

Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules
Episode #82: How to Handle Conflict with Confidence

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.

Today we are covering the last one, Cheri. Can you believe the Retrospect series is almost at an end?

Cheri:
Well, it means that 2017, is at an end, and 2018, is brand new. Yeah, that's exciting.

Amy:
It is exciting, and so today, we're covering one of the hardest topics.

Cheri:
I will admit I saved this one for the end on purpose, because it's such a theme for me.

Amy:
Yeah, and so we're going to talk today about facing conflict, which is, I don't think any of us love that. Do you love conflict, Cheri?

Cheri:
Oh, it's my favorite thing... not to do.

Amy:
Yes, exactly. Well, so mine, that I wrote is I work through conflict with grace, love, and candor. All three of these are going to be challenging for me, because what I like to do in conflict is disappear. I always say, you know, I'm a Southern girl, so I'm not going to have a knock down drag out with you. What I'm probably going to do is what the kids today call ghosting. That you're going to turn around, and you're going to be like, "Where'd she go?" That is how I handle conflict within friendships even Barry will tell you. I came into marriage with no conflict resolution skills. My parents have a great marriage, but they had resolved to do all their conflict behind closed doors. Let me just say that our children will not be able to say the same thing.

But there are some pros to that, but the downside to that was I never saw my parents resolve conflict so I didn't know how to do it. My go-to within my marriage and in my friendships would be to clam up and

Episode #82: How to Handle Conflict with Confidence

disappear until I could just get myself back together and move forward as if it had never happened. If I couldn't do that, then I just disappeared completely.

Cheri:
Permanently.

Amy:
How do you handle conflict or how have you handled it in the past?

Cheri:
Well, you know my statement on my personal manifesto is I am a conflict facer and a problem solver. When I speak on this the women all look so impressed and I say, "No, no. This is my statement of faith that this is who God is turning me into, because the truth is I'm a runner and a whiner." That vanishing speck on the horizon is me.

Amy:
I'm right behind you, sister.

Cheri:
So, yeah! Because for the longest time, and this is something Michele Cushatt and I have been talking a lot about this year, for the longest time disagreement was the end of the world. If you didn't agree with me, it meant you hated me and so just recognizing that there's multiple valid, not just perspectives, but experiences. You can be in the same situation and two people have an almost completely different experience. That's been hard for me to recognize.

Amy:
Yeah. Well, and for me the word candor, as you know, you and I have talked about this quite a bit, has become very important to me because, I do. I want to go into conflict with grace towards the other person, grace for myself, with love, and one of the verses that I found that I just love is Proverbs 10:12, "Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers all wrongs." I think sometimes in conflict we have to decide can I overlook this? Because, sometimes some things just need overlooked. We don't have to talk everything to death, or do I love enough to work through this? When I have to work through this, I have found that candor is really important.

What I try to do with the grace part is make it a safe place that you can be as candid as I am being so that we both have a safe place to lay our cards on the table, because unless we're honest, we are never going to be able to really work through it. There might be a Band-Aid on top of it but it's not going to be able to heal.

Cheri:
How would you define candor as being different from the person who says, "Well I'm just going to be brutally honest"?

Amy:
Yeah. Well, that's a great question. I think that a lot of times when we say, "I'm going to be brutally honest," for me that is a red flag that I am already valuing my own opinion too much. Somebody usually says, "Well, I'm just going to tell you the truth."

Cheri:

Yes, I'm just going to say it how it is.

Amy:

Yes, and you're like, "Hmm, that's your version of the truth. That's your opinion about what's going on here but truth is a really powerful word." So I think candor is, "Hey, this is my perspective. I'm going to be honest about the way I see this, the way I feel about this, knowing that someone else may have a different perspective."

Cheri:

Well, and you know you introduced me to the word candor when we started the podcast, when we were even just talking about it and one of the things you wanted to be candid about was an exit plan. If one of us decide to quit doing it, and I almost burst into tears because here we hadn't even started and you already wanted to quit.

Amy:

I didn't. I just didn't wanted us to be okay and still be friends.

Cheri:

It was such a gift but it was the first in many candid conversations we've had because we've done more and more things together. Here's what I think one of the other big things about this was timing. We had that candid conversation long before we needed it.

Amy:

Before there was any conflict.

Cheri:

Before there was even a podcast.

Amy:

Right. Yes.

Cheri:

And so even though it felt weird like, "Oh, she's already ... It's a prenup. She was planning to break up with me before we even get together." But then I slept on, thought about it and I realized no, this is so smart. It means that we have done the groundwork that says, well in this case, you value the friendship more than whatever this venture might be and it could've ... Okay, because we are recording at my house. You're getting the very real sounds of my life, and if you think you hear a nine pound black cat with an attitude meowing in the background...

Amy:

It's true.

Cheri:

It's true.

Amy:

It's Dusty. Hey, and I've loved the cats. I'm going to miss the cats the most.

Episode #82: How to Handle Conflict with Confidence

Cheri:

Yeah.

Amy:

I mean no. Cheri the most, then the cats.

Cheri:

And if you hear an elephant going through that's Rafiki. He's been showing off for Amy, but I think he can tell that she's leaving, so he's ghosting. He's mad at you. He's ghosted you. He can't handle conflict. He's just not going to show up.

Amy:

Oh, I hope Rafiki listens to this episode.

Cheri:

I think that learning to handle conflict means early. Not that that's the only time. Sometimes we can't do it early, but I have felt so much more comfortable and the other thing is whenever you've said, "Cheri I need to talk to you candidly about something." Of course, my old perfectionist people pleaser stuff, you know, "Oh!" I have a quick sixth grade girl moment, but then I know okay, we have a track record of it always means that it's going to be a discussion way before we need it and then you're going to invite me to be perfectly candid so that we can go back and forth. Sometimes, you've had concerns about things and I've been like, "No, you don't need to be concerned" and vice versa. I think that's real important.

Amy:

It's worked really well. Before, I always avoided the hard conversation, and I have done it enough now forced myself to do it enough now to realize hey the hard conversation is not the worst thing that could happen. The end of the relationship is the worst thing that could happen. The hard conversation most often saves relationships, so yeah.

Cheri:

Michele Cushatt posted this on Instagram last night. I thought it was so good. I'll read the quote, and I'm going to read what she put about it because to me this really, really it gives me courage and give me a good perspective going into 2018, more dedicated than ever to be a conflict facer and a problem solver.

It's a quote from Mel Robbins. It says, "Your only responsibility is being yourself. Just do you. If they leave, it's on them." Then Michelle says, "I spent the first half of my life making pleasing the entire world my full time job. Why? Because I was terrified of being alone, and I thought if I didn't make everyone happy all the time they would leave me. The irony. The one person I abandoned completely was myself. No more. No more. If I can show up every day and be fully myself, the unique creation God made me to be with all my quirks and flaws and mercy given beauty, that my friends is success. Here's to bringing the creator's genius to the planet day after beautiful day. What everyone else decides to do as a result, not my problem or yours."

Amy:

So beautiful! Well, and so the ghosting, the trying to please, the trying to avoid conflict what that does is it diminishes intimacy. We think that it's going to build intimacy because that's what our hearts long for

Episode #82: How to Handle Conflict with Confidence

but in the end, it doesn't at all. We can't be close when we live like that. We can only be close when we are conflict facers and problem solvers when we do it with grace and love and candor.

Cheri:

So, today we're done with the Retrospect series and so one more time, just going to encourage our listeners, if you haven't yet thought about a word for the year, it's not obligatory but going to be a beautiful thing to do. At some point, we should do a Facebook live once you have your word for 2018.

Amy:

Okay, we'll do it.

Cheri:

We'll do a Facebook Live. I don't want to reveal mine before you figured out yours. Then again, just love to encourage you to do a personal manifest or get started like a single phrase. Get out a post it note. It doesn't have to be this big, huge scary deal. You said it took you about an hour right?

Amy:

Yeah and it wasn't as time consuming as I had thought. Yup.

Cheri:

Okay, good. Good. Good. You'll find some resources on the website gritngracegirls.com/episode82.

Amy:

Next week we are going to be talking to Rebecca Gregoire Lindenbach who is the daughter of Sheila Wray Gregoire who I have interviewed in the past, and it is a fantastic interview that will let you inside the mind of your adult child.

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!!!