

The Grief School

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Grief Specialists

Episode : S8E192 - Your Support Matters



Sharon: [\(00:02\)](#)

Grievers need support. They need support in so many different ways, in so many areas of the grieving experience. They need support from their family. They need the support from their therapist or grief specialists. They need the support of their doctors. They need the support of their children who are also grieving. They need the support of their spouse. If the loss is not their spouse, they need the support at work with their colleague, work colleagues. They need the support at school from their professors. I can't even tell you the different areas where the griever is requiring support and need support to be able to get through this grieving journey to get to a place of healing. Unfortunately, support in many, many ways fall short or it's over the top. So it's all different types of support. So let's get into it.

Erica: [\(00:56\)](#)

I 100% know, without a doubt, I would not be where I am if it weren't for my support system. Starting with my siblings. Everybody was amazing. My friend circle, everyone there was amazing. My coworkers, they were 50 50. It was, you know, when you take your grief to work, it's miss. You know what I mean? So it's, it's a challenge. But my, my support, I was, I was blessed in the support system circle. And I am thankful for that every single day because yeah, I, I know I felt everyone literally holding me up.

Sharon: [\(01:41\)](#)

Sometimes the support falls short too. And we need to acknowledge that, like you were talking about at work, sometimes the support falls short, but even the simple things are support.

Erica: [\(01:52\)](#)

Yeah.

Sharon: [\(01:54\)](#)

We we, you have a neighbor that happens to actually be our brother's best friend. And after Austin died for one year, he stopped at your house every single night. Every single night. We call him Uncle Shane. Uncle Shane stopped at your house every single night. Sometimes he bought the trash can in sometimes he told you a joke.

Erica: [\(02:14\)](#)

Yeah.

Sharon: [\(02:15\)](#)

But it's not necessary that you guys were desperately talking about grief or talking about Austin. But he checked on you every day for one year. Man, that support is unbelievable. And the thing was, he didn't do the text of, Hey, what do you need? No. Hey, I'm here for you if you need me. I, I, lemme, let's just get that off the table. That is not support. That's the chicken way of telling your friend, I'm, I'm gonna be here for you. Come look for me. Hey, while you're grieving and crying and broken and you need something, just call me

Erica: [\(02:48\)](#)

In your free time. When you get a minute, when you get a minute, you just call me and lemme know what it is I can do for you,

Sharon: [\(02:55\)](#)

. So if you're trying to be the support, don't send that text. Just go do something. Go take their trash can in, go take them a meal, take a case of water and leave it on their porch. Write them a note. Send them a joke. Right? Send a picture of you and their son together so they know you're still thinking about that person. Ask 'em straight out, how's your grief today? So, so many different things that we can do in, in the grief field. He didn't do any of that. He showed up. Yeah, he absolutely showed up. He showed up every day for a year. I'm not saying you all have to make that commitment. I just wanted to share that story. So support comes in so many different ways, and the griever needs that support. They're not gonna make it through without that support.

Erica: [\(03:41\)](#)

No, no. And, and sadly it seems like that would be the easiest first step, right? The event happens and everyone rallies around the whoever, and you just, you just rally you just in different ways. Like you said, bring the trash in, sending a, a dinner or whatever it is taking 'em to get their nails done, whatever. But when it goes wrong, it goes so wrong. We have heard stories of family members kind of putting their pain above the person who had the event. So it's like, yeah. You know, and then they're taking it away and making it about them, or they're saying, oh, this is too heavy for me. I I can't show up for you.

Sharon: [\(04:30\)](#)

Yeah. Yeah. I can't even imagine that. The, and that's what happens sometimes is because we as the griever don't know how to help the griever. We try to get on the equal playing field. And so we start bringing our pain into the situation. We bring our pain, we bring our grief and our pain into the situation. And, and it happens a lot. Like I really, I, you and I did a video once where I was like, I had to look at Erica every day and talk to every day to know where my grief was gonna be. Mm-Hmm. . It's not that I was, and I didn't realize I was comparing so much at first, which is not a great thing to do, but I was looking to you to see how I was gonna go through the day. But what happens in reverse is that we don't even give you a chance to share your grief. We hit you with the I'm grieving more than you story so that I don't have to hear your story. Yeah. It's almost like a connect, it's a protection mechanism for my own heart. If I tell you a yucky story first, then you're definitely not gonna share that grief, which I can't handle.

Erica: [\(05:33\)](#)

That is so true. . That is, let me get mine out first. Let's start focusing on the drama ahead of the dry cleaners. Yeah. Before she starts trying to talk about how mess she misses her husband.

Sharon: [\(05:44\)](#)

Yeah. Yeah. It's because we can't sit in the pain. We just did this, that podcast about sad does equals bad, doesn't equal bad. We can't sit in the pain. I don't wanna sit in your pain. Well, oh, first of all, I don't wanna say my own pain, but I don't wanna sit in yours and be there for one minute. We get

uncomfortable in our own skin. We're like, I can't do this. I can't do this. So let me throw this, this yucky story out.

Erica: [\(06:08\)](#)

And then you also have to be careful of finding the people who you can deeply connect with because you share a similar pain. Right. and, but then you become this I love that we have a sister circle with, with some of our formal clients. Yeah. And, you know, we just get on and we chat from time to time, but hi

Sharon: [\(06:29\)](#)

Soul sisters,

Erica: [\(06:30\)](#)

I know hi soul sisters, but you can get a sister circle of pain and so you're just, you're not addressing the pain. You're avoiding it. So we're gonna go hit this happy hour and we're gonna go on this trip and we're gonna go hang out and do these things together because we know we have this pain that bonds us and we're using our pain, you know, as a because with this happened, we need to go do these things. But you're not really talking about the pain or addressing the pain or really supporting each other. Yeah. In a sense of saying the sad stuff.

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

Yeah. Erica, answer this question for me. You, you said I had my work, I had my family, I have my this, I have my, that. Let's not, not to offend anybody, but really when it came down to it, who did you really have? Who were the ones that you're like, I can pick up the phone and call this person?

Erica: [\(07:33\)](#)

You talk about grief.

Sharon: [\(07:34\)](#)

I don't want you to say names. Just, yeah. How many people do you think you really had? Because we're, we're a family of five. I'm gonna why you're thinking about it. I'm gonna keep counting. We're a family of five. We have probably, I don't know, in our, our dad's side of the family is 120 people that we can point to and count. And we know them all cousins. Right. We know them all. And, and when, when you, when I tell people this, they get blown away. So you had that then you had to wear it, but how many were there were, they're really in that circle.

Erica: [\(08:04\)](#)

I would say that's really, that I considered a safe space or a handful, like a safe space where I could really say some of the things. And then each, each person I could say different things to, right? Yes.

Sharon: [\(08:16\)](#)

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I, I agree.

Erica: [\(08:17\)](#)

But I would say a handful that were really a safe space.

Sharon: [\(08:21\)](#)

That were really a safe, you could say the ugly, you could cry with them. You could do whatever you needed to do. So there was about a handful. So when you really, cuz we kind of narrow it down. So I say that to say, so for me, even with Austen's death and with with Donovan's death and with Daddy, I would say I really only had two. I had two. The three, I had three. That's not a lot. When it really comes down to it, your support system's not gonna be the the ultimate support system, right. Where you can say, I didn't say this, but you could say, I hated that person. I'm glad they're gone. Like you could really be that honest. Mm-Hmm. , it's gonna be very, very small without judgment. Now do it without judgment. Without judgment, without them judging you. The, the support system's gonna be really small. So you've gotta love that, that support group and know who those people are. Right. So because you and I have just narrowed it down and we know that it's gonna be three to five people that are gonna be your, they're gonna be the ones that are gonna be with you for the long haul. They're gonna be with you for the longevity, and they're gonna be there no matter what. Sometimes s griever's don't even have that.

Erica: [\(09:36\)](#)

Yeah.

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

They don't even have one person. They can say, Hey, I'm so glad you're on my support system because their support person may have died. Yeah. Sharon, of the three that I counted, one of those are Sharon.

Erica: [\(09:50\)](#)

Yeah. I knew

Sharon: [\(09:51\)](#)

. Yeah, I know. So think about that. What if Sharon was my, what if I told you I only had one and then my support person dies? That happens sometimes. We work with Griever's all the time that their support person is the person that died.

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

And we briefly talked about this before we started recording and I was saying, you know, that's the beauty of social media. I would say it's, it's a blessing and a curse, but that's the beauty of it, because there's a group for everything now. You know, I'm, I'm in a Turkey group, I'm in a peacock group. I have a life people, but I mean

Sharon: [\(10:23\)](#)

Turkey, the bird.

Erica: ([10:24](#))

Mm-Hmm. . Mm-Hmm. , like living turkeys. Like not cook Turkey. I'm in a peacock. I'm in one for hatching, had a hatch. Anyway, that's, there's a group for everything. Yeah. So the beauty of it is, and and we have a grief group. I mean that, I'm not trying to plug it, but we do. Yeah. I've seen other grief groups because we have ours. I get you know, other groups you might wanna join. There's a group for everything.

Sharon: ([10:51](#))

Yeah.

Erica: ([10:52](#))

You don't have to physically sit in front of who you deemed your person or your support circle to get the support. You can connect with someone who lives in another country. Yeah. Via Facebook or any, any platform and get that support. So don't let the fact that you don't physically have a person in your presence stop you from finding the support. Because they have access now, which I do love compared to what Austin has been dead 18 years. This 17 years this year.

Sharon: ([11:26](#))

Yeah.

Erica: ([11:29](#))

It 17 years ago it wasn't like that. You needed to go sit into a, a group.

Sharon: ([11:33](#))

Yeah.

Erica: ([11:34](#))

Yeah. You needed to go to the, like you used to say, go to the hospital Yeah. And find the support groups. Now you can be in your, in your bedroom and find it. So that's beautiful. Don't let that stop. You. Find the group. Find the group that speaks to you and where you can still say the things because it's not so much the person giving you the advice. The advice is zero part of it. It's the person holding your space.

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

Yeah. Yeah. So

Erica: ([12:02](#))

It's you seeing that name Erica Honore on the screen and commenting and, and just knowing that they're holding space in that group where you can say the ugly stuff.

Sharon: ([12:16](#))

Yeah.

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

I can't believe he left me. I'm so mad at him. I'll never forgive him.

Sharon: ([12:22](#))

Yes, exactly. And if you are one of the people that you're, you don't have the support group that you wish you had, you have to go after it. You have to find it. So one thing, one or two things that I would definitely do is definitely join one or two support groups. Be active in those groups. Be actively talking in those groups, hanging out in those groups posting in those groups, participating in that groups. That's number one. The second thing is to find that one person that you can talk to. And it may be your therapist, it may be your grief specialist, but Grievers need to talk. They gotta say the ugly out loud. They have to hear themselves say it.

Erica: ([13:08](#))

They really do. It's, it's the unburdening of your heart. I saw a post the other day and I, I completely appreciated and resonated with this. It's one of the kids', former teachers, she moved to another school and we said we were gonna do a podcast on this, that she's struggling. She has two daughters and they're at that young adult, right. Where Jordan is and she's struggling. And she put it all out there and she said the ugly, and I can't even think of some of the words she used, but I was like, yes, somebody said it cuz I too have struggled. No. Struggled. If you're a parent, you have struggled. If you haven't struggled, I need some of what you got. Cuz it's that. And I just said to her, thank you for speaking your truth. Yeah. It must feel good to unburden your heart.

Sharon: ([13:59](#))

Yeah.

Erica: ([14:00](#))

Just to get it off. That feels good. Yeah. To put it somewhere else. But also I wa I said thank you for saying it because I needed to hear it.

Sharon: ([14:13](#))

Yeah.

Erica: ([14:13](#))

I needed that.

Sharon: ([14:15](#))

Yeah.

Erica: ([14:16](#))

So that's the thing. You gotta get it off of your heart. There's, there's healing in that.

Sharon: ([14:22](#))

Total healing in that total healing. In saying that I love the support.

Erica: ([14:31](#))

Mm-Hmm.

Sharon: ([14:31](#))

, I really do love the support. Part of the reason that the support is so good is because you feel, you quite often feel like no one else in the world understands how much pain you're in. But then you get into a room, even if it's a zoom room with a ton of other grievers, and all of a sudden you realize there are others out there like me. Mm-Hmm. that likeness. Right. You end up joining the, the grief gang. Yeah. The second thing is . The second thing is, is that sometimes you're struggling in a certain way and you can't actually articulate it. But having someone else articulate it for you helps you,

Erica: ([15:08](#))

It

Sharon: ([15:09](#))

Helps you to understand it and get it and truly be able to move past it.

Erica: ([15:14](#))

So, and sometimes your family cannot be your support. All right. You know your family as much as you love them and hold them dearly. They cannot be your support. What if you have the loss and everybody in the room? And that's the why we teach. You cannot compare losses. You're, everyone's relationship to that person is their own relationship. So you, if you're in a room and you're all looking for the support, and you have the mother and saying, well, she was my daughter. And then you have the sibling saying, well, that was my sister. And then you have the husband saying, well, that was my wife.

Sharon: ([15:49](#))

Yeah.

Erica: ([15:51](#))

You're all grieving. Yeah. So you can sometimes cannot be each other's support because you all need something different. Yeah. So you, it's okay to acknowledge that yes, you love them. Yes. You're, you're

all affected by this grief, but you sometimes can't be each other's support. Yeah. Cause you need something different and that's okay.

Sharon: ([16:14](#))

And that is okay. And be okay with wherever the gr the support shows up for you. Yeah, absolutely. Erica, if, if one of my sisters or my brother were grieving the relationship or of, of a divorce with their spouse, I don't wanna hear all of that. I don't wanna be there for all that. There's some intimate details that, that you're better off not hearing. So That's true. So that's also, you gotta judge your support. This is my support for this. This person does really well with that. Yeah. Some really intimate things, details that I need to share. And you might have a support. I think when you look back, Erica, and you look at the whole well-roundedness of your support, your support actually came up from so many, came from so many different areas depending on who the person was when you were grieving and what you were sharing that day.

Erica: ([17:06](#))

Yeah, that's true. As my grief started to change, my support started to

Sharon: ([17:11](#))

Change. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And that's what happens with the griever. And that's why it is so good for them to have multiple different, different types of support that they can lean into. All right, friend. If you are the person out there and you do not have any support and you are struggling, we will be your support. We promise you. Join our Facebook group, come and see us subscribe to this email, set an appointment to meet with us and just let us know you don't have the support. Erica and I are creating an amazing community of support for women who grieve. And we are here for you. We wanna be that guide for you. Please allow us in. Thank

Erica: ([17:54](#))

You for him. Oh, wait, no, wait. One, one quick note. Just so you know, our group is for everyone. You know how you look on the, the, and they say, you know, child loss, spouse loss, you know, this and that. Our group is for everyone. If you lost your job, if you broke up with your boyfriend, if you lost your fur, baby, our group is for everyone. We don't type of loss. Every type of loss. Grief is grief. We are firm believers in that. We don't let anyone challenge you are accepted. No matter, even if you didn't have a loss and you just feel unhappy, come to group.

Sharon: ([18:30](#))

Yeah, absolutely. All right. Bye friends.

Erica: ([18:34](#))

Bye.