

Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules
Episode #75: Finding New Ways to Be Better Together

Cheri:
Hey, this is 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 helps you lose who you're not, love who you are, and live your one life well.

Amy:
We're delighted that you've joined us for another installment of our retrospect series as we get intentional about living examined lives, together!

Cheri:
So, we are moving onto the second element, sentence, line ... The second part of our personal manifestos. And one of the things that I think is so valuable about this, and Cathy was so excited when I told her we were doing this. Is, when we came up with the idea of the personal manifesto the thought was to leave it on the fridge, right next to the computer, on your mirror so that on a daily basis you could use it as a tool for immediate decision-making.

But, we hadn't thought about it in terms of reflecting on how the past year had gone, and using it as a tool for planning the next year. So, you and I are kind of doing an experiment here, to see if this is something that actually works. I, of course, think it's going to work brilliantly.

Amy:
I love that, yeah.

Cheri:
So, let's take this next line in our personal manifestos, and let's talk about what it means to each of us. Then, just kind of talk also about how we've done during 2017, and maybe what might it look like to continue growing in this area in 2018. Does that make sense?

Amy:

Yes. But, I think you need to start this time because you wrote yours so brilliantly.

I love it!

Cheri:

Mine is a sticky statement, and I learned how to do sticky statements from Amy Carroll. So, thank you for recognize ... I will break my arm patting myself on the back for this one. I'm very proud of it.

Amy:

It is brilliant. It is.

Cheri:

Well, actually, I even had a little help from our writing coach Ginny Yttrup.

Amy:

Okay.

Cheri:

So, which illustrates ... It illustrates the concept brilliantly, here we go.

Amy:

Yes.

Cheri:

All right. The theme of our little episode here today is building community and building a team. So, here's the line from my personal manifesto. I can't be my best self all by myself. That has been such a hard lesson to learn.

By the way, it was Ginny who had me add the word best, so that it would have extra alliteration. I can't be my best myself all by myself. It does roll off the tongue beautifully.

Amy:

It's amazing.

Cheri:

More importantly, I remember this. I really would have to say that this year has

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been the year of me buying into that and recognizing that there is no glory in being the lone ranger. And being able to do things by myself ... Even when I can, even when I do pull it all off, there's almost no value in it. Honestly, it's lonely, and it's inconsistent with how God created me. I am naturally a collaborator; I have always been a collaborator.

Amy:

That's why we work together so well!

Cheri:

But, I've been surrounded by people how are like Mr. Incredible, I work alone. That's okay too. God's created some people to be that way. But, it has been just astonishing to discover how much fun it is to be part of other people's teams, and then to build my own team. It's not the easiest thing in the world, there's a lot of things I've had to learn. But, overall, it is so worthwhile.

And to learn that one of the values of building a team is that I can get help really early when it's still help, and it's not rescue. I think that's one of the biggest things I've discovered, is for most of my life, I wouldn't ask for help or accept, forget asking. People would offer and I would say, "No, no, no. I've got this. I've got this." Then, at the last possible moment, when I would then discover, "No, I'm desperate." Well, that's not help anymore. That's rescue.

And it's an inconvenience to other, sometimes there's more expense involved, it's embarrassing, it's shaming. So, for many years, I thought that was help, and so, I avoided it. Now, I realize, wait, I can ask for help before I even need it. That's just called having a good team, that's part of a healthy community is to recognize that we're all here for each other.

So, yeah. This has been a good year for that. How about you? I love how you worded yours; yours was very intentionally worded to.

Amy:

I embrace authenticity to build a delight filled community. So, there's two things in there for me. The whole I embrace authenticity is just, you know, trying to put that perfectionism behind me. That before I what I wanted to do, is I wanted to have a team. I have some leadership abilities, so a lot of times I'd end up as the leader. So I felt like I had to play that role instead of just being myself.

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When we play roles, and we hide behind walls, guess what walls do? They separate us from people. I couldn't even build the kind of community that my heart really longed for, because I was too busy trying to appear perfect. So, I embrace authenticity. I don't know why I'm having trouble saying that. I embrace authenticity, it's a little bit of a tongue twister, and that is my part of it.

Then, to build a delight filled community. You and I both love that word delight.

Cheri:

Yes we do.

Amy:

We both have it in our tagline. I love that. It's in my life verse too. One of my favorite shows this year ... well, they're all ... I say that about all of them. Like, whichever one comes up, "Oh, that one is my favorite!" But, one of the ones I loved was when we were talking to Mary about the friendship network.

Cheri:

Yes.

Amy:

That just has impacted me all year long. And another friend of mine, Lisa, who is in my friendship network, she pointed out to me that statistics say or studies say that the five people closest to you determine who you become. That's pretty eye opening.

You know, I've talked a lot about this year that I didn't use to be very intentional about my friendships. It was just like, whoever was in front of me, or whoever I was having fun with. I have become much, much more intentional. That delight filled community is an intentional community.

So, I think all of us have to look at ... If I'm not in a delight filled community, why not? I can choose the five people that have the most impact on me, and I've had to do that.

Cheri:

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I love that. I was wondering where the delight came from. I love your intentionality of making sure that that's part, not just of your life, but also of the community that you're a part of. You know, part of what you're talking about, is you're talking about organizational culture.

Amy:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Cheri:

You know, we think of organizations as being these big companies, but you're looking at your own Amy Carroll community, and saying, what do you want the tone of it to be? Do you want it to be a bunch of people who whine and complain? Do you want to be a bunch of gossips and back biters, I'm making this part up.

Amy:

Sure.

Cheri:

But, it sounds like you've decided that when you get home after hanging out with your people, and you review those experiences, that delight needs to be something that you can say was something that either happened, or you felt, or that they walked away with. I think that's a great thing to reflect on.

Amy:

Well, and I think it's accountability for me that I'm bringing my delightful self, not my whiny, complainy, gossipy self. But then the other thing that I was trying to hit on, I was trying to think of, how do I say I want this to be mutually beneficial.

Cheri:

Yeah.

Amy:

I want it to be a community where there's this give and take that benefits everybody who's part of it. And Ecclesiastes four, and it was so funny, as we were going through picking scripture for these shows in this series. I thought, "How many times I ended up in the wisdom chapters?" Proverbs. Ecclesiastes. And I thought, "You know, isn't this what we're really shooting for? Growing in wisdom?"

With this series and looking at 2018, and saying, "I want to grow some more next year in wisdom." But Ecclesiastes 3, and this is a beautiful and it's used in weddings a lot, but I don't think it necessarily points to a marriage. And it starts in verse 9, "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up."

See, it's about friendship, really, not marriages, necessarily. "But pity the man who falls down and has no one to help him up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm, but how will one keep warm alone? Though they may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." And that picture, I did have those on my napkins at my wedding that verse. But it's a beautiful picture.

Cheri:
Yeah.

Amy:
It's God and me and my third person, or sometimes community can be, what I'm learning is it's a very small number really.

Cheri:
Yeah.

Amy:
We think community like, "I have this big swath of friends." Not really. I've got a handful of lifetime friends.

Cheri:
No, I agree. And what I love here is that having that give and take in our communities, especially our chosen communities, is going to be influenced by what we talked about last week, which is where we're at with our identity in Christ because we're going to know what we have to offer. We're going to be more secure in what we have to offer, and we're not going to be trying to get our need met from others in community.

We're going to have our security needs met by God, we're going to know who we are, and thus we're going to know what we have to give. And for me, that's probably been one of the biggest things about 2017. I was, Daniel and I were

taking a walk last night and I said, I told him, "I think I really know what I bring to my friendships." I feel good about it, and....

Amy:
You should.

Cheri:
I spend so much less time second-guessing, wondering if people like me, wondering if they'll keep me, if they're going to discard me. I just keep showing up and focusing on what I do. And it's a little different in each relationship, but I'm not going off on all these little rabbit trails. And then, I'm better at receiving what others give in return. It's just so much more of a, what I call a reciprocal blessing. And there's, it's almost no drama. It's so nice. It's like-

Amy:
No drama? In female relationships? Wow!

Cheri:
We just do our thing. We just do it.

Amy:
Woo hoo!

Cheri:
So, that is something in 2018, that I really want to make something I'm even more intentional about, because I feel like this year it's just kind of happened and it's kind of been a blessing. And I want to be more intentional, both for myself but also for others and making sure that as I form new relationships, which I know God is going to bring into my life, perhaps some friendships with some younger women that I'm intentional about that reciprocity.

Cheri:
Head on over to GritNGraceGirls.com and click on new episode.

Amy:
There you'll find the transcript, and a free download that you can use as you pray-cess today's episode for yourself.

Cheri:

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Come on over and find our Facebook group also. We'll be doing some fun Facebook lives. Just go on Facebook and search for grit n grace girls. You'll find our page and our group as well.

Amy:

Join us next week for another retrospect conversation, because an examined life is a better life.

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 'n' Cheri:

BREAK IT!!!