

The Second Year of Grief

Erica Honoré & Sharon Brubaker

Grief Specialists

Sharon (00:00):

Hey girlfriends. Welcome back to Healing Starts with the Heart. It's me and Erica here with another great topic.

Erica (00:08):

Hey friends, thank you for joining us. We are getting pretty crafty with our podcast these days. So we, I know you're going to love them as we're bringing them out to you.

Sharon (00:21):

I guess she keeps calling them homemade. I don't know why, because we have all the equipment. I don't, I don't get it. But anyway, our our visual audio guy, we can't meet with them because of COVID. So we, we rigged our own home system and this is working right. Is that what you're trying to say?

Erica (00:37):

Yes. That's why I'm calling them homemade. It has left us unsupervised.

Sharon (00:44):

He's going to be like, what did you guys do?

Erica (00:47):

Well, hopefully we make him proud.

Sharon (00:50):

We'll make him proud. I do miss Fermin though. It is so easy to go in there and do our recording in his studio. Okay. Let's see. Our subject today is its second year. The second year of grief. It's huge that second year. And I don't think I, Erica, I don't know about you, but sometimes when I'm working one-on-one and clients, and even in our group, I don't mention the second year because I do it for a reason because what if their second year isn't they experienced that? I, I pretty much feel they're going to have

Erica (01:22):

It's it's you know, everyone because everyone's experience is unique and individual, it's very hard to put the thought out there before they actually have the experience. But it's very important to talk about the second year, because we, we lived it where our second year after Austin died was so much harder than the first year. Yeah. And that's because the first year we were in shock and we were so numb, we were trying to, we were literally stumbling all over each other and our feelings and our thoughts and our new normal that the first year went by getting through Christmas, getting through Halloween, getting through his birthday, getting through all the major first that when the second year came that's when the reality set in that Austin was never coming back. And it was hard.

Sharon (02:30):

Yeah. It's like at every first, every first birthday, every first Christmas, every first Halloween, we white knuckled it through it. So we grabbed on to each other and held each other as tight as we could for as long as we could. And then it's like this wave of water is coming over you. Cause you're drowning. So this wave of water's coming over you. And you're like, okay, everyone, hold on, hold on. And we just held on

and then, and then Halloween would be done. And we're like, okay, we got through that. We got through that. Okay. Here comes Thanksgiving. It's sort of felt like that for every first. And so that catapults you through that first year, plus you're so numb. You don't know where to stand. You don't know where to sit. You don't know what to eat. You're so numb trying to navigate grief. You've just been put into this new club. You starting to find out who are the other members in that club. You don't want to be in that club. So many things are going on. And then it's like, you wake up.

Erica ([03:31](#)):

Yeah. To a nightmare.

Sharon ([03:33](#)):

Yeah.

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

You wake up and you're still living the nightmare. And then it's like, like I said, reality sets in and then you're, you're stuck with the feelings of how can this be? How can he be gone? Right. Why did this happen? And it's a whole new set of waves that you have to write out because unfortunately it doesn't end

Sharon ([04:05](#)):

Erica, and I know this is, will be great for you to share. You can almost trick yourself into believing they're coming back that first year.

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

Yeah. I have had people share that when they experience loss, they would tell themselves at like, pretend like the sun was just away at college or pretend like the dad was away at work, traveling for work. Like they tried to make their minds believe something so that the, their hearts wouldn't feel the weight of the sadness that they were trying to hold that baby. But that only lasts for so long because they're not coming back.

Sharon ([04:52](#)):

Yeah. So when Donovan died and Donovan was in the national guard and he would do those weekends away, that was something that you could grab onto like, Oh yeah. Well, he's just on his, I don't know what you call it. Those

Erica ([05:08](#)):

Leave

Sharon ([05:09](#)):

He's just on his leave. Your brain actually played a trick on you. We just did a podcast on thoughts. Your brain actually tricks you a little bit and you could almost get into a comfortable state and just kind of moving along.

Erica ([05:22](#)):

That's not what you call it. I'm sorry. We don't call it leave, but I don't know what you call it. So let's just move on from the military is going to listen. I'm sorry. My brain just froze anyway. That's not the boy.

Sharon ([05:39](#)):

Oh my goodness. Good grief moments in my my mojo here, girl. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. But seriously, you, There were times where you just acted like he was on his a weekend away.

Erica ([05:54](#)):

Right! Well, and because he was, you know, he was a young adult, so he, he didn't live here, you know, right before he died. So it was like, he, I didn't see to trick myself that he was just so way at work or at his apartment, but I would be hearing from him like, he'll text me tonight when he gets home and we'll watch our show and he'll tell me his thoughts. Like, yeah. That, that, it's easy to do that because when someone's an adult, there's those gaps where you don't hear from them every single minute. Like you would a ten-year-old like Austin.

Sharon ([06:33](#)):

Well one of the things that you and I I'll quite often do, and this happens so much, a client will come in, they'll sit down and they'll say, Oh yeah, I'm just pretending like my mom's on a cruise. Oh yeah. I'm pretending like my dad is on a on a work trip. I just can't think about it. So I'm just pretending. And we always ask the same question. So how's that working out for you? And we always inevitably get the same answer. It's not exactly what they love saying that because they're trying to trick their brain.

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

They really are. But because we know grief doesn't happen in your brain, it happens in your heart. So even though you're trying to trick your brain and you're thinking these thoughts, you're feeling it in your heart, you're feeling it every minute of every day, the sadness, the absence, the void, the darkness, you feel it. And I'm speaking from experience because I felt it. And no matter how many ways I try to avoid it, the reality kept coming back to me. And the reality is it's, it's, it's cold and it's harsh and it's not forgiving. And it is overwhelming. And it's sad. But it happens that.

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

Connects or went out. I hope that got recorded.

Erica ([08:08](#)):

The second.

Sharon ([08:10](#)):

Hey, are you still there?

Erica ([08:11](#)):

Yeah, I'm here. Can you hear me?

Speaker 1 ([08:14](#)):

Erica we lost your, we lost you all of that. Yeah. We lost all of that.

Erica ([08:20](#)):

Can you hear me though?

Sharon ([08:22](#)):

I can hear you now.

Erica ([08:23](#)):

Okay. I don't know what part?

Sharon ([08:28](#)):

That chunk in there I'm going to have Fermin take that out.

Erica ([08:31](#)):

Okay. Well, what I was just saying that you try to trick your brain like grief doesn't happen in your brain. It happens in your heart. And even though you're trying to tell yourself these things and playing play mind games with yourself, your heart absolutely understands. And when you accept the reality, which is cold and unforgiving, you have to accept that there is an absence in a void in your world because your loved one is not there. And this can go with death. This can go with divorce. This can go with a breakup. This can go with the loss of a friendship. This can go with any number of the over 45 known losses that we experience as a human. It does not just apply to death, that we have to accept the reality and start to deal with the feelings. And it really happens in that second year, because in the first year, like Sharon said, we can ride those waves and we can play the games. And we just white knuckle our way through. But the second year is real. The second year's real. We cannot pretend that they're just a way of working. We can't pretend they're on a sleepover at summer camp. We can't pretend that they are traveling for work. It's real, they're gone and they're not coming back.

Sharon ([10:05](#)):

Here's the other thing, Erica, we, you and I have met clients and we know clients today. They didn't ever did their work. They didn't do their work. The first year, the second year, it got worst. And we've met people that have been 30 years later. And it's as if they're living it day in and day out, they live in the misery because they never did the work. They never healed their broken heart. They never had the hot, the knife that was stabbed clear through their soul removed. And that's where we are here to help you. We absolutely have the tools to help you remove the knife out of your heart.

Erica ([10:43](#)):

You know what? Those people have, the ones that come to us after 30 years that are still actively grieving. We call it active grief. When you talk to someone who's lost occurred very long ago and they act like it just happened yesterday. The ones that are actively grieving, they have chronic health issues because grief will find a way grief will affect you physically. It will manifest itself as anxiety or panic related issues. Grief will find a way and it will Rob you of your joys in life. And the longer you push off doing your work and mending your heart.

Sharon ([11:25](#)):

It will Rob you.

Erica ([11:26](#)):

Yeah. It will Rob you and it will steal your time. Next thing you know, where have you, where have those, those 30 years you look back and you don't even realize that 30 years have gone by, you went from entering the second year. And next thing you know, you blink and it's 30 years later and it's true. We've seen it. We're not just making a hypothetical. We've seen it. And it's sad when that happens.

Sharon ([11:56](#)):

Hey, friends, I want to thank you for joining us. Please look for us on our website at healingstartswiththeheart.com. There you can download our ebook. You can get in touch with Erica and I, you can set up a mini session. That's healingstartswiththeheart.com. Thank you so much for joining us by girlfriends friends.

Erica ([12:13](#)):

Thank you.