

Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules
Episode #158: When You SHOULD Disappoint People

Amy: You know we've had squirrel stories and now we've got bunny stories. Barry was taking out the trash the other night and he says, like, literally 3 feet from him he hears [makes noise]

—

Cheri: What?

Amy: and thunk. It was a huge deer! He said I could have reached out and touched it. It ran right by him and into our neighbor's yard. We had a deer with a fawn in our yard the other day.

Cheri: Awww!

Amy: But, you know, we live in a neighborhood. It's nuts, but it scared Barry.

<Laughter>

Cheri: I would think so. Oh, my goodness.

Amy: We have a robin who's built her nest on our front porch. I mean, it's just, yeah, it's like a zoo around here and at your house, too, skunks and moles.

Cheri: Yeah. We haven't had any skunks for a while, and Daniel sealed up the one remaining hole that we are aware of so it's all good.

Okay, so you know we have to start out today with me asking you what you are doing all up in my business this week.

Amy: [Laughs] This is the funniest thing! It's like, why is our book kicking our tushies? Why? We wrote it, Cheri!

Cheri: Well you know, I feel embarrassed, because I was re-reading your chapter—well at least I thought I was re-reading it, like I thought I'd read it before, like I thought I was listening when I sat in your house and you read it out loud to me, like, I don't think I was multitasking that time—but I was underlining it and I'm like, "Holy Cow! This is exactly what I don't want to hear today, but I really, really need to hear." So [groans] I guess this is where I say thank you, I think?

Amy: You're welcome, and I'm proud. [Laughs]

Cheri: [Laughs] Well, this is Cheri Gregory—

Amy: And I'm Amy Carroll.

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Cheri: —and you're listening to Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules. The podcast that equips you to lose who you're not, love who you are, and live your ONE life well!

Amy: Speaking of tushy-kicking—

Cheri: [Snorts]

Amy: —I have a little excerpt [chuckles]—I said page seventy-two last week, but also page ninety. [Laughs]

Cheri: [Chuckles]

Amy: It's so fun to get to do this because writing a book on your own is misery because you really, it would be too horrible to brag on yourself this bad, but I just love bragging on you! [Chuckles] So anyway [...]

Cheri: So what did I write on page ninety? Am I supposed to remember?

Amy: We're transitioning into the Love Who You Are section. So we're finished with the Lose Who You're Not for this series of episodes and now we're going to move into the Love Who You Are, and you just have this wonderful chapter on loving your uniqueness. One of the things that you identify as an obstacle to loving your uniqueness is over-authorizing people in your life.

Cheri: Hmm.

Amy: Giving them too much power in your life, and on page ninety you said, "Many people who do not matter have had too much authority over my life." Whew! Amen sister.

"They've had authority about my identity, my worth, my actions, my inactions. I remember the difference between expert and authority from a class I'm taking, and expert is someone who knows a lot while an authority is someone we actually listen to. This further deepens my concern over giving the wrong people so much authority in my life. I've listened to far too many people who didn't even know me."

Cheri: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Amy: Woo! I think all of us can think about that, so I want to ask the listeners to pause for a minute and think about, "Who have you over-authorized in your life? Who have you given too much authority to in your life?"

I've been thinking about, who have I given too much authority to? I've talked about the unhealthy church situation I was in in college.

I said leaders in a close-to-cultish church I gave too much authority to.

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Cheri: Mmhmm.

Amy: I could think of a few friends along the way that I gave too much authority to; they were people in the end who did not have my best interests at heart. But you know the last one I put down you didn't put in your chapter, Cheri, and it was the voice in my own head.

Cheri: [Chuckles]

Amy: It's the insecurities that tend to overwhelm and wash over me that I've given too much authority to. But your solution is so amazing. It's to dis-appoint or un-authorize those people or those voices. So Cheri, I want to turn the question on you, because I know I was supposed to talk about this, but I want to know some 'how'. So how have you, when you were writing this, what were you thinking? And how have you experienced even after the writing—what have you done to dis-appoint people in your life?

Cheri: Well, I'm actually in the midst of it right now. It'd be so nice if we could write these things, and it would just be evidence of our complete transformation and we could put that check and we're done with that.

Amy: Yes!

Cheri: I want to be an expert in this, Amy. Really. I do. I don't want to be an authority, I don't care if people listen to me or not. I just want to be an expert and be done, if the truth could be told.

Amy: [Laughs] Yeah.

Cheri: But I'm in the middle of something right now that I'm not, I'm learning something I'm not particularly good at and I'm just astonished anew. And I know it's those internal voices like you said—For me it's that inner critic I always say my inner critic always rides shotgun, front seat, yammering away. My big fear is being a disappointment. Being *a* disappointment. I don't know if you ever saw the movie or read the book of *The Tale of Desperaux* and his mother always said, "Such the disappointment, such the disappointment!"

Amy: [Chuckles] Wow.

Cheri: I'll tell you that runs through my head. It's even kind of a family joke when some—you know, when I make food that flops, which is frequently—'oh, such the disappointment.' But I can joke about it. But really, at a heart level, it is a lingering terror that, "Oh my goodness, I'm not good at this. I thought I could do it, but I'm not doing it very well; ergo, I am such the disappointment to these people." So, for me, it is being so important, and I know it seems counterintuitive that out of a fear of being a disappointment what I actually need to do is dis-appoint people. Of course, let's be clear again, this is all inside our own heads. Again, I am not saying walk around and point the finger and say, "I disappoint you, I disappoint you, I disappoint you."

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Amy: [Chuckles] I hereby, like a scepter that you lay on people.

Cheri: [Chuckles] Yes, as much fun as that sounds some days. But really what it is inside my own head and own heart I'm like, "Okay, I'm afraid of disappointing this person, of completely letting them down, of not being who they thought I was, and thus I am frozen in fear and doing nothing." Which, by the way, guarantees I will be a disappointment. But, inside my own head, to say, "Look, they're not the ultimate authority. I am going to disappoint them from that, that seat of power, from the position of God, and I'm going to move forward in obedience." Because God has called me to do this, He's going to walk me through — I mean, we've just spent time talking about dealing with failures, flipping our flops. I mean, and this is not a moral issue, this is just me needing to gain skill at something I'm not good at. And at fifty-two I want to be good at everything and I don't want to anything to ever be hard again. Wah! Yeah. So part of growing up . . .

Amy: It kind of makes me think about these days my phone lights up multiple times a day because I have learned that if I need to remember to do something I must set a reminder.

Cheri: Mmhmm.

Amy: So it's almost like we need to set a reminder in our brains that when we get in this frozen position of fearing that we're disappointing someone, we need a reminder. Is this person really an authority? Have you over-authorized them? So it's more of an internal, mental thing.

Cheri: I love that concept of over-authorizing. I wish that had been in the book. That's something new. I like that. You know, some people do have a certain amount of authority, but we've got to be careful not to over-authorize them. That's very practical.

All right, girl, so last week, you said my Chapter 6 was messing with you. So I have to tell you that this week your Chapter 9 is totally messing with me. I pulled a couple of things that I highlighted and put stars all around it and considered tearing the page out of the book, but I thought that was probably pretty immature as well. [Chuckles]

Amy: [Laughs] It's like the Thomas Jefferson Bible where he just cut out the parts he didn't like. You can do that to *Exhale* now; it's out and official.

Cheri: [Laughs] I didn't know that about Thomas Jefferson. That's hysterical.

Amy: Yeah.

Cheri: Oh my goodness! Here's what you said in the book and I am not cutting it out: Our difficult circumstances "draw us to Jesus and ... make us dependent on Him." And I was like, "Oh that sounds so good. I guess that's what I'm supposed to do" as opposed to what I actually do, which I'm going to tell you in a moment. And then you say, "Loving ourselves — every piece of our story, not just the easy parts — is part of loving our Creator." And what hit me so hard is that my response to difficult circumstances has been to often to hand over authority to people

that I think can change my story.

Amy: Oooh.

Cheri: It's like I go rummaging for the receipts so I can return my story because I don't like it. You know, it's not the whole story, it's just a few specific parts, but as I was thinking about this, this morning, it reminded me of a really good quote I saw a few years ago: "ENVY is wishing to opt out of my own process and opt into someone else's end result."

Amy: Ohhh.

Cheri: You want to guess who said that?

Amy: Who? They're really smart.

Cheri: That was me. Six years ago. [Laughs]

Amy: [Laughs] Don't you hate it when your own words come back to haunt you?

Cheri: My own words come back to bite me, and I'm like [clears throat] this is what I'm doing when I hand over authority to people who I think can change my story, so I can get some other some other end result instead of going through the process, instead of loving the process as part of my story. So clearly I still have a lot of growing to do in this area. So, there might be another listener out there—I'm just going to say the rest of this episode is going to be all about me. Help me out, girl.

Amy: [Laughs] Well, it was interesting because I referenced an interview I had that asked me what my favorite chapter was to write and then they asked me what was my hardest chapter to write. This was the hardest chapter by far.

Cheri: Mmhmm.

Amy: And it was a hard chapter, because, in the end it's really about gratitude for things that are hard. Well, who wants to hear that? I mean I didn't want to write that because I don't want to have to live that, and you guys don't want to hear that.

Cheri: That's what gift receipts are for! So you can return the stuff you don't want.

Amy: Exactly. Exactly. But this was the chapter that in the end that I loved. It may be one of my favorites, because I got to reconnect with an old friend that's living this incredibly well. She's probably one of my oldest friends and her name's Jackie. Jackie walked through—she has walked through—a really, really difficult cancer journey that you know some people with cancer we don't see the results of their cancer journey, but for Jackie you see the results of her

cancer journey as she lives in chronic pain now. So, she was really gracious—she told me on the phone the other day we talked, we’ve talked since our meeting just the other day. She said, “Amy, I wanted to give you that picture.” See, I couldn’t ask for the picture because that would be icky, but she said I want to take a picture with you with the book. She told me later, “I wanted to give you that picture so people could see what you had written about.” Which, I thought, what a generous gift to us, to all of us. So if you go on Facebook or Instagram my accounts—my personal accounts—you can see a picture with me and Jackie.

Cheri: We’ll go ahead and link it in the show notes as well.

Amy: Okay. Her story is so incredible, because she’s walked through such hard things, but her gratitude has become fortitude. Her gratitude has become her strength. And everybody around her sees it. Like, we had become very disconnected over time, but watching her Facebook feed while she was walking this journey, reading her caring bridge notes—it has transformed me. It has really made me look at things differently.

So, last month was a banner month for the Carroll’s.

Cheri: [Giggles] Yes!

Amy: Can I just say—there was graduation, there was a very happy wedding, and my oldest son got a full-time job—by the time the full-time job came I wanted to announce it and celebrate it with him, but I was like, “Hey, Anson, people are really, they’re going to kind of hate us now...” [laughs].

Cheri: [Laughs]

Amy: This has been a really amazing month!

Cheri: Too much good news!

Amy: [Laughs] I know! I know, right? It’s easy to be grateful in that kind of a month, isn’t it?

Cheri: Yeah. Sure.

Amy: But let’s be real. Every month is not that kind of month. We all have banner months, here and there, but life is kind of tough. And sometimes life is excruciatingly hard. So how do we find gratitude about the hard things? Instead of turning in the receipt for our life story, how do we cash in?

Cheri: Mmm.

Amy: Cash in! And the only is to go back to what we talked about in the last episode: is that we let the Redeemer redeem it. We let Him flip our life story. We let gratitude towards Him become our fortitude. We let our trials train us.

Cheri: Mmm!

Amy: He has a purpose for all this. It's so hard to see in the midst of it sometimes.

Cheri: So that segues really well into the scripture you picked for this episode.

Amy: Which is Exodus 20:3, "You shall have no other gods before me."

Cheri: Whew!

Amy: I know, right? When I started thinking about this, the problem with giving other people too much authority, and, kind of, having our own story on a pedestal, is that both of those places can become idolatry.

Cheri: Mmhmm.

Amy: Ooh! Even as I said that I felt this really sharp pain in my heart [laughs]. That those things can become idolatry, and God says, "Nope, I have to be first in your life; everybody else is very, very secondary. I hold the authority, and I hold your story. I'm really sorry if you don't like it, but I'm telling you, it's part of showing my glory to the world." That's tough sometimes.

Cheri: Yeah. All right, so what's the bad rule that we're breaking with this episode?

Amy: Other people or sad circumstances can disqualify me. 'Cause I think that's, in the end, we don't want to disappoint or be disqualified.

Cheri: In Chapter 9, you do such a beautiful job of unpacking the story of the Cannonite woman - that was a hard story. I mean I've not touched that one with a ten-foot pole.

Amy: Oh yeah.

Cheri: Readers, so listeners, if you haven't gotten *Exhale* yet—Chapter 9! You need it for Chapter 9, and if you've gotten it and you haven't gotten to Chapter 9 yet, pull out your highlighters! You'll absolutely love it.

What is the truth? The fact we can focus on.

Amy: God alone writes my story and qualifies me.

Cheri: So true! So for me the grit in all of this is: sticking with my story. It is so tempting for me to pull out the red pen and try to edit it. God is the author, and He has not asked me to be His proofreader. Who knew? Yeah, I think I'm just going to stop right there.

Amy: I'm gonna sit with that for a minute. God is the author, and He hasn't asked me to be His proofreader. Wow. That's powerful. Well, I kind of stole from Ann Voskamp, because I was thinking about her book *One Thousand Gifts*, and she says, "It's all grace." And her book is about gratitude. Gratitude is the habit I'm working to cultivate in every single season of my life. Because if God is there—and He is—then if we'll just look up from the hard circumstances, we can always find something to be grateful for as we watch Him at work.

Cheri: We hope you've enjoyed episode #158 of Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules!

Amy: Make sure to stop by our website: gritngracegirls.com/Episode158. There you'll find our transcript and this week's Digging Deeper Download.

More information about *Exhale* small groups is coming, but one thing you should know is if you buy ten books for your *Exhale* small group, you'll receive ALL the recordings of our sessions from the Grit 'N' Grace girls getaway... INCLUDING Cheri's whole teaching about dis-appointing and in that teaching she unpacks the story of the man born blind and let me just tell you there were some extras that aren't even in the book and there was not a dry eye in the place. It's an amazing teaching. All you have to do is submit your receipt with the sale of the ten books at: orders@exhalebook.com.

Cheri: For today: GROW your grit, EMBRACE God's Grace. And when you run across a bad rule? You know what to do! Go right on ahead and...

Amy & Cheri: Break it!

Outtakes

Cheri: All right for me the grit in all of this: sticking with MY story. And not pulling out [cat meowing] [Laughs] What if I don't want my story to include a meowing cat who threw up her entire breakfast this morning?

Amy: [Laughs] Ew!!

Cheri: [Chuckles] Don't worry I already cleaned that up. [Clears throat] Dusty, you're fine. [Pause] So for me the grit in all of this is: sticking with my story.