

Ep #154: E+R=O



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With Your Host

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[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

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Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 154, E+R=O.

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 still have a cold. It's still there. It's getting better but it's still there and I'm going to tell you, the best thing ever, if you don't have one, you need to get one is a cup warmer. The boyfriend got me actually two of them for Christmas and one is in my office and one is in the bathroom. And it is amazing because it keeps my coffee warm. And as I've been sick all the tea that I've been drinking with honey, it keeps it warm on my desk and it's amazing. So highly recommend.

Sorry you have to put up with another episode of my raspy voice but the podcast must go on. So, I haven't read reviews in a while and I thought I would do that because I love when you submit podcast reviews. And I just want you to know that I hear you and I appreciate them.

So, this one comes from Jane Grondin who I know because she was in Mom Goes On. And she wrote, "I've been participating in Krista's coaching program, Mom Goes On for about five months now. I found the program through the podcasts which I had been listening to for a few months before reaching out to Krista to ask her about her coaching program. I hadn't found anyone who seemed to understand better what it means and how it feels to be a widow.

I didn't sign up immediately but when I did a few months later, never did I think I would be starting such a lifechanging experience. The tools she teaches and helps you learn how to apply to your life situations are insightful and valuable, applicable to every aspect of life. I've made new

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beautiful friends in this community, a total bonus. I will never stop listening to Krista's kind voice and general advice in the podcasts. And will be using these tools for the rest of my life."

Jane, thank you for those kind words. You know that I love you. And it was so much fun to work with you and watch you grow in the program.

And then the next one is from a listener who calls themselves Lena Lou. And it reads, "This episode was pivotal." And she's talking about episode 144. "These concepts are not new to me but I've had such a hard time implementing them. For some reason the way I heard Krista present them today resonated with me as they never had before. It's as simple as she says, are these thoughts and beliefs taking me towards something or away from the life I want to have?"

Thank you, Krista for helping free me from the shackles of unhelpful thoughts and bringing me into the beginnings of joy today for the first time in many months." You are so welcome. And episode 144 if you're interested is called The Two Most Important Relationships. So, thank you so much for that.

Okay, this week I want to talk about a very simple formula that I did not create but that I know will be powerful for you. And before I teach it to you I want to tell you a little story about how I applied it in my life. So, after I certified as a life coach I was still working in my corporate job. And I had an opportunity to leave that job and do a 90 day trial for The Life Coach School in a new position. Whenever The Life Coach School hires, that's how they hire is they hire everyone on a trial basis which is actually quite brilliant.

And The Life Coach School is where I certified, that's my mentor and teacher, Brooke Castillo is the founder of The Life Coach School. So, it was an absolute dream for me to go and accept this trial position with The Life

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Coach School. And so, I did that, left my job and a few weeks into it, even though I was trying my best, I was giving it everything I had. I was probably working way more than 40 hours a week trying to get used to this new role and figure it out. I got a message from Brooke that basically said, "It's not you, it's me. It's not working out. I love you but this is not a good fit."

And so unfortunately my trial was over, basically I got fired. And I remember it happened right before I was leaving for a trip with my daughter who was then in middle school. And she was going to Atlanta with her middle school orchestra to participate in a strings competition. It was kind of a big deal. And I was a chaperone on that. And so, we hopped on a bus and I had just gotten this news. And all night I sat in the most uncomfortable bus. Have you ever slept on a charter bus? Not a comfortable bus either. This was not a comfortable experience.

And my brain kind of went wild. I had a lot of thoughts and feelings about what had just happened. Did a lot of crying, I was very sad. But also, after I let myself feel all of my feelings, hurt, angry, disappointed, all of it. And I didn't make myself feel bad for feeling bad. But after I let myself feel all those feelings and I got to the place where I could actually think again, I decided to choose my response to that situation. I decided to let what was done be done. And I decided to look for evidence that what had happened was happening for me.

And of course, what we look for we find. So, because I looked for evidence of how it was happening for me I found it. I could have let that be the end of my coaching career. I could have made it mean that I wasn't cut out to be a coach because after all my mentor, the woman I looked up to most, my teacher fired me. This was not good for my ego in this moment. But what I decided to believe was that it happened for me and to look for evidence of that. I could see the promise of that belief. And in retrospect I really do see it that way.

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In fact, it's almost hard for me to see it any other way now, I'm so convinced that it happened for me because here's how. It happened for me because if it had not happened, if I had not been offered that trial position I would have agonized for so long about leaving my corporate job. I did not have a bad job. I had a good job. These are my thoughts of course. But it paid well, the people were nice, it was a fun job. I just didn't love it in terms of I didn't love the mark I felt like I was leaving on the world. I just didn't love aviation.

But it would have probably taken me a long time of coaching part-time and working full-time to actually get the guts up to leave that job if this one hadn't been offered to me. So that happened for me so that I could quit my corporate job without all that drama. It happened for me so that I could learn to believe in myself instead of putting my trust in someone else's vision. I could have immediately gone back. I could have called my old boss and said, "Hey, I made a mistake, will you take me back?"

He told me before I left, "Hey, if it doesn't work out call me. We'll make room for you, you can come back." I could have done that but I didn't. I decided to believe it was happening for me, it happened for me so I could build the business that I wanted to build and do the work that mattered to me instead of working for someone else in their business. And I don't tell you that story because I'm amazing. I mean I am amazing but so are you. We're all amazing. I don't tell you that story because I think you should quit your job or any of that.

I tell you that story to illustrate the power of the tool that I want to teach you today which is E plus R equals O. Event plus response equals outcome. Event E plus response R equals outcome O. E plus R equals O. Now, this is not a tool I created. It was created by Jack Canfield, he's the author of the Chicken Soup for the Soul series and many other books. You can read about it in his book called The Success Principles which is one of my

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favorite books. And once you become aware of this concept you'll see it everywhere because it's not just him.

You'll see it written as S plus R equals O, situation plus response equals outcome. Even the self-coaching model, the thought model that I teach my Mom Goes On participants is an expansion of this idea. It's a tool built around the idea of E plus R equals O. And I've referred to it in multiple podcast episodes. But I wanted to do an episode on E plus R equals O just by itself. And I know that some of you might think because you've heard me talk about it before that you really understand it. But I want you to slow down and really listen to this episode.

Hear it in a new way so that you can apply it in a new way. So, E plus R equals O. What is E? E is the event. Anything we can't control is an event. If it is uncontrollable it is an event. Things that have happened in the past including the death of your spouse, things that other people have said or done, things that are happening or have happened around you, the weather, politics, what you see on the news, the family that you were born in. Anything that happened to you that you experienced as traumatic.

What's happening in Ukraine right now. The words your mother-in-law said, those are events, the thing that your son did, the error that you made, the money that you spent. Anything that's happened to you in the past or anything you've done in the past is an event because it's over and it can't be changed. But by itself it doesn't create the ultimate outcome in your life. And this is where opportunity lies. Opportunity lies in our ability to choose our response to events.

And by the way I will say sometimes I also include in events, I will also include thoughts that show up in my brain, or emotions that I have created with those thoughts. Once the thought has already showed up I still get to choose my response to it. Once a feeling has already been created by my thoughts I still get to choose my response to that feeling.

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Thinking back to getting fired from The Life Coach School, which by the way I then went on to do their applied coaching program, to then teach in coach certification and get hired by them as a contractor. To then go on and teach within their self-coaching scholars program. And then become master certified. So, the closing of one door didn't mean anything until I made a choice about what it meant. Now, was it a good choice or a bad choice? That's not what I'm talking about.

Does it make me better than people who were fired from The Life Coach School and didn't choose it? No. But I made a choice. I chose to think of it in a way that helped me create more of what I wanted. And that's what I want you to see that you have the opportunity to do too. I chose to think about getting fired in a way that helped me create the outcome that I wanted.

I chose not to listen to thoughts that popped up, lots of thoughts. My inner critic had a lot to say. You've made a huge mistake. You should go get your old job back. You're going to go broke. Hugo would be so disappointed in you. Maybe you're not going to make any money. You should just quit. I chose not to listen to those thoughts. If Brooke doesn't believe in you why should you believe in you? Good stuff. And I chose on purpose to think the opposite of that. What if I could be more successful as a coach than I'd ever been in my corporate job?

I asked myself powerful questions. I went all in on what I really wanted. I did not go back to my old job. I decided, no, I'm going to make this work. This happened for a reason. This is happening for me. And listen, it would have also been a really easy opportunity at that moment to listen to all the other thoughts that were popping up in my brain about the business that I had owned in my 20s. I used to own a couple of fitness centers and all of these thoughts were popping up. I ended up selling one and I had to close the other one and almost filed bankruptcy.

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And all of my inner critic thoughts were popping up about you're not good at business and who do you think you are? And you already ruined those businesses. You will just ruin this one. You're not meant to be an entrepreneur, all of these garbage thoughts. But I did not listen. I noticed them and I didn't make myself feel bad about them but I chose my response to them. And I decided what to think on purpose and you can do that too, we all can. It's not something special to me.

I just want you to see what it looks like in action. And listen, not everyone has the same events happen to them but everyone as the same ability to choose their response to those events. Everyone has the same ability to take 100% responsibility. Responsibility, there is a podcast episode called that too. Everyone has the ability to take 100% responsibility for their response. And that means you and that means me. And again, it's not about right or wrong, it's not about there are responses you should or shouldn't choose.

It's just to say that responses are choices and the more intentional we get at making them the more we're able to live a life that's aligned with what we value. So, the event is out of our control because it's now in the past. Our response however is in our control. And we can even choose our response to our reaction. Our initial reaction might be some thoughts that don't serve us. Our initial reaction might be some emotions that won't help us. And we can choose our response to those as well. And again, not everyone gets the same events. Some of us are born with more privilege than others.

So, E plus R equals O doesn't suggest that everyone can experience the same outcomes or that the world we live in is fair. In my view it is not. So, depending on the circumstances of our lives it's easier for some of us than it is for others and that's just the truth as I see it. We don't often have a say in the events that happen to us but just because events happen doesn't mean we did anything wrong or should have done something differently.

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This is not about finding another way to beat ourselves, it's not about shaming, it's not about blaming. It's about where to spend our energy so that we can live a life that's more on purpose. And E plus R equals O is also definitely not about toxic positivity. This is not just about thinking positive so positive things will happen. That is not helpful. It can actually be quite hurtful in my opinion. This is about choosing your response and that doesn't mean that when you choose your response you'll always be happy. That just means you'll be intentional.

And sometimes that means you'll choose to feel sad, or choose to feel frustrated, or choose to feel angry. But you'll make that choice consciously and you'll support yourself as you allow those feelings to pass. So, E plus R equals O is about spending our energy on what we can control, on what we can influence instead of railing against the events of our past, the things that are out of our control. Instead of manipulating others with hopes that they will change or thinking that they need to change so we can feel better.

We bring ourselves back to what we actually can control which is our thoughts, our feelings, our actions, how we show up no matter what events happen to us. I hope that you will see that anyone can apply this. Anyone can choose their response to what happens to them. And when we do that we take ourselves toward the life experience that we want instead of away. It's really just about being the boss of what you can control which is your response, how you choose to think, how you choose to feel and how you choose to act.

If you like this tool, I just want to suggest a couple of other podcast episodes you might listen to. Episode 64, Two Circles to Loving Your Life. Episode 22, The Thought, Feeling, Action, Connection. Episode 59, Responsibility and episode 70, The Self-Coaching Model. I encourage you, if you want to be in charge of the outcomes in your life which by the way you are, take 100% ownership of your response to the events that happen.

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Take 100% ownership of how you show up no matter what happens to you in life.

It really isn't what happens to us, it's how we respond that creates our outcomes. And all of us can do that. Alright, that's what I have for you this week. Remember I love you, you've 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 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.