnerable and authentic. When you're mourning, you're trying to find your way back to the light, even though your world might feel surrounded by darkness. To get through it successfully, we need to learn how to regulate these emotions and understand what we can take away from the experience to help us in the long run. After successfully mourning, a grieving person is re-engaged in daily life, reconnects to others, and is able to experience hope for a future with the potential for joy and satisfaction.

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So I wanna go into the cultural beliefs and practices that play in grieving. So you know how grief and mourning are things everyone experiences at some point in their lives, but it's also heavily influenced by culture. So here in the US, there is an unwritten rule that you should grieve privately and move on as soon as possible. But if you take a look at a place like Morocco, you'll see a totally different approach. After the earthquake, they declared a three-day national mourning period to allow people to mourn together. It was so fascinating because that particular article came showing up for me, for me to share about the cultural differences of the mourning process. And it's amazing how, in different cultures how they mourn and how here in the US it's a little bit different.

It's important to note that there is no right or wrong way to grieve. Different cultures have unique traditions and customs and respecting and honoring them is essential. Ultimately mourning is about coming to terms with loss while still honoring and remembering those we've lost. So whether you're in Casablanca or California, culture plays a big role in how we navigate grief.

Everyone grieves and mourns differently, for sure, but we all go through some steps along the way. Now, there are six needs of mourning, but I want to just give you the three essentials of the mourning process. And I got it from an author that I will leave a name and author who established the six needs on the show notes. As you work on expressing and processing your grief, you can think of it like your to-do list. Just take it daily and focus on meeting those three needs of mourning. It'll help you return to life full of meaning and purpose in no time.

So are you ready for those three essential needs? So number one, acknowledge the reality of the death. When we lose someone we care about, it's tough to accept that they won't be around anymore. Everyone's different, so the amount of time it takes to come to terms with it can vary. It's pretty normal to want to avoid thinking about it at first. That can help us deal with the pain for a while, but sometimes it's just too much to handle and we need to take some space and time for ourselves to process everything.

When someone we care about passes away, we often find ourselves playing back to the moments before they died and remembering both good and bad times. It's all part of the grieving process and helps us come to terms with the

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reality of their passing. While going through this tough time, it's important to be patient and kind to ourselves and treat our emotions with care and gentleness.

Need number two, embrace the pain of the loss. Dealing with pain can be tough. Usually, when we're in pain, we try to avoid it altogether, right? It might feel easier to brush it off, repress it, or pretend it's not there, rather than face it head on. But the truth is, we have to express and engage with our pain, so we can learn to come to terms with it. Just like when we're mourning, it's better to take things slowly and gradually, to feel the pain rather than diving it all at once. That way, we can find a safe place to deal with our pain and start to heal.

In some cultures, people are encouraged to deny their pain. They may receive messages from all around them to carry on and be strong. Others may discourage people from expressing their pain because it makes them uncomfortable. But the truth is, none of these messages are helpful or true. Embracing our pain is essential to our healing journey. By acknowledging and feeling our pain, we can take the necessary steps towards healing and moving forward.

And the last, need number three, develop a new self-identity. Reinvent yourself. You know how the people in your life shape who you are, right? Well, when someone you have a special connection with passes away, it can change the way you see yourself. Suddenly, you're no longer a wife or a husband, but a widow or a widower, or for those who've been divorced, a divorcee or a divorce. Or maybe you were a son or a daughter and now you're parentless, or you had a brother or a sister, now you're siblingless.

It's not just you who thinks about yourself differently, but society starts to see you in a new way too. Losing someone dear to you isn't just about missing them on the outside. It's also about exploring a void within yourself. You see, this loss might mean taking up roles and responsibility that were once shouldered by the person you lost. Someone has to handle the daily chores, run the errand, and now it's up to you. Each task becomes a mirror, reflecting your shifting identity without them. It can be incredibly tough, even exhausting. At times, you might find yourself feeling childlike as you lay hold of these changes and your evolving sense of self.

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When we go through a tough time in life, we may feel like we need to depend on others more than usual. Feeling helpless, frustrated, inadequate, and scared is normal during such times. However, as we work on ourselves and our needs, we may find some positive changes in our self-identity. For example, you may start to feel more confident and assertive, which can empower you to keep moving forward even though you may still feel a sense of loss. You may also discover a more caring, kind, and sensitive side to yourselves that we hadn't known before. So even though it can be hard, it's essential to keep working on ourselves and our needs as it can lead to positive changes in our lives.

I know some of you might be feeling hopeful after listening to these suggestions, while others are probably feeling a bunch of different emotions like anger, doubt, exhaustion, defeat, or just plain sadness. And you know what? That's totally normal. It's important not to keep all these feelings bottled up though. So I want to encourage you to share your stories, opinions, feelings, and ideas with a trusted grief advocate or a compassionate friend. These conversations are for your mental well-being. They really do matter, and so do you. It's not okay to suffer alone, so don't be afraid to seek help and support. There is always someone out there who cares and will listen to you.

Grief and mourning are two terms that are often used interchangeably, but they do refer to different experiences. So grief is what we feel on the inside, while mourning is what we do on the outside to cope with that grief. So here is the recap of the show, of the three suggestions, the three needs.

When you're mourning a loss, it's important to take a few steps to help you heal. The first step is to acknowledge the harsh reality of the loss and come to terms with the fact that the person or thing you've lost is no longer part of your life. The second step is to embrace the pain and confront it head on. This is like peeling off a bandage slowly, allowing for healing without causing further harm. Finally, loss can reshape how we perceive ourselves, and we may need to develop a new self-identity. As we adapt to new roles and responsibility, this journey of self-discovery can foster personal growth and help with the healing processes.

If today's episode struck a chord with you and you're looking for more insights and inspiration and exclusive content delivered straight to your inbox, don't miss



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out. What I wanna share with you is that during my client session, I do assign homework that can be intense, but a transformational experience for them. I provide a morning journaling workbook that helps them express their emotions, something they may have never done before. This technique enables them to embrace their internal grief and express it through writing and sharing with me. It was a game changer that these questions were not asked and it helped them to become more courageous in healing while also gaining a better understanding of the mourning process.

So as a special thank you for being part of our journey, you'll receive our free morning journal guide. It's a powerful tool designed to help you navigate the morning process and connect with your emotions. So take that step today and embrace your path toward healing and growth. Simply subscribe and your guide will be on its way. The link will be on the show notes.

Thank you so much for tuning in and let's keep supporting each other through the ups and downs of life and let's move beyond grief and develop a purposeful life. 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. And 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.

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](http://www.sandy linda.com).