

## Ep #112: Listener Q&A



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Krista St-Germain**

[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

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Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 112, Listener Q&A.

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. Haven't done a listener Q&A in a while, and it's time. What do you think? It's time.

So it might be a little shorter episode than normal but I'm going to answer a few listener questions. And a little update in my world, about to head out to San Francisco area and lucky me, the boyfriend and I get to stay in one of my client's homes.

She is a widow and we've been - she's been in my coaching program since it started. The group program anyway. And we coached one-on-one prior to that and she's just a lovely human. And she is also a brave human.

She's taking her two boys on a three-week national park adventure and it just so happened that she's looking for somebody to stay in her house for part of that time so that she doesn't have to get a house sitter and so I'm going to go out with the boyfriend for the first half of her trip and then another one of our members is coming out on the second half of her trip, so it'll be fun.

I haven't been to the Bay Area since I was in middle school. It's been a long time. So that will be a nice little adventure. So okay, let's jump in. We're going to answer four questions today. So the first one is, "How do I process all of the emotions that I'm feeling at once?"

And I want to answer this question because I know it feels like we're having lots of emotions at once, but that's not really what's happening. It just

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happens quickly. So we have one emotion followed by another emotion followed by another emotion, and the whole thing can feel like a rollercoaster and we might describe it as having a lot of emotions at once.

But really, we're having them one at a time and so we want to process them or allow them one at a time. And we don't want to overcomplicate this because when we think about it as overwhelming, we make it overwhelming, and that doesn't really serve us.

So most emotions only last about 90 seconds if we're allowing them, if we're not resisting them. But most of us just have never been taught how to allow an emotion. So instead of allowing it to be there and letting it pass, we're typically judging ourselves for having it or judging the emotion or telling ourselves that it shouldn't be there.

We're kind of white-knuckling our way through it, wishing it wasn't there, or kind of holding our breath until it goes away, and that just doesn't work. That just doesn't work. Because what we resist persists. So we just give our energy and attention to resisting the emotion, which means that we prevent ourselves from being able to process it cleanly.

So my favorite ways to process emotions are with the now process that I teach in my program and also if you haven't listened to episode three of the podcast called How to Feel Better Now, listen to that one because I give an overview of the now process in that podcast episode.

And then my second favorite way to do it, although it's really kind of becoming my first I think is with emotional freedom technique, EFT, also called tapping. And I also teach that in my program because I'm such a big advocate of it.

I tap most days. I love it. Not only to process emotion but to do some belief shifting work, there's lots of reasons that I tap. You can also learn more

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about tapping in episode 87 called What is EFT Tapping, which is an interview that I did with Jessica Ortner.

And one of the things that I find for me with tapping is that I might start tapping because I'm trying to process one emotion and after a couple of rounds, what I find is that one emotion dissipates and then often, it's like peeling the layers of an onion. Another emotion will surface.

So maybe I start because I'm feeling angry or frustrated, and then I tap on that for a while and the anger or frustration dissipates, and then the next emotion that surfaces might be sadness. And I feel sadness or disappointed, and so then I process that one.

And then that one will dissipate and maybe another one will show up, but it just feels very organic and it's the easiest way that I know to process an emotion. And the now process is a little bit different. It doesn't require that you actually tap on any parts of your body. It's just something that you do with mindfulness where you name the emotion, open up to it, and then witness it.

But again, check out episode three and it'll give you a little bit more detail for that one. So how do I process the emotions that I'm feeling all at once? We don't. We just do them one at a time and I want you to pick the tool that works for you and give yourself some grace and compassion because most of us just weren't taught how to feel feelings growing up. We just don't have this skill. And I'm really hopeful that once you learn it, you can also teach your kids because it's so powerful for them too.

Question number two. "How do I deal with all the 'I wish I had said or done this differently?' The memories just won't stop. How do I deal with all the I wish I had said this or done this differently?" So I think what we're asking here is how do I deal with these things that I'm regretting.

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And what I want to offer is that first, we have to see that the story we're telling ourselves about the past, that we should have done it differently is optional. And that's not always as easy to do as just listening to me tell you to do it.

This happened with me for sure after Hugo died. I had a lot of would've, should've, could've thoughts about where I parked on the highway and that I should have insisted we call AAA and that I should have insisted that he not change the tire, or I should have had the tire checked before the trip.

I could see lots of ways that I could have done it differently with hindsight. And I had to gently but also firmly tell my brain that we just weren't going to spend time with those thoughts because I could see where they would lead.

And I knew enough to know that my brain would find evidence for what I was thinking and that it would be a rabbit hole. And so I had to keep telling my brain, thank you brain, no, we're not doing that. We did the best we could with what we knew. These thoughts will lead us nowhere.

But I wouldn't have been able to do that if I hadn't known that thoughts were optional, if I hadn't known that thoughts can show up in our minds and we don't have to entertain them. We don't have to hang out with them just because they're there.

So when those thoughts show up, if you can see them as optional and then you can tell yourself oh, this is just the part where my brain tries to tell me that I should have done it differently in the past, this is just the part where my brain thinks that if I had done it differently, everything would be better.

Of course. But we're not going to do that today, brain. And then we tell our brain what we want it to think. And for me, what helped was we did the best we could with what we knew. I always speak in we. I don't have I think

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more than one personality, but we just feels right to me. It feels very supportive and loving and sometimes my self-talk involves the word we. That's just how I do it.

Okay, question number three. "Hey Krista, thanks so much for your podcast. Here's my question for you. Will I ever feel like a part of my soul isn't missing?" I'm going to guess a lot of us relate to that. I definitely related to that. It felt like a part of my soul was missing.

And what I want to draw your attention to is how often in our thinking we use the phrase I feel when what we really mean is I think. I feel like a part of my soul is missing. What we're really saying is I think a part of my soul is missing.

And it seems like semantics that maybe don't matter, but it really does matter. Because if we know that thoughts can appear and we don't have to listen, and if we know that we can choose to think what we want to think, then understanding what we're thinking really does matter. Because that's what gives us the ability to choose our thoughts on purpose.

So not that you've done anything wrong because you're thinking a part of your soul is missing. You haven't. Lots of us think that. But what I want to ask you is do you want to keep choosing to believe that a part of your soul is missing? Is that serving you?

And I'm not saying you should or shouldn't think that. I just want you to know it's a choice that you get to make because maybe you do want to believe that. Maybe you do want to choose to believe that a part of your soul is missing.

And maybe when you think that, you want to feel sad and experience grief. And I am not going to take that from you. Because maybe it's what you

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want. Maybe it feels appropriate to you and you choose that thought on purpose.

Maybe you choose to believe that a part of your soul is missing and that's okay. That could be another option. Or maybe you decide that a part of your soul isn't missing. That your person is right there with you, or that you're whole and complete, even though your person has passed.

It doesn't matter to me what you choose. What matters to me is that you choose. That you make an informed choice that lines up with the experience that you want to create in your life.

Also, just want to remind you that the brain finds what it looks for. So whenever we are asking ourselves a question with a belief baked in that we don't really want the answer to, we're just going to perpetuate that belief.

And what I mean by that is will I ever feel like a part of my soul isn't missing assumes that a part of this person's soul is missing. And because the brain finds what it looks for, a part of my soul is missing, thinking this thought, this question, will I ever feel like a part of my soul isn't missing is like giving your brain the assignment of finding evidence for how part of your soul is missing.

Does that make sense? So I actually did a whole podcast episode on this one too called Powerful Questions for Widows. And what episode number was that? Let me look real quick. Episode five. Pretty early on.

So when we ask things like why is this day so awful, our brain goes and finds evidence of why this day is so awful. Why am I always such a screw up? And our brain will go and find evidence of how we're screwing up. Why don't my kids respect me? And our brain will find evidence of how our kids are behaving as though they don't respect us.

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So whatever we're asking our brain in terms of questions is what it's going to find. And if we keep asking questions with beliefs baked in that don't really feel good to us and don't really take advantage of this powerful tool that we have between our ears, we're just going to keep finding evidence for beliefs that don't allow us to create the future that we really want.

Okay, last question. "Can you ever love again without feeling that you were denied a life you envisioned? It makes me sad when people talk about being married for 20 years or more with fond memories. I have fond memories of being married for that long but it seems weird to talk about it now that he's passed."

Again, I want to draw your attention to the word feel again. We really are thinking that and the way that that thought shows up in our mind is with the word feel. Can you ever love again without feeling that you were denied a life that you envisioned?

So what's really happening is that this person is thinking the thought I was denied a life that I envisioned. Do you see the difference? When we understand that it's a thought, then we can start to consider not thinking it or not listening to it when it shows up. Then we can start to see where our choice is, our ability to influence the situation is.

If we describe it as a feeling, it seems like it's just happening to us. When really, it's a choice that we get to make, whether we want to think I was denied a life I envisioned or not. And I'm guessing that for most of us, if we're thinking I was denied a life I envisioned, then that would probably create anger or frustration or resentment or maybe disappointment.

And again, it's not a matter of should or shouldn't think that thought because thoughts aren't good, bad, right, wrong. So I'm not suggesting that you shouldn't think that thought. I just want to make sure that you see it as

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optional so that if it's not serving you or the experience that you want in your life, then you can decide whether you want to keep thinking it or not.

And again, nothing wrong with any feeling. Whether we would classify it as negative or positive, all feelings are a part of the human experience and they're valuable. And so when I teach you that your thoughts cause your feelings, what I'm not trying to say is only go think happy thoughts.

Sometimes we want to think thoughts that create negative emotion because it feels appropriate to us and we like our reasons for doing that. I just want you to choose on purpose. Maybe you want to think that you were denied a life that you envisioned, but maybe you don't. And do you know that you can choose? That's what I care about.

Okay, hope this was helpful. I picked these questions because I think they're common questions that people struggle with. If you have a question that you would like me to answer on a future Q&A episode, feel free to email me, [krista@coachingwithkrista.com](mailto:krista@coachingwithkrista.com), and I'll see it and I'll add it to the list and hopefully can help you in the future.

Alright, that's what I have for you this week. I hope that you're doing amazingly well. I love you, you've got this, and I'll see you next time. 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.

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