

Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules
Episode #81: Making Sure People Know They Matter Most to You

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

Cheri:
One thing I've forgotten to do with each of these episodes is remind our listeners and ourselves of the bad rule that you came up with for the entire series. Do you remember, or do I need to hand this over to you?

Amy:
I think you do. I'm paralyzed and unable to change my life. I can get there so easily. Shut down, discouraged. So having this manifesto is tremendous. You know what I'm doing this year?

Cheri:
What are you doing this year?

Amy:
I am going to take my manifesto and print it in pretty scripts like you and Kathy did. I'm going to have it blown up at the printers, and I'm putting in a frame in my office.

Cheri:
Oh, so you're one-upping us?

Amy:
Oh, yeah.

Cheri:
No. I think it's a fabulous idea.

Amy:
I'm so excited.

Cheri:
That's very cool. I want a picture.

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Amy:

I need it in front of me every day.

Cheri:

Absolutely. Here's the thing I love. You gave yourself permission to do it quickly, imperfectly, and now we're processing it, and then you're going to put it in the pretty script, and then you're going to put it up someplace, so it didn't have to happen all at once.

Amy:

Ah, good insight.

Cheri:

It was able to happen in portions. If the bad rule is that we're paralyzed, what is the truth, the fact that we can focus on?

Amy:

Just like what we were just saying, I can take daily steps with Jesus to make life better.

Cheri:

All right. The one we're talking about this week in this episode is we're going to be talking about prioritizing people, so tell us about your statement on your personal manifesto.

Amy:

My statement is, "I prioritize my people over my tasks." Lots of people have heard me talk about this, but I am a to-do list fanatic.

Cheri:

I heard you speak last weekend, and you even confessed to large groups of women that you write things down that you've already done.

Amy:

Just for the joy of checking them off.

Cheri:

There was a lot of women laughing, and you could tell that you weren't the only one in the room who does that.

Amy:

Yes. Yes, yes. So, my to-do list can really drive me. I can start to see my people as obstacles instead of ... Cheri is laughing. Hey, Cheri. Can we tell them why we're doing this, really quick?

Cheri:

Go for it.

Amy:

Okay. So, since I spoke near Cheri, I'm at Cheri's house today. We are sitting across the table doing this today, and I'm looking out behind her at the Pacific Ocean, which is her view out of her back window.

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Anyway, just side note. Just wanted to let you guys know. This is the first time we've ever done this face-to-face instead of coast-to-coast.

Cheri:

It's true. It's true, and we're going to have to do it more often.

Amy:

Yes. Okay, off the rabbit trail now. I have experienced growth, and so we talk a lot about our fears, and failures, and flops on this show, but we have had some growth. Last year, my boys came home for Christmas, and they were really upset. I was surprised because they were upset because it has always been our family tradition to decorate the Christmas tree together.

Cheri:

Uh-huh (affirmative).

Amy:

But because they came home mid-December, I went ahead and decorated the tree.

Cheri:

Uh-oh.

Amy:

Especially my oldest who said, "Mom, how could you decorate the tree without us?"

Cheri:

Oh, no.

Amy:

Which was hilarious, because who knew they cared, you know?

Cheri:

You find out after the fact what's important.

Amy:

Exactly, exactly. This year, Barry and I made the decision. It was a crazy time, because we were going out of town for Thanksgiving with my extended family, but before we went out of town, we made some time to go up in the attic, drag out the Christmas trees and set them up so that on the one day that both boys were both home before they headed back to college, we decorated the Christmas trees.

Cheri:

How did that all go?

Amy:

It was really...

Cheri:

Did the boys decorate the way their momma would?

Amy:

No. It was really funny. My oldest caught the perfection infection, as Jill Savage said, from me, unfortunately. He's kind of sensitive to that for me, and he said, "Mom, how is it going? Is it better decorating the tree by yourself last year?" I will have to say my tree looked gorgeous last year.

<Laughter>

Cheri:

Pinterest-perfect maybe?

Amy:

It was. It was. See, that was one of those tasks that I like my Christmas tree to look a certain way, and it's always a little hard to relinquish that control or that task and involve other people in it, but I had decided this year, "No, I'm prioritizing my people." The boys, gosh, are the center of my heart, and what they wanted to do over the way I would rather have it done. So, no, my Christmas tree does not look exactly the way that I would have done it if it was by myself, but it makes my heart happy because I did it with them.

Cheri:

Ah, so instead of that picture of perfection like you always say, that picture of the perfect tree, you have a memory of spending time together and realizing that you can step away from perfectionism.

Amy:

Exactly, exactly and that realization that they actually cared about a tradition that we had established.

Cheri:

Yeah.

Amy:

That was more priceless than anything. Anyway, it was more perfect than any tree could ever look, Cheri.

Cheri:

Ah, I love it.

Amy:

Ah.

Cheri:

I love it.

Amy:

Okay, so you have a different spin on this, but it's similar. I really can't believe, and we're laughing. It's very cool. We are two brains and ... well, almost like one brain in two bodies.

Cheri:

Yes.

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Amy:
Yeah.

Cheri:
No, we have discovered that over the last few days. We won't talk about what we discovered about snakes, because we might scare away most of our listeners, but that was pretty funny

Amy:
That's true.

Cheri:
All right, so mine says, "I keep only what I care for, and I care for what I keep." This came out of doing a bunch of de-cluttering experiments when Kathy Lipp was writing her book, *Clutter Free*. At first, it might not seem like it has anything to do with prioritizing people, but when it comes to maintaining clutter, the amount of clutter I had, and you know, I didn't have a chance to clean my house before you came. Honestly, this is probably the worst it's been in a while, and I love the fact that I have not actually seen you glancing around, scans ...

Amy:
Oh, stop. Cheri's house is beautiful and warm, and I feel so at home here.

Cheri:
But it's not perfectly clean, and there is a little bit more clutter, but it used to be way, way worse. The thing I found with clutter is the kind of clutter I had was always purposeful like there was this ton of scrapbooking stuff that I collected, because I was going to be a scrapbooker, but what I discovered was no, I was a collector of scrapbooking supplies, but when you collect scrapbooking supplies, then you have to store them and you have to move them around if you don't have very much space, and then just multiply that by everything I became interested in. Suddenly, I spent large amounts of what little free time I had. I always felt like I had to spend it cleaning, organizing, decluttering, managing things.

Amy:
Reorganizing. Yes.

Cheri:
Reorganizing. It finally occurred to me, "If I just got rid of a bunch of this stuff and never again pretend that I was, for example ..." By the way, listeners, if you are a scrapbooker, this is not a slam. I thought I was a scrapbooker and discovered I wasn't, and then I lived in denial for 10 years, maintaining the hope that I would become one. I kept getting rid of it in phases, and I kept the core hoard, like, "If I ever become a scrapbooker, this is what I'll really need," and I had the biggest possible rolling tote with everything, like, all the hardcore tools in it like ...

Amy:
You wanted to be a scrapbooker.

Cheri:

I wanted to be a scrapbooker, but here's the thing. When I lived in Southern California, I would go once a month to a crop with two other friends, and they had daughters Annmarie's age, and so scrapbooking when I lived there was about the people.

Amy:

Ah, it was your social activity.

Cheri:

It was. It was like the old quilting bee, you know?

Amy:

Yes.

Cheri:

I don't think I ever got a page done. Maybe a portion of a page, but it was never about getting the album finished. Although, I slowly worked myself through a few albums, it was about spending time with the people. I moved up here, and the circumstances were just different, and so, when I finally got rid of all that stuff ... I gave it away for free, Amy.

Amy:

Wow.

Cheri:

I did. I was going to do the eBay thing, and I admit, I did some of that. But finally, when I made the big push, and I was like, "This stuff, every time I go buy, it causes me so much guilt and shame. I feel like I can't fully enjoy my family. I can't go out and have fun. I can't go out and play. I can't. How dare I sit and watch a movie with my family when there's so much organizing I need to do?"

Amy:

Yeah.

Cheri:

When I got rid of it all like I loaded it up in the car and I took it to ... I lived on a boarding school campus. I took it to the Administration Building, with permission during vacation, laid it all out it was gone in two hours.

Amy:

Oh, wow!

Cheri:

Gone, and then I waited for the regret and the dismay to hit, and it never did.

Amy:

Just relief?

Cheri:

Just relief.

Amy:
Ha.

Cheri:
Just relief that I didn't have to spend all that time messing with it. Now, as I'm going to go back and do some decluttering which needs to happen in various areas of my house, the biggest focus is going to be, "Do I care about this enough to care for it?"

Amy:
Wow.

Cheri:
If not, then it needs to go, because I have people. I have people that I want to have the margin. I want to have the free time to be able to hang out and be with them. I'm sure some of our listeners have young kids, and I don't know if this happens to you, but with my friends who have babies, they constantly say to me, "Oh, it must be so nice. I'm sure it gets so much easier when they get older."

Amy:
Right.

Cheri:
Like your life is all your own.

Amy:
Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Cheri:
I know that some of the physical demands have changed, but my kids still have needs from their mom.

Amy:
Yeah.

Cheri:
Yours do, too.

Amy:
Yeah, even as adults.

Cheri:
I want to be available, and I want to be more interruptible than I currently am, and so I keep only what I care for, and I care for what I keep. I don't want to be a minimalist. I don't think I'm made of true minimalist stuff, but I want to minimize the amount of stuff that is taking up my time, because the house does need to be cleaned. There are certain things we can't not do.

Amy:
Right.

Cheri:
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The laundry, for heaven's sake. It doesn't do itself for reasons I don't understand, but the more I can get rid of that extra stuff, then the less I'm focused on tasks and things. Honestly, I think sometimes I did that because it was easier than facing my people, like puttering around, reorganizing things.

Amy:

Ah. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Cheri:

They don't talk about.

Amy:

Yes, that's true. What you just said about being interruptible I think is so Christ-like, which sounds funny, but I was reading Matthew 9 the other day, and this was an account of a day in Jesus' life that was incredibly, incredibly busy. And towards the beginning, it talks about Jesus being on the way, so he was on the way, but let me tell you what happened when he was on the way. He forgives and heals a paralyzed man. He called Matthew. He answered some questions from his disciples. He raised a dead girl and healed a sick woman. He healed a blind and a mute, and he gave a little mini sermon on the workers being few.

Cheri:

Wow.

Amy:

Oh my goodness, so he's on the way. In other words, I think Jesus had maybe a to-do list in his pocket. He had something he had in mind, and yet, he made time for all those people in his day. He was interruptible, and so that's the goal of really serving our people and being there for our people.

Cheri:

Being interruptible. All right, so this is the second to the last of our retrospect series, and so we started out talking about our one word and encouraging our listeners, so this would be a great time, everybody. I even asked Amy yesterday. I said, "Do you have your one word for 2018?"

Amy:

I don't.

Cheri:

She's like, "No." I know what mine is, because I was debating between two, and I swear, this week, every scripture I have read has the word. I'm like, "Okay. I know what my word is. It's all good." Now, here's the thing, is if you don't know your word by January 1, it's okay.

Amy:

Yes. Sometimes, I haven't.

Cheri:

Yeah. As I've done this with a small group, sometimes, January is the month to discover the one word, but this is a great time if you've been brainstorming, or if you haven't, it's a great time to go ahead and sit down. Do some brainstorming. Be real prayerful about it, and just see where God might be leading for the one word. If you've never done your personal manifesto, it's easy. It's fun, and it's a great way to

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bring some clarity, and so we'd really encourage you to head over to the website for this episode. It's going to be gritnGracegirls.com/episode81. You'll find the transcript for this episode, and you'll also find full instructions for making your own personal manifesto.

Amy:

Make sure to join us next week. When we'll cover our last item in our personal manifestos.

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!!!

Outtake

Cheri:

All right. Let me not hit erase.