

Ep #88: How to Love Your Life Without Changing It



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With Your Host

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[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

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Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 88, How to Love Your Life Without Changing It.

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 truly look forward to. Here's your host, Master Certified life coach, grief expert, widow, and mom, Krista St-Germain.

Valentine's Day is coming up and this can be a particularly hard time for widows. A time where what we don't love about life is glaringly obvious. And so today, I want to talk about how to love your life without changing it. And if you're skeptical, you're in the right place. Stay with me until the end of the episode, okay? You ready?

What do you think needs to change about you or about your life in order for you to love it? I want you to think about this for a second. Look around at your life, look around at yourself. What don't you love? Is it your sadness? Something about your career? The way you parent? Your body? Your home? Your finances? Your lack of patience?

Maybe it's something about the way that you look or the way that you are. Maybe as you listen in, you're thinking there's not much about my life I like, Krista. But I want you to really think about it. I can't truly love my life until what? Fill in the blank.

I can't truly love my life until I've figured out this grief thing, or until I no longer feel negative emotion. I can't truly love myself or my life until I've changed the things about me that aren't perfect, until I no longer have shadows and only light.

Here's why I really want you to consider these questions and I hope that you're genuinely considering them. Chances are very, very high that you

Ep #88: How to Love Your Life Without Changing It

think you can't love your life without changing it. You think there are things about you and things about your life that you just couldn't possibly love.

And you think the only way to love yourself or your life is to live differently, to be different. And what I want to offer is that you're wrong about that. And I'm hoping you'll receive this as good news and that you'll lean into what I'm saying, even if part of your brain is skeptical, that you'll lean into the idea that peace is potentially just on the other side of what I'm saying to you today.

Because here's what I know to be true. Nothing about life is objectively unlovable. Nothing about you is objectively unlovable. Most of us though have put conditions on what we think we can love. We have expectations of how we're supposed to be and how we aren't supposed to be. And we have expectations of how life is supposed to go and how it isn't.

And then... reality doesn't match those expectations. And so we think something has gone wrong. We think we must change, that our lives much change, that we have to work to make reality reflect our expectations, the story we told ourselves about how it was supposed to go.

We think something's gone wrong or something's wrong with us. And that we have to make our lives look like what we expected. And then we can love them. Then we can be happy. Then we can believe it's all working out.

When we change things, then we can believe we're on track, or we're not stuck, or we're where we're supposed to be. And so if this is you, I hear you. I was you. I'm still doing my own work in this area, still. I don't think I'll ever not be doing work in this area.

Things did not go according to plan at all when Hugo died. My expectations for the future, just like yours, were ripped away. And still, even now, several

Ep #88: How to Love Your Life Without Changing It

years down the road, I'm in a very different place with my thoughts about grief and all the work that I've done. I still fall short of my own expectations. We all do. This is what it's like to be human.

And we get to decide on purpose what we want to love. We get to decide on purpose if we want to, to love what is. We get to make that choice. Nobody can take that from us. And you can make that choice today if you want.

You can choose to love yourself and all of your beautiful imperfections. You can choose to love all of the emotions that you experience as a human, even in grief. You can even choose to love your grief.

Now, this is not a moral obligation. You do not have to love what is. You can choose to hate it. You can choose to resist it. You can wish it were different, you can reel against it, you can put conditions on what you're willing to love. And even as I teach this, I continue to notice where I put conditions on what I'm willing to love.

I am also a work in progress. And I can love that about myself. It's not all or nothing. But just notice that when you choose to not love what is, you don't feel very good. And when you don't feel very good, you don't show up in your life in a way that you love.

When you don't love yourself as you are, it feels terrible. And so we don't recognize that loving ourselves, our lives, loving what is is a choice that we're empowered to make. And we just keep chasing the change. We just keep allowing ourselves to not feel good.

Our brain keeps moving the line. It keeps finding evidence for why we aren't lovable, or our life isn't lovable, or why things have to change. It doesn't seem like we're making a choice to not love ourselves and to not

Ep #88: How to Love Your Life Without Changing It

love our lives, but we are. We think it's just happening to us. We think we just can't love ourselves as we are. We think we just can't love the circumstances of our lives.

We are so wrong about that. We just haven't yet seen how powerful we really can be, how powerful we really are. So I want you to ask yourself, what if I chose on purpose to love myself just as I am? What if I dropped the conditions? What if I chose on purpose to love my life as is it? Just as is it. What would it be like if I just dropped all of the conditions? The if onlys. What would that kind of radical acceptance be like for me?

And here's what I'm imagining is happening in some of your minds. Some of you are thinking, "Krista, come on. If I love myself as I am, I won't change. If I love my life, I'll never do anything differently with it. If I love things as they are, I'll just stop trying. Why would I want to love myself as I am and my life as it is?"

And I hear you. I hear you. I have coached so many clients on this exact issue so many times. And I can tell you what you're thinking is common. It's not helpful. And it's actually inaccurate. You have nothing to lose by choosing to love yourself and your life just as it is. There is no downside. None.

What we've been doing is equivalent to a life-long pattern of kicking the can down the road. I'll accept myself when I'm different, I'll accept my life when it's different, I'll accept the people around me when they're different, I'll accept my grief when it doesn't hurt so much.

And you know what that does, right? It gives all of your peace away to something in the future. It gives all of your love away to things that may or may not come. It robs you of your power and your ability to be present in your life with what is.

Ep #88: How to Love Your Life Without Changing It

And we don't live in the future. We live in the present. I think that's worth repeating. We don't live in the future. We live in the present. So what if the grass is greener in the future? We don't live in the future. We live in the present.

If we're living for tomorrow, we're missing our lives. Because right now, this moment, this is where your life is. Who told you that you were only allowed to love what's rosy? Who told you that you were only allowed to love things that go according to plan and allowed to love people who follow your manual?

Because that is a recipe for resistance, for misery. And resistance keeps us from being fully present in our lives. Resistance keeps us from living fully right now in this moment where life happens.

So before you decide not to accept yourself as you are because you're worried it will mean that you'll become a sloth or you'll stop trying, I want you to ask yourself, how has resisting what is served me so far? How has putting conditions on my own self-acceptance helped me?

Because what I know is that what we resist persists. We add energy and attention to what we don't accept. We spend our time arguing with it and cursing it and judging it. And resisting doesn't actually help us change anything. In fact the opposite. Resistance just keeps us repeating the same patterns over and over.

And not in a fun, joyful kind of way. So sooner we drop into acceptance and choose to love ourselves the way we are unconditionally, choose to love our lives the way our lives are, the people around us the way they are, the sooner we choose that for ourselves, the less suffering we create and the more powerful and more present we become.

Ep #88: How to Love Your Life Without Changing It

So if you think you need to change your life or yourself to love it, you're wrong. Thank goodness. That's what I have for you this week. Remember, I love you and you've got this.

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 and click Work With Me for details and next steps. I can't wait to meet you.