

Grit 'n' Grace — The Podcast for Highly Sensitive Christian Women

Episode #289

Take Your Time: **How to Make Decisions You Won't Regret**

In a world that idealizes instant answers and snap decisions, Highly Sensitive Persons often get labeled *hesitant ... indecisive ... over-thinking*.

But what if your HSP brain and body are **not** motivated by being told to “Hurry Up”? What if your soul responds to pressure by asking, “Can we please slow down?” What if you need a counter-cultural approach to decision-making?

In this episode, I share a real-life story of navigating a big decision (with a looming deadline) as an HSP who is, by definition, **a reflective thinker**. You'll learn how *scripture, curiosity, and community* can lead to clarity and confidence.

So if you, too, struggle with decision-making, I hope you'll find encouragement to **honor** your God-given pace and—whenever possible—to **Take. Your. Time.**

Welcome to *Grit 'n' Grace - The Podcast for Highly Sensitive Christian Women!*

I'm your host, Cheri Gregory.

Are you tired of the overthinking, overwhelm, and exhaustion that can come with being a Highly Sensitive Person?

Are you ready to stop worrying that something's wrong with you and start understanding and nurturing yourself as an HSP?

Together, we'll build resilience, practice self-compassion, set healthy boundaries, unlock your creativity, and learn to embrace—*not fight*—your God-given sensitivity.

Let's dig in!

3 — *Welcome*

Hey friend –

I'm so glad you could join me today!

Buckle up, 'cause we are takin' a ROAD TRIP! We're going to travel together through several episodes focused on HSPs and DECISION-MAKING!

As you can guess from the title of this episode, today we're going to explore why it's SO vital for you, as an HSP, to TAKE YOUR TIME.

Now, if you're starting to say, "But Cheri, I already take waaaaaay too much time making decisions!" please know you're not alone.

One of the biggest **concerns** I hear from sister HSPs is about how our brains seem to get stuck in "over-thinking."

Throughout your life, we've been told to just STOP over-complicating everything and "just think on your feet" ... "just make snap decisions" ... "just go with your gut."

People seem to assume that

(a) we're consciously aware when we're over-thinking AND that we're doing it intentionally **just** to irritate everyone within a 5 mile radius?

(b) we're aware of many other options BUT we've chosen to do life in the hardest way possible, because that's **just** so much fun.

Okay ... sarcasm aside ... (for now, at least!) ... I want to remind us ALL that according to Dr. Elaine Aron — the original researcher into the Highly Sensitive Person trait — THE key quality of being a Highly Sensitive Person is being a **deep processor** ... otherwise known as a REFLECTIVE THINKER.

And my friend Kendra Burrows, a retired psychology professor who is also an HSP, has **such** a great way to think about this specific HSP quality.

Like so many of us, I've always **apologized** for being "such a slow processor." But Kendra confidently calls herself a "long processor."

SUCH a powerful reframe!

So today I want to camp out here — in our LIVED EXPERIENCE as a "long processor."

I'm KEENLY aware that **deep reflection** can morph into **destructive rumination** — we regularly have nuanced discussions about the difference between reflection and rumination in the Sensitive & Strong Community Cafe.

But today we're going to focus on how — as an HSP — the way to Make Decisions You Won't Regret is to GIVE YOURSELF TIME.

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Now, I never want to hold myself up as a role model — I learned that being a Highly Sensitive Person is "a thing" after 4-and-a-half DECADES of believing something was VERY WRONG WITH ME ... after 4-and-a-half DECADES of trying to "fix" myself and become #JustLikeEveryoneElse. So although I've got almost 13 years of embracing the truth that God created me to be an HSP — at the DNA level! — on purpose for His purpose, I'm still rescripting old messages and unlearning old habits from the first 45 years of my life. I'm a sister learner who is still very much "in process" ... NOT some role model who has "arrived."

However, I LOVE turning my life experiences into a case study. As an author and speaker, I'm used to unpacking what I did wrong ... focusing on the problem. But today, I'm going to do something unusual ... and a little bit uncomfortable: I'm going to share what I did right. Again, NOT to hold myself up as some sort of example, but to encourage you that growth isn't just possible – it's an organic result of embracing the truth about your God-given wiring.

And I want you to know that sometimes growth does NOT involve a dramatic change or total transformation – **sometimes growth looks a lot like leaning into what's always been true about you.**

Okie dokie ... let's backtrack just a bit to bring you up to speed on why we're taking this roadtrip through the Land of "HSPs and Decision-Making."

In the Sensitive & Strong Community Cafe, we have a regular "Fri-Yay" Celebration post where we can share our "wins" for that week.

On very last day of January, I shared this win:

After pouring thousands of dollars into one family car earlier this month, yesterday I learned that my car also needs costly repairs.

What I'm celebrating is that *instead* of ruminating and frenzying (bouncing from decision to decision like my brain's in a pinball machine), I used my HSP tools.

I made a knee-jerk decision and then un-made it, even tho that was uncomfortable. (After all, I <gasp!> INCONVENIENCED someone!)

I had initially given the go-ahead to do the repair, and then I realized my brain was still in panic mode from the transmission that gave out a week ago. But my car's issue isn't *nearly* that urgent. So I called and retracted the repair approval.

That's right ... I CHANGED. MY. MIND. I was "wishy-washy" rather than sticking to my word. Because I'd said "yes" from a place of fear rather

than reflection, and that did NOT feel right.

I realized that I need to "try on" various decisions to see how they fit before finalizing on one.

So I got curious. I asked questions. I did research. I took several small actions that gave me greater clarity.

Ultimately, I brought my car home without having it repaired to buy myself the TIME I NEED to make the best decision FOR ME and my HSP brain and body.

I may end up taking my car back in a week (or two ... or three!) and having the work done. But I'm also considering getting a different car.

Whatever I decide to do, I will FEEL GOOD ABOUT THE PROCESS because I am going to TAKE. MY. TIME.

Now as I share what this particular decision-making process looked like for me, you're likely to resonate with some things more than others.

That's because one size does NOT fit all — even if we're all Highly Sensitive Persons!

Each HSP has her own unique constellation of the various HSP qualities ... kind of like a big sound board with many sliders, each set to a different level.

So as you listen, some of what I share will resonate with you ... while for other things you'll need to "sub out" my specific example and "sub in" details that are a better fit for you. Okay?

The week after I brought my little 2009 Honda Civic back home from the shop, the Lectio Divina passage in the Sensitive & Strong Community Cafe was Isaiah 42:10-17.

As we read and reflected on these verses, I took special comfort in verse 16, which says:

“I will lead the blind by ways they have not known,
along unfamiliar paths I will guide them;
I will turn the darkness into light before them
and make the rough places smooth.
These are the things I will do;
I will not forsake them.”

Pray-cessing this verse, I wrote “decisions, decisions, decisions!” in my journal, in all-caps with exclamation points. And the struggle or longing I was experiencing: “I want to make the RIGHT decision. And the way I will know if I made the right decision is that everything will turn out fine. Not perfect, but no negative consequences for anybody. But the deeper longing, I realized, tied in to conversations we’ve been having in the Cafe and here on Grit ‘n’ Grace about learning to trust ourselves.

Of course, I mean lower-case “t” not capital “T” – Capital T trust is always in God. But in this instance, short of God actually showing up and saying, “Cheri, here’s what I want you to do about the car situation,” I’m going to Capital T trust God to lead me, but then I’m going to lower-case “t” trust myself to make a good decision.

And oh, that’s SO hard when you have a brain that loves to ask, “What if I should have done this? What if I should have done that?”

It occurred to me that I could write the scripture — Isaiah 42:16 — on a card and put it in my wallet and take it with me to the car dealerships. ‘Cause I’m just going to go ahead and confess that car dealerships are NOT a place I have ever felt God’s presence. If anything, I’ve felt the opposite — I go in feeling small and insecure, and I come out feeling like I’ve been manipulated and conned.

I’m not saying that’s objectively TRUE – I’m just saying I’ve tended to come out of car-buying scenarios with SO MANY REGRETS!

So to bring this passage with me as a reminder that God goes with me, whether I decide to take my Civic back in for repair ... or whether I go to a car dealership to look for a different vehicle ... He is ALWAYS with me..

Then in re-reading Isaiah 42:10-17 again, two things especially stood out:

First,

Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise from the ends of the earth,

I thought, “What if I make a point to listen to hymns and praise music during this process? I want a NEW experience ... infusing this experience with SONG — especially songs of praise — would absolutely be NEW for me!”

And I was especially taken by the middle part of verse 16 —

“I will lead the blind by ways they have not known,
along unfamiliar paths I will guide them;
**I will turn the darkness into light before them
and make the rough places smooth.**

These are the things I will do;
I will not forsake them.”

I got to thinking, “As I do my research, if the way before me is dark and rough, it’s probably NOT the way God is guiding me on. So as I’m exploring my options, I’m going to be looking for a light path ... a smooth path. I’m going to give myself permission to LEAVE if it feels rough or dark — if it starts to feel the way it’s always felt in the past with fast talk and high pressure I. WILL. LEAVE.

I’m going to watch for this to be a *different* experience, a NEW experience ... as evidence that God is leading.

Let me pause right here to say, I also recognized that it was “just a car.” This wasn’t a life-or-death situation. There are far, far bigger things at stake in this world.

And – not “but” – it was a significant matter of stewardship of the resources God has entrusted to me, and I wanted to be able to say — when all was said and done — that I capital “T” trusted God to lead me ... and lower-case “t” trusted the way He wired me to be able to make a wise decision.

Isaiah 42:16 became one important filter for my car-related decision-making.

As did three other things that organically arose from conversation in the Sensitive & Strong Community Cafe.

I shared how important it was for me to “try on” various possible choices, almost like trying on clothes to see how they fit ... how they felt. Which TAKES TIME.

And when I tried on the possibility of “buy a brand new car” I felt like I should take that off right away — almost like I was having an allergic reaction to even imagining a new car.

It was this overwhelming sense of “I do NOT deserve a new car.”

After all, I have totaled two cars — I totaled my very first car 4 months after getting it, and almost exactly 8 years ago I totaled my husband’s favorite car. I’ve PROVEN myself to be untrustworthy. A new car would be SUCH a waste because — according to my track record — I’ll just ruin it, too.

I had this conviction that my husband, who has never been in an accident, has proven himself “worthy” of a new car ... but I should only drive used cars.

Words like **deserve** and **worthy** are SO loaded, especially for us as Christians, right?

It was vital for me to pray-cess through them ... was this God “turning the darkness into light before me”? Or my Inner Critic beating me up for my past mistakes?

One Cafe member gave me such great encouragement:

“When it comes down to making a decision, God will be with you either way. I think just the grace to say, “Okay, this is the decision I make, and I’m not going to ruminate about it ... or believe that if I had made the other choice it would have been free of consequences. When you make the decision, know that God was there to make it with you ... and you did ... and move on.

And then she added, “But I’m not saying this because I’ve done it well.”

Which I think we can ALL relate to!

These deep processing HSP brains of ours can get so focused on examining the decision we did NOT make, that it holds us back from fully embracing the decision we DID make, which means that rather than living in the present moment with the decision we MADE, we’re putting ourselves into an alternate reality that doesn’t actually exist. And that’s depleting.

Another Cafe member commented, “God **wants** you to have peace about your decision” and I told her, “I’m going to rub that right in” like Amy Carroll is always saying.

Well, once I allowed myself to even THINK about a new car, something else rose to the surface:

If I was going to get a new car, I wanted a very specific color:

candy apple red.

But I kept telling myself, “No Cheri, you have to be sensible. You have to be practical!”

I struggled with the question, “What does good stewardship look like when it comes to the COLOR of a car?”

All my life, I’ve considered the word “want” to be a 4-letter word that = selfishness.

But what if that’s not true? Or at least not always true?

And this is where a Cafe member said,

“There’s nothing wrong with wanting a certain color of car. I’m finding specific colors just bring me joy. Imagine having joy every time you look at your car.”

And I absolutely had NOT even thought about the joy aspect. It felt like such a FRIVOLOUS choice, I had not allowed myself to even try it on for size.

And then a couple of Cafe members shared stories related to shoes ... which turned into a HUGE “light bulb” moment for me.

Here’s Karen’s story:

I have issues with shoe buying, and so if I go somewhere and somebody's helping me, they have to bring out boxes and boxes and boxes. I'm a little bit like Goldilocks. The shoes have to fit just right so that my hips feel okay and my knees feel okay, and My back feels okay, but I'm willing to pay to get the shoes to give me that Goldilocks feel. So a few months ago, I was shopping, and I wanted to get a particular pair of a certain brand, but I

wanted to get a pair that don't show up in the room before I do, because some of that brand are very flamboyant colors. I wanted black on black. That's what I needed, so that I would feel confident that my shoes weren't too noticeable. So I tried on different sizes and different colors, and I found one that was a low profile, but it had a white bottom and a black top. And I said, Oh, that's not going to work for me. But she didn't have my size in black on black. And I said, Well, I really want the black on black. Can you order it? And it was that thing where you've already tried on a million pair, and now you're not going to buy anything. I started to have a little bit of feelings like, Oh, she spent all that time with me. I should buy something from her. And then I realized, no, I want the black on blacks. And she said, Well, let's try to order them. I can't guarantee they'll come in. It's kind of late in the season, I replied, but those are the ones I really want. Let's order those. It took about a month, but guess what? They came in and I got my black on blacks, but I had to be able to say no and disappoint her to get the shoes that now I can wear confidently. Now, if you have a pair of that brand in the psychedelics, that's okay too. You're probably a very fun person, but I needed the black on blacks, and I got them. Yay, you.

And here's Pam's story:

I really resonate with this, because I also have foot trouble. It has become the reality that I deal with, and it's astonishing how central it is to the fun things that I want to do. So I did go ahead and decide to compete in dancing with the wake of stars, and I am just so excited I can't see straight. Meanwhile, my husband wants to do his bucket list thing, and now we have on the calendar for fall of 2026 to do the Grand Canyon, rim to rim, where you hike 22 miles into across and out of the canyon. We are not hikers period. We do not even climb. But now we've set these things in front of us, and there are some really exciting opportunities ahead that are dependent on significant footwear that I talk about God leading the blind down smooth places. I have got to have good walking shoes for the Grand Canyon. I have got to have good shoes that I can dance in and not kill myself. And for my son's wedding this summer. I want to be able to stay on my feet for hours without suffering. So I went ahead and I made an appointment with my podiatrist, and I had her look at my orthotics, which

I've only had for six months, and asked, Are these holding up like they're supposed to? Because here's what I've got coming up. What do I need? Well, we agreed I should invest in what they call dress shoe orthotics, they fit at an angle, like a dance shoe or a heel. Then she said, Well, we will have to rescan your foot to make a brand new set. So this is not a buy one get one half off deal. These will cost as much as your original pair. I really want to unpack this, because there's something so significant about investing here. My feet hurt because I'm having issues that I didn't used to have, which means I have to make all these accommodations, but it forces me also to depend on other people and ask other people for wisdom. So now I'm doing a lot of research about good hiking shoes and good dancing shoes and custom orthotics, so I can do all these cool, exciting things, which circles back now to the whole car buying thing. What does it say that we're not willing to invest in our own self, that we're not worth it? These are \$700 orthotics. And former Pam would have said, you don't observe that, but it can't function if my feet are in pain every time I take a step, let alone do something like this dancing thing, which, to be honest, really did appear as what looked like a God ordained opportunity. I mean, let's just do the math. I can spend \$700 to help raise upwards of \$25,000 for charity. So it just feels like there's nothing I've been spending more time on this last week than foot care and shoe stuff. And I just feel like there's a deeper takeaway that tracked with all the stuff we've been talking about. I.

Karen's story and Pam's story prompted a major paradigm shift for me..

I'd gone into this whole car decision / discussion thinking of a car as a FRILL — an extra, a luxury — for me.

But in these stories Karen and Pam told, they were talking about FOUNDATIONS.

If our feet aren't working, there's so much we can't do, or if we do it, we end up in pain. I know this from personal experience, having discovered THE shoes that work for my high arches and plantars fasciitis about 10 years ago — and they're the only ones I wear when I know I'm going to be on my feet a lot.

They are not “FRILLS” ... they are FOUNDATIONAL.

Up until this conversation, I’d been telling myself that a new car was just a FRILL. But as Pam pointed out, “If we don’t care for the foundations, everything else will collapse.”

Thanks to this rich conversation with my HSP sisters, I found myself asking: “How can I switch the way I’m thinking about this decision from **FRILL** to **FOUNDATION?**”

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For me, all of the “aha moments” and paradigm shifts I’ve shared in this episode were vital parts of my decision-making journey.

Let’s wrap up this episode with 10 benefits you experience as an HSP when you TAKE. YOUR. TIME. with decision-making.

But first, I do want to let you know that this episode of Grit ‘n’ Grace is sponsored by the Sensitive & Strong Community Cafe — your go-to learning community for the Highly Sensitive Christian woman who wants to embrace her divine design and live out God’s purpose for her life with confidence.

To learn more about the Sensitive & Strong Community Cafe, simply head to CheriGregory.com/Cafe and you’ll also find the link in the show notes!

No matter what decision you’re making, here are 10 benefits you experience as an HSP when you TAKE. YOUR. TIME. with decision-making.

1. You recognize God’s presence in the process. Slowing down becomes sacred when it opens space for prayer, surrender, and Trusting His guidance.

2. Clarity replaces confusion. Taking your time allows your deep-processing brain to sift through details, emotions, and implications until things feel clear instead of chaotic.

3. You make aligned choices. When you slow down, you're more likely to choose what fits your values, season of life, and needs—not what others expect or pressure you into.

4. Panic gives way to peace. Giving yourself space helps your nervous system settle, so you can respond from calm rather than react from fear.

5. You notice your own patterns. Reflection reveals what's motivating you—like fear, people-pleasing, or perfectionism—so you can move forward more consciously.

6. Discernment deepens. A slower pace makes it easier to pray, listen, and recognize God's gentle nudges, which just might come through conversation with your sister HSPs.

7. You honor your unique process. Rather than fighting your HSP wiring, you start to work with it, building self-trust instead of shame.

8. Small steps feel empowering. Trying options on for size—through research, conversations, or test runs—helps you make confident choices, one step at a time.

9. You avoid unnecessary regret. Time gives you the margin to consider outcomes more fully, so you're less likely to second-guess later.

10. You make wiser use of resources. Taking time often prevents rushed decisions that cost more in money, energy, or emotional bandwidth.

If you're thinking to yourself, "This sounds all well and good for you, Cheri. But how do I start learning to 'take my time' with decision-making in my own life?" ...

... let me invite you to consider joining the Sensitive & Strong Community Cafe.

It's an online community for HSP Christian women where we learn — and practice! — and CELEBRATE new skills together.

And when I say “celebrate” I mean that I have a pair of pom-poms I pull out

Just this last week, a founding member shared this after a Zoom session:

It was SO GOOD to be a part of this conversation. I treasure the times I can be live with you all. It's been SO COMFORTING for me, especially during this chapter of my life. I know I'm not alone. ... I've learned SO MUCH in this group and I look forward to learning more both live and in the replays you offer.

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Thank you for listening to *Grit 'n' Grace - The Podcast for Highly Sensitive Christian Women!*

I hope this episode leaves you feeling encouraged and equipped to thrive, **and TAKE. YOUR. TIME.** with decision-making!

Be sure to follow in your favorite podcast app and share this episode with a friend!

If you're brand new to the whole HSP concept, come take the “Am I a Highly Sensitive Person?” quiz — you'll find that link in the show notes.

And remember: God created you sensitive; in Christ, you are *always* strong.

