

Long term Illness
Vs
Sudden Death

Erica Honoré & Sharon Brubaker

Grief Specialists

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

Erica and Sharon are sisters who began their grief journey in 2006. When Eric has 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 Eric, his oldest son, Donovan was killed in a motorcycle accident, Eric 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 friends. Welcome back. You're listening to healing starts with the heart, but show where it's all about you. Our girlfriend, our friend, our sister, and your broken heart. You may have experienced a loss, death divorce, but we are the two sisters that are bringing you the path through the true healing. My name is Sharon, and this is my amazing sister, Erica.

Erica ([01:05](#)):

Hi friends. Welcome back. We love doing this podcast. We are really trying to get a topics that are very relatable and topics that most people wouldn't associate with grief like today's topic.

Sharon ([01:22](#)):

Yeah. Hey I'm sorry. Today's topic just went out of my head. What is it called?

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

Grief and our Changing World. We have a lot on our plates as a society. We have the we're in the middle of a global pandemic. We are just in the United States, our unemployment rate or unemployment people who have filed for unemployment. It's in the millions. We have seen a civil unrest of a the unjustified killing of George Floyd and Briana Taylor and Elijah McClain. Those are the few that have been in the news lately. We are at a time where there's such divisiveness in our political arena. It's like, and I'm going to, it's not, I don't not to make light of it, but it's like the Republicans and the Democrats are the bloods, the Crips, they're a gang and they are not seeing eye to eye. And if you identify with Lynn, you're losing family members, friends, coworkers. I mean, you almost can't even say the word politics out loud anymore without a full-on role breaking out. So these are situations that in my lifetime, I never thought I would live through. And you, and I know that grief is about having pain in your heart and these things absolutely are causing people to have pain in there.

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

Well yes. And I'm going to piggyback on that with some others because it goes on. Okay. What about wearing a mask wearing public, the argument of wearing a mask? What about the simply being at your loved one side when they die? Just even being allowed to go in the hospital when someone is sick now we're not allowed to do that anymore. That was a grieving experience. The the, the simple, the, one of the most simplest, most beautiful things that we do in our lifetime is celebrate someone at their death. We usually have these big celebrations. That's all been taken away life, as we know is different. 2020 is the nightmare that we can not get out of. But I

Erica ([03:53](#)):

Think even, yeah, 2020 is terrible. And that, and we, we shared in the past grief is the cause can be caused by a normal, a change, our normal pattern of behavior. Right, right. So right now there's nothing normal about RPA.

Sharon ([04:15](#)):

You want that nightmare to end, but here's the other thing that happens. Yes. So we talked about the circumstances, you and I just pinpointed the circumstances. So I can't go to the funeral. I can't be in the hospital. My family member has COVID right now. They're suffering. I don't have my job, my extended unemployment may end. Those are the circumstances in which the grief comes about the thought of those circumstances. What do you think about those circumstances? What are the thoughts going through your head, a podcast, you and I just recorded a little bit ago. What about the why's that? Why is this happening to me? That's where the grief is. The grief is not in the circumstances. The grief is in the thought and the feelings of that circumstance, that kind of deep isn't it

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

That's very deep. So I'm just going to have another layer on that to make it even a curvier. So the grief is caused by the, the circumstance and the thoughts about the circumstance that drives the feelings, which also connect to other losses you've experienced in your life. Well, the fact that you're struggling financially, because you are filing for unemployment and both you and your spouse are both unemployed right now is connecting to your divorce you had, and the struggle you went through with that, which is also connecting to you losing your, your favorite grandma when you were in high school, all of that is connecting to each other and causing one big ball of brokenness in, and then you're having to figure out how to survive each and every day with this big ball of brokenness in you.

Sharon ([06:09](#)):

Exactly, exactly. So I think we just gave him a mouthful there, but let me just help to break it down at this time in our lives in 2020, I don't think I've met or talked to anyone that is not having an agreement experience at some point in their life today, some point in their life. And just like what you just said about grandma, that person not being here and us having to go through this without them intensifies these feelings, any emotions. Cause I can't even tell you how many sisters just have we been with and just sitting with them. And they're saying, I wish he was here. I wish she was here. She, he would help me with this. He was the one that talked me off the ledge. I don't know how to get off the ledge without him. The missing them is so deep and the pandemic is just making it worse.

Erica ([07:03](#)):

Oh my gosh, I, and I haven't you and I did a special COVID series back in April. I want to say, and that I totally thought we were going to see the end of it by now. And so the fact that we are July 25th and we're, we've gone backwards from where we should be in terms of getting an ending, there's no ending in sight for it. And now we're coming up on the school's starting to reopen and I've got to tell you, I mean, from what I experienced back in April, cause you and I shared, we were struggling our own personal struggles to now I'm in a whole new set of struggles personally, because I'm freaked out about sending Jordan back to school. And of course he's 17 and gung-ho because it's his senior year and he wants to have all the, the thrills that his senior year of high school should bring, but we're not living in a normal time.

Sharon ([08:04](#)):

And is he even going to be able to have those? I mean, just think about everything is going to be so altered, right? And all the seniors last year that didn't get their graduation that didn't get to do prom. Well this year, I guess it was this year. So going into 2021, it's going to be a lot of the same, same stuff on a different day. My personal situation is that I live with our mom who is 78. I live with my husband who is also a senior of 74. And the thought of bringing anything to them is just so overwhelming. And so we have literally, and I kid you not been quarantine since the beginning of March, my mother, since February 3rd, because we refused to allow her out. Now I'm not complaining about that, but it created a whole new sense of trying to survive, figuring out how to do the grocery, shopping, how to get to the bank, where, what can we do online, ordering things online not getting on each other's nerves, entertaining, being entertaining. And so part of the process is we've set up this new routine and our lives. And one part of that new routine is that it's so simple, but every Friday night we eat out. So one of us will go, typically me goes out to pick up the food and we do, we were trying different restaurants. It's the highlight of our week, but it's so different. It is so, so different. There've been days where we're just dying to get out. Last Sunday, we just drove to the beach just to break up the monotony. It's just a drive. We got in the car and we drove just to break up the monotony. Tony and I are trying to figure out date nights, you know, how are we going to have these date nights? And some of our date nights are just in the McDonald's parking lot, but we've attached. We would attached it and we talk about it and we share the feelings of it. We share the feelings in our heart and we've cried about it today. This morning I woke up and I miss my children. Right. I literally missed my children. I haven't seen my grandchildren personally in months. I, we have FaceTime. Thank God we have this new technology, because we're not writing letters to each other, but I miss my grandchildren. I miss my daughter, Brittany, I have not seen her or touched her or been in a room with her since February. And as things are going, I probably will not see her until next year. I haven't seen you since February.

Erica ([10:37](#)):

Right? Right. Yeah. You, the last time you were here and we had a work to do, it was in February. So it's been such a change for us because we were doing alternating one month. I was there and one month you were here. So that was also good for me when I would be going to California. Cause I got to see her mom. I haven't seen our mom and God bless her. When we FaceTimed on mother's day, I saw a patch of her forehead because I understand technology and in a corner of her forehead. So yeah, I haven't seen her. So yeah, this is, this is hard. It's hard on families. It's hard on relationships. It's hard because it's not what we're accustomed to. And that causes a sadness in our heart.

Sharon ([11:30](#)):

I have not seen my son all year. I have not. I, my grandson who is sent, who was sent home from LSU I have seen him twice. He came on mother's day and father's day, both times we had to meet him on the porch. Both of us, all of us in a mask. So I've seen him twice this year and we kept our social distancing. And so also our brother came for father's day. And for me, no, he came for Easter and mother's day and it was both on the porch. Our sister had to see my mom through the window. It is so life altering. It is so painful. As I'm telling these stories, my heart is just breaking because, and I'll tell you why my heart's breaking because I, we have each other, we have each other and we're here with each other going through this. What about the person that's in their little apartment by themselves. Right, right. What about the person who's just experienced a fresh loss or death, right?

Erica ([12:34](#)):

Yeah. And we didn't even get to go through the ritual part of beginning, the grieving process, which is the funeral, because a lot of people are being denied that, right? Because they don't have the facility

space or you have to keep it to less than 10 people. So you, who, how are you going to pick, you know, the 10, I mean obviously immediate family, but there's a lot of other people that are grieving that person.

Sharon ([13:03](#)):

And we have my family here. We have experienced three major losses. So we had a cousin who had a death by suicide and March. We had a cousin that died of cancer and we had Tony's, my husband's nephew died of cancer as well. We didn't get to go to any funerals, no celebrations. It, the two of them are still waiting to do something now. It's just extremely devastating friends, girlfriends. We know this is so hard. It is so, so hard.

Erica ([13:43](#)):

Yes. And, and the family member who died by suicide, I was able to go to be with them. And they were hoping that they would be able to have a beautiful, big celebration of life for him. Because his 50th birthday is coming up next month. And I checked in to see what the status of that was to see if I needed to make traveling plans. They said, no, because California, his numbers have gone back. And so the hope of being able to have that, I mean, so that we we've done shows, like I said, if you go back to our April shows, we cover this whole COVID series. And we talk about that. But for me personally, who has had to lay to rest my children, I couldn't imagine where I would be out of my process. If I wasn't able to do that. I couldn't imagine where I would be without having the family come and love on me and hold a space for me and hold me up. And literally literally hold me up because I needed that. Some days we haven't been able to give that to our family. And it's hard because that's who we are as a family. That's the one thing that you teach about is we, we learn how to be strong. We show up, we take over meals, we take over planning. We start organizing that's who we are as a family. And not being able to do that for our loved ones has been a challenge for us, especially for you and I, as Grief Specialists, we can't go to them. We usually are the first ones there to hold their hands. Yeah. It's cool. To not be able to do it.

Sharon ([15:25](#)):

Yeah, it is. So, so life altering. So life-changing, so here are some tips that we can give. The one thing is acknowledge and that you are grieving. Yeah. Say number one, man, I'm grieving. Wow. This is a grieving experience. The first step to recovery and to healing your broken heart is knowing that this is a grieving experience. Just saying that out loud will make a difference. Yeah, go ahead.

Erica ([15:59](#)):

I'm sorry. Don't use other words. I'm so depressed. This is causing me trouble. Making me having anxiety. No. What you're feeling is pain and sadness. Use those words. If you use the correct words, it's amazing how healing that is because you make a connection. Like you already said your thoughts, drive your feelings. You make that right connection. It's like putting two puzzle pieces that fit. And that helps me.

Sharon ([16:28](#)):

Right. And then when you say I am grieving, put your hand over your heart and see what emotions come up. I'm sad. I'm lonely. I feel anxious. I feel overwhelmed. Those are emotions that go along with the thought I am grieving. That's the number one thing. The second thing you have to do is you have to allow the feelings in. You have to allow them in. It's really simple. Just sit in it, just sit in it for five minutes and see all the things that come up that the other thing that you can do is do a Thought

Download. Just think of all of the things that go along with that sadness. And just simply write those out, write out all the things literally you and I, Erica, we just shared all the things I said, I haven't seen my children. I missed my grandchildren. I would write all those out on a thought download. I haven't seen my son all year. My grandson is in town and I can't even be with him. All of those things sit with each one of those are thoughts, but you can write them out, get them out of your head. So you're not living and spinning on those.

Erica ([17:40](#)):

Right? Absolutely take social media breaks. Take news breaks. Walk from the things that really fuel. They, they it's like pouring gasoline on a fire with the take breaks. You have to allow yourself some space. At the beginning of the COVID crisis crisis. I was waking up every morning and turning on the news and watching the numbers. And I was getting so scared that, you know, watching the, the, the way the media was explaining things, I was almost in a full-blown panic every single day that I was driving Louis crazy. And he said to me, you have to stop doing this because I just, I just to myself, I was like, if I stay informed and I watch those numbers and I can make sure that we can be safe, what I started to do. Cause I did realize I was making myself and I was making him crazy. More importantly, I stopped turning on the news in the morning. I would get up, I do my exercises and I started listening to some guided meditations. They're on YouTube. They're amazing. I started listening to them and then I could, I would turn on the news, but I would give myself a time limit, just look at the numbers, look at the map, get off. And I would get off. It helped me so much. It improved my mood. I was a lot nicer. I was a lot calmer. I'm telling you, you have to do that because the people that are sitting in front of the TV all day, or looking at social media and getting in those social media fights, you're only making yourself crazy.

Sharon ([19:22](#)):

I agree. A hundred percent. One of the things that I have picked up over the last seven weeks has been walking and I'm up to three miles now and I walk every single morning and I absolutely love it. It is. And I listened to meditation tapes that has definitely changed for me. I didn't know you were doing that. So it's so interesting that we're sharing this, but that I had to do something because I was literally going crazy within this house. The other thing that we know that is so, so utterly important is that grievors need to talk and I'm not talking about the complaining, just complaining like a broken record and just saying it over and over again. I'm talking about identifying the pain, feeling, finding the feeling that goes along with it and sharing that out loud with one other living soul, not the absolute complaining about the circumstances, but just being able to share with it. I miss my children. I hate not seeing my children. That's it saying it out loud to one another so,

Erica ([20:21](#)):

Or, or I'm scared. Yeah. I'm so scared. Yeah. I'm scared about what's going to happen with unemployment. I'm scared about what's gonna happen to me if I get it. Yeah. Those words. Yeah. I'm scared about the, if you know how our leaders are handling these things, I mean, it trickles down. We, we, the show we did, we talk about how it affects every area of your life and this, this pandemic. And this was so unrest, everything that's happening in our changing world right now will affect every area of our life. So we got to use the right words to talk about it and we don't have to fight. We don't have to argue, avoid people who don't share your opinion, avoid them. It's not worth the energy to have to argue your point of view. Your belief is your belief and you have no matter what is this.

Sharon ([21:18](#)):

Absolutely. Hey friends. We also I want to tell you just on that, Eric and I have created something called the Grievers Guide and it is the very first thing that we want to put in your hands. That absolutely breaks down grief and the definition of grief. I love that Grievers Guide was done. There's some journaling pages you can find in there. The definition of grief is in there. How to talk to your children about grief, how to talk to your children about what's going on right now, that's in there. You can find ways to have that conversation. More. So this is so special to make us Donovan's silhouette is on the front cover. And I think you guys are really feel like you're a part of our lives. If you see that, that the Grievers Guide can be found at our website at healingstartswiththeheart.com. We'd love to give it to you as a free gift. Please go there. And also also@healingstartswiththeheart.com. You can find our program, our new program that we just launched called processing the pain of grief. It's a four week program. You can find that there in the show notes below, you can find an attachment to joining our Facebook group, where we have conversations about growth grief, and we get together with all of our sisters. We have so many resources for you guys. We love you. We want to help you through this pain. We are you. We are believers. We're grieving right now. We're grieving the pandemic and COVID-19 and loss and change we're with you.

Erica ([22:51](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. We are having our own personal experiences. So we are absolutely with you and the grievers guide is an amazing resource. And I know you're going to love it. Thank you so much for joining us for our show today. And we hope to talk to you very soon.

Sharon ([23:09](#)):

Yay. Bye. Bye girlfriends.

Erica ([23:11](#)):

Bye friends.