

Ep #147: The Robin At The Window



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With Your Host

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Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 147, The Robin At The Window.

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. My house is empty again, y'all. It's empty. My boyfriend went to go visit his parents. His mom's having some surgery, and kids are at school, and it's the puppies and me, and it's very strange, but I like it. And I'm also getting ready for a Mom Goes On Masters Retreat, which is really fun. I have the best graphic designer, and she does such good work, and I just got the materials. We've been going back and forth all week on the materials for the Masters Retreat.

I'm so excited. It's going to be really good. Master's is something not everybody can join. So, if you're wondering how do I get on Masters, you actually have to do Mom Goes On first. What happened is that, you know, a lot of people you know kind of wanted to keep going after Mom Goes On. So, we created Mom Goes On Masters, which is our continuation program, and some of the Masters members have been there now for gosh, two-plus years.

So, we have retreats every six months. Okay. Enough about that. I want to talk to you about the robin at the window. It's been occupying so much of my brain space. So, a couple of weeks ago, I heard a strange banging noise. I was sitting in my office, and I heard this noise, and I couldn't figure out what it was, and so I started walking around the house, and what I found was this beautiful little gray robin, right? With that kind of orangey peach-colored chest and he was sitting outside of my kitchen window on the edge of a wicker chair, just looking at me through the window.

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And he looked at me for a while, and then he started flying up a foot or two on the window and banging his body into the glass and then floating back down to the chair. Then, flying up again and banging his body into the glass and then landed back on the chair. He did this over and over and over. At first, I was so confused. I had no idea what he was doing.

So, I had to go to Google and find out why was he doing that? Was he wanting something inside? Was he upset? What was happening? And what I learned is that at this time of year, this is a common thing for robins to do. So, they have essentially decided they're going to build a nest in your yard, and they are looking for threats and actively trying to get other robins out of your yard.

So, when they see their own reflection in the window, they think it's another robin. So, they attack their own reflection in the window. And so, since I've learned this, that little robin has attacked his own reflection in almost all of the windows along the backside of my house, and I have a lot of windows. My house—There's a golf course behind my house, and the basement has windows, the main floor has windows, the second floor has windows, and he has attacked all of them.

We were laying in bed on a Saturday morning and hearing this weird noise, and I was thinking, is there someone on the roof? What's happening? It was the robin, right, pecking at his own reflection in the glass. So, our whole house has just been fascinated watching this little robin do battle with his own reflection. And I have kind of gone from initially being confused about it to then being a little bit annoyed about it, and now being so full of love and compassion toward this little bird because I see how this little bird is so much like us, and we don't even know it. Right?

There are so many ways this little robin could be spending its energy, enjoying its little robin life, right, working to build its nest, getting food, doing things that actually do help it. Yet, it keeps coming back to the window. It

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keeps being intent on removing the threat that isn't actually a threat, and that's what I want to talk about today. Where in our lives are we wasting our energy trying to solve problems that aren't actually problems? And what could we be doing with that energy instead?

How are we the robin at the window? You ready? I think we're the robin at the window anytime we're trying to change something that doesn't need to be changed. I think we do this in two ways. We do this with things that are happening outside of us and things that are happening inside of us. When we're thinking something is a problem, that isn't actually a problem. We're spending our time and energy in ways that don't take us toward what we want in life, even though when we're doing them, they seem valuable and important.

I'm pretty sure that little robin thinks he's doing very necessary, important work. Right? He's probably very proud of himself, even though all he's really doing is spending his precious time and energy trying to change something that doesn't need to be changed, giving him less time and energy to change things that he actually could change. He probably thinks that this work is important and necessary.

So, how does this show up for us? Anytime we're trying to change something outside of us because we think that the thing outside of us is the problem, and we're falling into the same trap as the robin who thinks its reflection is the problem. We're the robin at the window when we believe that we need other people's approval, other people's approval about how we're handling our grief, our parenting choices, our career choices, how we handle our money, whether we wear our wedding rings, or whether we date again.

When we're staying in a relationship, we no longer want to be in. Right? Or even how we dress or look because not having other people's approval seems like a problem, but it isn't. Where are we saying yes when we really

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want to say no just so that we can get other people's approval. For most of us, getting other people's approval means we don't get to live the lives we want. It means we become people-pleasing chameleons, right? And we jump through hoops that we don't want to jump through, and we're not honest about what we really value. Or what we really want, or we're hiding those things, so other people don't see them, and we have a public us and a private us, and those two versions are not the same person.

So, just like the robin thinks its reflection is a problem, it isn't actually a problem. We think not getting other people's approval is a problem, but it isn't. Not being ourselves, not living the life we want is really the problem. Not being willing to let them reject us is the problem. Not making decisions that matter to us because we're afraid is the problem. And when we spend so much of our energy trying to get their approval or trying to be the person that we think they want us to be, then we have less time and energy available to us to get better at being brave, to get better at letting them have their opinions without making it mean we've done something wrong.

We have less time and energy to put toward the scary and uncomfortable decisions that would actually light us up and have us feeling alive and free. We have less time and energy to do the work of loving ourselves and being our own champions, regardless of what the other humans think. We're less of who we want to be, and we're born to be because, like the robin, at the window, we think something is a threat that just isn't. And our past is also outside of us, and when we think it needs to be different, we're the robin at the window trying to solve a problem that isn't a problem

What happened to us in the past isn't a problem. The decisions we made aren't problems. The things that our mothers and fathers and late spouses said or did are not problems. They are over. We can't control them. We can't change them, and we don't need to. They're data points. They're information we can use to guide our present choices, that's it.

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They're opportunities for us to learn more about what we care about and who we want to be in the here and now. And when we spend our time and energy judging ourselves or wishing the past were different, just like the robin at the window, we're missing what's available to us here and now. The past is not a problem until we decide that it is. The past is over, and we can learn from it, let it be what it is, and bring our attention to the present, which is where we are now, and what we have the opportunity to influence now.

And we're also the robin at the window when we think something that's happening inside of us needs to be changed but doesn't. When we think our experience of grief is a problem for us to solve or our negative emotions are problems to overcome. We're trying to solve problems that aren't problems. Grief is just our natural response to loss. It's what happens when our brain is adjusting to losing something that a part of us didn't want to lose.

And when we spend time worrying about doing grief right, instead of seeing that there is no right or wrong way to do grief, we're trying to change something that doesn't need to be changed. To solve a problem that, yes, while it's painful, isn't actually a problem. And even once we're through the challenges of acute grief, negative emotions still aren't problems. They're happening inside of us, but they aren't problems. They're meant to be a part of our human experience.

They're what gives context for positive emotions, right? Without sadness, we have no appreciation for joy. Negative emotions are just the price of admission. The price of admission for the rich, meaningful lives that we want. They're just vibrations in our body caused by stories in our mind, and whenever we're telling ourselves that our grief or our negative emotions are problems are just like the robin in the window, spending our time and energy trying to solve problems that aren't problems.

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Then, we end up trying to escape our feelings and escape our bodies and wish the present moment away in favor of some unfair fantasy where the grass is greener and negative emotion is not part of our humanness, and that never comes. But we miss out on living the present moment because of it. We waste time and energy planning for some future moment when we could be focused on staying present with ourselves and getting to know more of what we value so we can live accordingly.

And we spend our time and energy hoping for a different life instead of creating more of what we want to experience in this life. We turn to things like overeating and over drinking and overworking and overspending and over scrolling all because we think an emotion is something we need to get away from. Or we think we need to be in another relationship because we need to get away from our loneliness.

All of this time and energy wasted trying to solve a problem that isn't a problem. Grief is not a problem. Negative emotions are not problems. We're also the robin in the window when we believe something about who we are is wrong. When we believe something about who we are as unacceptable or somehow less than, we choose to put conditions on our own self-love. When we believe that we must be different or act different or look different in order to be more lovable, we start wasting our time and energy trying to change those things instead of using that same energy to choose to love ourselves exactly as we are.

We are the robin at the window when we're believing we need to be different to be loveable instead of seeing that we're 100% lovable just as we are. Changing ourselves doesn't increase our worth. It can't because we're already fully worthy. And this image of the robin in the window speaks to me so deeply. It's literally—it's been on my mind so much.

I want to consider that you think about how you can use that image as a compass for yourself. A measurement of whether you're spending your

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precious time and energy in ways that help you create the life you want or wasting them trying to change things that don't need to be changed or can't be changed. Where are you being the robin at the window, and when you notice that, how can you lovingly redirect yourself back to what really matters? Because we'll all be the robin at the window. I do it too.

It's not about never being the robin at the window. It's about noticing when we are and lovingly redirecting ourselves back to what really matters. Alright. That's what I have for you this week. I love you, and you've got this. Take care, and I'll see you next week.

If you like what you've been hearing on this podcast and want to create a future you can truly get excited about 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 that you can move forward with confidence. Please don't settle for a new normal that's less than you deserve. Go to coachingwithkrista.com and click work with me for details and the next steps. I can't wait to meet you.