

Helping Our Kids Cope Up with Social Distancing

Erica Honoré & Sharon Brubaker

Grief Specialists

Sharon ([00:01](#)):

Cheers. Welcome back to healing starts with the heart, that show where it's all about all of the women out there that have broken hearts. My name is Sharon Brewbaker and this is my sister Erica honoree, and we are grief specialists. And we're honored to bring the show to you today.

Erica ([00:18](#)):

Hi friends, we are doing something a little different, obviously, because times are very different right now, but we are doing these next few shows on like quarantine related topics. Because we just know that there's so many different facets of this pandemic that has really affected the entire world. So we really just think it's important to get a lot of different messages out there, cause people are going through so many different things.

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

So you and I talk about all the time about all of the different things that can happen to a person's heart and cause them to grieve. So divorce, breakup of a romantic relationship, obviously death pet loss, but you know, what we need to add to our list is quarantine pandemic losing your job. You losing your job is already on there waiting for your stimulus check. I mean the list just grew exponentially.

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

Well, even, even to the point of like, you know, putting your protective gear on to go to the grocery store that freaks me out. I have not, I have a mask. I've worn it once and it, it gives me so much anxiety. I refuse to leave the house. I'm not even joking. I I've been able to

Sharon ([01:39](#)):

Wear the mask and the gloves. And I have a total system that I do when I go to the store. I only go once a week or every other week, but that's not what freaks me out is the people that still come up on you and get close to you. And I'm like, Ooh, you know, so that there's anxiety right there. You and I just did a show on the anxiety that couples are having with their marriage and just being stuck in the house together. And then there's this whole other show that we have to even talk about is when your house becomes the everything, it's the gym, it's the office, it's the classroom. It's the church. Now it's your marriage place? It's your restaurant time? It's your restaurant. Oh my gosh.

Erica ([02:29](#)):

It's everything. I love cooking, but I am, I'm seriously. I'm sick of it. I'm tired of cooking. And I never thought that I would feel that way. I just am like, let's have peanut butter and jelly at this time.

Sharon ([02:44](#)):

Yeah. Nobody's with me on that. But are you cooking three times a day?

Erica ([02:49](#)):

I am. Well, yeah, yeah,

Sharon ([02:52](#)):

Yeah. That's what I'm doing. So we do a late breakfast and then I do a late lunch and then earlier dinner, but yeah, it's three times a day and I cook, I, we don't have like processed cereal in the box with milk because my husband's older and I have to make something. So yeah, I've been done with cooking like five weeks ago,

Erica ([03:17](#)):

But nobody's well, you were done with prior to the pandemic.

Sharon ([03:23](#)):

I figured out how I could get food delivered to my house so that I wouldn't have to cook, but that hasn't worked out for me yet, but I'm still on, on that plan. I'm still on that plan. At some point, I'm going to come to that plan.

Erica ([03:35](#)):

We had a great show. We did.

Sharon ([03:37](#)):

We'll touch on this two weeks ago because you notice that your son, Jordan, who is 17 years old, was really struggling with the quarantine and with his grief coming up of just becoming slower and now wanting to leave the room, share a little bit about that story of what you were noticing Erica.

Erica ([03:56](#)):

So one of the things that I noticed was because I have, I have really taken this serious. And so I have really shut down her house and I don't let him go like to friend's houses or anything like that. Because I'm just so fearful of, of any one of us getting sick. And so he's really, really been isolated. And I started to notice, you know, the, the sleeping in a little bit later and later, and then to one day I couldn't even get him out of bed. Like he literally stayed in bed the entire day. And I thought into the rule of super dark and I'm like, this is this isn't the norm. And I just started to talk to him. I said, Hey, something going on. And he's like, I just, you know, I can't do anything. And it, it just, I could see where he was really affected because now we're at a point where he's driving. He has a license, he had his, he had a job, but he was working at Chuck & Cheese. And now that has stopped because only serving a takeout he's not going over to friend's houses. So he really has been cut off from his, his social world and his social existence and is living in his bedroom. I mean, at this point he kind of made it into a man-cave. So I that's, when I was like, you know what? Jordan is not the only one. I'm sure he's a junior. So thankfully he is not missing out on his senior year activities, but then my heart went out to all those families whose were preparing for graduation prom all types of exciting things for your senior year. And those are no longer happening. And then I was like, Sharon, we got to talk about this because this, this has gotta be affecting almost every household in the country.

Sharon ([05:50](#)):

Well, I can't even imagine, you know,

Erica ([05:52](#)):

He had his newfound freedom recently getting his driver's license, getting a, having, driving himself to school. I mean, all of that was in the last, what would you say? Year and a half?

Erica ([06:04](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. And he's always very active in sports. And so in sports cut off, he can't play any sports. So then like you said, that the house is the gym, it's the classroom. And you know, then that there's that part, which I am so thankful that I am not quarantine with the little that I would be required to teach because there's no way, I mean, my poor child would just, I don't even know. I can't do math. I don't, I can add.

Sharon ([06:32](#)):

You can't do the core math. Is that what you're saying?

Erica ([06:40](#)):

I can not do the common core math here that, that, that a math question that was going around on social media. I mean, we all got that wrong.

Sharon ([06:49](#)):

So and you know, I think the other thing that happens is that we are reluctant to call this grief. We're reluctant to call it a grieving experience, but you and I both know that Jordan is going through a grieving experience. He's experiencing the loss of what was, he's experiencing the loss of his freedom. He is less than happy. He's reacting out of this less than happiness. And we're using Jordan as our example, but how many other kids are out there and you just touched on it for a second. But I had a beautiful friend. She had her daughter put on her prom dress last night and she got her all dressed up and she took pictures of it and posted on Facebook for everyone to see my heart just breaks for these kids that had every intention, their whole lives have been living towards this prom, going to this prom, getting the perfect dress. And she posted those pictures last night, that my friend is a grieving experience and we have to acknowledge it and label it as such.

Erica ([07:53](#)):

And I think it's important for us to share. One of the definitions we use for grief is a change of formal pattern of behavior that causes a grieving experience. Grief is not just death. This, this whole quarantine is causing a grieving experience for so many people and especially for our, our littles and our teams. And we need to talk to them about that. We need to have open conversation, open heart, to heart conversations, where we, as the parents share with them, that our hearts are sad and allow them the space to say that their hearts are sad. They're not having soccer games on Saturday. They're not having baseball games. You know, they're really struggling as well. They're having to listen to mom, try and explain these math problems like it's, this is not fun.

Sharon ([08:50](#)):

No, absolutely not fun. And the other thing is that grieving a process grieving is the process that we go through to figure out what is going on in our heart and what's missing in our heart. And I think because of all of our lives, Erica, would you agree with me that grief was just so associated with death and then bereavement and all of those things that go along with it. But I think that it was absolutely mislabeled immediately when I feel less than happy when I am grieving the loss of what was, or the change in a familiar pattern of behavior, it is the process for which I try to go into my heart and figure these things out. And it's that process that we, that grievers actually need the help with.

Erica ([09:39](#)):

That's it exactly. Because like you said, we've only ever been taught grief is death. So we don't know how to communicate about these other things. We don't know how to share from our hearts, that these, that we're having these feelings. So if we, as adults don't know how to do it, imagine that our teams really don't know how to do it, but you know, who does know how to do it? Our little, our little, no filter, they speak from their heart 90% of the time, whether we want them to or not. And so I think in times like this, we got to start taking a page from the littles and learning how to really, and truly speak from our hearts.

Sharon ([10:24](#)):

I agree with you 101 hundred and 50000000%. Is that a thing I don't know, check out. That's incorporated.

Erica ([10:32](#)):

It's a thing now.

Sharon ([10:33](#)):

Okay. Here's the deal. We know for a fact that we came here with the ability to work out the brokenness in our heart. We came here with that ability. This is one of the things that you and I teach in our program. And we know that a child between the age of four to seven can figure out the grieving experience like that. They know their heart's broken. They know what they're sad about. And they go right after it immediately. But over time as we grow and we become teenagers and we become young adults, we get told so many things like big boys don't cry. Oh honey, don't cry. Girls shouldn't cry. Let me give you a cookie. We get corrected from having emotion, the normal flow of emotion that comes out of our heart. And so we learn to push it down, ignore it and not talk about it. Here's where you come in parents right now while your kids are grieving and why they are actively grieving. You need to start talking to them, have open conversations, honest conversations. You need to use feeling words in your own heart. I am really sad. My heart is just broken. I'm devastated that you won't be able to go to prom this year. My heart just really breaks. I remember what it was like when I had my prom. And I always wanted that for you. My heart is that this is now not happening for you.

Erica ([12:00](#)):

So true. That is in such, we have to lead by example. We have to really open up so that we could get the kids talking, because if it's, and I, and I know it is agreement experience for the moms, especially for the senior parents, this was their last hoorah, and then it's been taken away from them. So now they're going to have to, you know, look forward to other amazing things, which I'm sure they will have in their lives, but they'll never forget this point in time.

Sharon ([12:28](#)):

Allow them the space to grieve it and be sad about it and be okay with it. For as long as the tapes, you may notice that some of the kids aren't coming out of that grieving experience really fast and that's okay because there may be other losses that they have they've attached in. I have two daughters and my oldest daughter got to go and second grade to the whale-watching trip. And then my my daughter followed her, got to do that as well. But in fourth grade they got to go to Sacramento to a like a pioneer camp. Well, when my daughter got to fourth grade her trip, my second daughter got to fourth grade. That trip was canceled. When my daughter got to eight, the oldest daughter got to eighth grade. She got to go to the Washington DC trip. When my second daughter came up on the Washington DC trip, nine

11 had just happened and that trip was canceled. And she still to this day talks about it. Let me tell you my friends that has been a grieving experience for her, of all the things that she didn't get a chance to have. The one thing that you can do as a parent is talk about it and allow them to space to grieve it and know that it's okay. Let it be okay with you that they are not getting a chance to experience this.

Erica ([13:46](#)):

Absolutely. And by talking about it, you're teaching them how to be in, in touch with what they're feeling, to tell their truth about how they're feeling to get, be able to receive support on it. And then you're setting them up for their future. Because if they learn this lesson, now just think of how it's going to serve them throughout their life. And they'll be that much better because they learn this lesson now.

Sharon ([14:12](#)):

I know it would be great, Erica, if you and I could come up with all of these ideas about how to do a fake prom, how did, how to put them in their dress, all of the good ideas that we could do, but those are just things that would avoid the actual grief of what's going on. And that's not an area that we work in. I wasn't in red planner for 25 years. I could probably come up with 30 ideas for you guys or more of ways that you can help your children by fixing it. But that's not what we're talking about. We're talking about you tapping into the pain that's in their heart and you leading and guiding them as the parent.

Erica ([14:47](#)):

Absolutely. Cause that is so important. I'm telling you, this has been an absolutely unusual experience for all of us, but we definitely want to pay attention to how are our teams and our littles are responding during this time. And like the last show Sharon and I did on the couples and the tension, if there's tension and there's arguing with the parents also, that's something else the littles are taking in, right Sharon?

Sharon ([15:14](#)):

Oh 100%. And that, and that's just adding to it. Then that then in the fight, they start to think that it's their fault, that they did something wrong and they start to hold onto that. Personally. Here's the best advice that I think Eric and I could give you and that's keep talking, talk as a family, talk individually, talk, one-on-one keep talking and as important, keep listening, listen, even when you don't feel like listening, if they're just standing there going over and over this story about a dream that they had, and it goes on for 30 minutes, I may be speaking from personal experience. Just keep listening and share your own story and interject whenever you can.

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

That is so important that you said that the listening, because that's the thing I think as parents, sometimes we get, and I know I'm guilty of this. Jordan would come over here and, and say 150000000%. I do a little talking and sometimes I struggle with listening. So the listening is equally as important as the talking, I think

Sharon ([16:23](#)):

A hundred percent Erica would have been, what have you been doing for Jordan to help him?

Erica ([16:30](#)):

So fortunately we live in a very rural area, so we have a lot of outside space. So he's actually been going to work outside on the property with Louis. And I think that that has been helpful for him because one, it's getting him out of the house too. It's keeping him active and, and he's getting paid. So it's like, you know, it's giving him an opportunity to earn some money. And I think that that has just been so great for him. And I'm so thankful that we have that opportunity to do that.

Sharon ([17:03](#)):

Oh man, that's so cool. We actually sat down with Jordan, the two of us and just had a conversation. And, and to be honest, he literally could not articulate exactly what it was, but he knew he was off. That was the most that he could get a, he knew something was wrong. He knew it didn't feel right, but as we talk through it, cause we did a little interview with him. He was able to go more and more to the part that's in there to all of the parents out there that are listening to this show, man, I can't even imagine what this is like for you right now. I can't even begin to imagine what your heart is going through, but you got this, you know, the right thing to do, go with your gut and lead them and guide them. They are our future.

Erica ([17:46](#)):

Absolutely. Please be patient with them, be patient with yourselves. This is just a brand new experience for, for the world. And like, that's the thing sometimes. I just want to say for us and just think it's so local, but this is global. Everyone is experiencing this all together at the same time. So absolutely be patient with and be kind.

Sharon ([18:12](#)):

Thank you friends. Have a great day.

Erica ([18:14](#)):

Thank you so much for listening. Bye friends. Bye.