

# *Fake it Until You Make it*

**Erica Hono e & Sharon Brubaker**

**Grief Specialists**

Tony ([00:02](#)):

Erica and Sharon, her sisters who began a grief journey in 2006, when Erica's 10-year-old son, Austin drown together, they participated in a grief education program were so moved by this experience. They studied and became specialists so they could help the broken hearted find recovery. In 2015 tragedy struck the family. Once again, when Erica's oldest son, Donovan was killed in a motorcycle accident, Erica and Sharon are committed to sharing their experiences of love, loss, and healing through this podcast. Now your grief specialists, Sharon and Erica,

Sharon ([00:41](#)):

Hey sisters, welcome back. You're listening to healing starts with the heart I'm Sharon. And this is Erica.

Erica ([00:49](#)):

Hi friends. Welcome back to our podcast, where we do a show for griever about griever and a lot of different topics that affect you. When you are grieving. This show today is called Fake it Until You Make it. And I feel though, as though, if you look that up in a dictionary, my picture would be right there with my Academy Award for being the best faker of all time.

Sharon ([01:18](#)):

Did you ever receive that Academy award?

Erica ([01:21](#)):

No. You never sent it to me.

Sharon ([01:27](#)):

I, this topic is crazy because it can fit in so many areas of our lives right now, many times, not just in grief, but so many times we do have to fake it until we make it. And the truth is that if we buy into this, it can help us. But if we buy into this, it can hurt us. If we buy into this 20 years from now, we can still be in this spot. So it's a double edge short, right?

Erica ([01:56](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. And specifically, what we're talking about is when you are so sad from the pain of your loss, so angry from the pain of your loss, so lost from the pain of your loss, right? But you go out into a social events, which we have to do. The world does not stop turning when we have a grieving experience and we are, we feel like we want to curl up into a ball and die for me. That's how I felt. And but you walk into a room and you go, hi, I'm good. Yes, I'm fine. Inside in my brain, I'm dying. I want to go home. I want to cry. I want to pour a glass of wine. I want to I want to have my children back. That's what's going on in my brain, but this smile is there and I'm talking and I'm engaging. And no one is the wiser about what's happening with me.

Sharon ([02:55](#)):

So part of that is a survival technique. You needed that to survive. You needed that to kind of catapult you to the next area of your healing. You needed to do the fake it until you make it to get you even out of the bed, get you even out of the house. Sometimes we have to fake it until we make it because we have little children or we have a husband to look after, or we have parents to look after or a surviving

parent. And so we have to fake it until we make it with them. So some ways the first part of faking it until you make it is a survival technique that we must have to survive.

Erica ([03:38](#)):

Completely, completely because the world does not allow you to walk in to the social event, sobbing and crying and you know just feeling your feelings. So you absolutely have to go into survival mode because eventually you have to go back to work. You have to go to the grocery store, you have to go to parent-teacher conferences. You have to, there are things in the world you absolutely have to do. And so you've got to go into survival mode, right?

Sharon ([04:11](#)):

Well, and the other thing that happens as well, you're faking it until you make it. Is that everything you look at touch feel, breathe in, remind you of them every year at a parent teacher conference for your five-year-old. And all you're thinking about is your sixteen-year-old. Oh, he went to this school to this. He sat in this little desk. So as you're there, your brain may not even have made it there yet because you're so off to a different spot. But the truth was you needed to be there at that moment at that time to show up for someone else.

Erica ([04:45](#)):

Yeah. I remember. I mean, like you said, everything, so I would get a piece of junk mail with Donovan's name on it. I'd be like, Oh God mail. Everything's like trash. I mean, it just takes you to a place such sadness.

Sharon ([05:02](#)):

Yeah. Yes, yeah. Yeah. So that is, that is actually a really good, a good advice of just to help you show up to help you get out of the bed because there were days where you wouldn't fake it and those days when you can't do it, don't do it. Don't push yourself through. But on the days where you have to, and it's not a comfortable spot to a comfortable place to share your brokenness, you got to have to fake it through a little bit at that moment.

Erica ([05:37](#)):

Right. There are times when you absolutely cannot let the true emotion doubt. I don't think the third grade teacher wants you sobbing in her room in the desk that you're sitting in. Even though she I'm sure she would be supportive, she probably doesn't want it. So yeah, there's absolutely times, but, but in, in the times when you're making a choice, it's not a half two, but you're making a choice to attend something. And you know, in your heart, you don't want to, the desire's not there. You're not really motivated. Set a time limit for yourself. I'm going to go for 30 minutes. I'm going to go for 30 minutes and then I'm going to just make an appearance, greet everybody. And then I'm out of there sometimes. What happens when you get there, you actually are not having a terrible time. So then 30 minutes might turn into two hours and that's okay. We flexible with that. But at least go in with, I'm going for 30 minutes. That gives you that you're giving yourself permission to have an out.

Sharon ([06:39](#)):

Second thing that we tell a lot of our girl friends is this don't take a person. If you can, don't take a coat in, put your keys in your pocket, put your cell phone in your pocket. Because if, if 30 minutes turns into 15 minutes and you got to make a quick escape, you don't want to have to go get your coat in your

purse before you leave, be prepared to just walk out and do the Irish goodbye with not letting, making the huge announcement that you're leaving just highly step away and go. Also, sometimes it would make sense for you to let your friends know. I will try, but I want you to know if I can't do it, I'm going to quietly slip away, go in with that mind set ahead of time, set everyone up for victory, set yourself up for victory and set your family and friends up for victory. Let them know that you're not going to be able to stay the whole time. Oddly enough, what happens is that family and friends will get offended that you don't stay because they're not trying to understand at what space you're even in.

Erica ([07:46](#)):

Right. And they, and their well-meaning intentions. They just want to love on you and support you. So, and that, that Louis and I experienced that we had people that just wanted to be around us. And so it was hard for them to understand where we were at and how we were functioning with when you're going to an event with your family though, make sure you have a clear conversation with your littles. Cause they just want to go be with their cousins and their friends. And then when mom gives him look, and it's saying, it's time to go. And then they start, you know, making a scene. That Austin, that was his thing to just, this is norm. You need to make sure you have a clear conversation with your husband and with your littles. That if I can't do it this is going to be the signal I'm going to do this. And then we need to go. Because if everyone is on the same page, it just makes that transition so much easier.

Sharon ([08:44](#)):

We just recently worked with a couple where they went to a couple of events and she, so she drove separately knowing that the husband and the kids would be able to stay longer than she was. So she drove separately. You gotta plan ahead. You gotta plan ahead. Okay. Part two of the fake it until you make it, is that faking it until you make it can become so comfortable. Yeah. Hey, I can do this. No one knows that I'm really not showing up for work. No one knows that I'm staying in my bed crying all day. No one knows that I am not just doing laundry. No one knows.

Erica ([09:25](#)):

Are talking to me?

Sharon ([09:27](#)):

I'm talking about you.

Erica ([09:32](#)):

That may or may not have been me confirm or deny, but have you been Oh, during the podcast for a while. You know, that was totally me. I was getting up, taking the kids to school, coming home, getting back in bed, sleeping all day or trying to sleep all day, just staying in bed all day. Sleeping was a respite from the sadness. So I would try to sleep all day and then setting a clock to get up and change my clothes and wash my face and brush my hair, pick up the kids with a fresh face. I was even faking it for them with a fresh face. And Jordan would say, mom, what did you do today? And I had a whole list of things that I did not do. I was also liar. You are faking it liar. So big fat Faker. And no one knew no one knew. You didn't know that I was doing this Lewis didn't know I was doing this. And it did. Unfortunately it did become very comfortable. There would be days though, I would say to myself, you have to get out of this and watch TV all day. And for me that was like a victory because I did get out of bed. That's how much pain I was in. That's how sad I was. And I didn't think anyone would understand, I didn't want to talk about it because there was no way they could understand. And I, I knew coming up, I did that

almost for a year and coming up on that year, I said, if I didn't make a change in my life, I was never going to get my life back. And I, you know, I had to fight, I had to fight to get out of that.

Sharon ([11:21](#)):

So, that's actually really a great point to having the fight. You had to fight your way back. That is a whole nother show that we need to be talking about. But that's, that is so true. So I want to keep that one on the back burner because sometimes you can get in trouble with your grief is another show we're going to be doing, coming up here, but faking it until you make it can get you into trouble too. It's a very thin line. When is the time that the faking it is enough and I have to go for the fight. You and I can't answer that question for anyone. They have to answer that question for themselves, right?

Erica ([11:59](#)):

Yeah. Yes, absolutely. But the signs are going to be there that you're in trouble. Your kids are going to be missing things, you know, like clothes cause I wasn't doing laundry, meals now, you know what I mean? Instead of cooking, you're just getting McDonald's are doing box meals and there's nothing wrong with that. But I mean, this is, these are some of the signs when you're, you're not maintaining any connections with your friends, you know, you're starting to just text instead of getting on the phone. So they can't hear your voice and hear the sadness. You know, things like that. There's there's grief is going to come out in affect every area of your life. And you're going to have red flags that you're getting into dangerous territory. You're you're with your spouse or significant other.

Sharon ([12:46](#)):

Exactly. And that's where I wanted to head down to is that one of the things that happens is when they can get rid of the grief or they can function during the grief or they can go back to work and go back to living their lives. They can't understand why you can't. They can't understand why can't you do it. And they don't get it. Even someone further down the line or someone else who's lost a child, it starts to compare themselves. They can't understand how can you still be this way. They don't get that. And that sometimes becomes a really a struggle in explaining it. We also have part three of faking it. So there's three aspects of it is when we see you 20 and 30 years later and you're still faking it. You almost never talk about the person that you lost. You never talk about the divorce. You never talk about your mom who died when you were five, you're still faking it. But almost to the point where, well you all, you've gotten to the point where I don't go around Christmas. I don't go around new year's. I don't do this. It changes the trajectory of your life forever. And everyone in your orbit, their lives has changed as well because of it.

Erica ([14:02](#)):

Right, and I think when you have when you encounter people like that, you can identify them because there's an edge to them. There's a bitterness to them. And they like you said, refuse to talk about it. Don't want to acknowledge it. And then they may kind of snide comments about, you know, someone who's whose spouse is sitting at the dinner table with them, or, you know, so you'll see, you can identify that person because there's, there's an edge and a bitterness, but also on the flip side of that, there's the person who's 30 years later. And even though they're not talking about it every day, but when they do start to talk about it, they cry. Like it was just yesterday. That's another clue that that person has been faking for 30 years. Because if they can instantly go back to the pain of the loss, they have not mended their heart.

Sharon ([14:59](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. How many times do we sit with officers? And they come in for the law reason loss of a child and it turns out they really got a grave. Their dad who died when they were 10 and that's the grief that's just been sitting there and stuck there. And we got a process that first, before we can even get to the child, because now this is 30 years of faking pain, loneliness, heartbreak. That's just been stuck in there.

Erica ([15:29](#)):

That is so true. That is so true. And it's very sad when they it's sad. And it's also enlightening for them because it's, it's hard to watch them come to that process where they realize the source of, and the reason they are reacting so strong is because they have this other loss that's been in their heart forever. But then to see them make that connection, it's, it's empowering for us to, to reaffirm we're on the right track.

Sharon ([16:00](#)):

Yeah. So sisters, we're talking to you, friends were talking to you. If you're faking it, acting recovered, if you could win an Academy award right now for your behavior out in public, and people do not know how much pain you're in, we are speaking to you specifically, we have a way out, we can guide you through this journey. Even if the loss was over 30 years ago, we can guide you. We're here for you. We know this pain.

Erica ([16:37](#)):

We absolutely, we do know this pain and I personally walk this path and it almost it almost wrecked me to the point of no return. So I am glad that I fought my way out of it. And I am absolutely available to sit with you and, and support you as best I can.

Sharon ([17:01](#)):

Thank you, friends.

Erica ([17:04](#)):

Bye friends. Thank you.

Erica ([17:07](#)):

Hi friends, Erica Honore here with healing starts with the heart. Sharon and I are so glad you joined us for another great episode of our podcasts We hope you enjoyed this episode. We want to let you know for more information you can go to our website at [www.healingstartswiththeheart.com](http://www.healingstartswiththeheart.com). There you will find not only today's podcasts, but all of our podcasts, along with our blogs, the information on the programs that we offer and the griever's guide, which is something Sharon and I put together to document how we came to be your grief specialists. We also have a quiz to take, to identify if you are truly grieving. And if you want to talk specifically with either Sharon or you can schedule an appointment there, you will also find a place to join our private face book group at hope, heal and recover. Thank you so much for being with us. Have a great day friends.