

## Ep #109: Getting Back Out There



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Krista St-Germain**

[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

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Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 109, Getting Back Out There.

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 there. welcome to another episode of the podcast. I wonder, are you feeling any dread about emerging from your post-COVID cocoon? About getting back out there now that the world is starting to open up? Because I'm seeing lots of that in my widowed clients. And in this episode, I want to help you get back out there.

So first, a little update in my world. As you know, the boyfriend and I bought a house and moving day is drawing nearer. And I'm just watching my emotions fluctuate as I prepare to get ready to leave this house that I've been in for the last 18 years.

And here's kind of the conclusion that I've come to. I can feel excited and scared. I can feel happy about the move and sad about the move. It's all okay. that's just the way of it. There is no exit ramp for the human experience. And I've just decided that no matter how much I understand how the mind works, no matter how good I get at managing my thoughts, we're all still feelings creatures.

So, I'm continuing to breathe it all in, make space for all the thoughts and feelings, and I'm choosing repeatedly how I want to think and feel on purpose. I'm letting myself be human as I move and leave this house that I have so many memories in.

So, thanks to those of you who send me messages and tell me that what I share about my life on the podcast helps you. That's my goal; to help you see that if I can do it, you can do it, always. I want you to see an example

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of an imperfect human doing her best and loving her life after loss. Because truly, if I can do it, you can do it.

Okay, let's get into this episode and getting back out there. This episode is for widows who have mixed feelings about getting back into the world now that things are reopening.

Perhaps like me, you're naturally a bit introverted. Or maybe you haven't been out much since your partner died, or at least since the pandemic started. And maybe you dread moving through the world without them. And maybe the idea of meeting new people and answering the, "Are you married?" question sounds worse than poking yourself repeatedly in the eye. That's how I think it feels to most of us.

Because honestly, if you want to avoid interactions with people, a global pandemic is kind of convenient. Even when we have gone out, we've been able to hide our facial expressions behind a mask. And with only our eyes showing, it's been harder to recognize us. Those people we'd rather not talk to anyway are less likely to know who we are.

I may have – I'm just thinking about one situation where I was getting my hair cut and happened to walk by someone and I was like, "Oh, thank goodness they don't recognize me because I have my mask on and I don't want to stop and talk about all the things." I just didn't want to.

So, it's okay. Staying home in this whole pandemic situation has become familiar for most of us. It feels safe and the conversations that are out there, the interactions that are out there waiting for us are unknown. And if it's worse for you because you lost your partner during the pandemic, you might not have much experience moving through the world outside of your home without your partner.

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It's super unfamiliar to our barking-dog brain and unfamiliar equals risk and risk is to be feared and avoided by that part of our brain. So, it all makes sense that a part of us would just rather not.

But another part of us knows that avoiding people and staying safely cocooned in our homes not only won't last forever, but it also has some downsides. And most of us want the benefits of having a village and feeling supported and connected.

We might not want to do the work to create the village. We might not want to meet people or do the work of maintaining relationships with people, but we want the benefits of the connection and the support in the village. And we want our kids to be engaged in their activities and in our communities. And we know it's best for their growth. And we know that in order to start loving life again, that's going to mean getting back out there.

So, I think for most of us, this is a problem that we want to solve. But it can be super frustrating because it's kind of like wanting to put your foot on the gas pedal and the break at the same time. So, how do we get back out there when it's so uncomfortable?

I'm going to give you what I believe are the two most game-changing, most helpful ways for you to get back out there. Two things. First, it's counterintuitive but this is the time when we want to pursue emotional discomfort on purpose. Instead of waiting to feel better before we go out, we want to remind ourselves that the way to get what we want, the way to get back out there is to be willing to feel uncomfortable.

Discomfort is the way when it comes to getting back out there. And there's nothing wrong with us because we feel uncomfortable. It's just thoughts causing feelings and our barking dog brain trying to keep us safe. And we don't have to be excited about getting out there. We just have to be willing to bring the feelings with us, bring the dread, bring the anxiousness, bring the resistance. Whatever it is, bring all of it.

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The very worst thing that can happen when we get back out there is a feeling. This is why – and I know nobody likes me for this when they come into my program, but this is why I'm so insistent on teaching people how to develop the skill of allowing feelings. This is why we spend so much time working on it.

Because if I can help you become a feelings ninja, if I can help you believe that feelings aren't problems and I can get you to practice feeling them and allowing them to pass and not judging yourself when you have them and not trying to avoid them or numb them with food or shopping or busywork or social media, that's when so many doors start opening up for you.

That's when you start creating what you want because you have the secret sauce. And being willing to pursue emotional discomfort on purpose is a skill. Anyone can develop it.

After Hugo died, I decided to do a little challenge with myself. I dared myself to go out to dinner by myself and sit down at a restaurant, like a sit-down restaurant with menus, without looking at my phone.

Now, this may not be uncomfortable for you, but holy cow, it was uncomfortable for me. I remember it very well. I went to PF Chang's. I remember thinking, "They're going to ask me, is it a table for one? It's going to be awkward. They're going to think there's something wrong with me because I'm here by myself. I won't know what to do with myself if I can't look at my phone."

I had lots of brain drama and lots of feelings. And the reason I was able to do that, which for me it was a really good exercise, for me. The reason I was able to do it was because I was willing to feel the discomfort. I knew I would feel uncomfortable and I went there with that in mind.

And the other reason I was able to do it is because of the second thing I'm going to tell you, which is to decide ahead of time to be proud of yourself no

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matter what, no matter how you're feeling, no matter what thoughts are floating through your mind. Decide ahead of time to be proud of yourself no matter what.

You are not your thoughts. You are not your feelings. And you always get to decide what you want to think about yourself for getting out there again. So, decide ahead of time that even if something is awkward, even if you cry, even if you stumble over your words or you stick your foot in your mouth, even if you completely freeze and say nothing or you act like a wallflower. Decide ahead of time that, no matter what, you will think, "I'm so proud of you. This is hard and you're doing it." Be your own champion.

When I went to PF Chang's, I decided ahead of time that no matter what happened, no matter how I felt, no matter what I did, no matter whether my inner critic tried to beat me up, no matter whether other people were staring at me, that I would be proud of myself, that I would love myself, that I would say, "Good job, Krista. You didn't want to do that and you did it. Well done, you."

That's how I decided ahead of time to speak to myself. If you do these two things, if you pursue emotional discomfort on purpose, if you decide ahead of time to be proud of yourself no matter what, I promise you, getting back out there will be so much easier.

Soon, you will look back on this and you will think, "Wow, this isn't even hard anymore." Or, here's the thing, it's not that it won't be hard anymore. It's that you will be good at doing hard things. You will believe you're good at doing hard things.

It won't be any different. You'll just feel better about doing it. And all of that said, I completely understand that while it's simple to understand, it's not easy to do. So, show yourself some grace.

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These are the kinds of things that I love supporting people through. So, I will always tell you, the door is always open for you inside of my program. I challenge you this week, pick one opportunity for you to experiment with what you just learned. One opportunity.

It can be very little if that helps. And then I'd love to know how it goes for you. Pursue emotional discomfort on purpose and decide ahead of time, be proud of yourself, no matter what. Just decide. Alright, that's what I have for you this week. I love you. You've got this. And I'll see you next week. Take care.

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.