

***Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules***

Episode #106: How to Step into a Confidence that Moves Mountains

**Cheri**

All right, so let's talk about a time when we've compared ourselves to somebody else and then something surprising. You go first.

**Amy**

Well, I think, I don't know if I've talked about Lane before. Lane is the woman who had just graduated from college that moved into the travel trailer in my parent's backyard when I was sixteen years old. So I met Lane at a bible study, I just fell in love with her. She needed a place to live, and my parents said yes. That's the short version of the story, and the rest is kind of history because having Lane in my backyard literally changed my life. She disciple me, she poured into me, and she changed the course of my life. Jesus moved her into my literal backyard. He's so good! He is so good. But anyways, so Lane, one of the assumptions that I had made as a sixteen year old is that if you're smart and you're pretty, and at that point, if you're Godly then you get the guy!

**Cheri**

Ahh.

**Amy**

Right? And she had this guy that she was super interested in that totally overlooked her. So she did not, she was pretty, and godly and smart, and just...I just thought the best woman that I had ever met in my life and she did not get the guy. How about you?

**Cheri**

That's not fair.

**Amy**

I know!

**Cheri**

Life should be more fair. Well, mine actually has a kind of a fairness aspect to it as well. I was sitting in church and Daniel and I were newly wed, and I was watching this couple in the front pew, and I just thought they had it all going on. They had these two adorable children, they had this little boy who was all dressed up in these adorable little shorts, and the little girl was so adorable, and I was starting to have baby cravings even though I was too young, and I was just – I totally idealized them, I though how wonderful it must be to be that young mother with her

two adorable kids, and then they were invited up to the pulpit and they were introduced as the Chamberlin's from Australia, and this is the couple who had lost their baby to a dingo. The movie, *Cry in the Dark*, was made based on this many years ago. And I remember just sitting there shell-shocked, because here, seconds ago, I had been envying and idealizing them with no idea of the tragedy they had been through. And it was one of those moments where I literally sat and thought to myself, "Maybe comparison is not such a good thing."

**Amy**

Absolutely. Absolutely. I always think about what René Swope says, which is, "We compare our insides to others outsides." And it's so destructive.

**Cheri**

Well, I'm Cheri Gregory.

**Amy**

And I'm Amy Carroll.

**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**

Today, we're processing what we learned from our interview with Lynn Cowell, author of *Make Your Move*.

**Cheri**

Okay, so the first thing that I loved, and I always love about talking with Lynn is her honesty. When she said that she got so worn out from feeling confident one day and then having to scrape herself off the floor the next day I just busted up. I'm like. I know that feeling!

**Amy**

Yes just like me!

**Cheri**

Oh my goodness and you know I loved how she talked about how we misunderstand the whole concept of a gift, the gifts that God has given us; that the gift is about the giver, not about us. And a lot of women, and I know you've experienced this too. When you start having conversations about what they're good at. If we ask them what they're bad at or what their weaknesses are they could write books filled with this. They could talk forever. But as soon as you ask them what they're good at, in other words, what gifts God has given them, they, like, fall silent.

**Amy**

Yes. Oh, literally, this weekend I was speaking and one of the things I like to do is lead women through kind of a progression of one thing that they'd like to take home, and so what's one thing that God's given you that he delights in. And I could see, nobody was writing. And you are literally not allowed to leave that blank, 'cause God don't make no junk.

**Cheri**

Good for you! Whoo!

**Amy**

Women are resisting. You know one of the things that really helped me this past year was working on my personal manifesto for our retrospect series. And that kind of helped me to think of what I already have and then where I want to go with that. Do you hear that from other people?

**Cheri**

Absolutely. Absolutely. You know one of the concerns I do hear from women. When those pens aren't moving, after you've asked that question, I wonder if part of the concern is that somehow thinking about what were good at, what God delights in, is that somehow selfish. Is that too self-focused in some way, shape, or form. For me, knowing what he's gifted me with the most, what I'm best at, dare I use the word best at, I don't mean better than everyone else, but I mean of all the things I could be doing this is what I'm best at. It kind of keeps me in my lane, and it helps me know, to use the plate analogy, it helps me know what to put on my plate. Because otherwise, I'm trying to pile way too many different things, some of which I'm good at, some of which I can try hard at. But it keeps me focused. And gives me confidence that comes from the right source. It's not confidence that comes from myself, it's confidence that comes from, well, this is how God created me, this is the gift He gave me. I'm doing what He's called me to do. Cool!

**Amy**

The personal manifesto really helped. Another tool that's really helped me is Strength-Finder 2.0, and both of us love that. And it is this idea of let's figure out what you're wired to do and do it. I think comparison, the main thing comparison has done is detour me over the years, because I start to get in her lane. I love what you said about knowing our strengths, knowing our gifts, recognizing where they came from, but knowing what they are, keeps us in our lane. When I compare, I start to swerve into her lane. You know like when you're driving and whatever you're looking at is where your tires go?

**Cheri**

Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

**Amy**

If you're looking at her, you're going to swerve into her lane. That leads to collisions.

**Cheri**

And you going to crash!

**Amy**

Bad stuff, bad stuff.

**Cheri**

Crash and burn! Well, and you used the phrase how we're wired, but if we were comparing it's cross wiring. It's almost as if you're trying to unplug or add new wiring, and it's like no. It's become so clarifying to me to know that there's this handful of things that I'm good at and if I'm in a group situation, I do those things, and then this is the hard part, I try to be quiet. The other thing that she said that just really, really hit home for me was that a confident woman doesn't crave other people's approval because she already has God's. So my question is, how can we remember that in the moment? We know that. You and I can sit here and talk about it. And we're good, 'cause we're looking at each other, and we're friends and there's no outside input right now. But I was going to say 24 hours from now, but maybe 24 minutes from now after get off. How can we remember that, how can our listeners, how can we remember in the moment that we don't need others approval?

**Amy**

Well, it's funny, because our listeners should know that not all that we do is off the cuff. That you do give us some things to think about ahead of time, and so you gave me this question to think about ahead of time and I thought, hmm. I really don't have any strategies that I currently implement. So just to be completely transparent, but it was a great question because it made me think about, "Oh, I should be doing that let me think of some strategies to think about to do in the future." So here we go girls, here are some things that Amy and you could do in the future. But I thought one of them is to think about my triggers ahead of time. Like, I already know myself pretty well, so I already know certain situations that I'm going to walk into, particularly social situations, sometimes job related like speaking situations where I'm going to feel less than. I start to feel it ahead of time, I know it's going to happen. I thought, I really need to identify those ahead of time and start training my thoughts and adjusting my thoughts ahead of time when I know there's something coming that's going to put me in the position of feeling less than.

**Cheri**

That is so smart. You know, what I'm slowly getting to the point of understanding is that after 20 or 30 years of being blindsided by the same thing, it's not being blindsided anymore. It's just stupid! Its magical thinking! Oh, maybe that will never happen again even though it always happens. And there's this great quote by Viktor Frankl, he says, "Between stimulus and response there is a space and in that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom." And that's what you just described. Rather than showing up at an event and being triggered you're going to stretch that space. You're going to create extra space so you can choose, pre-decide, pre-choose that response so that you aren't blindsided again. Cool. What else?

**Amy**

One of the things that I started thinking about in the situation, I started thinking, what is my response in that situation I feel less than; I have physical indicators. I get butterflies in my tummy, that anxious indicator going on. But the other thing that I do is I slump. Isn't that funny? But I was thinking about the TED talk about our physical reactions to what's around us and doing what's counterintuitive. And when we're in a situation most of us, Amy Cuddy says, we get smaller. I certainly do. I slump. I slump way down. Now, my posture is not particular good at any given moment but when I'm feeling insecure its like I'm trying to disappear within myself. When I notice I'm doing that, when I notice the butterflies in my tummy, or I notice, "Oh, I need to throw my shoulders back," those are times to go say, "Okay, my confidence is in Christ." How about you?

**Cheri**

I was remembering, you can correct me if I've got it wrong, 'cause I m just going by memory. It's one of your mentors, Mona, right, who used to say, "Beloved, run to Jesus."

**Amy**

Absolutely. Don't you love that, 'cause it rings in your head now?

**Cheri**

It absolutely does. And I'm like okay; I'm seeking outside approval...beloved run to Jesus. That just – that will preach and that will walk. And it's such a beautiful – because for me, as a recovering perfectionist, the temptation is to beat up myself. What are you doing? Stop it. You know better than that? Well, that's not exactly grace. I'm not even sure that's grit. That's self-abuse.

**Amy**

That makes me want to slump more just hearing it.

**Cheri**

Exactly. Exactly. So just that reminder that as we're sensing any of these things, we can hear that gentle reminder, "Beloved, run to Jesus."

The other thing that Lynn said is that failure is part of learning.

<Laughter>

**Amy**

Yuck.

**Cheri**

At that point I wanted to stop the interview and say what are you talking about? So how have you experienced failure recently? I want to hear about it.

**Amy**

Oh golly. Well, we've talked about how difficult it is to be the parent of an adult son or daughter. So recently, I was doing so much better, gosh, I was doing so much better. But recently our oldest son, Anson, has been having, it's not a major health issue, but it's sort of major in the grand scheme of things and we're like, dude, go to the doctor! For heavens sakes, what are you thinking? Like, hello, this is what people do. Be an adult. I mean we we're not nice, either one. And we hung up and I immediately started hearing myself in my own ear.

**Cheri**

Oh no! Oh no!

**Amy**

Well, and suddenly, he had to go.

**Cheri**

Oops.

**Amy**

Yeah, he's sweet. He didn't just blow us out of the water. He was, like, yeah gotta go. Anyway, we had to circle back around and apologize and say you're a man, you are a smart man, we are sure you will make the right decision. Let us know how we can support you. But major failure, but then, hey, it's growth to be able to go back and apologize and make it right. And I will have to say it was a little...it was a little strained there for just a short time in a fun conversation, so it was resolved by the end of the conversation. We really were pretty horrible. But, yeah!

**Cheri**

I'm only laughing because my turn is next I'm sure. What I love is that you heard yourself after the call. You know that's how it actually works. We can't actually hear our tone of voice while we're talking.

**Amy**

Really?

**Cheri**

Yeah, our brains shuts down, our ability to interpret tone of voice shuts down when we're talking. We can hear it from anybody else. So, actually, the fact that you heard it afterwards is a sign that you were open to the Holy Spirit 'cause I'm sure that's why it came around in a way that you could actually hear it. So. Yeah.

**Amy**

Very interesting.

**Cheri**

Yeah, that made me feel better because I think about the way that I used to talk to my kids, and I'm like why didn't I hear myself? Because we can't.

**Amy**

Hmm. Well, this is good to know, but also important to know. Like, to be able to pre-decide how we're going to respond to things. So I bet you haven't had any failures recently...

**Cheri**

Oh yeah, because I've actually arrived at perfection. I've actually, it was actually really interesting, though, because I've actually put together this little mini e-course, it's called *Overcome Procrastination and Just Write*. It's a little free e-course. And let's just put it this way, I may be a teacher, but doing an e-course with videos and downloads and all that, it's work. There's a lot of work that goes into it, a lot of time and a lot of details. And I was so proud of myself because I sat down, and I got all the details and then I sat down to edit them and discovered that the video quality was low and the sound quality was bad. Like, there was a lot of sounds and cracks and pops. And I was like ahhhh. I did all of them. I did 9 little videos, and now I have to redo them all. And I so I was really frustrated and the whole perfectionist fine! I quit! I'm not going to do it! Because I felt like I couldn't do anything with what I had. I either needed to completely redo it or just ditch it. And then it occurred to me. Hang on a second. I need to redo them, no question. But what if I let some people see them, and just I told them up front, these aren't great. The content is good. The concepts I shared were perfectly fine. What if I warn them ahead of time that it'll be a little rough going, but ask for their feedback. And so I started with a really small group that I knew was safe. And then I got really brave, and I actually sent it out to my email list. I title the email, "Do you want to see me make a mess and then clean it up?"

**Amy**

So, cool!

**Cheri**

I wrote this whole email. And as I wrote it I actually had so much fun because not only was the video bad and the sound, but my cat kept making cameo appearances without me seeing it.

**Amy**

I bet it was Rafikki.

**Cheri**

It was Dusty this time!

**Amy**

Oh! Really?

**Cheri**

Yes, little prima donna kept showing up, you'd see these little black ears in the background! It was crazy. And I thought, you know what, these people are adults that I'm emailing it to. And if they're not interested, 'cause I told them, if they watch it now, I'm gonna replace it with better videos. They can watch it again, and maybe they can learn from my process. Maybe they can realize that there is value to this process of going from bad to better, to kind of good at something. Well, I put that out there. I had 45 people immediately sign up. They're going through it. I'm getting so much feedback. They're not telling me, "Hey, Cheri, the video is bad 'cause they know it. They're not complaining about the audio, 'cause they know that I know it needs to be fixed. But what they're doing, there's several places where I need to make a few little tweaks that I wouldn't have caught on my own. Like, there's a whole concept called the procrastination cycle, and about half of them, the way I explained it didn't work for them. It is so important that I found that out while it was still in the rough draft, messy stage. So what was a failure, I was about to like throw away has now become this whole process of learning, and I'm like I almost want to pat myself on the back except I didn't plan it.

**Amy**

You should! You should! That's amazing. Like, you have been hanging out with Kathi Lipp.

**Cheri**

I have. I absolutely have!

**Amy**

We love Kathi, because she loves failure. But you turned what you perceived as a failure, pretty minor in the grand scheme of things, but you turned it into a tool. That is amazing. That's amazing.

Now one of the things that Lynn kind of ended with that I absolutely loved is the "so that" of the book. Like why do we want to walk in confidence? What difference does it make? Well, we want to do it so that, as Lynn says, we can be a difference maker. What are some of the ways that you're learning to be a difference maker in this world, Cheri Gregory?

**Cheri**

This is a great question, and I was convicted this weekend while driving home from a writer's conference, and I was listening to a book called *Barking Up The Wrong Tree*. And it's basically about why everything you know about success is wrong. I love those kinds of books. And it's filled with research and other things that make me geek out. But the point this person made is that those who are in the early stages of learning something need lots of encouragement. And a sign that you're moving from being a total novice or beginner to being more advanced is that you start seeking critique. You start literally asking other people tell me what I did wrong. And it just really hit me one of the ways that I can be a difference maker is to be more sensitive to whether someone is still in that very beginning stage where they need the encouragement or whether they've moved – they've kind of crossed over the divide into the place where they're ready to hear more critique from me. I tend to get it opposite. If I see that someone is making all these newbie mistakes, the perfectionist in me is like no, no, no, here let me help you fix it



all up, which means I could crush somebody. And then if somebody is doing really well, I could tend to lay on the effusive praise and more than anything else what I need to do is listen. In order to make the kind of difference that people need me to make in their life, I need to listen. I need to ask where they're at. I need to be perceptive. I need to watch. And then I can do a better job of figuring out do they need a lot of encouragement here or are they literally asking me to tell them what they did wrong. How about you?

**Amy**

Well, that's fantastic, and I'm thinking about, I really, seriously, as you're talking about this have like 10 different applications for that in my life, so I appreciate that. One of the ways that God is calling me to be a difference maker, something that he's been doing for a while in my life, is he is calling me into the messy.

**Cheri**

Eww. Your least favorite thing.

**Amy**

It is my least favorite thing. Oh my gracious, and if I could just tell you some of the messy that I'm in the midst of right now with some of my friends. And everything in me says run. Run away! And God says wade in. Wade in. Just wade right into it with them. I can't make a difference in their life, this is one of the things that I'm learning, and think it's one of the reasons I've avoided messy in the past is because I've wanted to fix so much and there are just some things that you cannot fix. Only God can do it. And So God says it doesn't matter that you can't fix it. I just want you to be there. Just be there. The ministry of presence and do what you can, and pray, but be there. And so I'm trying to be a difference maker by wading into the messy and not running away from it.

**Cheri**

And that'll make a difference in you.

**Amy**

It will. It's already changing me. And some of it, like, I had a conversation last night with a woman who's in a really bad place, and truthfully, there are some aspects of it that make me a little impatient. I'm like, girlfriend; you created that! Do you know what I'm saying? I'm not a mercy person! Like if any of our listeners don't tell me ...well. Anyway. I'm not a mercy person! But on the other hand, I was able to do a little bit of what you were talking about as I saw she's got a big 'ole mess on her hands, and she's not going to be able to fix all of it tomorrow. Just encourage her Amy, and encourage her to take one little step. And I was afraid even that was too much, but Barry was listening to me, and when I hung up he goes, "Wow! You were so compassionate." Well, compassionate is hard for a not mercy person. So that's growth right there.

**Cheri**

You got the Barry stamp of approval right there!

**Amy**

I did. He's the more compassionate of the two of us so.

**Cheri**

And his number one is empathy right?

**Amy**

He's got empathy in his top five.

**Cheri**

His top five, all right. So what's the scripture that you've paired with these episodes?

**Amy**

2 Corinthians 3:5 says "Not that we are confident in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our confidence comes from God." And you know confident and competent, I think they are related. I think our confidence comes from being competent most of the time, but that confidence then we have to recognize comes from God himself.

**Cheri**

Sure. So what is the bad rule for these episodes?

**Amy**

Well, I think it kind of circles back to the beginning. The bad rule is that confidence is pride. But the truth is that we were called to be confident and competent ... in Christ. And that's the difference. Because our culture talks about self-confidence all the time and one of, I think it's Lisa Whittle talks about that, self-confidence is measurable, it's limited, but when we tap into confidence in Christ, that's limitless.

**Cheri**

So what's the grit in all of this for you?

**Amy**

You know, it really takes grit for me to seek God about who I am and to stand in it, rather than to compare and to look to other people for the standards I should live by. Just to let God alone set those standards for me and also tell me who I am. The grit is still getting rid of comparison. Still. Hopefully, I'm leveling up.

**Cheri**

Well, and you know, the grace for me ties right in with that. And I find myself saying, I'm fifty, I should know this by now. Or I'm fifty; I should have figured this out. I shouldn't have to work this hard. I shouldn't need this reminder. And it appears that as long as we're on this planet, we're gonna keep needing to relearn certain lessons. I'm the one being hard on myself. Condemnation is the voice of the enemy, not the voice of God. And that God is never the one

saying that I'm more trouble than I'm worth. And he's the one that demonstrated on the cross that I'm worth everything to him, and so, competence, confidence, grace, all of that goes together as we keep learning and relearning, even, these lessons as we move forward.

**Amy**

To our very last breath.

**Cheri**

Head on over to [gritngracegirls.com/episode106](http://gritngracegirls.com/episode106).

**Amy**

There you'll find this week's transcript, our digging deeper download, the bible verse art, and a chance to win a giveaway of *Make Your Move*.

**Cheri**

Come join our Facebook page and group where we'll continue this discussion of comparison and confidence. Just search on Facebook for Grit-n-Grace Girls and you'll find us.

**Amy**

Join us next week when we'll be talking to Sharon Hodde Miller, author of *Free of Me*.

**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!