

Grit 'n' Grace — THE PODCAST

End-of-2021 Bonus-sode #2:

3 Ways to Make 2022 a Creative New Year

Cheri Gregory

Hey, this is Cheri Gregory.

Amy Carroll

And I'm Amy Carrol,

Cheri Gregory

and you're listening to Grit 'n' Grace —

Amy Carroll

THE PODCAST that helps you to lose who you're NOT, love who you ARE, and live your ONE life well.

Cheri Gregory

Well, friends, we are thrilled to welcome back Kathi Lipp —

Amy Carroll

co-author, with Cheri, of a brand new devotional book.

Cheri Gregory

It's called An Abundant Place: Daily Retreats for the Woman Who Can't Get Away.

Amy Carroll

You two wrote An Abundant Place during a global pandemic — not exactly the word that comes to mind ... "abundance" is not the word that comes to mind about the last 24 months. So what was that like for you? And what did you learn from the process?

Kathi Lipp

Oh, my goodness ... Well, first of all, thanks for having me back, you guys. You guys are so much fun.

Kathi Lipp

I will say ... I had to really dig deep. Because we were making all sorts of promises in this book that we need to authentically live out for ourselves. And yeah, you know, it's easy to feel abundant when you can, you know, go out and get a latte. And you can, you know, go go to a bookstore. And think back to when we were writing this: none of that was happening. Like we didn't know what was ... we didn't know what the situation was ... it was it was all sorts of confusing.

Kathi Lipp

And let me just say I started out writing this devotional not while I'm here at The Red House in the mountains and everything. I started writing this at my mom's house, in her closet while Roger was

upstairs working. Like I couldn't even tippity-tap. So like, I had to say, "Okay, where does my abundance lie? Does it? Does it lie in the circumstances in what's surrounding us? Or do we get to that deeper place?"

Kathi Lipp

And so it's this balance, because I want to appreciate the abundance that's around me. We're in the middle of a pandemic, and I have enough food. I can make coffee every morning. You know, my mom lives in not a gorgeous place, but there's outdoors — like there's so many good things. But also, there's some really hard things. And you know, in the midst of this pandemic — and I write about it in *An Abundant Place* — we lost Roger's mom to COVID. And where is the abundance in tragedy? Where is the abundance in seeing your kids in really hard places? Where does my hope lie? And if it lies in the circumstances, or even in the vaccine, or anything like that ... my hope can only land in Christ.

Kathi Lipp

And so that's where we had to get to. And it really is tearing down some of the notions of let me just say it American Christianity, and saying, "What do I really believe? Who really is my strength? Who really is the One that I need to run to in the midst of this?"

Kathi Lipp

And I'm very fortunate, I have good friends, I have a great husband, I've got terrific kids. But when you're in the midst of a crisis, it's not enough. And so this was quite a struggle for me.

Cheri Gregory

I struggled with the writing, I was not one of those people for whom the pandemic unleashed untold creativity. It was the exact opposite. The details are not necessary right now.

Cheri Gregory

But what I finally came to recognize was everything was taking me about 10 times longer than usual. And I'm used to being a fairly high productivity person, and my productivity was way, way down. And I needed about 10 times as much help. And I don't like asking for help. But I was grateful that over the years, I have learned to ask for help because I recognized it sooner. I think I asked for it a little sooner.

Cheri Gregory

One of the things we did with this book, which we've done with past books is we had a manuscript development team. And so whereas Kathy's devotions, were going to the team pretty much completed, I was sending them scraps, I was sending them messes, I was sending them ... and I got back sometimes some brutal comments, like, "Cheri, you can't use that verse. You're pulling it completely out of context; you can't use God's Word that way." And I was really grateful for that. Like, I mean, I kind of felt like like Moses with people lifting up my arms and keeping me going and giving me clarity, because not only would they say things like "You can't use that verse" they'd say things like, "You might want to explore the following three to five verses ... " and then I would take the time to immerse and be like, Oh, okay, you're right here.

Cheri Gregory

So the process was probably the hardest I've gone through as an author, and I'm really, really — I hope it's okay to say — proud of the end result. Not because of me, but because there was a stage where for some of my devotions, I was like, these aren't going to work at all ... like I was either too tired to put a pretty bow on top of them or I was ... the thing I tried not to do was to claim things that weren't already true in my life. Like, I wasn't going to say I'd had victory in an area that I hadn't actually experienced victory, I can't do that. And so having that massive amount of support that kind of pulled me, at least, over the finish line was huge. I mean, these were people who were being Jesus with skin on through Zoom, through Facebook, you know, through all the digital ways that we do things.

Amy Carroll

Well, I love Cheri, though, that you always describe yourself as a collaborator. And you had to lean into that in a whole new way to be creative in this situation. So as we go into a new year, what advice would you give a woman who wants to pursue a creative project — like writing — but is feeling worn out from the past couple of years?

Kathi Lipp

Oh, yes, yes. Because let's admit it: many of us are worn to the nub.

Kathi Lipp

And I've asked for forgiveness for this, and I have been forgiven by those who love me: Early on in the pandemic .. you know, people tell me all the time, "Oh, I wish I had the time to write a book!" And like, "I am carving this time out of like, I'm grabbing nips, and nabs!" And so I reposted something that said, "Hey, if you haven't finished your novel, yet, maybe it wasn't time that you were lacking."

Kathi Lipp

And okay, it may have been coming from a slightly snarky place, because of all the people who have who thought the only barrier to them writing was time. And I still stand by that.

Kathi Lipp

But I also understand that you need more than time, and a lot of us lost our creativity. We lost our drive. You know, some of us were not in great healthy situations in the homes that we were quarantined to. We all have these different things. I think you take your example from Cheri, like Cheri and I both did extreme things to get this book done. Cheri, you know, asked for help for all these places, I created a coaching program.

Kathi Lipp

I've told people, this is the biggest scam of my life, because I am charging people a lot of money to be in this program. But I'm doing it because I need accountability. And I created like a whole program for accountability, because that's what I needed in all of this. And so figure out your accountability.

Kathi Lipp

And the other thing I would say is break things down into ... like, people say, I'm going to sit down and write chapter one. No, no, you're not. No, you're going to sit down and you're going to set an alarm for 15 minutes. And you're going to put down your "brain droppings" about chapter one. Or maybe it's

about chapter eight. Or maybe you don't even know what chapter it's going into. But you're just like, "These are some random thoughts I've had about something..." So timers are beautiful for people who have a hard time focusing. And I think that's a key thing that's going on for people: is they have a really hard time focusing. So get your timer, get an accountability person.

Kathi Lipp

And then just understand that any progress is to be celebrated. Because if you're doing anything creative, right now, you are a superhero. You are a Marvel character. You truly are.

Amy Carroll

So good. And that applies to music or painting or writing or whatever it is that people are doing.

Kathi Lipp

Or coming up with a new better way to do the dishes.

Amy Carroll

Oh, yes!

Kathi Lipp

Like, if you're ... I mean, like if you have figured out how to unload your dishwasher faster, or you are doing a recipe that's like, "I've decided I'm going to add cumin to this." It's like whoa, what? What, what's this crazy! Celebrate it. It was required by law for all of us to be baking bread at the beginning of the pandemic. But if you are still cooking meals, you are a creative being. Even if you're just following a recipe or heating things up, you are doing something ... you're putting a creative force in the world. And that's to be celebrated.

Amy Carroll

Fantastic. I gave that up a few months ago ... the cooking meals,

Kathi Lipp

If you can remember where the DoorDash app is on your phone, then you are to be celebrated.

Amy Carroll

Kathi, remind our friends what they'll receive when they pre-order An Abundant Place: Daily Retreats for the Woman Who Can't Get Away.

Kathi Lipp

Okay, so Harvest House has just ... they've just been rockstars through all of this because they understand what we've all gone through, too. So they gave us a free companion journal that you can download. It's got like all these great ideas for little mini-retreats and places ... we have an acronym that I'm not going to unpack right now, but it's SPACE. And it's talking about how to take Scripture and kind of break it down and to think about the concepts and stuff. So you have a place to write all of that in case you're opposed to writing in hardcover book. Like I can write in a softcover book, but I can not

write in a hard ... I don't know what it is ... I don't understand that little weirdness in me ... so I'm super grateful for this journal.

Kathi Lipp

And then you get our limited series podcasts that Cheri and I did: Devos for Dropouts. And basically how to keep going with your devotions and make them fun and joy-filled and something that you look forward to, instead of a duty you have to show up for daily. And so we'll give you access to that 6-part series of podcasts that we had way too much fun recording. They were the best.

Amy Carroll

Fantastic. Tell us where to find those, Cheri.

Cheri Gregory

Just go to AbundantPlaceBook.com ... and you'll find all the details there.

Amy Carroll

Kathi, thanks so much for being with us again today. You know how much we love you!

Kathi Lipp

Always a joy you guys. Thank you so much for having me on. And thank you for extending your season for us — I love this!

Cheri Gregory

Well, friends, thanks so much for listening to Grit 'n' Grace — THE PODCAST.

Amy Carroll

Have a Merry Christmas! And we can't wait to kick off season six with you in the new year

Cheri Gregory

For today, grow your grit.

Amy Carroll

Embrace God's grace.

Cheri Gregory

And as God reveals the next step to live your one life well ...

Amy Carroll

... we'll be cheering you on ...

Amy Carroll

... so TAKE IT!