

Ep #90: Moving On, Through, or Forward



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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 90, Moving On, Through, or Forward.

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.

Hey everybody. We are going to jump right into the podcast. So if this is your first time listening, welcome, welcome, welcome, I'm glad you're here. I wonder if you struggle to "move on." If so, here's why I think you're probably struggling to move on.

Because moving on sounds like you're leaving him behind. Moving on makes it seem like you don't care. Moving on feels almost like you didn't like your life with him and so you just chose a new one. And for most of us, none of those things could be further from the truth. Am I right?

So the purpose of this episode is not to argue over semantics. It really isn't. It's to help you remove a potential roadblock that might be preventing you from loving your life again, which is what I'm all about. But sometimes semantics matter more than others, and I think this is one of those times.

So I want to consider these phrases, moving on, moving through, moving forward. Not because one is right or wrong, but because I want you to pick what is serving the results that you want to create in your life. I want you to be one that decides what's right for you.

So first, we need to acknowledge that grief does not have a finish line. And if you've listened to me for any time at all, I'm sure you have heard me say this before. Grief doesn't have a finish line. It is not a journey with a destination.

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Grief is a natural response to a perceived loss. It is made up of our unique thoughts and feelings and experiences. But it doesn't have an end. Because the loss will always be there. We can't travel back in time. We can't make the loss go away.

And because we're humans and because of the way that humans make meaning in the world is largely through our minds, we will always have thoughts and thoughts cause feelings, so we will always have thoughts and feelings about this loss that has happened, which means it's not going away. That's what grief is.

Thoughts and feelings about a perceived loss. If you're human, you will always have thoughts and feelings. If you can't time travel, the loss will always be there. And therefore, we will always have grief. It's not something that ends.

But that doesn't have to be a bad thing. That doesn't have to mean that we have to be sad forever. That doesn't mean that we're only allowed to have a certain set of thoughts and feelings. That doesn't mean that we have to now experience a higher ratio of negative to positive emotions than we did before the loss.

That just means that the journey of grief is really about integration. It's really about choosing those thoughts and feelings on purpose. It's not about it going away. I used to say moving through a lot, and I say that less now because to me, moving through still kind of implies that we're going to get somewhere where grief doesn't exist, like we're going to get to the other side of it.

I don't think that's useful at all anymore. I don't. You've probably also heard me say, and I think it bears repeating, grief isn't linear. There's no step-by-step instructions, there's no finite stages. It's not linear at all. As much as

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we might want it to be, as much as it might feel comforting if we knew it were, it isn't. Grief is actually typically very messy for most of us. It's very unpredictable, it's very all over the place.

There's no destination, there's no finish line, there's no pot of gold, no certificate of completion. There's no degree. So the sooner we recognize that it has a starting point but not an end point, I think the better. Because when we recognize that it has a starting point but not an end point, then we can decide on purpose what our goal is.

We can define our own goal relative to our own grief experience. Because if it's not to get to the end, what is it? That's what I want you to think about. So what I want to offer is that this is your grief. This is your life. And you get to decide what you want your goal to be.

I think it's about integration. I think it's about choosing thoughts on purpose, deciding how you want to think about this loss, deciding how you want to tell this story, deciding who you want to be in the face of this loss, deciding what serves you, deciding what is in support of the life that you want to keep living, that you want to live in the future.

I think it's an opportunity to know yourself on a deeper level than you've ever known before. You could see it as a blemish if you wanted, and some people do. You can also decide it's an opportunity to live with more intention because it's happened, it will always be a part of your life experience, and I think we just want to weave it in.

We want to weave that part of our life experience into the fabric of our lives. And for me and what I love helping women do is figure out then how do I love myself even more, more than I ever have before? How do I love myself as I integrate what has happened into my life experience? How do I

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become more alive? More fully present? More human? More of who I want to be because this is my one precious life?

And of course, none of it is right or wrong and it's all very much an individual choice. But I want you to decide on purpose for you because you have the power to do that. So are we moving on? Are we moving forward? Are we moving through?

For me, moving forward feels right. But what feels right to you? You get to choose. And regardless of which phrase you choose, I want to tell you the things that I see holding widows back from loving life again, from really living it, specifically as it relates to the idea of moving forward, moving on, moving through.

So first, we make these phrases mean things they don't need to mean. Regardless of which phrase we choose. We make them mean things like I didn't love him enough. If I move forward, I'm leaving him behind. It's not true.

But we need to be honest, okay? We need to be honest. He died. You didn't. He's not alive. You are. And I know it can hurt to hear that, but it is the truth. And some of us are acting like we're the ones that died. But he died, you didn't. And some of us are living, we're going through the motions, but we're not really alive. We're not really living. We're just kind of tolerating.

And you're the one that gets to decide if you really want to live. You're the one that gets to decide, do you want to stay stuck in the past? Do you want to keep wishing for what was? Or do you want to figure out how to love your life again?

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And this is where we get ourselves tripped up. We think that it's like, impossible somehow to keep the love that we felt for him and feel for him and move forward. But I promise you, you can. You can keep the love you feel for him in your heart and bring it with you as you live. You can keep his memory with you, and you can move forward with it as much as it sometimes seems like his memory exists in the house you shared, and the clothes he wore and his glasses or his wallet, I promise you, that is not where his memory is.

It is in your mind. And nobody can take that from you. Nobody. Now, if you're worried about it, I was, if you're worried you're going to forget, you can always start writing down what you want to remember. But I promise you, moving forward does not mean you're leaving him behind. It means that you're continuing to live.

So we have got to stop making moving forward or whatever term you like mean that we're leaving him behind. You get to believe that he's always with you if you want. You can believe that. You don't need anybody's permission. You just get to believe it if you want. He's always with you.

So moving forward doesn't mean we're leaving him behind. That's roadblock number one. Roadblock number two, that we make it mean that we didn't love him enough if we continue living. Again, so optional and so painful and so not true.

I really do believe figuring out how to fall in love with your life again, how to really live again says absolutely nothing about your relationship with him. It says absolutely nothing about him. What it says is that you are willing to love yourself, that you value your one precious life.

It says a lot about you and your desire to love. You loved him, we clearly know that, and now you have a desire to keep loving. And I don't even

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mean to keep loving in a romantic sense. I just mean to keep being in that state of love where you love life, where you love yourself, where you're contributing love, experiencing love, feeling love, not resigning yourself to some crappy new normal and ticking off the boxes, waiting to die.

I know that's a little dramatic and that might not be where you are, but then again, it might. And maybe it shows up in more subtle ways. Maybe it shows up in more subtle ways. Maybe it shows up in the choices that you make, where you aren't really fully embracing the choices that you care about, your dreams, you're not letting yourself dream again, you're not letting yourself do what feels good to you so that you can create the life that you want.

You're still kind of living what he wanted. You're living out his dream instead of acknowledging that it wasn't your dream and that's okay, and giving yourself permission to live into your dream that's next, whatever that is for you, even if it means you sell the property that he loved, even if it means you sell the business that he loved, even if it means you're in a new relationship, even if it means you're living somewhere he didn't really want to live. We make those little choices mean something that they don't need to mean and it really holds us back.

Third, we hold ourselves back from moving forward, moving living again, from loving life because we worry that people will judge us if we do. And let me tell you, if you're worried that people will judge you, you're right. They will. They will.

People judge. But are you living your life for them or are you going to live your life for you? Seriously, ask yourself that question. Are you living your life for them or are you living your life for you? Because people will definitely judge you, but it doesn't need to be something that you worry about.

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Right now, people are judging you. You're judging them. You're judging me. All the humans, we're judging. It's what we do, we're good at it. Doesn't mean anything. And truthfully, it's not really what you're worried about anyway if we're honest. What we're really worried about is that we're going to agree with people's judgments of us.

That they're going to judge us and we're going to think, "They're right. I'm doing it wrong. I should be doing it differently. I've made a bad decision." They're going to have a judgment and then we aren't going to be our own champion, and that's the optional part. That's the optional part.

When we can learn to be our own champion no matter what we do, that doesn't mean we have to think we're perfect or flawless or have big egos. That just means we have to show ourselves grace and compassion and be kind to ourselves. If we do that, then we can let them have their judgments. We can let them have their opinions. Their judgment doesn't have to be something we experience as a problem.

So I want you to look for where you are holding yourself back from loving your life again, truly living it, because you're telling yourself that figuring out how to do that means something it doesn't need to mean. It means that you're leaving him behind, it means that you didn't love him enough, it means that you're doing it wrong.

Where are you making living again mean something that is preventing you from living again? The way that you want to. Not the way he wanted to. Because you're the one that's still here. And where are you not living again, not moving forward, or whatever phrase you choose because you're worried about what other people will think instead of being focused on what you think, instead of choosing on purpose to be kind to yourself and have your own back and be your own champion, you're letting other people's opinions dictate your choices? Because that we can change.

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And if you need help, I'm here for it. I'm here for it. Sometimes I have no words when I think about who's out there listening to this podcast, not giving herself permission to love her life again, not giving herself permission to live the way that she wants to live because she's should-ing all over herself, or holding herself back because of what other people think.

It just makes me emotional just thinking about it. So please don't do that to yourself, okay? And I don't care if you call it moving on, moving through, moving forward, it doesn't really matter. You pick what works for you. You pick what feels right to you.

But what does matter is that you decide to keep living, that you give yourself permission to love your life. Not just survive it. Not just check the boxes. Not just adjust to some substandard new normal because somebody told you you had to, but that you give yourself permission to really live and love in whatever way is right for you, which only you know. Only you know.

That's what I have for you this week. Remember, I love you, and you've got this. Take care and I'll see you next week. 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 and click Work With Me for details and next steps. I can't wait to meet you.