

## Ep #121: Feelings About Feelings



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Krista St-Germain**

[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

## Ep #121: Feelings About Feelings

Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 121, Feelings About Feelings.

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 how often you have feelings about feelings. So, maybe you feel guilty about being happy. Maybe you feel embarrassed about feeling angry, or worried about feeling joyful, or doubtful, or insecure about feeling sad. Does this happen to you?

That's what we're going to talk about in today's episode of the podcast. Because I think it happens to a lot of us. And I want to explain how it happens. Because once we understand how something happens, and more importantly than how it happens, but actually we take ownership over how it's happening and we see that it's something we're creating.

Then and only then do we have the ability to change it, if it's not something we like. Not because it's good or bad or right or wrong, but because maybe it just isn't the way that we want life to go for us. So, that's what we're going to talk about on this episode.

First, a little update in my world. So, gosh darn it if I could not find my podcast microphone right before going to record this. Where was it? It was in my 14-year-old's room. Of course it was. Of course it was. He is a Minecrafter and a YouTuber and he asked me if he could borrow my podcast mic, because it's a nice mic, and record a voiceover for some work that he was doing. And then, he didn't return it. Ah, teenagers. Good times.

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And then my 17-year-old, she started a new school this semester. It's her senior year, and a new school, new semester, new volleyball parents. So, that's the other thing that we've been getting used to is this new volleyball team. Love, love, love how active and supporting and encouraging these parents are.

But maybe you have been through this before, which is that awkward moment when people don't know you and they don't know your story and they don't know you're a widow, and then you have to explain it all again. And so, that's what I've been doing, is having a lot of new conversations.

We just had a kind of getting-to-know-you event with parents and it was a whole lot of, "What do you do for a living? Oh, you're a life coach for widows. Oh, how did you end up doing that?" And then I saw, "Well, actually my husband was killed by a drunk driver and life coaching was really helpful to me, so that's what I do." Then, they just stare at you and go, "Oh, I'm so sorry." And then they change the subject, "So, how's your daughter liking school?"

So, what I've learned over many of these awkward conversations is that it is not my job to make them not feel awkward. And it is okay that they feel awkward. The only part of it I can control is my story, is my being comfortable telling my own story.

If my own story then makes them feel awkward, that's not for me to control. And so, I've done a lot of work in getting comfortable telling my story so that for me, when I tell it, it doesn't feel painful anymore. And that's what I want to encourage you to think about.

Not really related to this podcast episode, but it was just on my mind. If when you go to tell your story, it doesn't feel comfortable to you, it's a story that maybe is creating suffering on top of your pain or you just feel super awkward about telling your story, there's no rush to do that work. But that

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work is available for you to do. And that's the place that I hope you'll consider getting to, is comfortable with your own story so that when you have to tell it, you feel awkward, and then you let other people feel how it is that they feel.

Okay, so I haven't read a listener review in a little while. I want to do that real quick. This one is from a listener that calls themselves, I think it's Gmomas.

And Gmoma writes, "I just found your podcast from an ad on Facebook. I listened to the podcast that you sent out by email and they were so touching and informative. Four months ago, I lost my husband of 49 years to suicide. The experience has been like nothing I've ever been through. I'm a mom of three children and 10 grandchildren. The insights that you shared are the best I've heard since my loss. I may not fit your usual listener. But what I've heard from you today has been so helpful and has hit upon so many of the feelings I've had. The Bill of Rights episode is something that everyone who has lost someone dear to them should hear. I also listened to your program on Suicide. It was right on target. Suicide is a real problem that's escalating but rarely addressed. I plan to be a regular listener to your program from now on. Thank you for reaching out to all those who have experienced loss as you have. You give hope when times are at their darkest."

Gmoma, thank you for taking time to leave that review. I'm glad the podcast is helpful to you. And listen, I don't know what my usual listener is, but I just want everyone who listens to feel welcome and comfortable here. Yes, it's *The Widowed Mom Podcast*. But that doesn't mean that you can't be a mom of grown children and a grandmother and sometimes a great-grandmother. Everyone's welcome here.

So, okay, let's jump into feeling about feelings, shall we? This will be a fairly short episode. I'm going to break it down for you so that you

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understand the pattern, you can see it for yourself, and then you can notice it in your own life wherever it's showing up. And if you want to change it, you can. You'll have what you need to be able to change it.

So, first, most of us do this. It's nothing to feel bad about. We kind of have a feeling, and then we have a feeling about that feeling. We feel scared, and then we judge ourselves for feeling scared. And then we feel weak. Or we feel happy, and then we judge ourselves for feeling happy, and then we feel guilty.

So, it's not always emotions that we would classify as negative that we're judging. It's any feeling. Sometimes we judge ourselves for feeling good. Sometimes we judge ourselves for feeling bad. But it's adding an emotion on top of an emotion. Stacking it on top of ourselves. It's like creating layers of emotions. So, we all do it. Nothing to feel bad about.

But it's optional and we don't have to do it to ourselves if we don't want to. So, let's talk about how we do it and then, if you want to stop, you'll know how.

So, first, feelings are created by thoughts; sentences in our mind, interpretations of the world around us. So, maybe we think, "This is scary." Something happens and we think, "This is scary." That's the thought. That's the sentence, "This is scary."

That thought then creates a feeling. And maybe that feeling is scared or afraid. We have lots of different names for feelings. But something happens. Maybe somebody would be scared of it, maybe somebody wouldn't. But if you have the thought, "This is scary," then probably you will feel scared. So, a thought causes a feeling.

Then another thought will cause another feeling. So, if you think to yourself, "This is scary," and then you feel scared, and then you have more thoughts

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like, “You’re such a wimp. Other people don’t get scared like this. You should be able to handle these things by now. How are you ever going to get it together if you’re scared of things like this?” Then those other thoughts will cause more feelings.

So, the thought, “You’re such a wimp,” probably makes you feel weak. So, you have one thought that makes you feel scared, “This is scary.” Then you have another thought that makes you feel weak, “You’re such a wimp.”

So, this is how it happens. We think a thought, it creates a feeling, and then we think another thought on top of that thought that creates another feeling. Layers.

So, just because we have a thought, doesn’t mean anything about us as the thinker of that thought. I’ll give you another example. Maybe you think the thought, “This is fun.” And then that thought makes you feel happy. It would seem like it’s the things around you that are happening that make you feel happy, but no. It’s really not. It’s your thinking.

Because people can have the same experience and some people are happy and some people are bored and some people are sad and some people are, you know, angry. Why is that? It’s because they’re all thinking different thoughts. That’s the way the brain works. We think different thoughts and we have different emotional experiences.

We create different emotional experiences for ourselves with our thinking. So, something happens. You have the thought, “This is fun.” And then you feel happy. And then you have another thought about your happiness, “Oh, I shouldn’t be happy. I must not have loved them enough. I should be more sad. Something is wrong with me if I feel happy. It’s too soon in my grief to feel happy. Maybe I’m denying my grief?”

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Have you done this? Then you feel another feeling about your feeling. Maybe you feel guilty about feeling happy. I see this happen all the time. Maybe you feel angry and then you feel embarrassed because you felt angry. So, how does that work?

Well, you have a thought that creates anger, “He shouldn’t have died,” maybe that’s your thought. That was one of my thoughts, “He shouldn’t have died. That shouldn’t have happened. I had lots of thoughts that created anger.

So, that thought is logical that it would make a human feel angry. You’re thinking, “They shouldn’t have died...” anger. That makes sense. So, we know that anger is caused not by what happened, but by our thought about what happened.

And then we have a feeling about a feeling, “I shouldn’t be so angry. What’s wrong with me? Why am I so angry?” We have all of this story about our anger. So, now, we tell ourselves, “I shouldn’t be so angry.” That thought floats in our mind, and now we’re feeling embarrassed about feeling angry.

I’ll give you a couple more. Maybe you feel joyful and then you feel worried about feeling joyful. Has this happened to you? So something happens and you think, “Oh, that’s wonderful.” And maybe it’s just for a brief moment you feel joyful. And then you judge yourself for feeling joyful.

Another thought appears, “Oh, nothing good lasts forever. I wonder if the other shoe’s about to drop. Last time I felt really happy, something bad happened. I shouldn’t get used to this. It probably won’t last. Maybe something else bad is around the corner.” So, joy doesn’t cause worry. We have a thought that makes us feel joyful, and then we have another thought. That makes us feel worried.

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I'll give you one more. You feel sad, and then you feel insecure about feeling sad. Has this happened? So, it looks something like, "I don't want this to be my life." Maybe that thought is floating through your mind, "I don't want this to be my life." And that thought makes you feel sad, right? Thought causes feeling.

And then another thought, "Maybe there's something wrong with me. I shouldn't be this sad. I should be doing it better by now. Other widows aren't this sad." And then you feel insecure about feeling sad.

Are you following me? Have you done this? Most of us do it. Nothing wrong with you. It's not good or bad or right or wrong. It's just thoughts causing feelings. So, we don't have to feel bad about any feeling that we have. We just have to know that there's a thought in our mind that caused that feeling.

Feelings don't mean anything about the human. Thoughts don't mean anything about the human. Did you know, we're the only creatures that get to think about our thoughts and think about our feelings. We're the only creatures that can create thoughts on demand. And thereby create feelings on demand. Which also means nothing has gone wrong when we have thoughts that cause feelings.

In fact, if you've listened to the episode on the Motivational Triad for Widows, you'll know that the most basic part of our brain really just wants to seek pleasure, avoid pain, and be efficient. Evolutionarily speaking, brains are lazy. It's in our best interest in terms of survival that we have a lazy brain.

So, a lazy brain doesn't mean anything bad about the human. Actually, it means the brain is working as designed. It just means that most of our thinking will be unintentional. It will just be old recycled thinking that shows up without us really trying.

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Not a problem. But we want to start noticing our own judgments of our own emotions. Because we don't have to buy into any judgment in our mind. If it's not serving you, you don't have to listen. And if you're noticing thoughts of judgment about your emotions that make you feel worse, you just don't have to listen.

But first, you have to understand, you are not your thoughts. You are not your feelings. But thoughts cause feelings. Thoughts about feelings cause more feelings. And you're not any of that either.

I know that this is a little bit mind-bendy. Truthfully, this is why it's really helpful to have a coach. Because it's hard to see this in your own mind. It's much easier for someone else like me to come along who's outside of your life and outside of your mind who can show you, "Hey, this is what you're creating with your thinking. This is why you're having feelings about feelings. This is how your brain is judging you and this is where you don't have to listen."

And we do that enough times and our awareness increases enough that then we can start to get some leverage. We can start to get some traction. And we can start to change our own judgments. We can start to change those patterns that exist in our brain that our brain just wants to default to.

Because it's being efficient. And then we kind of turn down the dial on the judgmental thoughts and we turn up the dial, we turn up the volume on the kind and compassionate thoughts and rewire our unintentional thinking. Because then we feel a lot better and we're not judging ourselves so much and so often.

Okay, so that's what I have for you this week. Don't feel bad about it. Just notice your own judgments of your own emotions. None of it means anything about you. But you don't have to buy into any judgment in your mind. If it's not serving you, you don't have to listen, okay? Okay.

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Alright, I love you. I hope you have an amazing week. And whatever you're going through, even if you're feeling super alone, just know that there's a whole community of listeners, a whole community of you who have a similar life experience, and you're really not alone. You're really not. I love you. You've got this. Take care and I will 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](http://coachingwithkrista.com) and click Work With Me for details and next steps. I can't wait to meet you.