

Ep #125: Who Are You Fighting For?



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[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

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Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 125, Who Are You Fighting For?

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've got a good topic for you today—hopefully something that will make you think—and maybe an episode that you will come back to time and time again. That's my hope.

A little update on what's happening in my neck of the woods: so, some sad news in my world. I wrote an email about it. If you get my weekly Widow Wednesday emails, you've already heard this story by now.

If you don't get them and you want to get them, by the way, you can go to CoachingwithKrista.com. And when you see a little popup appear, you can put your email address in there and you'll start getting my weekly Widow Wednesday emails.

But anyway, my friend George died. And you know how the people who support you after your spouse dies aren't always the people that you expected to support you after your spouse died? That is the case for me and George. And man, I'm telling you, I've been sad since Hugo died, but there is no nonfamily death that has been so upsetting to me as much as George's death was.

So, George was this kind of ornery, cantankerous, opinionated, but really brilliant engineer that my husband and I used to work with. And, in fact, for a while, he actually worked for Hugo. And I was a project engineer. And so,

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my job was to keep everything on schedule and on budget, and of course, Hugo was in a very technical role.

And George was one of those people that I—honestly, until Hugo died, I didn't even know George liked me. I really thought I was just kind of a pain in his butt. So, I never would have imagined that George would take the kind of care that he took of me after Hugo died.

Literally, for the last more than five years since Hugo died, never more than a couple of weeks has gone by without George checking in on me. Without a text message... Without him asking me, "What's going on?"... Without him telling me what he's up to... You know, showing me a picture of his latest woodworking project or telling me about a trip that he and his wife Diana were taking... Or, you know, Diana just had a knee replacement...

You know, whatever was going on, George was always checking in on me and just letting me know that he was there and just really surprising to me. Because there are a lot of people that I kind of felt like were my friends that I never hear from or didn't hear from after Hugo died. Maybe I heard from them initially, but then they kind of disappeared and faded into the distance and never really made it a priority to reach out to me.

But George always did. He was always a constant. And I think it's important that one of the things that he taught me that ended up having something to do with his death, I think... It's important for me to tell it to you because meaning-making is an important part of grief, and I want to kind of share one of the things that I learned from George with you, so that you can share it with people in your world.

So, when we worked together, we always started the day with a startup meeting. And a lot of manufacturing companies do this, where you start with the daily standup meeting. And because safety is the first priority of

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your company—which, it's almost the first priority of every manufacturing company—then you always talk about safety first.

So, we always talked about safety first, and many, many, many, many meetings were had over the years. So, every fall and spring equinox—the start of fall, the start of spring... When those days would come around, George would always start to remind us at startup meetings that that's the time of year when the sun is rising very close to due east and setting very close to due west, and to be mindful as we drove our cars of cyclists.

And he was a cyclist. And he wanted to make sure that we were paying attention and we knew that the start of fall and the start of spring were the most dangerous times for cyclists.

And he would remind us, too, when, you know, deer season was bad and when we should be watching the road for deer. He was always just very helpful in that way. And a couple of days before he died, I was driving into the west sun in the evening, and I was thinking, "Wow. There it is. This is what George is always talking about is that sun that's in my eyes right now."

And so, when I heard that he had been killed riding his bicycle—he was a cyclist. He was 71, but he was training for another event and always riding in events around the area... Just something in my gut just knew that sun had had something to do with it because of the time of the year that it was. And sure enough, the driver who hit him did not see him because of the sun.

So, in honor of my amazing friend George, who lived a beautiful life and contributed so much to the quality of my life, please remember—and I'll probably remind you again—please remember: fall equinox, spring equinox. Especially if you live in a city like mine where the streets are set

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up on a grid, and all of our east-west streets run exactly east-west because we're on a grid.

So, watch out for cyclists, because yes, he was 71 and some may say that that is plenty of time on the planet, but in my mind, it was an amazing life cut far too short. And my heart goes out to his wife **Diana** and his three children and his five little granddaughters. So, George, I love you. Thank you.

Okay. Before I cry. All right. Let's talk about who we're fighting for, yeah? Here's what I want to tell you: whether we are aware of it consciously or not, we're always fighting for some version of ourselves.

So, we're either fighting to keep our limits or we're fighting to change them. We're fighting to maintain the same patterns that we say we don't like or we're fighting to create new patterns that we want.

The problem is that most of us don't know that we're doing this. And so, that's what I want to bring to your attention today. I want you to see who you're fighting for and then I want you to make a conscious choice.

And before I tell you what I mean, I also want you to know that this is not a moral issue. It's not a matter of "should" or "shouldn't" or "right" or "wrong." There's nothing morally superior about who you're fighting for. It's just a choice that we're empowered to make.

So, please don't hear me saying that you should do it differently than you are doing it. I just want you to see what you're doing or what you could be doing, so you can decide if it's what you want. Or if you want to change it. Because it's your life and you're the author. Okay? Okay.

So, I believe there's a continuum of what's possible for each of us. And on one end of that continuum—and I kind of visualize it on my left—on that

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end, there's fear and lack and limitation, and perhaps most importantly, there's familiarity. And that end of the continuum has less risk, it feels comfortably familiar, but it keeps us small. Smaller than what you're capable of being.

When we stay there, that's when we're repeating the same old, same old. We believe our minds' stories about what isn't possible for us and we're very focused on the past. In this place, we're settling. We resign ourselves to the new normal that we didn't ask for. And you know that's my pet peeve.

We believe that our best days are behind us, which I used to believe. We believe that moving forward means leaving them behind or that we didn't love them enough. And sometimes on that side of the continuum, some of us are really numbing out.

We aren't listening to that still-small voice that's asking us for more. And we're ignoring the inkling that all of us have about what's possible, kind of pushing it down, believing it's attainable for others but not for us.

On this end of the continuum, we don't see our inner critic as separate from us. We don't see our thinking as optional. We're completely fused with our crappiest and most familiar beliefs.

And for sure, when we're on that end of the continuum, we aren't really happy. We aren't even really in our bodies or present often with what we're feeling. We definitely aren't feeling alive. We aren't excited about what's ahead. We aren't able to contribute our unique gifts to the world. We are not allowing the light that's in us to show itself. We're hiding.

And the primitive part of our brain that's designed to seek pleasure and avoid pain and be efficient is actually quite content, because growth is hard and stretching ourselves is uncomfortable. And that part of our brain would

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just rather not. “Play it safe. Be small. Fail in advance, so our inner critic never gets to say, ‘I told you so.’”

So, on this end of the continuum, we’re fighting for the version of us who isn’t allowed to dream again. We’re snuffing out those tiny, little sparks of possibility by depriving them of oxygen. And this end of the continuum is surviving, but nothing more.

But on the other end of the continuum is a different human experience. I visualize that end on my right. And over there is an experience that’s grounded in love, in abundance, in future focus, and it’s just full of limitless possibility.

It’s choosing new beliefs on purpose. It’s practicing them. It’s making our brain find evidence for how they could be true. It’s noticing when we’re fused with our crappiest thoughts. And pulling away from them. And pivoting our minds toward the new thoughts—the new thoughts that are hard to believe but that stretch our self-concept.

It’s setting big goals. And not because big goals are morally superior, but because big goals are what we want. It’s allowing ourselves to want again. It’s giving ourselves permission to be happy again without making it mean that we didn’t love them or that we’re forgetting them. It’s being our own champion, even when we mess up, and then trying again.

And on this end of the continuum, this is where we’re listening to that still-small voice. This is where we’re giving oxygen to those little sparks—oxygen that will turn them into brightly burning flames.

We’re asking our brain to focus on what’s possible, even when we’ve never done it before. And even when it feels scary. We’re challenging our own perceptions of who we are and what we’re capable of. We’re not buying our brains’ BS.

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On this end of the continuum, we're continuously noticing what we can control and what we can't, and we're choosing to spend our energy on what we can. We're noticing when we're having a tug-of-war with reality. And when we're doing that, we choose to drop the rope. We're reminding ourselves that our inner critic is not the truth of who we are.

But I want you to know also that this end of the continuum is not kittens and sunshine all the time. It's not even, arguably, greener grass. It involves feeling hard feelings and taking action anyway. This part of the continuum is where we allow ourselves to be fully alive and experience the full spectrum of human emotions. But we stay present. And we plan for the future.

And in this end of the continuum, we're willing to fail. We're willing to put ourselves in the arena again, over and over. Willing to create love and lose it again. Willing to feel rejected and embarrassed when something doesn't work out. This is thriving.

That other end? That's surviving, barely. And I'm talking about thriving. It's being present with our humanness and staying in our bodies. Taking responsibility for our results, for our lives, and loving ourselves no matter what. It's knowing that—as I remind myself all the time—wherever we are, love is. And all is well. And that's available to us.

In my Mom Goes On coaching program, this is exactly what we're doing. I'm giving you the tools, giving you the support, helping you increase your awareness, so that those of you who want to can move yourselves from one side of that continuum to the other.

So, I just want you to ask yourself: "Who am I fighting for? Am I fighting for the version of me who wants to stay small and repeat the same old patterns because they're easier? Am I fighting for my really familiar

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unconscious beliefs that don't actually help me create the life that I want? Am I just surviving but not actually truly living my life?"

Because if that's what you're doing, I don't want you to feel bad about it. I just want you to know that it's not what you have to do. There's more available to you. I just want you to know that you get to be the one who chooses who you're fighting for.

You don't even have to believe that what I'm saying is possible for you. You just have to start choosing to fight for possibility. You have to choose to fight for the version of your life that you want to create. Because you are the creator of your life, even after your person dies. And nobody can take that away from you.

So, we're all fighting for something. Ask yourself honestly who you're fighting for. Are you fighting for those old patterns that you don't want? Or are you fighting for the new life that you do want, even if you can't visualize it yet?

And then let's go fight for the version of ourselves and the version of our lives that we want, with intention. All right? You have what it takes in you to do this. We all do.

Okay. That's what I have for you this week. Remember: I love you and you 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.

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Go to CoachingwithKrista.com and click “Work with Me” for details and next steps. I can’t wait to meet you.