

Ep #186: From Grief to Empowerment: A Widows Unfiltered Interview with Annette Warmoth



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Krista St-Germain

[The Widowed Mom Podcast](#)

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Welcome to *The Widowed Mom Podcast*, episode 186, Widows Unfiltered: An Interview with Annette Warmoth.

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 want to introduce you to another widow today, her name is Annette. And I know many of you are going to relate to her story, I'll let her tell it of course. But I don't know why I didn't have her on the podcast sooner, honestly, she graduated from the program quite a while ago. But actually in a way I'm kind of glad that I didn't have her on the podcast immediately after she completed the program because she's had a lot of life happen to her since then.

And I'm going to let her tell you about that but one of my goals for Mom Goes On participants is that by the time you're done I really want you to not just have solved the problems that you came in with. If you come in feeling sad, and overwhelmed, and lonely or angry, it's not that we just want to address what's bothering you now. I want you to be ready, empowered, equipped. I want you to understand how your mind works. I want you to understand how to navigate difficult emotions because life will still keep happening after six months together.

And that story is proof of that, that things keep happening, challenging things keeps happening and they're so much easier when you have the right tools. So I'm going to let Annette tell you that story, we'll jump in. Before we jump in, before we do though I want to remind you tomorrow is our private training, it is by application only. It is something that's available to you or I highly recommend it for you if you really resonate with the idea of being stuck in a grief plateau.

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If you are past those early acute grief days, you're back to functioning, you are not in bed all day crying, if you wanted to go back to work you could. You are not in the barely surviving stage of grief, you are also not loving your life. This new private training is for you if you are kind of stuck in that surviving place, where you are getting by. It's not terrible, it's not unbearable, it's just not enjoyable. You aren't loving your life again and it's really difficult to imagine how that might happen but you are functioning in the world.

And other people are telling you that you're strong and that you're doing great. You just don't feel great. So if you resonate with that I want to invite you to apply for the free private training. It's called How Widowed Moms Can Truly love Life Again Without Forcing Gratitude, Thinking Positively or Reading More Grief Books. I know you. I know you have probably tried those things, maybe not all but at least some. And they haven't gotten you where you wanted to go and that's because they just don't work. You do not need to read any more grief books. You do not need to think positively.

And please do not force gratitude, we're going to talk about what you actually do need to do to love life again. But again it's by application only. The reason for that is because once it's over, I will be inviting those of you who are interested to join Mom Goes On. And I will be giving all the details of how that works. So if you are not ready for the type of coaching that we offer I don't want to invite you in. And that's not because I don't love you, it's because I want to set you up for success, and early acute grief is not the time for the coaching that we offer inside of my Mom Goes On program.

So go to coachingwithkrista.com/lovelife, coachingwithkrista.com/lovelife. And you will get all of the details about the private training and you will complete the application. Assuming that your application is accepted, we will send you everything you need and again, that private training is tomorrow December 20th. Alright, let's get into my interview with Annette. Enjoy.

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Krista: Alright, welcome, Annette. I'm excited to have you on the podcast. We were talking just a little bit before we started and I don't know why it didn't occur to me until a couple of weeks ago because I've known you for so long and you've participated in Mom Goes On a couple of years ago and yet I've never had you on the podcast. So I'm glad that we're finally making this happen, so welcome to the podcast.

Annette: Thank you. I am Annette Warmoth and I did, I took the class about almost two years ago.

Krista: Yeah. I would love it if you just kind of started by telling people just a little bit about who you are, where you live, your person, Ken, yeah.

Annette: Well, I live in Puyallup, Washington and last night we just happened to get about four inches of snow, so it's exciting.

Krista: Oh my goodness.

Annette: I met Ken online through an app that I didn't want to be on. And my friends put me on there. I'd gone through a previous marriage that was very, very difficult. So they said, "No, you're not stopping here." Anyway, met Ken.

Krista: Good friends.

Annette: Good friends. We got married, wonderful, wonderful relationship, oh my gosh, amazing man. And just very active, very outgoing. He was a whitewater rafter, just we were always on the go. And after about 10 years I noticed him kind of slowing down. But he was getting to retirement age and I thought, well, maybe he's just tired. And it kind of progressed and then we

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started going to doctors and trying to find out what's going on, what really was going on. And he had a thyroid problem so they fixed that.

And then we went on and different things just kept happening. We would travel and be in Hawaii and we'd end up in the hospital with a blood clot. It was a surface blood clot but still, so then they just kind of kept progressing. And we were in Italy and he had bad headaches. And we ended up in the ER in Venice which that is an interesting story all by itself because you're walking in Venice. Anyway came home, they got his blood pressure down, came home and the doctor just put him on blood pressure medicine rather than checking to see maybe what caused the headaches.

And two years later he started having terrible headaches again. So we went in and that's when they did the MRI and found a brain tumor the size of an orange. And so that was a blow but when we got the call from the neurologist they said, "This is a non-cancerous tumor, it does not invade the brain, it's just pushing your brain. So they're very easy to get out, no worries, we're going to take this out, you'll be back to where you were at in no time. So I was actually very optimistic that we had finally found what was causing all of his problems.

He was sleeping a lot by this time so we were very excited that we finally got an answer to what was going on. So we went in for surgery a week later, the surgery lasted longer than they thought. His tumor was much harder than the normal meningioma tumor. They were able to get it out. The next day it was amazing, he did not sleep at all, he was vibrant, he was talking, he was excited to go home. I felt like I had my old Ken back. And they said, "Well, we want you to get up and walk before you go home because we know you have stairs at home."

And so he got up to go walking and I was actually packing things up. And I heard this code blue, I believe it was. And I looked out and I thought, no, not Ken, nothing. And all of a sudden these ENTs and everybody's racing

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down the hall. So then I thought, oh no. No, no, no. So I went racing down the hall, also just not too far from our room and around the corner and he had collapsed. And he was on the ground and they were getting him up onto a gurney and they couldn't get a heart rate, couldn't get a pulse, couldn't get anything.

And they tried for 40 minutes and I finally had to walk up and say, "Enough." And the doctor said, "We have the medicine to fix." It was a pulmonary embolism and that was the second one he had actually had in his life. And he said, "We have the medicine to fix the pulmonary embolism but if we give it to him then he bleeds out in the brain." So I said, "There's not an option." So anyway, so then I said goodbye to my husband and that was the end of my life. Very, very challenging.

Krista: Yeah. And so that was November of 2019?

Annette: That was November of 2019.

Krista: Okay. And at that point how many kids did you have between the two of you?

Annette: We had six kids between us, all married, and 15 grandkids.

Krista: 15 grandkids, yeah. Okay, so then what was it like for you in those early grief days?

Annette: It was the worst thing I had ever gone through. I had never known a relationship like this and so when Ken was gone it was what am I going to do now? Oh my gosh, I didn't even know how to go on. And I would get up and I have horses, so I would get up and go feed my horses and come home and basically sit on my couch. And I did that day in and day out for months. I couldn't even fathom what would be next.

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Krista: Then we kind of got into COVID.

Annette: Yes. And then we got into COVID two months after he died, three months after he died, we shut down. So I happened to have a friend call me, I was seven months in and I distinctly remember that morning sitting on the couch thinking, how can I wish myself to die but not kill myself. Literally I wanted to just exit this life.

Krista: I think a lot of widows relate to that where you don't actually want to do it, you don't actually have suicidal ideation but you wouldn't be sad if a bus came.

Annette: Exactly. So I happened to get a phone call that morning from a friend to go walking. And I thought, okay, which I don't know what made me go walking that morning. I went walking and as we're walking she's like, "Oh my gosh, you need to listen to this podcast." She said, "It's a woman who is a widow and she's gone through what you're going through. And she is a coach and she helps you." And I'd never heard of coaching. I'd never heard of podcasts. I thought, okay.

And I was just desperate enough that day to come home and I probably listened to eight or nine or more of your podcasts in one day. And then I called you the next day but the important thing was, was your first podcast and I could relate so much.

Krista: The very first one, you started at podcast number one, Game On.

Annette: Number one and that grabbed me immediately.

Krista: I'm so glad.

Annette: Because you had been married 15 years, Hugo was an amazing man, it was a sudden death, just so many similarities. And had I not,

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because I had gone to a therapist before that time. And I didn't feel like he could relate to me. He didn't act like I had had death. And I didn't feel like I was getting what I needed at that time. But when I heard your podcast it was like, holy cow.

Krista: Yeah. But for some reason I kind of thought you came to me through Jody Moore, am I misremembering that?

Annette: It may have been my friend who was listening to Jody Moore because she listens to her a lot.

Krista: Got it, okay. Jody's a coach friend of mine and I've been on her podcast. And she specifically coaches women with LDS values is kind of her thing. And I had been on her podcast pretty recently, right around that time. So I wonder if your friend [crosstalk].

Annette: Yes, it was right away because she had just heard that podcast the day before. And she listened to Jody Moore all the time. And I now listen to Jody Moore but I didn't listen to podcasts.

Krista: Didn't even know, yeah. I'm so glad your friend – you know what I'm really glad? Here's the thing. People ask me all the time, "Why do you go on podcasts that aren't grief related?" This is why. Because everybody knows somebody who is in our position. Or when they do they're really interested in helping them and so I love that your friend was so willing to help you, yeah.

Annette: Well, I believe in inspiration and divine. And I believe that was divine intervention that she happened to tell me that day, on the day that I was probably the very bottom of the hole I had gotten myself into. And that was just amazing. It was absolutely amazing. So I called you either that day or the next day for an interview.

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Krista: Yeah. My notes say it was July 29th was the first day that we talked. So we probably got you in the August group.

Annette: I think I was, I was in the August group, yeah.

Krista: Amazing. What was it like to go into the group and how did it compare to what you imagined?

Annette: The first thing that was so interesting with me with the group is that you could relate so well to all of us. And I found that amazing because I hadn't found that before, someone who could really relate to pretty close to what I was going through. And that is I think vital to people then thinking, okay, I'm going to listen to her because she really has a great idea and knowledge of what I'm doing.

Krista: It's one thing. I always feel kind of bad sometimes for people who are trying to help in grief and all they have is grief theory because if you don't have the felt experience, the actual having lived it in some form it really is so much harder to help people I think.

Annette: I absolutely agree with that. There is just some experiences, it's like childbirth. You can't tell somebody what childbirth is like. You have to experience that. And it's the same with death. You can love someone and try to support them but you can really help them when you've been in that situation.

Krista: Yeah. So being around somebody who got it. What was it like to be part of a group of women?

Annette: I thought the group was amazing. I learned so much from other women who would be on there and sharing their story and sharing what they were struggling with and it was like, oh, yeah. And then they would say something that I didn't realize I was struggling with. And they would say

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bring it up in one of our coaching classes or sessions. And it was like, oh my gosh, yes, I do that exact thing. It's very helpful, very, very helpful.

Krista: Yes, I love that too. I think it's so unexpected because you know what you're struggling with but sometimes the things that you're – well, I will say there are a long list of things that people usually have that they know they want help with. There are some things that they would like help with but they kind of don't even think to ask because they don't know that it's either something they can get help with or they think it's some sort of inherent flaw within themselves. Or maybe they just aren't there yet in that place in grief. And so we can kind of head it off at the pass which I love too.

Annette: Yeah. Well, it comes back to everything that we learn on Mom Goes On about our thoughts. Some of those are beliefs and so those can't be changed until you realize.

Krista: Was that relatively new information for you in terms of your thoughts cause your feelings, and your feelings drive your actions, yeah?

Annette: Well, I'd always known that those two go together. I took psychology, I was going to become a psychologist. And so I was in college when I met my husband to become a psychologist. So I'd had some of those classes where those relate and how they work. But not until you actually see, for example, the model where you can actually go through that. And to me it's almost like a math problem. I can go through all of those answers and get that result at the bottom that I was like, "Oh my goodness, holy cow." Because you can't miss it if you do it right.

Krista: Yeah. It's simple but it's so powerful.

Annette: It's so powerful.

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Krista: I remember the first time I remember hearing, it was probably Brooke Castillo say, "Everything in the world fits in one of these five lines." And there was something so comforting about knowing that I could help myself with one tool. I could help myself solve what felt like insurmountable obstacles and problems with one tool. Yeah, so I love teaching that tool.

Annette: And it's interesting because I've never thought of myself as a logical, I'm not a logical thinker. I'm more of an abstract. And yet that was perfectly logical to me. So the way that lays out and you look at the model, it was just wow, that is exactly what I need to plug in these different areas and then come up with the result of what is going on and then what I want was amazing.

Krista: Yeah. So what were some of the changes that you experienced, what did the tools and the coaching actually do for you?

Annette: Well, the main problem that I – well, not a problem but my main thought when I came in is Ken shouldn't have died. Ken should not have died. Just absolutely that was a fact that was a very strong belief by seven months in of repeating that to myself over and over again during the day. So when we would go through the coaching, and you had coached me a few times at least if not more, on that exact thing. And until you're ready to let your brain think something different, you can't think something different.

And I remember, we had coached, and it was the third or fourth time that we had coached in the group. And I had been talking about this and for a while I couldn't even get through coaching without crying, I mean I cried a lot. And one day you said, and I'd been coached on this for a few times, more than I thought I needed. And you said, "Well." And it was always, "Ken shouldn't have died." And you said, "Well, what if Ken was supposed to have died?" And that literally was a light bulb moment for me. I finally, my brain could finally wrap itself around that.

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And when you said it, that time that was the start of changing everything. And I don't know if you realize how powerful that was for me, it really was lifechanging at that time. And that is the tool that I use continually is I look at my brain and I keep going over things and how can I do this and yeah.

Krista: Yeah. No, I don't think I probably realized it.

Annette: No, I don't think you did because I think you do that probably on a daily basis in your coaching. And I don't think that you realize the impact that it's making on people. That one for me was just an absolute eye opening experience. But some of the other times that we coached it was like, well, yeah, that makes perfect sense. But that one, and maybe that was the one to break the barrier of learning to think differently.

Krista: I remember having that experience myself and I remember hearing that same idea kind of dropped at my doorstep for consideration. And there was just a long amount of time where it felt offensive to even contemplate it. And then I remember somehow I made a switch where I didn't actually believe that he should have died but I remember a moment of believing, it's just, it's my choice that I get to think what I want to think. I don't have to believe every thought that shows up in my mind about him and his death and what happened.

I actually get to be the one who chooses what I think. And that was the difference for me. It wasn't about there is a right way to think or a wrong way to think but I went from just being at the effect of my own thinking to realizing that I was the one who could choose and that felt really freeing.

Annette: It was just amazing. It truly was lifechanging. It was lifechanging.

Krista: That's awesome. That's awesome. Well, and you really showed up for yourself, you were active on calls. And I always tell people, there's many ways to do the program and you can get a whole lot of crazy

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transformation. And I never even get to see you on a call but you weren't that person. You were regularly asking for coaching and there with your notebook and taking notes and paying attention.

Annette: I was hungry. I was hungry. I did not like the state I was in and I didn't know how to get out of that. And so when I started on that program I was hungry to do whatever I could do to help myself. And I've always been a self-starter and someone who seeks out knowledge to learn new things but this was, I ate this up. In fact I ate this up so much that after I got done with your class I went on to The Life Coach School and I just could not get enough.

Krista: And certified as a coach, you didn't just passively join their programs, you went all in, yeah.

Annette: Yeah. I certified as a coach. And I didn't do it to coach. Although I have coached quite a few people but I did it for me. I did it because I wanted that knowledge in my repertoire, when I can go get it.

Krista: Yeah, absolutely. The same thing for me, same thing. When I had such a transformative experience for myself, I was like, "Oh my gosh, I need more of this and then I could use it to help people." Yeah, so good. I wrote down in my notes from our original conversation, well, actually that's not true. This was actually straight from the application you filled out. So top three emotions you said you were feeling at the time were sadness, overwhelm and anger.

Annette: And I probably would be anger number one.

Krista: Yeah, we did have a lot of conversations about anger. Do you want to talk about that? Yeah.

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Annette: It was my go to. Just anything, I would be fine to 10 on the anger scale just like that, just in a flash. And get me in the car, forget it, it was awful.

Krista: Like road rage?

Annette: Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh. And I've never done, I'm not a road rage kind of person, I was road rage at that point. I felt like life was unfair. I felt like I had been punished, I mean you name it, I felt it and anger just came out. And you gave me some help starting coaching on how to deal with anger a little bit. And some of it was for my own self, I would just plan to leave before I needed to be at a place. So if I was in traffic, I would be fine. And I would just think about that, you're going to be fine. You're going to be fine, you left in a timely manner.

So that helped and over time that dissipated to a point, I mean you still, but the real, I think I might have even, I went back to a lot of my learning and my stuff I had gotten from you, the information because a year after Ken died I had a big family home evening at our house. And my brother who is my best friend was there with his family and he's very loud and we have a lot of fun. And he's just goofy and loud and he was talking over someone with a bunch of us in the room. So he was being louder than his normal loud and I lost it.

And then as soon as I had lost it I thought oh my gosh, what is wrong with you? And I went back and started doing a lot of models, and a lot of downloads, and a lot of because I had to get that to where I was not hurting other people. And I apologized to him over and over again, but it was just, that was another turning point for me to get the help I needed by going back into what I had learned.

Krista: Yeah. And I think what can make it so problematic is when we're experiencing a lot of intense emotion and sometimes that's anger and then

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we judge ourselves for it. We can make that anger mean that now we're an angry person or that there's something wrong with us. And especially if you're part of a faith tradition that teaches not to be angry. And judging ourselves never really helps with that but getting curious about it and really trying to compassionately understand why do I feel this anger, what is going on in my mind? What if it doesn't mean anything about me as a human?

What if it is just a part of the grief that I'm experiencing right now? And then we can kind of detach ourselves a little bit from it and not make it mean anything that it doesn't have to mean.

Annette: Exactly, yeah. I did have to do a lot of models on anger. There were so many things that went along with my anger, that I did a lot of models on anger to understand that I am okay through those models. And I could change those models to be what I wanted. I saw you had a new sheet out that has the bubble with the little arms going off and then the little bubbles. It might be in your new coaching.

Krista: The feelings map. It's a feelings map.

Annette: Is that what it is?

Krista: Is that what you're thinking of with the circumstance in the middle and then the thought feeling, thought feeling on the outside? Or is it something else?

Annette: I put the anger in the middle and then wrote to what was all the thoughts that went around with my anger.

Krista: Perfect. That's a great use of that tool, yeah.

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Annette: Then I went ahead and did the models to match, because I had so many thoughts around my anger.

Krista: Yes, so many thoughts. Thoughts about your anger or thoughts causing your anger or both?

Annette: Both. And so that really helped me to kind of see it out there in that way and then I could go through each one and try to work through those models. There was so much involved in my anger, there was just so much.

Krista: That just makes me so happy because, so sometimes I think people panic, when they get into the program they're like, "It's six months long, what's going to happen after six months? If I don't get through all the materials in six months it's a problem." And I love that, how many, it's been a couple of years since you've been in the program and yet you got back in there with an updated version of a workbook that wasn't even in the program when you were there and used it to help yourself. And I wasn't even there.

You were not even surrounded by the program anymore, you just did it for yourself.

Annette: I'm constantly on Slack, I'm looking at the information and I'm so grateful that in your group as a former person that I still have access to that Slack and the information in there because I still go back in there and I read what people post. And I took that book off and I have another use for that book that we talked about. And that has been so helpful. I just went back in and started diving back in.

Krista: Yeah, let's talk about that. So one of the things we talked about before we pushed record and I really wanted to make sure we talked about it is it's important to me that the program and the coaching that I offer is not

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just a band-aid, it's not an experience where we just solve the problems that you're experiencing. It's really important to me that we don't create a dependency on the coach, and that by the time six months is over you have what you need to solve whatever happens next, to support yourself through the challenges that will come after the program because they do.

And we don't need, well, now I can't help myself because I'm no longer in the program and I don't have a coach. We need, now, I have the tools and I know how my mind works, and I know how to support myself with intense emotion and I'm ready. So can you talk about, because you're just the stellar example of continuing to have challenges in life and using the tools that you learned.

Annette: Well, I was out of your program in January and then the following December, is that right? Last December my son died. So I mean any time a child dies there is no way to describe that. The pain is completely different, the heartache completely different than my husband. And my son lived close to me and would come over every day. After my husband died he was always my go to, was always there, just showed up out of the blue and would just sit with me. And so when he died it was like a double blow.

And I immediately went to work to help my daughter-in-law and her three kids. But in that process I thought, okay, I have got to get back into my coaching information. And I even contacted Becky to get onto some of the videos that we had done, the coaching calls because I needed to get that information back in my head. So that when my daughter-in-law was struggling, I could help her in areas because at the time when you're so emotionally involved it's hard to be who you want to be unless you know the information well.

So I went back into all that information that you had given us, the manuals and all that, and my books, and my notebooks, and reworked myself through that process. And the change with my son and my husband is, I

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knew right away that I could pay attention to what my thoughts were doing and what emotions I was having. And I stepped back for a while, a few months because I really wanted to focus on myself and my daughter-in-law and my grandkids.

But I tell you what, that information was vital at that time because it was that was where I could go to get back to where I can love my life again. And that has been a process. I don't know that I'm actually there yet but he's only been gone a year but I know I will. And that's the great thing is I know I have the tools that will keep me on that path moving forward.

Krista: Yeah. I hate that it happened but I'm so glad that you had the tools to fall back on.

Annette: Well, we all, that's just it is when we got through with the Mom Goes On and life continues, you still have trials and that I think when my son died that really was a shocker for me because I thought that those trials were behind me. I could never have dreamed my son would die suddenly from a heart attack. And so just to know that oh my gosh, really terrible things can happen again, that information was everything.

Krista: Yeah. And nobody ever really wants to do the feelings work, they always kind of groan when I get them started on it. But I really am convinced that when we get good at allowing difficult emotions to pass through us, it makes the trials that are potentially in the future so much easier to bear. If you've had such an intense experience of negative emotion and it was awful, then it makes sense that we would be anxious about more of that in the future but we can't control the future.

But what we can do is develop the muscle and the skill of being able to allow the emotion to pass through with less suffering.

Annette: Exactly, yeah.

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Krista: And then it still doesn't make you look forward to things that could happen in the future but it gives you the confidence that you could handle them.

Annette: Yeah. You know you have the tools you need in your toolkit. Another help that you gave me is one time I was feeling really – I don't know, I was judging myself for feeling sad and that I should be able to keep going and I should be able to do better or whatever. You just what if yourself. And you said, "It's okay to feel sad. You lost your husband." And that was another one of those aha moments. And so then I would just sit for an hour and be sad and then I would get up and get going.

And it was amazing that I could allow myself to do that and feel better afterwards and feel more able to do what I wanted to do. And I've helped with my daughter-in-law because when my son died she then was mom and dad. And then she had a business, my son had a business so she's now running the business, just a lot of things on her plate. And she said, "I just can't do it all. I just am so sad."

And so I just told her, I said, "Allow yourself to be sad, give yourself that hour or two in the morning to just sit on the couch and cry if you want. And then you'll feel better and able to go into the office and do the work you need to do." I said, "If you allow yourself that time to feel that, you'll feel better afterwards."

Krista: Where do you think you picked up the message that it wasn't okay to be sad or sadness was something to be avoided or solved?

Annette: I think I just figured I should be over it sooner, or it's okay to be sad for a period of time. But when that period of times passes you need to get on your feet and get going. And that's not how it works.

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Krista: Yeah. And any sadness after that point is now a weakness, it's now a personality flaw.

Annette: That's what I gave myself was that, well, now you're not capable because you are still sad.

Krista: But you can be human for a certain amount of time but after x number of months pass you're no longer allowed to be human.

Annette: Exactly, exactly, yeah.

Krista: So we're so hard on ourselves, yeah.

Annette: Yeah. The other thing I learned during that time was that I could allow myself, that's what, I think that that was one of the things is I am given permission. Yeah, you can do that. And I think I didn't give myself permission for a lot of the emotions. It makes it really hard.

Krista: It so does but it all makes sense, I mean when you go back and you look at, for most people what they were taught around emotion growing up or their particular culture or different things for different people. But a lot of us did receive the message that sadness is a problem, emotions are things to fix or flaws, or we should hide them, or we should be past them, or pull yourself up by your bootstraps, that kind of language, yeah.

I've been really fascinated lately by how some people that come to me, it's super easy for them to, or at least it appears to me, super easy for them to invest in themselves and join a program like mine. And then others who really struggle to either see themselves as worth it or they struggle with being able to invest in something for them. Did you go through any of that? Was it an easy decision for you or did you struggle at all?

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Annette: I think at the time, yes and no. I struggled with, my husband left me very well financially but I struggled with the financial part because I just have never been one to spend money on myself. If I had nice things my husband usually bought them for me. And so I just never was one who, and that's probably a worthy thing. I never felt worthy of putting money out on myself, and that was the best investment I did.

But by the time I talked to you and you accepted me into the program, I was desperate enough for information or for something that would help me, I would have put out pretty much anything.

Krista: Yeah. So it was like a rock bottom kind of experience for you as opposed to a lot of women I'm reaching and kind of in that grief plateau place where it's not terrible, it's tolerable, they just don't love it. But for you it wasn't even tolerable.

Annette: No, it wasn't even tolerable. I had really gotten myself in a hole and I did not see a way out. And so when I listened to your podcast and actually felt like this could be my way out, I was clawing. I'd have clawed over to you to get into your program. If you would have told me, "I don't think we're a good fit", I probably would have hounded you until you finally said yes.

Krista: Let me in.

Annette: Exactly. Knocking at the door. I'm coming.

Krista: Yes. Well, I'm so glad your friend referred you to me, that you found the podcast, that it met you at the time where you needed it the most. I'm so proud of you for what you created with the program. I was talking to one of our kind of newer members yesterday on a coaching call. And I just love her so much, of course I love everyone but she's just a doll. And she was

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just like, “This is changing my life so much and thank you.” And trying to give me all the credit.

And it’s like, I really appreciate hearing positive things that people say but a lot of people have gone through the program and not everybody has the same experience. So it’s not me, I’m providing the same tools to everyone. It is what you do with the experience that creates your results. And because you showed up for yourself and because you applied the tools and you asked for support and help and you were open to it, that’s what makes all the difference.

Annette: It makes all the difference.

Krista: It’s truly how you approach it so good on you.

Annette: Yeah. Well, and my plan is, I had put some feelings out and my plan is now that I am going to hopefully, I want to work with underprivileged women, maybe women in a homeless shelter. Or I really want to help women, my former life, there’s no way I could have ever afforded this. There just was no – I pretty much was destitute.

Krista: Yes. You mean life pre Ken?

Annette: Yes. And I want to work with those women who are in that spot that I was in before. Because I still would have been hungry for it, I just could never have, I mean I was barely surviving at that time. And so my goal is to work with other women in that situation and help build them up. And help them step maybe out of that area in their life and step into something they want more.

Krista: Yeah. Is that something you’re going to start soon?

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Annette: Well, I contacted some women's resources and I'll see what I hear back. This is not a good time of year because they're so busy. But yeah, I plan to pursue that and work with the women that are like I was before I ever met Ken.

Krista: So here's what we could say, so anybody who's in Washington south of Seattle if you know of any opportunities for women who are struggling and would want some sort of coaching support, yeah.

Annette: Yeah. And it's interesting because when I was talking about doing that and I was trying to come up with a booklet, what I could use, and then you put your newest booklet on Slack.

Krista: We just redid all of our workbooks recently.

Annette: Oh my gosh. And so I contacted you immediately to see if that would be available for me to print off and use for these women when I ever get that chance to finally do that. And when you said that, "I'm all for it." I was just like, "Oh my gosh, that took such a weight off my shoulders to try to come up with my own."

Krista: Yeah, let's go change the world, yeah. Did you check out the skills, the mindset and skills scorecard yet? Did you see that in the workbook?

Annette: No.

Krista: Okay, it's brand new, you'll have to look at it. And I'm really excited about it. I say brand new, I think this was month six of having it but we created, I wanted something that was a little bit better than the life wheel assessment that we used to use to just kind of help people assess where they're starting. And then also track their progress and then also expand what's possible. And so we created this mindset and skills scorecard and

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so it has, it goes through 24 areas which are the key mindset shifts and skills that we're working on in Mom Goes On.

You do a rating of yourself, there's no grades, there's no prizes, we're not judging you. But where are you starting and then in the middle of the program, do it again, where are you now. And then at the end of the program, how far have you come. And I love it because it's so fun, just starting to see the numbers come in at the six month point for people and the increases in scores are really exciting for me. Plus it's also just going to be a way I think for me to be able to look and see where are people experiencing the greatest transformation.

And what are the areas that maybe are lagging and how can we improve those. It's kind of a window into what people are getting out of the program for me. But yeah, it'd be interesting for you to go take it now, kind of assess where you are not and then see if you can maybe go back just for your own benefit to celebrate yourself of where you started. Where would you have rated yourself when you started and yeah, celebrate that.

Annette: The expanse would be huge because I have grown so much in the program that you have.

Krista: Yeah, I'm so glad. I'm so glad. Is there anything else that you wanted to share with people? Did we miss anything?

Annette: Just that invest in yourself, I mean what a wonderful thing that you're offering. And when I just did it, even though I had doubts and I wondered and I just did it. And it was truly lifechanging. It made all the difference in the world of how I could handle and manage my husband's death and now my son's death. And so I can't say enough about people getting that just for themselves, just to help who they are. It's been an amazing program.

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Krista: Thank you. I love that, I've been thinking about it a little more holistically especially as some of the women that I have worked with, I've continued to have relationships with them now years after they have completed the program. And then I watch what they go through in life and I also have just watched I think what probably touches me the most is what their children have gone through and how they have been better equipped to help their children. And for some of them it's like you where their children are grown and you're helping your daughter-in-law in her grief.

You're helping yourself in your own grief, and it's not always death related grief. Sometimes it's just watching them support their kids go through just the challenges of being a human on this planet and the ripple effect that that is having in the world. And then watching people like you go and become coaches and other clients that have done the program and then have gone on to become coaches. And then watched the people their helping. And it's just such a rewarding thing to be part of something that ripples into the world.

Annette: Well, my whole family, I've coached almost everybody in my family at some point or another.

Krista: I love it.

Annette: You just can spread out and help people and family, and close, you know, those that have contacted me to coach some, it's just amazing.

Krista: Someday this is going to be normal. Somebody everybody's going to have a coach. We're going to look back and be like, "Remember when we didn't even have, nobody knew what life coaching was and we didn't have a coach and now everybody has one." We're headed there.

Annette: Yeah, we should be headed there. Yeah, I think that that would be a wonderful asset for everybody, definitely.

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Krista: Yeah. And then I think grief will be so much easier. Because it won't be us waiting until our spouse dies to learn how to feel our feelings and process intense emotion and change our thinking. It won't be a problem solution, it'll be preventative.

Annette: Well, and it won't be in a situation where I was at, where you're absolutely destitute. Well, not destitute, but you're desperate for something. It will be something that you already have on hand. Wait, I already know how to do that. I was just to the point where I saw no other way. And this was just was like a bright light in a very dark hole and it was, yeah, it was just amazing, lifechanging.

Krista: Well, thank you so much for coming on the podcast and for being so open and sharing your story, it really does help other people to hear that they aren't alone and to hear similarities in their story. And imagine when you were in that place and here you are now.

Annette: I've had friends who have lost either spouses or children or something and I am right there with them. I just immediately am at their door. I'm immediately talking to them about things and I just want to help whoever I can with this information.

Krista: Yeah, love it. So if people want to get in touch with you, what's the best way, shall they go through me?

Annette: Probably. I just really haven't, yeah, because I haven't really reached out or started any process of any program, but yeah.

Krista: Alright, so we'll just say, if anybody wants to, if you have an opportunity that you want to forward onto Annette or you want to talk to Annette, you want to get in touch with her, come through me, you can email me, krista@coachingwithkrista.com and then I'll connect you. Okay, thank

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you so much, Annette, you take care of yourself. Okay, alright, we'll talk soon. Bye bye.

Annette: 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.