

The Grief School

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Grief Specialists

Episode : S8E196 -

I Am Lonely



Sharon ([00:04](#)):

We have so many grieverers that their loss has not over been overwhelming and broken their heart to a degree that neither one of us understands. But the second part of that is maybe they're the surviving spouse and they have no ch kids. Maybe you're the last child out of the drive. You know, all my brothers and sisters have died. We've actually met Grieverers that everyone in their family has died. We know grieverers where everyone in their family has died. But it's, when we talk about layers of grief, Erica, there's layers to the grief. Right? So I have my loss. Now all of a sudden I realized I'm the only one left. <affirmative> or <inaudible> losses in my family. And there's very few of us left. We are finding that a lot of grieverers hang onto the loneliness and the isolation, and one, instead of doing their grief work, and two, they can't get past that. The loneliness and the isolation, and they just get stuck in that.

Erica ([01:14](#)):

We've been seeing that a lot especially in our, our Facebook group. And it, it's heartbreaking When I read someone's experience and they share, I have no one, like, I just, I can't even imagine what that scenario, what level that brings to the grieving, because we've shared multiple times throughout our podcast years. I mean, we're, we're blessed and cursed with a very, very large family. So I, I just, and our, most of our immediate, like first cousins are like our mo siblings. So in addition to having there being five kids, we have first cousins that are like other brothers and sisters. And so we have just more, you know, siblings and I, I I don't know what that loneliness, I can't imagine how stifling that layer of the grief must be.

Sharon ([02:17](#)):

Yeah. First of all, grief in, in and of itself is a lonely place. Erica, go back to the moment where Austin, well, Donovan died.

Erica ([02:29](#)):

Yeah. I didn't isolate as much until, until Donovan died. But even still, there were people calling me every day. There were people texting me every day. I was withdrawing. I was choosing the isolation

Sharon ([02:45](#)):

Exactly where I'm going. That's exactly where I'm going. There's this feeling of even though there are a million people in the room, you literally can feel like you're the only person in the room because no one understands how bad you feel.

Erica ([02:58](#)):

And that, that, that is what was stopping me from sharing. Because even with me trying to communicate through the loss of Austin, I could see everyone was filling it together. But when we got hit with Donovan in my brain, I thought, no one will understand how bad this feels. Therefore, I will not share it with anyone except Lewis. He was the only person I knew. But if I didn't have a Lewis and if I had that experience, Sharon, and like if I didn't have the family,

Erica ([03:32](#)):

I don't even know because it's like, what, what is getting you up? What is keep waking you up and making you get a bed out of bed? The thing that was getting me out of bed were those two children I had responsibility for and that that I knew you would be calling, but if I didn't have that, I don't know how hard that struggle must be. And I just, it makes me sad.

Sharon ([03:57](#)):

That's exactly where I was going as I tried to jump in on you three times. It's okay. That's, sorry about that. That's exactly where I was going. One grief is a lonely and isolating place by itself. Even you surrounded by everybody was still lonely and isolated. That's number one. But when you're the surviving child and all of your family has died, it adds a layer of very deep layer to the grief. We often talk about that grief comes in layers. It's not just that I've had my loss and I've gotta work on this person. It's that I've had my loss and now it's affecting every other aspect of my life. But for some reason we've gotten a lot of griever that are really alone. You are really alone and really trying to figure this out on their own. And so we wanted to talk about some of the things that they could do to not feel so isolated.

Erica ([04:53](#)):

Exactly.

Sharon ([04:54](#)):

I think the number one thing, Erica, is they need to make a commitment to not live in the isolation. Yes. I am the surviving child and everyone in my family has died. My parents left are gone for many years, and all my last brother has died. I'm gonna make a commitment that I'm not gonna live as the last survivor of this family

Erica ([05:21](#)):

And with some of the clients we have had in the past that were alone. Cuz they really, their family dynamic, they were estranged from certain family members or whatever the issue. Or they had lost parents the year before and then lost, you know, their last person. And I feel bad because I'm just had this thought right now. I could have brought the names of these groups to the podcast, but there are groups, there are social media support groups. There are things that I have I found cuz I would Google for them. When you are alone, there are groups to help support you and a a thousand percent, you have to stay on your healing journey. You have to choose healing. And you have to say, I need to keep going because just because we don't wanna live anymore doesn't mean we get that as an option.

Erica ([06:20](#)):

We're gonna keep waking up until it's our day and we don't know when that day is. So why be so miserable in those in your, you know, in your life you can choose. Grief is a choice and you, you always say we have choices in grief. You can choose the darkness and to stay isolated and to just be sad all the time. Or you can choose to go after your healing and find a little bit of enjoyment. Granted, it may not be with, it will not be with your family, but you get to make connections with people. Thank God for the internet. Thank God for social media in that regard, because it does bring so much ugly. But in that regard, it does bring so much beauty because you can still make connections with people and never have to leave your house.

Sharon ([07:12](#)):

I agree. I agree. I agree. And so I wanna go into a little bit deeper about some of the ideas that they could do that. But I'm gonna turn left here right now. I am alone is a thought. I am alone is a thought that we live in. Right. Even if you're the only person left, I am alone is truly a thought that's gonna formulate how your grief is. If you're that waking up, I'm the only person. I'm alone. No one understands this grief, I'm alone. You need to ask yourself this question. Is it true? And a lot of grieverers would tell me, yes it is true. And then I would say to them, well, add a bridge thought to it because I can't get you to just change that out or the truth. This, that, that is true. I'm alone when I'm going to find some plants, I'm alone, but I'm gonna find grief support. I'm alone, but I'm gonna do my healing on my broken heart. I'm alone, but I refuse to live out this loneliness for the rest of my life. You've got to make a commitment to not stuck there in your grief. That is a huge spot where grieverers can get stuck. So go ahead.

Erica ([08:30](#)):

No, no, no. Go, go finish.

Sharon ([08:33](#)):

Oh, one of the places that we've formulated a committee is in our Facebook group. <Affirmative>. We have a lot of women in there that are talking. They're sharing their grief. Hearing somebody else say today is a bad day. And then having all the other grieving women come in and hold them up even in the form of a text may not give you instant relief, but knowing that someone else is holding you up is huge.

Erica ([09:02](#)):

That's the one thing I do love about the Facebook group, is to see, even before you and I have a chance to get in there and give a response, there's so many other women who have commented and is really are really trying to reach out and make a connection with that person to say, I am so sorry for how you feel. And I, I love the beauty of the group working that way. And it's like, by the time you and I get there, there's five or six comments and I'll be like, oh, did you go back and see that post? And then we gotta go down so far to find it so that we can comment.

Sharon ([09:36](#)):

Yeah. I love that. And griever support grieverers, which is really huge. So if the, the Facebook great group is a great place to be. Well, let's say that's not your gig, that's not your jam. Right. Join our faith. Join a grief support group that's in person that meets in person. <Affirmative> where you can get to the live bugs. You can be there for someone else. Someone else can be there for you.

Erica ([10:04](#)):

We had a, a client recently who shared about their experience with a grief group and that they had very strong views on covid and that when they shared 'em, they were expecting judgment and they were not met with judgment. The Yeah. The group was supporting if that was their view. They were respecting their viewpoint and did not beat them up. And it didn't turn political and it didn't get ugly. And I thought that was so beautiful because we all have the right to our own opinions.

Sharon ([10:35](#)):

Yeah.

Erica ([10:36](#)):

We don't have to agree, but we also don't have to attack someone for the way that they think.

Sharon ([10:42](#)):

Yeah. You get a lot of that in a group. Yeah. You get a lot of that. Don't let that de deter you from joining a group. Right. Here's the other thing. Joining a support group or following and joining an in-person support group. Or maybe you're just gonna go to meet up groups and, and join a women's group that's a book club or something like that. That's not your healing.

Erica ([11:10](#)):

No.

Sharon ([11:11](#)):

Your healing process. That is something to help you have community. That's something to help you with your community. Maybe your community is gonna come to your church. Maybe your community is gonna come through aa, maybe your community is gonna come through Al-Anon. Maybe your community is gonna come through you volunteering. Maybe your community is gonna come from you going to volunteer at the food shelter. Right. The food pantry. There's many different things that we can do so that we're not alone, but we've got to work on our broken heart first because we're never gonna have the energy. Erika, could you imagine me coming to your house right after Donovan died and going, you need to go serve at the food pantry.

Erica ([12:00](#)):

I almost no way. That's what you did after Austin died, but whatever. We won't talk about that

Sharon ([12:04](#)):

<Laugh>. Ok. But,

Erica ([12:06](#)):

But thi this is why it's so important to go get the healing because you cannot walk into the food pantry and start bawling in front of a group of strangers.

Sharon ([12:17](#)):

No, no.

Erica ([12:20](#)):

It, it, it definitely one grief make pe makes people uncomfortable and you will definitely get not met with the reception you're looking for. So if you go after your healing and you're doing both simultaneously, you have a place where it's your safe space to do your bawling and crying and working through your pain. And then when you meet up at the food pantry once, twice, three times a week, however many times you go, you get to be in your present moment and enjoy the new connections you're making. That's the difference.

Sharon ([12:54](#)):

So we have had clients that have worked with us and done their grief healing and gotten true healing and also gone to grief share through their church. It's simultaneously. I love that.

Erica ([13:05](#)):

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>,

Sharon ([13:07](#)):

I love it. You know why they're getting community in their grief share. They're also in our Facebook group. So they're supporting other women there and they're getting the actual healing that they need from us. We've done, we've worked with Grievors, have gone to therapy, done their grief healing with us, been in our Facebook group and done their own grief support group outside in another community. All of those things work simultaneously together. You're touching every.at that point. You know, maybe grief share's not your jam and so maybe you get involved at your church. Maybe you volunteer at the food pantry and do your grief healing. You know what I mean? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> a group. Yeah. The thing is are resources out there for you. You don't have to sit and be alone. And to any griever that is hearing me, that has found themselves in this position and they're the only one out there when everybody in their family has died or their, their spouse has died and they feel alone, we see you. We really see you and we hear you. This, I'm just sending you love and energy through the podcast to know that we know you're there

Erica ([14:21](#)):

And there are a lot of people who don't know how to make that first step. Yeah. So in the event that you are that person, call us, we will help you make that first step.

Sharon ([14:33](#)):

Yeah.

Erica ([14:34](#)):

We'll find the place that is the best fit for you because we'd rather do that even if it's not with us. We'd rather be that assist you need than to know that you're sitting and suffering in silence. Cause that's the last thing that we want.

Sharon ([14:49](#)):

Yeah. We offer with grievors. Hey, you can call me, you can text me. But I think people don't sometimes take us serious on that until we actually respond to their call. But sometimes we get a lot of grievors that come and meet us just one time and they, we may help them to map out a path for themselves, our job and what our mission is to change the conversation on grief so that the entire world will know how to grieve. That's the reason we're doing what we're doing. And so if our job is just to set you up with some sort of grief, grief support groups that don't do with us, we're not gonna negate that now. Okay. The world don't call me cuz I don't know all the grief support groups <laugh>. But

Erica ([15:29](#)):

Facts <laugh>,

Sharon ([15:32](#)):

We are the ones that give the true healing. That's the difference.

Erica ([15:35](#)):

And we

Sharon ([15:36](#)):

You know, support and healing, Erica,

Erica ([15:38](#)):

There's absolutely a difference between support and healing. Our mission, like you said, is to normalize the grieving experience so that when you walk into the food pantry and you do start crying with strangers, that the strangers would know how to support you. But we're not there yet. So let us help you at least find your place that's your best fit. But not to too our own horns. We're pretty good at this, so

Sharon ([16:07](#)):

I'm good at it. <Laugh>,

Sharon ([16:09](#)):

We're. So I had, we had a client of many years ago that went in join their loss happened right around Halloween and they joined the Grief Share group. I don't know if it was Grief Share, it was Grief Support Group. And they went into the grief support group and that day, the Grief support group were making candles. So here they are in their fresh new grief and they get there and the grief group is doing a craft. Now, they didn't wanna do the craft, they had just lost their child. They didn't wanna do the craft. If that ain't the group for you, if you don't feel that, that's where you're gonna grow. There's other groups. Don't get, and grief supports aren't gr aren't for me. You know, don't get stuck there. Just move on. There's a lot of grieverers in our group that don't write anything.

Sharon ([17:03](#)):

They just read all the posts mm-hmm. <Affirmative> and they get from what they see other people posting. They see the question and they answer the question for themselves that day. There's many groups, maybe a group support group is not gonna be for you. Maybe you are really gonna find it in your AA group or your Al-Anon group or your church group. Maybe you're gonna really find what you need by being of service at church and being in the nursery. Just don't stop. You've gotta claw your way out of this. Yeah. You've got to find your way out. It's not just gonna fall from the sky. Healing is not just gonna fall from the sky.

Erica ([17:41](#)):

No, it's not. And it doesn't happen over time. That's not real. You really have to go after it. And you have

Sharon ([17:48](#)):

To make that choice. You have to step into the authority of your healing. You have to make a commitment to your healing friends, I, we love you and I'm so sorry if this is you, but know that we're here for you and for anyone listening to this that will love a community, our Facebook group is the best way to be for us because we're in that group. We're answering questions, we're saying things. We're making videos for that group. We're gonna start putting videos in that group and just teaching you little bits and pieces of how to grieve. And we would love to have you in that group. Bye friends.

Erica ([18:25](#)):

Bye.