

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Krista St-Germain**

[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 70, The Self-Coaching Model.

Welcome to the *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 truly look forward to. Here's your host, Master Certified Life Coach, grief expert, widow, and mom, Krista St-Germain.

Wouldn't it be great if there were one tool you could use to understand any problem in your life? A tool that would help everything make sense and show you exactly what needed to change so that you could love your life again? Well, in today's episode, I'm going to introduce you to that tool. It's called the self-coaching model. I used it to change my life, and I can't wait for you to use it too.

Hey, everybody. Welcome to another episode of the podcast. I've got a good one for you today. Just finished up my Mom Goes On Master's retreat. We spent part of three days together virtually. I'd hoped it would be in person. But, you know, COVID.

So, we made it work and it was all that I had hoped for. The women that are in that group have already gone through my Mom Goes On six-month program and, you know, just wanted to keep going, keep growing. And it's been so fun to watch them change, to watch them get close to one another and support one another and just rally around each other.

And it was my pleasure to do some teaching this weekend and my joy to watch the light bulbs turn on and watch us bust through some things that had been holding them back. And it was just amazing. A lot of fun. So, that's what's happening around here. And, of course, I got kind of into planning that retreat and a little bit behind in recording the podcast. I

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

usually like to have a couple more of them in the hopper. So, I need to catch up. But it was worth it. It was totally worth it.

Alright, so before I teach you literally the most powerful tool I know, I want to do a little listener shoutout. This one's a little bit of a longer one, so I'm going to only read a little bit of it. But wow, thank you, listener. The reviewer has called herself Widowed in Colorado.

And she wrote, "I've just started to *The Widowed Mom Podcast* and I'm on episode four. I already have an amazing therapist that is helping me work through the death of my husband 18 months ago. I was introduced to Krista St-Germain when she was on another favorite podcast of mine by Jody Moore. While I listened to Krista's experience of going through her own husband's tragic death, I was able to connect to her and felt like I was talking to a dear friend. Guilt is an emotion that's been very difficult for me to work through, and while listening to Krista, I realized that I can experience all of my feelings and that there is no right or wrong way to feel.

Knowing this truth takes away a needless layer of pain instead of beating myself up for not being stronger, I allow myself to feel weak or sad, and then I take care of myself. The roller coaster of emotions that accompany grief is not predictable and can jump out at you at any time. When I feel overwhelmed by these emotions, I can start listening, any time I want, and hear Krista's reassurances. I find a kindred spirit in her and she helps me to put words to my feelings, which in turn helps me to work through those difficult moments. I'm so grateful for her and that she's taken her tragic loss and used it to help others. I highly recommend listening to this amazing podcast."

Thank you. That makes me so happy. I just know that there are so many of you out there that listen and I know, some of you send me emails and you write me lovely reviews and take the time to tell me. But I know there are

[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

lots of you that don't. And I just want you to know that I hear you, I see you, I love you. And I'm cheering for you. And even if we never meet or we never talk or we never exchange an email, I'm so honored that you listen and I'm so honored to be part of your life.

Okay, goodness, I can get myself all teary-eyed just during listener shoutouts. Quick reminder, still doing that giveaway. And it's the beautiful Grit necklace that I told you all about for the last couple of podcast episodes. If you would like a chance to win it, and more than anything, you just want to share the podcast love, just do a little screengrab on your phone as you listen to the podcast, from whatever app you're using; Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Spotify, or my website directly.

And then tag me on Instagram @lifecoachkrista or you can tag me on Facebook, Coaching with Krista. And I will see it and hopefully others will too. And every time you do that, I will enter you to win this lovely Grit necklace, which is just so appropriate and inspiring for widows like us.

Okay, the self-coaching model. When I learned it from my teacher Brooke Castillo – and I'll be honest, it took much more than just listening to a podcast to learn it. But when I learned it, I started changing my life.

First for me, the self-coaching model was a tool. It was a tangible practical tool. It was the tool I was trying to find that I couldn't find in therapy, that I could use to make sense of my life, to make sense of what was happening around me and what was going on in my grief. And it helped me understand why I wasn't doing things I wanted to do, why I was doing things I didn't want to do, and it helped me see what needed to change if I wanted to love my life again, which was fully within my ability to change.

It showed me why my husband's death didn't need to be the end of my happiness, not just conceptually. But it gave me a tool so that I could

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

actually see, in concrete black and white terms, how my husband's death did not need to limit my future. This tool did that for me. And it helped me figure out what I needed to do to move forward.

And for those reasons and many more the self-coaching model is the tool that I use most when I'm self-coaching. And I invest lots of time teaching it to my clients because once you understand it and you've practiced it and you know how to apply it in your life and you have confidence around your ability to use it, you will also be able to create any result you want. And that's what I want for you.

And so, I spend so much time on this tool in my coaching practice because I know how it enabled me to coach myself through difficult situations. And most likely, I'll probably always have a coach because I value coaching, I value an outside perspective on my life and on my brain. And I want someone who's always in my corner with my best interests in mind, there to help me point out what's holding me back that I can't see for myself.

But that said, what I want for my clients is that after working with me, they know how to use this tool. They know how it works. And so, they aren't completely dependent on a coach like me to solve future problems. If they want me, I'll be there. But they can go forward and they can live life and they can always fall back on this tool and use it to help them when they get stuck.

Because when you master the self-coaching model, you can handle so much of your own problem-solving. In fact, you can kind of just head off your problems at the pass if you use it regularly.

The self-coaching model will help you see what you can and can't control, which is so often where we get confused, because we think we can control things we can't and we think we can't control things that we can. So, when

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

you use the model, that will become clear. And then you know where to focus your energy and how you can intentionally think and feel and behave so that you can create any result in life that's important to you.

Alright, so if I haven't sold you on the self-coaching model yet, I'm going to keep working on it. I'm not going to give up because I really want you to understand how valuable this tool is. It's also called by a few other names, so the thought model, I often call it just the model. Some call it the CTFAR model. Either way.

But what I want you to think of it as is a tool that you can add to your toolbox to help yourself. And I'm going to explain it conceptually today. Now, listen, understanding it conceptually is nothing like practicing it and having someone help you with it and failing with it and just really making a mess of it until you get the hang of it. But that said, I think you're going to benefit a lot just from listening to this podcast episode so that you understand the framework and you can start to think about this tool and how to use it.

Okay, so here we go. Let's jump in. Everything in your life can fit into one of five categories. This is the model. There are five lines of the model. And I'm going to tell you what they are.

The first one is circumstance; C. So, when I call it the CTFAR model, that's why. The first line is C for circumstance. In the circumstance line are the facts of life; things that happen to us, things which are outside of us. They include words that other people say, things that other people do, events of the world. There are things everyone in the world could agree upon. They are very factual.

Newspaper headlines, whatever your neighbor said last time they asked you how you were really doing, the thing your son said as he was slamming

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

the door in your face, your husband's death, the weather. These are things that happen. They are in the past because they have already happened. So, as soon as it happens, it's now a circumstance.

These things, though we are often confused here, really do not have the power to cause our feelings. Most often, we think that they do. Circumstances don't have any subjectivity. They don't have any opinion. They are as factual as they can possibly be.

Circumstances are the things that happen right before we have a thought. They are, if you will, the stimulus before our response. And one thing you've probably heard me say a million times is that it isn't what happens to us that determines our outcome. It's how we respond to what happens to us that determines our outcome. And the circumstance line is only what happens to us.

And in order to understand how best to respond to something, first, we have to understand what it is we're responding to. Then we can understand where our power is. And this is the circumstance line of the model. Things in life that happen, which we as humans have thoughts about.

Let me give you some examples. Your son says, "I hate you." That is a circumstance. He said it. Everyone could agree that he said it. Those words came out of his mouth.

Let's say you hop on the scale. The number on the scale is a circumstance. It doesn't make you feel good or bad. It's just a number on the scale. Some people might be on that scale and they might be thrilled to see that number. And that number in their mind is a good thing. Maybe that number in your mind is a bad thing. But either way, the math on the scale is a circumstance.

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

Let's say you open the mail and in the mail, there's a bill in your mailbox for \$5000. There you have it. It's a paper. You're holding it in your hands. We could all agree that that bill is in your hand, it exists. It says that, by the end of the month, you owe \$5000. That's a circumstance. It's math.

Your husband died. It's a fact. It happened. You probably have a death certificate to prove it. Everybody in the world could agree that this happened, and we could show them the death certificate to prove it.

So, these are the types of things, the facts of life, the things that happen to us, the things that, as humans, we have thoughts about. But these things that happen, these circumstances, the first line of the model don't actually cause our feelings in and of themselves.

Now, before you get the wrong idea, I'm not saying that you should or shouldn't have feelings about things that happen in life. We absolutely want to have feelings about things that happen. I'm also not saying that the goal of this tool that I'm teaching you is to avoid negative feelings and think our way to perpetual sunshine. That's not it either.

This is not about happy thoughts, good vibes, being phony, or any putting of lipstick on pigs. None of that. This is about understanding how we work, where our feelings come from, what needs to change if we want something different in life. This is about understanding how all the puzzle pieces fit together.

This is a tool that will help you feel empowered; more empowered than you've ever felt. But it's not about thinking positive, happy thoughts at all. And if you're doing it that way, I want to help you do it in a way that serves you, because I promise you, that way won't.

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

Okay, so first, we have a circumstance. These are the facts. These things happen to us. Then we have thoughts, because we're humans. We have thoughts about the things that happen to us. And thoughts are just sentences in our mind that give meaning to circumstances. Thoughts are just sentences in our mind that give meaning to circumstances.

Thoughts create our emotional experience of life. They create our feelings. And because we have thousands of thoughts each day, we typically have many thoughts about a particular circumstance and many thoughts in general, therefore many feelings.

Thoughts are not right or wrong. They're not good or bad. They have no moral value. There are not thoughts that you should or shouldn't think. Thoughts are just optional sentences that create feelings. And when we think them long enough, thoughts become beliefs.

And this really matters because thoughts are what create our feelings. So, going back to the examples that I gave you earlier, the circumstance where your son said, "I hate you." Maybe your thought about that is, "He shouldn't be so mean to me." That would be one thought.

Maybe your thought is, "Oh, he's just having a bad day." That would be a different thought. Maybe your thought is, "He's so disrespectful." We could have lots of thoughts about what other people say to us.

What about that number on the scale? You hop on the scale. There's the math. The math is the circumstance. And maybe your thought is, "Woo-hoo, I finally reached my goal." Or maybe your thought is, "I'll never reach my goal." Or maybe your thought is, "No one will want me." Lots of different thoughts that humans have about numbers on scales.

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

That circumstance that the bill arrived in your mailbox for \$5000, lots of thoughts about that for different people, right? Maybe your thought is, “I can’t afford to pay it.” Maybe your thought is, “Oh, thank goodness, I was expecting it to be more.” Maybe your thought is, “Those blankety blanks, how could they have billed me this much for that terrible service?”

Lots of different thoughts about any given circumstance. And the last one I gave you, which usually gets me the most skeptical looks; the circumstance of my husband died. Believe it or not, this circumstance isn’t what causes pain. It isn’t what causes sadness. It isn’t what causes suffering. And here’s how I know.

When my husband died, you didn’t feel the way you felt when your husband died. Why is that? They both died. If the death would cause the feeling, then you would have felt my pain when my husband died and I would have felt yours.

So, this matters. Now, I’m not saying we shouldn’t feel pain or we don’t want to feel pain. It’s not about should or shouldn’t. It’s not about good or bad. It’s about understanding that the things that happen to us in the world do not have power over us.

Yes, I want to be sad. And I wouldn’t let you take that away from me if you could. I wanted to be sad when my husband died. But if his death caused my perpetual sadness, then I would need to bring him back to life to ever not be sad.

So, once we understand the difference between what exists outside of us and what we make it mean with our thoughts, then we’re starting to understand where our power is. Are you following?

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

Okay, so something happens outside of us. It's a circumstance. That's the C-line. We have a thought about that thing that happens. That's the T-line, the thought line. Thoughts cause the next line of the model; feelings. The F-line. C, T, and F. F is for feeling, interchangeable with emotion for this purpose.

Feelings are one-word descriptions of physical vibrations caused by thoughts; happy, sad, joy, despair, anger, fear, love, worry. You know all the feeling words, right? But feelings aren't caused by the things that happen to us, outside of us. They are caused by the way we interpret the things that happen to us.

So, going back to the examples I've give you, son says, "I hate you." Maybe your thought is, "He shouldn't be so mean to me." And then the feeling you notice is anger. You notice that number one the scale and maybe your thought is, "No one will want me." And then the feeling is perhaps inadequate. The bill arrives in the mailbox for \$5000 and maybe your thought is, "I can't afford to pay it." And then you feel scared. Or, perhaps your husband died, your thought is, "He shouldn't have," and the feeling is bitter.

Now, different thoughts cause different feelings for different people. So, you might think a thought and you might feel something different than when I think that thought. And that's okay. The point is that we understand where our feelings come, and it isn't what happens outside of us.

Circumstances, then thoughts, then feelings. Feelings matter because, for sure, they are partly how we experience the world. But also because, as humans, feelings are what drive us to behave in particular ways. Feelings are the reason that we do and don't do things, the reason we take action or sit still.

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

And sometimes, the actions that we take that are fueled by these feelings don't even happen outside of our mind. Sometimes, the actions are to worry and to spin and to second-guess ourselves or catastrophize or judge. Sometimes, they're things a camera could capture. Maybe we're slamming doors or crying ourselves to sleep or saying things to our children, yelling.

So, circumstances happen. We have a thought about them. The thought creates a feeling. The feeling fuels us to do something, to take action, or to not take action. So, let's go back to those examples.

So, your son says, "I hate you." You think, "He shouldn't be so mean to me." Then you feel angry and then the actions you take, maybe you get defensive and maybe you look for evidence of how he's wrong and you avoid conversations with him. You plot how you're going to get revenge. Punish him. Or maybe you yell back. Those are the kinds of things we do when we're angry, if anger is fueling our action.

Scale reads 150 pounds. Your thought, "No one will want me." Your feeling, inadequate. And when you feel inadequate, you hide or you eat to make yourself feel better. You don't commit to eating any healthier for yourself. You don't commit to exercising and you look for evidence of how no one is ever going to want you. We have pity parties when we feel inadequate. I'm not judging you. I do this too. This is just humans. This is what we do as humans.

Alright, the circumstance, my husband died. My thought about it, "He shouldn't have died." That thought makes me feel bitter. And when I feel bitter, I close down maybe, turn inward. I stop communicating with friends. I start comparing and despairing my life to their life, looking at them with envy, wishing that it hadn't happened. These are the types of things that bitterness fuels a human to do.

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

So, there's nothing wrong with you. Whatever it is that you're doing or not doing that you don't like, there's nothing wrong with you. Do you hear me? There's nothing wrong with you. What we do is because of how we feel. Whatever you're feeling, there's nothing wrong with you. All the feelings are a normal part of our human experience. And what we feel is caused by how we're thinking. And it's all okay.

But how we're feeling isn't caused by what happens outside of us, meaning we're more powerful than we think we are. We don't need all those other people to change so we can feel better. We don't need to turn back the hands of time so we can live again. We don't need to rewrite history so that we can get excited about the future.

But we do need to understand what's happening in our mind, which is that we're having thoughts. And most of them we aren't choosing and those thoughts are creating feelings and those feelings are driving actions. And those actions, that A-line is what is producing the results, the outcomes of our lives.

We create our results based on what we do and what we don't do. And we can't create results for other people. Just ourselves. So, in our models, we only have results for us. And what we create in terms of results will always be aligned with how we think. Our result line in our self-coaching model will always be evidence of, proof of our thought line.

We prove our thoughts true when we act on them. Something happens. We have a thought. It creates a feeling. The feeling fuels us to behave in a particular way. And when we behave in a particular way, we will create a result that proves our thought true. You've heard this, I'm sure, thoughts become things. This is how.

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

It doesn't happen magically. It's not – you know people watch the movie *The Secret* and they think, "Well, if I just think about it then the result will come to me." That's not what I'm saying.

I think, in that movie, the movie was missing the self-coaching model. Somehow, the movie skipped straight from the thought line to the result line and missed the whole part where, as humans, we have to feel things and then do things. And then, that's what creates our results, right?

Okay, so, let me walk you back through the examples I have given you and I'm going to bring it full circle and show you that result. So, remember, these five lines, everything in life fits somewhere in them.

So, the circumstance, your son says, "I hate you." It doesn't have to have any power over you. It doesn't have to make you feel anything. But, as humans, we have thoughts. So, if your thought is, "He shouldn't be so mean to me," it wouldn't be surprising if you feel angry. Any human with that thought probably would.

And when you feel angry, then you get defensive and you look for evidence of how he's wrong and you avoid conversations with him and you plot his punishment and you yell back. And then, the result is that you show up as mean to him.

Your thought is that he shouldn't be mean to you, but then you get angry, and angry humans don't exactly act like role model parents. And then you end up behaving the way you're judging him for behaving. This is how we do it, right?

I've done this so many times as a parent. I will tell myself how disrespectful my child is being, and then I'll feel self-righteous, and I will stomp my feet

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

and demand that she stop rolling her eyes. And then I end up being not a great example of respect. And then I'm disrespectful to her.

This is how it works. This is how we roll. That number on the scale, it doesn't have any power over us to make us think anything about ourselves. But if we have a thought like, "No one will want me because of that number on the scale," and we feel inadequate. And we, from inadequate, hide and eat and look for evidence of how awful it is and have pity parties and we don't do anything healthy, the result that we create is that even we don't want ourselves. I don't want me.

I'm so worried that no one else will want me, and then I don't even show up in my life in a way that makes me want me. Who even cares about other people if I don't want me?

The bill shows up. It doesn't have any power over us. It can't make us feel worried. It can't make us feel scared. It can't make us feel anything until we have a thought about it.

And if your thought is, "I can't afford to pay it," it makes sense you would feel scared. And that if you felt scared, you wouldn't look at the bills, you would just avoid budgeting entirely. And then the result you would create is that you don't pay it and you don't figure out how to improve your financial situation. You don't figure it out. Not because you can't figure it out or you're incapable of it, but because our thoughts cause feelings and feelings drive actions and actions produce results.

And we can block ourselves from what is available to us with our thinking. If we are convinced that we can't figure something out, we won't figure it out. If we're convinced that it's impossible, we will prove that true. Do you see? This is powerful.

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

Okay, one more. My husband died. If my thought about that is, he shouldn't have died, then that would logically make me feel bitter. And when I feel bitter, I'm likely to close down and turn inward and stop communicating with friends. And then, the result I create for myself is that I don't live now.

I can't do anything about what happened to my husband. It's over. It's done. That part of our life is done. But when we keep arguing and thinking that it shouldn't have happened, then we are the ones that feel bitter or resentful or maybe angry or maybe wronged or maybe self-righteous. It could be different for each of us, yes?

But those feelings, because we're human, fuel us to show up in ways that aren't necessarily what we want. We end up behaving in ways that we don't like. We don't get to live now because of thoughts like that. And again, it's not about right and wrong. Please hear me. I'm not telling you that there are thoughts you should and shouldn't think. What I'm telling you is that you are so powerful and what you think matters.

And you don't need all the people and all the circumstances and all the things in life, all the math of life. You don't need any of that math to change for you to experience a different life, to create a different life, to change the drama.

We cause the drama. Our human brain brings the drama to life. It's not outside of us. And so, I want you to hear me because I want you to know that whatever it is you don't like about how you're showing up in life or how you're feeling about how other people are showing up in life, I want you to hear this and use this tool so that you can change your life.

It's not the stimulus that causes our outcome. It's the stimulus plus our response that causes our outcome. And you know this, right? You know it.

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

It doesn't matter what cards you get dealt. It's show you play the cards. And the model shows you how you're playing the cards.

And most of us aren't doing it intentionally. Most of us are just waking up and recycling the same thought patterns that are in our unconscious mind. We have no idea where they came from. We don't know that they're optional. And we just keep recycling the same old thoughts and feelings and behaviors. And therefore, we keep getting the same results.

No wonder. There's nothing wrong with you. This pattern is just happening in your life and you don't know it yet. And I want you to know it because when you understand what's happening unintentionally in your brain and you see these patterns and you do these self-coaching models and you go, "Oh, well no wonder I keep trying this same goal 5000 times and quitting as soon as it goes wrong no wonder I haven't taken that chance and asked for the raise or gone back to school."

This is why. There's nothing wrong with me. I can do any of these things. I can put anything I want in the result line of a model. Anything. My teacher Brooke, she was the one that came up with the model and I watched her prove this to us when she said, "You know. One day, I just realized, maybe I could put anything I want in the R-line. Maybe I could create any result I want. What if I could create a million dollars? What if I could do that?"

And she used the model, and she reverse-engineered a million dollars. And guess what she did. She went out and she made a million dollars. And I think I've lost count, but somewhere this year, she's somewhere in the neighborhood of, I don't know, \$30 million-plus this year. We can put anything we want in the R-line. And many of you aren't interested in money. I don't care.

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

You put in the R-line of life, the result like, what is it that you want? Who do you want to be? How do you want to feel? How do you want to show up? Not because of what society says or your parents told you when you were little or your kids think or anybody. But what is the life that you want now?

Because, guess what. It's yours. And if you'll take the time to understand how the self-coaching model works and take the time to be curious and interested in what's happening in your brain, then you can start to create and live with purpose and with intention.

This is why I exist on the planet, I know it, is to teach people how to do this. And this is why I am so passionate and I'm giving you a podcast that's a little bit longer than normal, because I really want you to hear me.

Nothing outside of you has any power over you. You get to choose to think about anything the way that you and you don't need anybody's permission. And how you think will determine how you feel. And how you feel will fuel you to do or not do things, to act, to behave, to create. And then, what you do in this world determines your result. You're always in charge of that. You get to be the boss of how you think and how you feel and how you act and what you create. And no one can take that from you. Certainly not your husband's death.

Alright, okay, I feel better. Listen. One podcast on the self-coaching model does not make you an expert on the self-coaching model. So, you're going to have to allow yourself to be terrible at this as you practice it. And honestly, it really did take me working with a coach to figure this out.

I'm not saying you can't. But I'm saying that if you really want to do it, let's do it. let's go for it. This is the type of work that I do with my clients. This is why I spend so much time on it. This is why I really want them to leave my program knowing this tool inside and out and forward and backwards and

## Ep #70: The Self-Coaching Model

be able to think in models and see the world in models and feel so empowered to go create the next chapter.

Okay, so listen, again, if you think this work is for you, if you want to take it deeper, if you really do want to apply it and learn it, I encourage you to go to [coachingwithkrista.com](http://coachingwithkrista.com) and take the next step. We're having so much fun and we're making so much progress and I want that for you too.

Alright, everybody. That's what I have for you this week. I hope you have an amazing week. I love you. You've got this. And I'll see you next time. Take care. Bye-bye.

If you like what you've been hearing on this podcast and want to create a future you can truly get excited about, even after the loss of your spouse, I invite you to join my Mom Goes On coaching program. It's small group coaching just for widowed moms like you where I'll help you figure out what's holding you back and give you the tools and support you need so you can move forward with confidence.

Please don't settle for a new normal that's less than what you deserve. Go to [coachingwithkrista.com](http://coachingwithkrista.com) and click Work With Me for details and next steps. I can't wait to meet you.