

# Grieving Our Changing Body

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

Erica and Sharon are 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 can 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 Shannon are committed to sharing their experiences of love, loss, and healing through this podcast. Now your Grief Specialists, Sharon and Erica.

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

Have you ever thought about this, Eric and I talk all the time about the different types of losses that we can grieve in our heart? One of those losses is our body image. Maybe I've gained a lot of weight and you can't get that weight off. Maybe I get teased about being too thin all the time, and I want to gain weight, but it's just not happening for me. Maybe we are missing a body part. Maybe we're fitting our hair's thinning and we're losing our hair. Maybe our body is just changing and we're really not happy with the way things are. Did you know that you could truly grieve your body?

Erica ([01:25](#)):

I love this topic because I feel like I have been, excuse me, personally, struggling with this with a changing body. And I didn't, I honestly didn't make the connection until we did the midlife prime show, which I love, because I think as women, we grow up thinking, you know, once you hit a certain age, then it's over for you. It's all downhill and it's absolutely not. But when your body, my body physically most specifically I'm having trouble with a hip. I have a tear in the lining of my hip, which has caused me a lot of pain and I'm not able to be as active as I normally am. That has caused a grieving experience for me because I am struggling with that. Like, I'm sad that I can't physically do things that I would normally be doing now. And it, it really, really has been causing a grieving experience for me.

Sharon ([02:27](#)):

So, what we're actually talking about is grieving the imperfections that we see in not what other people's doing, but what we see. So, we put this label on that. This is not perfect. This is less than perfect. And I know for a lot of women our age, and I'm putting you in that group that this five, 10 extra pounds that we get gather and gain, you know after our changes starts to can just hang on and make us feel less than that's where I'm bringing it to like this constant need to diet lose weight. And then we're good until three o'clock. And then we fall off the bandwagon. That is, it can be a true grieving experience that, that

happens to our body, that we literally can change the way we're walking in and seeing things out there. There are a lot of women that I meet those one or two areas of their body image is affecting them big time.

Erica ([03:34](#)):

Yeah. And in this is so common of a thing, because when you look at what we have out there, like, look at, look at Christie Brinkley, isn't she in her sixties. I mean, she looks flawless. They have these people that are in the forefront J lo is now in her fifties and she looks better than ever. Someone else just came out recently that that is of significant age, and they look just amazing. But what happens to us? The commoners, I'll say the people without the personal chef and the personal trainer and the, the doctor that monitors your eating habits and nutrition, when you don't have a team, a glam squad or an, a team of people to make two's job, it is to make sure you look like that. What are you going to do? What are we supposed to do when we could try Quito? And it makes us feel good for the first week. And the second week, all you want to do is eat sugar and sweets. You know what I'm saying? It's like we constantly are fighting a loss, lose battle against ourselves because we don't have the team whose job it is to make sure we look amazing. A hundred percent of the time

Sharon ([04:48](#)):

We see this a lot in young women, teens, young girls, it is truly a grieving experience when they are trying to, they compare, we compare our body. I mean, I, I don't even know how long I've been comparing my body. First of all, I was spending for 90% of my life, I guess that's my 90% of my life. I was very, very, I was very thin, and I go back to being a young girl and this topic brings this up for me. And I'm sorry that I'm connecting this to weight, but apparently, I'm grieving this about myself now that I've started talking about. But when I was really young all of my uncles used to call me skinny Minnie, because I was so thin. Hey, skinny mini. I remember going to daddy one day crying and telling him to make them stop. Dang. I wish that wasn't my problem right now. Daddies tell him to stop calling me skinny mini. But on the other token, I had a sister that was plump, and they gave her a nickname. What's her was the nickname of girl name. They called her Charlie. And she hated it because she felt like they were making fun of her weight. Right. And so, when they were calling her, so she didn't like that and she'd go, I'm not Charlie. She would tell him. And now it's something she's embraced, and she absolutely loves. But think about that. The body image starts way back. Then it becomes a grieving experience in our heart. How would it have been different if, if daddy would have said, oh honey, I think that there it's a loving term. Tell me what you don't like about it. Tell me what you don't like about it. What if he had just taken five minutes and just asked me what a difference would it have made in my life? What a difference it made in not taking that to heart. Right? So that, that was the image that came up for me.

Erica ([06:44](#)):

Well, and, and if that scenario would have happened, if he would have had that conversation with you, like how amazing to be able to acknowledge one, that you're having a sadness and a brokenness in your heart, and to get you to talk through it, giving you a tool set that you didn't have before, right. And call it something that is upsetting you and giving you the freedom to give those emotions, voice, and learn how to express, why that was affecting you in that manner. That would have been awesome. Unfortunately, I think most of the people we know in our world, they never get those lessons in their young life. And that's why we're all struggling. And we're, you know, a massive mess of heartbreak and sadness because we didn't learn those tools as young people. And we're trying to learn and navigate them as adults.

Sharon ([07:31](#)):

In the same token. I'm sorry to cut you off. Cause what I, on the same token, why is you experiencing, I'm going to ask you, why is you're experiencing a change in your body and the pain in your hip, so emotional for you?

Erica ([07:49](#)):

Well, because like I said, we're, I, we have this I feel like a new bar has been set when I was in my teens being 50. And I'm not 50 yet just for the record, but I'm close to, I felt like, you know, they were, I don't know how to say it. You were allowed to be frumpy at 50. Now it, now that I'm approaching it, we're not allowed to be frumpy at 50. And not to say that we should be, you should be however you feel. But you know, they, this new bar has been set that I got to get out there still and be able to do somersaults and backflips and run marathons and things. And I'm not, my body is not allowing me to do that. So, I feel like I am not where I should be. I should be on this new standard of, of, you know, 50 and fabulous is the new thing. It's not frumpy. And 50. I felt like when we were young, it was frumpy and 50 now it's 50 and fabulous. I have to still be fabulous. I can't be limited by my physical abilities. I got to get out there and own it and still wear a bikini.

Sharon ([09:04](#)):

So, you're just grieving the fact that you can't drop it, like it's hot?

Erica ([09:11](#)):

I mean, I can drop it. I just can't get it back. That's the part.

Sharon ([09:19](#)):

That's the part that keeps hanging up the drop-in is no problem. But it's a real thing when we see the changes that happen. What about the well, like for me? Okay, so one of the things that is, this is my skin. Yeah. I'm going to call it sagging, but it's changing like my appearance changing and literally thinking about, okay, wow. I got to really see if I can get

somebody to help me with this neck and the crow's feet by my eyes. Those are all grieving experiences. When we go through that, the other thing that happens is we try to start covering them up, try to start covering that stuff up because of the way we are feeling instead of slowing down for one minute and just feeling right or living in it or being in it

Erica ([10:09](#)):

And learning. Unfortunately, I feel we're not given the tools how to embrace it. You know, like sometimes we say, you know, we are sorry, tongue tie. We say all the time, grief sucks. And then we turn around and we tell our friends that we work with embrace the suck. And I feel like this is something as women, we need to start learning how to embrace the changes, embrace the looser skin, embrace the faulty hip, embrace the 20 pounds. I mean, I see women that are heavier set-in bikinis and I'm like, go sister, I love it. More power to you. Will I, do it? No. And then I'm like, why, why do I limit myself? But I'm ready to cheer on someone else.

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

Yeah. You don't want to see this in a bikini, but we also have to jump up, get off the bandwagon of dieting body image, changing lives. Because I also see, I think the thing that's changed and this is some of the things that Pam and I were talking about, which is going to be in our podcast this Saturday is that there's so many women out there that have laid the past path for us. Like we're seeing older actresses out there we're seeing. And I there's, I love Tiktok. I see a lot of women trying on their bikini's and be like, do you think I can pull this off? Like literally asking strangers can I, and I love when they have the energy while I don't care what you say, I'm doing it anyway.

Erica ([11:54](#)):

Right.

Sharon ([11:54](#)):

Jumping off the bandwagon could be, would be really quick. Great. Could you imagine if we had a group of 50 something murals and we just grieved our body image, which would be.

Erica ([12:07](#)):

I would love that I would love that. Cause it's not something that we freely talk about. And if we talk about it, we do it in a superficial kind of way, like, oh yeah. You know, you throw out the things that you don't like about yourself before anyone gets a chance to comment on them. You know what I mean? And then you want to move on, but you don't really sit there and talk. Like, I have cried a lot about this hip. I have cried. There was a day Lewis really needed my help during the snowpocalypse. And I went outside and tried to, he jumped the fence. So, then I thought I could jump the fence and he actually landed on his feet. I landed on my face because my hip gave out. And then the rest of the day I was sitting in a chair in pain, and I couldn't, I couldn't help him. And I was so distraught over that because he

needed my help. You know, Jordan and Kayla are in LA land, and they were grieving the loss of the internet and I needed to be there to really help Louis. And I couldn't. And I, I cried, I cried cause it, it made me sad that there's going to be things that he's going to need me to help him with. And I can't because I have limitations with this.

Sharon ([13:18](#)):

Right. So, one of the things that we do with grief, and we help people through grief is that we absolutely take out that relationship. Right. So, we take out the relationship and we hold it as in a ball in front of us. And we look at, we turn it over and we look through it and we look inside of it, and we look at every aspect of it and I'm trying to help people understand how we would grieve a change of a body image. We would hold that as if it were a relationship. Our relationship to our body image is something that we have personally. So, we would take that out and we would look at it and part of that, looking at it and looking through it and looking around it would come up this part of our hip and how has that hip served me? And how has that hip let me down. And how has that hip this hip, the pain in my hip changed me. And how has it changed me as a woman? And what am I losing? Because I don't have this completely working hip any longer. And we complete our relationship with that hip to the pain, loneliness, and isolation that it is causing us. That's how we grieve something that is intangible. That really is other than the loss of a death.

Erica ([14:37](#)):

And that, and that is so important because people don't think that that's possible. You know, we, we just did the hierarchy of grief and that was something I wanted to mention. I forgot. But there are a lot of intangible things in our lives that we need to grieve a loss of trust, a loss of safety, a loss of a hip.

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

Getting a diagnosis, getting a cancer diagnosis. What about getting a cancer diagnosis going through all the treatment and it hits you at the end of it, you know, that changed the trajectory of your life. And now forever, you're going to have this subconscious thought about where your health is, right? So, that could be something that can be great friends, grievous, any loss that occurs in our heart, anybody image that changes for us, be it diet weight, loss, weight, gain hair loss diagnosis. Those are all the things that we're talking about right now, which I want to tell you is really deep. It is not superficial. It's completely deep.

Erica ([15:41](#)):

It is deep. And that's why we need to start speaking our truth about it. Because when we make the true statements about ourselves and how we really feel, we can release some of that pain and pressure that we're holding ourselves under, because we were scared to speak our truth. We have to tell the truth about ourselves, always and acknowledge that these feelings are real.

Sharon (16:03):

Erica, I also want to make the connection back to this. Let's say you're having a problem with body image or you're having a problem with your hip. And then you experience a loss, a death, a divorce, a breakup of a romantic relationship, or you lose your job. Guess what? Just came to the forefront. Two things can happen in one will come to the forefront and start aggravating you even more or to you push it so far down. You don't even acknowledge that you need to take care of this area in your life. And then by the time you go back to take care of it because you're, so you've been so grieving so deeply, it's in worse condition than it was before. The truth is we've got to call it all out, whatever it is, we have to address it. And we have to verbalize it. That's the key is really verbalizing.

Erica (16:49):

Yeah, absolutely. Otherwise, we're not going to be able to move through it. And that's what we say. You can't get over your grief, but you can go through it and grow through it. And by doing the work, acknowledging the pain and giving voice to those emotions that you're carrying in your heart are going to help you grow through your grief.

Sharon (17:06):

So, you're going to grieve your hip sister.

Erica (17:08):

I'm completely going to grieve my hip. I'm sick of this.

Sharon (17:11):

I really think you should set it down and look at it. And I know a great grief specialist that will probably help you

Erica (17:18):

Do you know someone?

Sharon (17:20):

Yeah. Okay. So let me leave you with a couple of tips. Number one, call it out for what it is. If you're having a body image issue in one area, call it out for what it is. Number two, when I say call it up, shared verbally with one other person, I think this is grief. I think the struggling with my weight I'm actually grieving because you could actually be grieving your addiction to the food too. So, or your lack of wanting to eat. That's the other thing, call it out for what it is. Here's the other thing, share it with one other person and sit down and write out everything, do a brain dump on it. What do I mean by Brenda? I want you to get a pencil and a piece of paper, and I want you to write at the top hip. And then I want you to sit there and think about your hip. And I just want you to write out everything that comes to mind regarding that hip. That's the perfect first place to start the perfect first place.

Erica ([18:20](#)):

Yes. And when you're writing, you absolutely can speak your truth because it's just you and the paper. There's no one else in the room. So, you can connect and be really honest and say the things that you've had left unsaid in your heart for a long time.

Sharon ([18:35](#)):

Wow. I just thought about something. I mean, what about someone who's struggling with the, the hip issue? Let's say, for example, I'm using your example and then they have to go to a cane. That's a huge agreement experiences in your health. What if you change in your health? What if you have to have surgery, all of those things, those are all the things that should be on the paper. Even the fact that you hate the change should be on the paper. Everything you can think of should be on that paper, just so you're at least acknowledging it. Because a lot of times we're having this grieving experience about a part of our body, and we haven't even acknowledged it yet. Right? So, friends, I hope this helped to understand and be open to changes happen. And when a change happened, it can absolutely cause agreement, experience.

Erica ([19:19](#)):

And sadly, the changes are inevitable. If they're going to happen, whether we want them to or not so better to prepare for them, learn how to embrace the suck about the changes, and then take the steps to deal with it

Sharon ([19:32](#)):

Leaned into this. My friends, thank you so much

Erica ([19:35](#)):

By friends. Thank you.

Erica ([19:37](#)):

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 podcast. We hope you enjoyed this episode. We want to let you know for more information; you can go to our website at [healingstartswiththeheart.com](http://healingstartswiththeheart.com). There you will find not only today's podcast, 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 myself, 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 friend.