

## Ep #50: Ask Krista Anything: Live Coaching



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Krista St-Germain**

[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

## Ep #50: Ask Krista Anything: Live Coaching

Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 50, Ask Krista Anything: Live Coaching.

Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, the only podcast that offers a proven process to help you work through your grief to grow, evolve, and create a future you can actually look forward to. Here's your host, certified life coach, grief expert, widow, and mom, Krista St-Germain.

Hey, everybody. Welcome back to the podcast. We're going to do something a little bit different this week. So, if you're new to the podcast, welcome. This episode will be quite unlike the 49 that have come before it.

You may not have known, but I have been doing a series of free public coaching calls just for widowed moms. I started doing it because, you know, the world kind of went, it felt, a little bit nuts with COVID-19 and I wanted to be able to step up and serve at a higher level, not just the people who pay me, but also people who just might need some help.

And so, I started doing these live coaching calls where I bring people on using Zoom. And then those who are brave and want coaching can raise their hand and then I coach them. And I thought that you might benefit from hearing one of those coaching calls.

Once you can get an idea of what coaching is even like – I know, before I had a life coach, I didn't really even know what life coaching was. And so, maybe you've never heard what it sounds like to have a life coach. But also, I think the issues that these women brought and the coaching that happened might benefit you and would benefit other people that weren't on the call. So, I want to share that with you.

So, that's what I'm going to give you this week; a replay of one of the most recent Ask Krista Anything coaching calls. I am going to do more of them, and if you would like to be notified, make sure to go over to my website,

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coachingwithkrista.com. And after you've been on the site for just a couple of seconds, one of those little annoying pop-up boxes will show up for you and you can just enter your name and your email address and then that will get you on the list.

If you're already getting emails from me, you should be getting notifications when these calls happen. But if you're not yet in the inside scoop then you need to get on my email list and that's how you do it. So, I will do more of these calls coming up soon. This podcast is going to air on May 11<sup>th</sup> and I do have planned an Ask Krista Anything session Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup>. That is the next one on the books.

So, get on the email list and you can get all of the specifics, the times, and login information and all of that. So, I hope you enjoy this and let's get into it.

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Krista: So, Megan, I'm going to come to you first.

Megan: Okay, you'll have to pardon my appearance. I'm hiding from the kids.

Krista: Perfect. Who isn't hiding from the kids right now?

Megan: I know, right, it's crazy. So, here is my question, and I'd love your advice. I'm struggling with the fact that my husband died not that long ago but my friends feel like they should tell me how I should grieve. They should kind of tell me my timeline, they should tell me what's appropriate and what's not. And that's really hard for me because it's my journey, not theirs. I know they're saying it out of a place of love, but I'm just really struggling with it. So, I just wanted to know what your thoughts were on

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those people that want to help but maybe are giving you unsolicited advice about how you're grieving.

Krista: It happens a lot. So, I'm curious, what is it right now that makes it a problem for you that they're giving you unsolicited advice?

Megan: You mean what am I doing?

Krista: Well, like, why is it – because it's causing probably an emotion, yeah?

Megan: Right, yeah.

Krista: Why?

Megan: Why is it causing an emotion? Because I don't want people to be, I guess, judgmental or disappointed in how I'm handling it. Like, they expect me to act a certain way, I guess. I'm just not the type of person that's going to wear black the rest of my life and, you know, stop everything. I loved him. That will never change. But he's not here anymore. So, that's really, yeah...

Krista: Okay, so you don't want them to judge you, and they are.

Megan: Right, yeah.

Krista: Okay, this is the interesting thing. It's like, we have this idea of how people should behave, but then they don't do it, and then we kind of get wrapped around the axel because we tell ourselves that they should be doing it differently than they are. And then we feel bad. And the only way for us to feel better is if they change.

Megan: I didn't think of it that way.

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Krista: It doesn't really work because if you're like, "Well I can't feel good about my choices until they stop judging me," then we have to be magical. We have to somehow make them stop judging you. And we can't.

Megan: Right.

Krista: So then, we have to focus on what we can control, which is only what we think about their judgment. So, what if we just decided, it doesn't matter if they judge us?

Megan: I guess it just becomes a problem when, like, my best friend won't talk to me kind of situation.

Krista: Okay, tell me about that.

Megan: She's just mad. She's mad because I'm dating. She thinks it's a bad idea. She thinks that it's too soon. She thinks that I shouldn't be dating and she doesn't want to hear about it. And I wasn't even going to tell her. She found out and she got mad and now she's not talking to me.

Krista: Okay, so how do you feel about dating? Do you want to be dating? Are you okay with dating?

Megan: This particular guy, absolutely. Any other guy, no. But this guy is amazing and he's aware of the situation. He's super-respectful of the situation. He's respectful of the kids. Like, he's just not – I'm not, like, casually dating and going on multiple dates. It's just one individual.

Krista: Well, listen, even if you were casually dating, that's totally your prerogative.

Megan: True.

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Krista: There's no right or wrong. You get to make choices. It's your life. Not everybody is going to like our choices. And there's really not a lot we could do about it. The only way I know to do about it to somehow surgically get into their brain and make them think different thoughts and make them approve of us, but they don't.

Megan: That's not going to happen, yeah.

Krista: So then, if we can't control that and they show up as they show up and they think how they think and they feel how they feel, which there's nothing we can do about it, then we are left to decide what we want to think about how they are thinking. And we can be like, "It's okay if she doesn't love me in my choices. It's okay if she doesn't like my choices. I can love her anyway."

Or, you can choose to be like, "I don't want to be friends with someone who doesn't like my choices." There's no right or wrong. What we have to focus on is the only part of it we can control, which is the way we think and the way we feel and how we behave, anything else is such a waste of our energy. And sometimes, it could just mean letting people be wrong.

Megan: Okay, that's a good way to look at it. It's much less stressful.

Krista: Well, yeah. I mean, really, if we give them permission to be wrong, they're kind of going to think what they think anyway. So, we're just giving them permission to already have the same thoughts that they probably have. But the piece for us comes with when we stop trying to control them and we focus on what we can control, which is us.

Megan: Okay.

Krista: So, if you like your reasons for dating and you like this guy...

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Megan: He's amazing.

Krista: Sometimes, what happens is we'll have a little bit of self-doubt about whether or not we're making the right decision, and so then when somebody else also questions our decision, because there's a part of us that believes they might be right, then it's problematic for us.

Megan: Well, I think society expects you to grieve as a widow for a certain amount of time. And I just think that that, especially when you're in the world of business and you have people that come to you for advice and you do a lot of public speaking – not looking like this, clearly – then they expect you to act a certain way.

Krista: But, you know, here's the thing; somebody would probably say you're dating too soon, and somebody else would probably say you should already be dating more.

Megan: Okay, so there's like no winning?

Krista: Well, there is no winning. You know how to win? You live your life to your standards, for your reasons, because it's your life. And you let the other people have their opinions. And you don't get all upset about it because it's not relevant to Megan. And yes, opinions are like you-know-whats and everybody has one.

And it's probably coming from a real place of love from your friend. Your friend probably legitimately believes that she's right and she's trying to save you from your own misjudgment. You could totally love her for how much she cares about you and still not agree with her opinion of your dating. You do you.

Megan: Thanks, Krista.

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Krista: You're welcome. I'll see you later.

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Krista: Is it Taffy?

Terry: My name's actually Terry.

Krista: Very good. How can I help you?

Terry: So, first of all, I think it's a really neat thing. I haven't had the opportunity to do much around my widowhood except for a grief group that I was in that met for 18 months. And it was every other week, which was helpful, but it's over. And I'm quite adrift now. It will be two years since my husband died after 31 years of marriage. And I have three adult kids and one who's 23 is currently at home during quarantine.

And I guess, what I want to talk about is where to go from here, you know. I jumped onto Match for the first time about a month ago and it's so confusing to – I don't know. I just have to say, I thought I'd have an easier time dating than I have. And so, a lot of ego comes back at me. And this is another point that I'm dealing with is my husband had Parkinson's for 22 years. So, when he died, there is such a mixed blessing.

You know, I really, really miss him, but not all. And I was a caretaker some of the time, but I can't say that I'm not just still – and I'm afraid of being judged in this – but there is some feeling of, "Stop beating my head against the wall," you know. It's gotten a lot easier. And I'm reveling in that. And I don't know what the real purpose – except sometimes the loneliness for the future – of meeting another relationship or primary relationship. Sometimes I'm fine on my own, but it's looking forward – I'll stop talking – looking forward, like, am I cutting off my nose to spite my face if I don't take a more active role in looking or dating? I think I've said enough. And by the way, I



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have on – the hair thing is, like, short, short hair which has gotten really long...

Krista: Quarantine hair drama.

Terry: Yeah, this quarantine hair business. So anyway, just again, thanks for doing what you're doing. It's really cool.

Krista: Yeah, my pleasure. So, to your point about loneliness, I think it's really important at this stage that you kind of sink into – and maybe this is a totally new concept – to where loneliness comes from. It always seems like loneliness comes from the lack of a relationship, that when we aren't in a relationship, that that means we're going to be lonely.

But it isn't true at all. In fact, many times, you may have been in a relationship – case in point when you're caretaking a husband of 22 years with Parkinson's – where you still felt lonely. Or even before he has Parkinson's, you might have felt lonely.

That's because loneliness actually comes from our thinking. So, it's completely possible to be in a relationship and feel very lonely, to be in a room full of people and feel very lonely, to live by ourselves and not feel lonely at all. Because loneliness doesn't come from whether or not we're in a relationship or whether other people are around.

Take this quarantine, for example. There are a lot of people right now who are experiencing a lot of loneliness and they aren't around others. But there are a lot of people who are reveling in the idea that they get to be at home. It's different for every person because we all have different thoughts.

So, I say that because I want you to free up your mind in terms of what's possible for you. If you're concerned and you're thinking that you need to be in another relationship someday so that you won't be lonely, it's not true.

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You can decide that you want to be single and be very fulfilled and not lonely at all. So, you don't need someone else to make you not feel lonely.

So, I think the most powerful place for you to make a decision from about whether or not you want to date is, "If I could be happy either way..." like, let's go to the place where you're in a relationship and it's amazing, or you're single and it's amazing. Which sounds better to you, if both were possible?

Terry: Gosh, it's really impossible to tell because there's good things about being in a relationship. And if it were amazing, that would be great. And I have kids who still need a certain amount of care, so that amazing person means that they were amazing with my adult children, that would be good. And if I didn't feel suffocated or like a caretaker, that would be amazing.

If I could travel on my own or with somebody, that would be amazing. So, I guess it would be kind of nice if you had that other person who could be both, who could be with you and I would also still have some freedom, you know. I guess I just really have to be careful. Like, I don't really want to take care of another person right now.

Krista: And maybe, listen, we give ourselves permission to not make the long-term decisions immediately. You can always decide that, for the next X-number of months or X-number of years this is what I choose and I have the right at any time to redirect myself, to make another choice.

Terry: What about the idea of, you know, I see these people who are matched with me on Match or whatever and I don't do anything about it. They're not the right religion or they're not immediately in love, I don't even respond. And believe me, I'm sure there's plenty who don't respond to me too, so it's not that. But what about, do you owe it to yourself to try?

Krista: Do you want to try it?

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Terry: It just seems so hard to be – if I keep rejecting people, I'm afraid if I start with people who I'd be open to in another religion, maybe I'll eventually think that wasn't the right choice and I shouldn't have done that. Yeah, it's just like I'm too worried about what might happen in the future; I'll like the, then I might have to reject them. I don't know. There's so many pieces to that. I just can't even imagine somebody fulfilling all the pieces.

Krista: Well, the good news is that – I'm glad you're not expecting this fantasy amazing super-human perfect person to come. But there is no way to make a right decision or a wrong decision. There are only decisions. We make decisions and then we get new information and then we make new decisions. And the only thing that makes it right or wrong is our judgment.

So, you can decide to date someone and then later decide not to date the, and still not tell yourself that you made the wrong decision. You can always have your own back and decide, "No, it's exactly the perfect experience for me. I learned so much. Now I know exactly what I don't want and I keep going. I fold that information into the next decision that I make." But it wasn't inherently wrong because it didn't last longer than it did. It was a necessary...

Terry: Why am I so convinced that rejecting someone is such an awful thing, or just saying, after you'd said, "Yeah, I liked you for a while," and then if you say, "No, it's not right anymore," like, I'm so ridiculously afraid of hurting somebody...

Krista: Well, let me offer you two things to think about. One is that you can never cause another person's emotions. So, we have no idea – if you tell him, "It's not working and I don't want to be with you anymore," we have no idea how he's going to feel and it isn't up to us.

He may think, "Thank goodness because I didn't think it was working out either and I'm so glad she had the courage to say it because I was never

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going to say it.” He might be relieved that you said, “It’s a no-go for me.” We just can’t control it.

What he thinks is what will create his emotional experience. But nobody teaches us this, so we live our whole lives trying to act in a way that is pleasing to others because we think we’re responsible for their feelings, and we’re just not. So, that’s part of it.

But also, I think we think sometimes that somehow honesty, like saying something, rejecting another person is bad. But really, put yourself in the other person’s shoes. Would you want to be in a relationship with someone that wasn’t enjoying the relationship with you?

Terry: No way. No.

Krista: No, you wouldn’t. So, you would be doing them a disservice to be dishonest by continuing to not reject them, by being somebody artificial. By faking it in a relationship, you’re really just leading them on, which that’s actually cruel compared to be honest and truthful so that they can move on.

Terry: Yeah, that is true.

Krista: So, you could stop thinking about rejecting someone, telling them no as a bad thing and start thinking about, no, that’s the honest thing and that’s what anybody would want from a partner in a relationship.

Terry: Right, and I think that helps in terms of going the opposite way too. It’s like, I’m 60 now and so the last time I was out there was more like 26, or lower because I got married at 27. And to look at it like not that I’m so terrible if not everybody picks me. You know...

Krista: Think about a food that you like. Is there a food that you like that maybe is a little polarizing or not everybody likes it?

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Terry: Sure, yes.

Krista: Tell me what it is.

Terry: I would say cabbage.

Krista: So good. So, you like cabbage. Not everyone likes cabbage. That doesn't mean cabbage is bad. It doesn't mean cabbage is good. It just means that some people like cabbage and some people don't like cabbage. Do you. If you like cabbage, go for cabbage.

But let's say you're the cabbage. Some people are going to like you. Some people aren't. But you're still a beautiful cabbage and it's okay that some people won't like cabbage. We don't need them to like cabbage because there's plenty of people who do, and that's who you're meant to be with.

You could be like, "You know what, at no other point in my life have I been any less interested in people's opinions and any more interested in making quick decisions. Because if I want to be in a relationship, like, let's go. I don't have time to be dilly-dallying with a guy I don't really want to be with. I'm going to be honest and up front and be like, listen, it was a great try. You're a nice person. It's not for me. Wish you well. Next."

Terry: Yeah, those are the kind of words I want to write down.

Krista: Yeah, well I've recorded this conversation. You can go back and watch it. Alright...

Terry: Thank you so much. Nice to meet you again, bye.

Krista: Likewise, bye.

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Krista: Alright, let's go to Lena. Let's see...

Lena: I know that you have discussed this before and I've missed some of it, about the grieving process for your children. My husband's been gone for about a year and a half and my 16-year-old, I don't think he's grieved yet, period. But he's recently copped a horrible attitude. And I feel like I've given him absolutely everything, like I've probably gone above and beyond, like, I probably shouldn't have bought him as much or done as much.

But recently, he's just gotten really disrespectful and I don't know how to handle that. I have him set up for a doctor's appointment next week. But I don't know, as a mother, how I should be handling that.

Krista: Okay, so a doctor's appointment with, like, a primary care doctor or someone who's a mental health professional?

Lena: Well, that's where we have to start, with the primary care doctor. And then we can move to maybe some sort of therapy.

Krista: Okay, and so what are you worried about?

Lena: He's very withdrawn. He already was withdrawn. He's homeschooled and I feel like he's been sleeping a lot more lately, sleeping all day long. I mean, obviously this situation has not helped any of us. But he's been raised differently than my other two children because I've been a caregiver for the last 10 years.

My mother was ill for many years. And then towards the end of her life, my husband got very sick. And so, he has not had, I think, the attention this entire time that he's needed, and so that's what I was kind of trying to do. But I'm not sure if I've gone above and beyond, and maybe I've made it more detrimental to myself.

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Krista: Okay, so, it sounds like there's some judgment of your parenting here.

Lena: I worry about that, yes.

Krista: So, tell me, what are the ugly thoughts that your brain offers you about you as a mom?

Lena: Well, even last night when we were arguing over his phone, and I asked him, I said, "I feel like I'm not a good mom. Am I a bad mom?" And he literally didn't respond at all to that. And I felt like, "Oh my gosh, I have done so much for him. Gone way above and beyond than I would have normally." And I feel like maybe I've hurt myself by doing that, or hurt him.

Krista: Yeah, because you said, "I shouldn't have bought him as much or done as much."

Lena: Yeah, I got him a grief dog right away, which was probably the best thing ever. He saved the dog and the dog really saved him because he went into a very dark place at first. And then once we got that dog, he seemed to come out of it and things were good. And I don't know what's changed.

Maybe, like I said, just because we can't be around our friends and our family right now, that may be a lot to do with it. and I am still working. But I've been trying to do things with him, you know, making sure we're outside and everything.

Krista: How do you think we would know if you were a good mom?

Lena: I guess if your children were healthy and happy.

Krista: Is that how we know?

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Lena: I don't know.

Krista: Do you think there are good moms whose children aren't healthy and happy?

Lena: No, I guess they'd probably be good too. Maybe their kids are – I don't know, I'm not really sure. I don't know how that works.

Krista: Well, it's a really good thing to explore, how we measure ourselves as parents. Because we're pretty inclined to take responsibility for how our children show up in the world and make that mean something about us. But you have more than one child. So, you know, they're all different. And of course, you're saying that the reason they're different is because you're a different parent for him than you were for them...

Lena: Correct.

Krista: Case in point here is what I want you to consider. You remember the Columbine shooting? I don't know where you live...

Lena: I'm in Florida, but yes, I remember it.

Krista: So, there's an amazing TED Talk by, I think it's Dylan Klebold's mom. She just shares her story about all of her thoughts and judgments about herself as a parent after her son did a mass shooting. This is not a mom who wasn't amazing, by all the standards. Like, she loved her son, did all the things that she needed to do for her son, and yet still that happened. Does that define her as a mother?

Lena: No, I guess world-influence could also mold our children.

Krista: So many things, not to mention the reason other people do things, our children included, is because of what they think in their own brain and



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the emotions that their brain creates for them with their thoughts. That's what fuels their behavior, none of that we can ever control.

So, again, when we can clearly see what we can control and what we can't then we start to measure ourselves as parents so much differently. All you can really control in this is how you choose to show up, what you think, how you behave around him, how you feel, the kind of mom that you are.

What he ends up thinking and doing, we'll never really control it, as much as we want to. And so, then we get ourselves really confused because we think, "Well if I was a good mom, they would be healthy and happy." But that isn't true. That is not a given. You could get a parenting award, we could all agree, yea verily, you are the most amazing mom ever. And your son could still be really angry.

Lena: And I definitely think that's what it is. I think he's angry.

Krista: And so then, when we think – we also have to realize that our judgment of ourselves changes the way we show up for our kids. Because when we're thinking that we're not a good mom, we don't feel as good. Like, how do you feel? Do you feel self-doubt? What do you feel when you think, "I'm not a good mom?"

Lena: I do. I feel self-doubt, for sure.

Krista: And so, then how do you show up? How do you parent with him when you're feeling self-doubt?

Lena: I don't know. I guess I probably still try to do more then, thinking that that will make the situation change?

Krista: And maybe that's why you've bought some of the things that you've bought or done some of the things you've done. So, self-doubt, it's not

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really a very powerful place for us to parent from. It usually has us second-guessing ourselves, second-guessing our decisions, second-guessing their behaviors, worrying, spinning, ruminating. It's really not useful. It doesn't have us showing up at our full potential as a parent.

But it isn't because we've done anything wrong and it isn't because we aren't amazing parents. It's because we're judging ourselves and we're thinking that we're not good moms, and then we create our own self-doubt and that changes how we show up with our kids and that changes the way that we parent. So, what if you believed that you were a good mom?

Lena: Okay. We can work on that.

Krista: And sometimes people would think, "Well, but won't that be problematic? Won't I be arrogant or I won't be as concerned about my child if I believe that I'm a good mom? Won't I miss something because I'll just be oblivious to what's actually happening?" The answer is no. Because if you believed you were a good mom, how do you think you would feel?

Lena: You would feel better about yourself and your parenting.

Krista: Yeah, and then you would probably parent in a more effective way.

Lena: Okay, I can work on that.

Krista: Yeah, and when our brain is convinced of something, it's all it sees. When our brain is convinced that something is true, it will show us anything it can find in our environment that backs that up. So, anything your son ever does, if you're wearing glasses that color your world of, "I'm a bad mom," your brain is like, "Okay, let's find it. Let's find evidence that she's a bad mom. It's there. Did you see what he did over there? He got angry. He's sleeping." It won't show us any evidence of the opposite belief. It's just how the filtering system in our brain is designed to work. It can't process all

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the data, so it has to show us what it thinks is relevant to us, otherwise we couldn't process everything.

So, the view that you currently have of your son is distorted through the lens of, "I'm a bad mom," and that's not helpful. And it keeps you stuck there. So, I just want to offer to you that it could be that you're actually an amazing mom and that even the most amazing moms have 16-year-olds that get angry and sleep all day, or act in disrespectful ways and that you can navigate that together with him and it means nothing about you and it means nothing about him and this is totally something that you can both handle. And it doesn't mean you did anything wrong by being the caregiver that you were. It doesn't mean you shouldn't have bought him the things that you did at all. Nothing in the past has to change and you can be a good mom, but you just don't fully believe it.

Lena: Right, but I have to work on that.

Krista: Most of us do, right? Most of us do.

Lena: Well thank you very much.

Krista: And when you think that, it will help you then, if you go to the doctor and you advocate for your son, then you can clearly separate you and what's best for him and you won't be making any of his stuff mean anything about you and that will allow you to love him and show up for him and parent for him and advocate for him in such a stronger way.

Lena: Okay. I will work on that. Thank you very much.

Krista: You're so welcome. Okay, bye.

Lena: Bye.

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Okay, there you have it. That is an Ask Krista Anything call. This is my favorite thing in life to do, you guys, is to coach you, to help you, to show you where your brain is holding you back from loving your life and to help you figure out how to build the next chapter.

Part of Mom Goes On, my coaching program, this is my favorite part of it is the live coaching. I do two of these calls every week for the people in my program, not to mention all of the coaching that we do in the online community, which is just for those members of my small group coaching program.

So, if that's something that you're interested in, June spots are already filling up. So, you would need to go to [coachingwithkrista.com](http://coachingwithkrista.com), click on request a consultation, and then fill out the little questionnaire and we'll take it from there. And if it's a good fit for you, we will welcome you into the group with open arms and we will get started on loving your life again, because that's possible for you. That's what I want for you.

I want you to know that whatever it is you want in life, it doesn't matter if you're husband died, it doesn't matter what happened to you, it doesn't matter what cards you were dealt, it doesn't matter if the original plan didn't materialize, you can still create a life that you love. You can still love the life that you have, and that's what we work on. That's exactly the reason I exist on this planet, in addition to being the mother of my children. I'm pretty sure of it.

Alright, that's it for this week. Remember, I love you, you've got this, and I'll see you next week. Take care, bye-bye.

Ready to start building a future you can actually look forward to? Get a free copy of Krista's Love Your Life Again Game Plan, and learn her three-step

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process so you can stop feeling stuck and start creating your next great chapter. No matter what you've been through, your past does not have to define what's possible in your future.

Text the word PLAN to 1-858-widows-1, or visit [coachingwithkrista.com/plan](http://coachingwithkrista.com/plan) and get Krista's Love Your Life Again Game Plan delivered straight to your inbox. A future you love is still possible and you are worth it. Text the word PLAN to 1-858-widows-1, or visit [coachingwithkrista.com/plan](http://coachingwithkrista.com/plan) and get your free game plan today.