

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

Episode # 151: Grit 'n' Grace Live from Lake Geneva, Part 1

Cheri: Yeah. Hey, this is Cheri Gregory.

Amy: I'm Amy Carroll.

Cheri: 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 are so thrilled to introduce you to our friend Tonya Kubo who's going to take over the mic as our guest host for the next couple of episodes. Tonya, we love you so much and we're so glad you're here. Tell our listeners a little bit about yourself.

Tonya: Oh my gosh. Well, I'm so excited to be here. I'm totally fan-girling. My name is Tonya Kubo, and I am so excited to be leading the launch team for the book, Exhale. I have just had the privilege of working with both of you on social media, because that's kind of one of the things I do. Today, it's just, I'm beside myself because you guys have invited me to introduce a couple of, could we call these one of a kind Grit 'n' Grace episodes?

Cheri: Yeah they are.

Tonya: Could you maybe tell us what makes them so special?

Amy: Well, Cheri and I just got to do our first Grit 'n' Grace girls get away together just a month... How long ago? A month or two?

Cheri: Just about a month ago, yeah.

Amy: Cheri, who is our genius idea girl, came up with the amazing idea to do a live taping of Grit 'n' Grace at our first Grit 'n' Grace girls get away.

Tonya: Let me get this straight. This was like you guys' first time speaking together. What was that like?

Cheri: Well, oh my goodness. For me it was a dream come true because what most of our listeners know is that Amy used to be my message development coach, that's how we actually first got started working together. We spent about three years where she helped me with every single retreat message that I did, talk about fan-girling. I was like, "I get to actually speak with Amy Carroll this weekend." It was the best thing ever. I cannot wait to do it again.

Amy: Well, let me say that I fired Cheri as my client, because I told her I had not only taught her everything that I knew, but she's a better speaker than I am, so I was fan-girling back.

Tonya: Okay, well. I'm glad you didn't take too much of a breath there, because I was like, "Oh, that's going in a direction I was not expecting."

Amy: Can I explain where we were?

Cheri: Yes, please do.

Tonya: Yes please.

Amy: Because this is mentioned in the middle of the episode, and I thought it needed a little clarification. We were at the Playboy Mansion. I mean the former Playboy Mansion.

<Laughter>

Seriously, it's the former Playboy Mansion, but now it's a beautiful retreat center for people who are not wearing bunny ears on Lake Geneva in Wisconsin, and it's amazing. I refer to it in the middle, and I just didn't want to alarm our listeners.

Tonya: This is like the best girls night getaway ever. Thank you guys for letting me be here and be your MC. As we let our listeners know, kind of, what they're going to get the sneak peek into is... This was your first ever Grit 'n' Grace girls getaway. This retreat, it's your Friday night message and, I mean, it's totally a makeshift recording studio, right?

Cheri: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Tonya: Bistro table, podcast mic and you're just like, "Hey, we're just going to have this live audience, and we're going to hold up signs for clapping. Is that how it was?"

Cheri: We didn't even think about the signs that would have been a great idea.

Amy: That would have been great.

Cheri: They just kind of did that on their own.

Tonya: Awesome. Before we go right into the episode, anything else that you think listeners need to know?

Amy: Well, we were really afraid this was going to be a gigantic flop.

Cheri: Let's be clear, not because of the audience. The organizers of this event were wonderful. Dawn and Theresa were amazing and the women were all around their tables and

they were looking at us so expectantly, but, of course, those old reforming perfectionist tendencies, because we didn't script it out. We just had these little skeletal notes in Google docs.

Amy: Yeah. We were afraid it was going to flop because we had never done it before, and it turned out to be a tremendous hit. That's why we're sharing it here today. Really, the truth is, Tonya, that if it would have flopped the plan to share it on the podcast...

Cheri: Ideally.

Amy: ... would have never come to be. We would have buried it as deep as it could go.

Tonya: I want to extrapolate, if I can, the true message here, which is that, you didn't plan it to death, and yet God still managed to move in it. Is that what I just heard?

Amy: Unbelievable but true.

Cheri: Absolutely. It was so much better than, first of all, we had imagined, and way better than if we had planned it. Way, way better.

Tonya: All right, well I don't think we should make the listeners wait any longer, so let's go to it.

Amy: So, Cheri, we talk about that our podcast came from that book proposal rejection but you talked about good girls breaking bad rules and that's what we want to focus on tonight. So tell us what you mean by good girl.

Cheri: Well, I grew up the typical good girl. I don't have a dramatic, transformational testimonial like my brother was the one who did drugs, my brother was the one who was always in trouble. And I watched him—he's seven years older than I am—I watched him and I was like oh, no, no, no I'm not going to do things that way. I'm going to be the good girl of the family. And so that was my role. But the problem is, you know, being the person who always does everything right, who's always above reproach, who's always finding out, you know, what's the rule is in this situation so that I could not just follow the rule, but like, you know, double, triple follow it so that I could never ever get in trouble. The problem is trying really hard to look good doesn't actually make you good it just makes you alone. And so that's what I found. And I also was also constantly afraid that people would find out I was faking it.

Amy: Mmm.

Cheri: Because I didn't feel great, it was just all so incredibly surface. And so a lot of our listeners are good girls who are either trying really, really hard to stay good girls or they've given up.

Amy: Yes.

Cheri: They're like I can't follow all of the rules, or they're like the rules are stupid anyways—

Amy: [chuckles]

Cheri: —and they've given up on them, so yeah.

Amy: Well, and I'm sort of a mix of the both of, both of those. I say I'm a rebel rule follower; I follow rules until I think your rules are stupid, and then that's when the rebel comes out. So.

Cheri: Yeah, I don't think my mom would have wanted me playing with you when we were kids.

Amy: [Laughs]

Cheri: [Laughs] She would not have trusted you.

Amy: I told her, I told Cheri, I was going to start tonight by making a joke about the playboy mansion, and she goes my mother is rolling over in her grave. Right. Now [Laughs].

Cheri: [Laughs] All right. So what kind of perfectionist did we figure out that you are?

Amy: Okay, well it's been interesting because as you know as you process life with a friend so many times they have insights into your true being that you never even had about yourself. And so one of the things Cheri said, one day she goes, "Oh, you had adult-onset perfectionism" [laughs].

Cheri: [Chuckles]

Amy: We know about adult-onset diabetes; it's fairly serious. And adult-onset perfectionism was very serious for me, too. Cheri and I, kind of, came from different kinds of homes. I grew up in a home where my parents were big into the self-esteem movement, and they just said, "Amy, you're so great" and "you can do anything you want," and so I mean I grew up with a lot of encouragement and unconditional love. But somewhere in me there was this fallen part of me that believed I had to earn love. That I had to earn approval. And so, and that became really bad at the point that I was a part of a legalistic church in college.

Cheri: Mmm.

Amy: And so legalism and a bent towards perfectionism is a really bad mix, and it just went into hypergear. It had kind of been undercover because my parents had loved me so well, but as an adult—and particularly as a young mother—

Cheri: Mmm.

Amy: —my perfectionism began to kill my soul by drips is the way I think about it. Now, it served me really well at first! And that’s why it’s so insidious: is because it earns us pats on the back, it earns us approval a lot of times, it earned me good grades, I earned some plaques on the wall. But then suddenly I started to realize I couldn’t be myself anymore. That every room I that walked into I was taking the temperature to see how I could fit in there instead of being my truest, God-created, authentic self. Now, for some of you—and Cheri’s going to talk about her version of perfectionism a little bit, too, but for some of you—you may be going, “I’m not that person,” and I want to challenge that a little bit because let me ask you a question: the last time you were having a no-good, very bad, terrible day, and somebody came up to you that you didn’t know well and you weren’t quite sure if you could trust them and they said, “So how are you doing?” What did you say?

Audience: Fine.

Cheri: Fine.

Amy: Fine! We all have a little bit of the performer, or the perfectionist, or the people pleaser in us. It’s just—it’s part of who we are, and I think in our culture, especially with social media, that we have become people about image, and God never created us to make our own image; He wants us to reflect His. And so, Cheri, tell us about, kind of, your brand of perfectionism.

Cheri: Oh my goodness! I have been a card carrying perfectionist from the cradle and very proud of it. Thank you very much. My mother used to proudly tell me that I hardly made any sound as a baby. That anytime I cried it was as if I was being apologetic for inconveniencing anybody.

Audience: [Chuckles]

Amy: [Chuckles]

Cheri: And I thought, oh, that’s a good thing to never inconvenience anybody, and to never ever make waves, and you know, one of the biggest illustrations I can give was in eighth grade. In eighth grade I took geometry, and I was so proud. So proud. My grandmother was a math whiz, and so here I was just like my grandma and I got to go from the junior high building up to the high school to take geometry class. And I wanted so badly to do well. And so, I was with a group of other kids who were good at math, and, you know, they took it seriously—but me, I took it so[ooo] seriously. Every. Single. Test. I literally would take a big old stack of paper and several pencils and erasers, and I would take the whole test. And then I would turn all those pages over, and then I would take the whole test again. And I would turn those pages over, and then I would take the whole test a third time. And then I would take all the pages and I would spread them all out, and I would compare my answers. And if they all matched and—some of you, your jaws are open, you’re right. Yes, okay. If you’re like, “Does she know this is weird?” Yes, she knows this is weird.

Audience: [Laughs]

Amy: [Laughs]

Cheri: [Chuckles] It's ok to look at me that way—as long as all the answers matched, I was like yes, I've got it all right. I've aced another test. I've gotten a hundred percent. And if anything didn't match, I would work that problem another three times. And I got through the entire first quarter, and I had aced every single test. And I was so proud of that.

Amy: And given yourself an ulcer.

Cheri: I wasn't aware of the ulcer yet.

Amy: Okay.

Cheri: Okay. Oh no, no, no I was waiting for my fifteen minutes—fifteen seconds of fame. And so at the beginning of second quarter Mr. Vickers said, "I am going to announce who has the highest grade in geometry," and everybody's looking around to figure out who it is—well, I know who it is because you can't have higher than a hundred percent, right? And so sure enough he called out my name, Cheri Elder has a hundred percent. She's aced every single test." And I'm like, I'm waiting for the angels to start singing and I hear the Hallelujah chorus, and then he says, "but today I'm going to introduce to you a new student who is going beat her second quarter..."

And I was crushed. Because Mr. Vickers had known me all quarter long, which meant he knew that I would fail, right? Like, if he knew me then he could, he could predict this about me. And he introduced the new student and I was just shocked and heartbroken, and I tried I really did try to rise to the occasion. But his prophecy over me, prophecy—now, of course, he was a sports coach; he was trying to bring out a competitive spirit in me. I don't have that kind of competitive spirit. I compete with myself, but as soon as I'm pitted against somebody else, at least back then, it was like just shrink down—and so I will never forget the second test of second quarter. I made the same stupid negative error all three times I took the test. And so I took my test up to him, and he marked a minus one at the top. And I dissolved into tears, and I ran behind the gym, and I cried for two hours.

Amy: Wow.

Cheri: And my friends thought, "O[ooo]h, you can't handle not being the teacher's pet—"

Amy: [Chuckles]

Cheri: "—spoil sport." You know—and I'll be talking more about being a highly sensitive person in my workshop tomorrow for those who are interested—and they're like "drama queen," "attention-seeker." I was heartbroken. My worth was so tied up in my performance.

Amy: Yeah.

Cheri: So, for some of us perfectionism and people pleasing feel so normal we don't recognize it. Like I can recognize it now, I'm like, "Oh, I was so sick," and actually I literally was. I was hospitalized for an eating disorder; I was both anorexic and bulimic between graduating from high school and going into college, because perfectionism was that deep seated for me. Yeah.

Amy: Mmhmm. So, and we know that there are other women that do the same thing that tried to gain approval, but they have the never good enough list. So they're working and hiding just like our kind of perfectionism on the outside, but on the inside there's that shame that takes over, and most of us swing between the two lists—

Cheri: Oh yeah.

Amy: So that's how we wanted to define being a good girl. And listen. I just have to say it: although I don't think it's as prevalent in your church at all because of who leads you—Dawn and Theresa and some of the others that are part of your leadership team—but this is particularly hard for church girls, particularly hard, the 'good girl syndrome'. And being transparent and being real is—can be really, really tough.

Cheri: Mmhmm. Absolutely.

Amy: So, let's talk about bad rules.

As reforming perfectionists we would like to have a formula that would apply to any given situation, right?

Cheri: [chuckles]

Amy: So that we can know how to do it right. Give us the rules for it.

Cheri: [Chuckles]

Amy: And so Cheri said, "Okay, when we do this break out we are going to—I'm going to create a formula for how to identify a bad rule."

Cheri: [Chuckles]

Amy: How'd that go, Cheri?

Cheri: Yeah, that didn't go so well.

Amy: [Laughs]

Cheri: You know at the end of every show what we end up saying is “when you run across a bad rule you know what to do go right on ahead and break it,” and actually the book that I brought with me, *The Cure for the Perfect Life* it—it’s original title was *Good Girls Break Bad Rules*, but a couple of months before they published the book they decided to change the title of it because the publisher didn’t like the idea of Christian women breaking any rules, let alone bad rules.

Amy: Hello.

Cheri: Yeah, that was kind of ironic.

Amy: Red flag number one.

Cheri: [Laughs]

Amy: [Laughs]

Audience: [Laughs]

Cheri: But that whole title, the whole concept about rules came from a monologue that I did, for those of you who aren’t familiar with solo performing, I took a class with 8 other students, 10 minutes on an empty stage. And what I really wanted to do [chuckles] I wanted to learn ‘improv,’ but I was too scared to actually ‘improv,’ you know, the perfectionism in me was like “no, I want my—my spontaneity needs to be very carefully planned, please.

Audience: [Laughs]

Cheri: So the thing about the monologue class is I got a script and I got to practice. So I’m like, okay [breathes shallow and quickly]—we always joke about hyperventilating into a paper bag—and I felt like okay, I could probably do this. And so, as I developed my script for this monologue, I was talking with my fellow classmates and my instructors about the role perfectionism had played in my life. It was about the time that Brené Brown had published the *Gifts of Imperfection*, and I was starting to really, really pay attention to perfectionism. And realize, hang on a second, this is not something to be proud of—it’s not just like a crazy uncle who lives in the back room, but he’s kind of okay—it’s really, actually, really damaging. And so what I ended up doing for my monologue is I ended up speaking to the audience as if they were perfectionism, and as if perfectionism was this abusive relationship that had actually taken my mother, and was taking me, and was now going after my daughter. You know, we women know that we will sometimes tolerate things for our self, but oh man, oh man if somebody goes for the children in our life we will rise up. And so, I have a chronic case of awkwardness. And so, when I went on stage—I mean, literally it was an empty stage—and so I needed something to do with my hands, and so I brought a ruler on stage with me and I used it to illustrate how I used to measure whether I was skinny enough. And I used it to talk about the rules of perfectionism. And then at the very end when I was talking to perfectionism directly and I said,

“You do not get my daughter, too.” What I found happening is I found myself breaking the ruler. And it was incredibly powerful. And I found out that breaking bad rules feels amazing.

Audience: [Laughs]

Cheri: And once you’ve started breaking bad rules you want to keep on breaking bad rules. And so that’s what we mean by the whole “good girls break bad rules.” Now, Amy, you’re the one who actually devises the bad rules for our episodes, so how do you—we, we didn’t figure out a formula [...]

Amy: No formula. Sorry.

Cheri: [Laughs] Honestly, I wanted to give you a worksheet so that you could figure out bad rules in your life and maybe color code it and highlight it—

Amy: [Laughs]

Cheri: Oops, yeah! So how do you come up with the bad rules for our episodes?

Amy: Well it was so interesting because Cheri asked me that question the other day, because I thought how do I come up with the bad rules [chuckles], and here’s the truth: I thought about how I’ve always thought about things, and I write it down. [Laughs] And that’s how I come up with the bad rules. “So what is a bad rule?” A bad rule is something that sounds really good, that sounds very reasonable, that sounds God-ish.

Cheri: Hmm.

Amy: But if you’re in—our friend Lisa Whittle uses that term ‘God-ish’—so it, it sounds like something a church girl would say, except there’s something a little off about it, there’s a little untruth. And Cheri shared the most hilarious blog post from this girl that was talking basically about bad rules, and she said it’s like a glass of lemonade. And she said, you know, a glass of lemonade is such a wonderful, delicious thing, especially on a hot day. But she said a bad rule is like a glass of lemonade with a mouse turd in the bottom of it. [Laughs]

Audience: [Laughs]

Amy: And I thought, “I can share that with this group—

Cheri: [Laughs]

Amy: —I can totally share that with this group.” So, you know, it’s that little thing in the bottom that you think “well, like it’s just little, like what’s the problem?” The whole rest of, you know, all the rest of it’s okay. Right?

Audience: [Chuckles]

Amy: Except it's not, is it? You wouldn't drink a lemonade with a mouse turd in the bottom of it. And yet, we put up with bad rules in our lives, and actually don't just put up with them, as Dawn and I were talking at dinner, sometimes we'll take a bad, a bad thing and we feed it and nurture it for so long that we begin to believe it. And then we begin to behave based on that. And we don't even see it as a bad rule, we think it's true. And that's why it's really bad is because we've embraced it as truth.

Cheri: My word for the year—this is not in our notes I'm just going to do true confession—my word for the year is rest.

Amy: Cheri is really bad at rest. [Laughs]

Cheri: I am the worst. I wanted a receipt to return this word to God. I'm like give me something else accomplishment oriented please, but no He, He decided to give me rest. And when I do take the time to rest or even pause, I recognize a bad rule because I hear the Holy Spirit stirring in my heart and I hear my Father's voice saying, No, no, no that's not what I want for you, my daughter. I have something better for you than this." And it's always something that does not have condemnation involved in it, but it's something that has my best at heart.

Amy: So what bad rule did you break that brought us here today with everybody else?

Cheri: Well, you know it goes all the way back to that rejected book proposal. And so much of my life if there was failure I was so ashamed of it, wouldn't look at it again, and the rule I grew up with is failure is the worst thing in the world. Failure is the worst thing in the world. You hide it, you blame it on other people —

Amy: [Chuckles]

Cheri: —or you quickly start something new and do so well at that that nobody sees that you fail. Like, I literally did not learn how to learn from failure. You know, we know as humans—we're supposed to learn from our failures. I didn't. All I learned was how to run and hide from them. And so that night that I messaged you and said, "I'm starting a podcast—I had no idea how to start a podcast" [chuckles] It was crazy.

Amy: I thought she did.

Audience: [Laughs]

Amy: I was like, "I'm in." [Laughs]

Cheri: Way too trusting. Way too trusting. But I—that was the night that instead of going back down that familiar road of shame, I was like no. I'm going to try something, and I'm going to

keep on trying new things. I'm going to get back up and try things until I find something that works. And I, and I was 99.9% sure you were going to say no, but I asked anyways. And that was the other thing—I almost didn't ask.

Amy: Mmhmm.

Cheri: I was almost like, "Ah, I know she's going to say no, so I will save myself the pain."

Amy: Hey, can I break in a minute?

Cheri: Yeah.

Amy: Does anybody hear a lesson in that for you? Maybe?

Cheri: Mmhmm.

Amy: You thought, "I want this person as my running partner, but I don't think she'll do it."

Cheri: Mmm.

Amy: Just saying. Anyway. Go ahead Cheri. [Laughs]

Cheri: Oh! Well—

Audience: [Laughs]

Cheri: —you're, I mean, you're Proverbs 31. What could you have possibly needed from me? Or gotten from me? But during that particular year—if I do my math right, it was 2016. My word for that year was 'ask.'—and so, anytime God laid somebody on my heart: to either invite to do something, or ask them to do something with me, or ask them to do me a favor, or ask them to help me—that was the hard part of that year, maybe rest is looking better than ask come to think of it—but so my, my thing for that year was if God laid somebody on my heart to ask, my only duty was obedience and His job was the results. And so that's the only reason I messaged you and said, "Hey, I'm doing this thing. Do you want to get involved?" And so instead of the boomerang of rejection I got the wh—I mean, I did get up early the next morning to see if you'd responded [chuckles]—

Audience: [Chuckles]

Amy: [Laughs]

Cheri: —and you had!

Amy: Immediately.

Cheri: And it was so amazingly cool. And so here's the thing for me that changed then: is that instead of measuring success in terms of outcomes, I measured my success in terms of my obedience to God's leading. And that made all the difference in the world.

Amy: And it's continued to make all the difference in the world 'cause I joke and say that, that Cheri's bad at rest, but, God, if you do a word for the year or a, you know, whatever you're doing to let God challenge you—you know that we get challenged in the areas that we're bad at and I have plenty of my own—and the grace in all of this, too, is that it took grit to do the ask. But the grace is, is that we line up people to interview and we basically like figure out who we're 'fan-girling' over and ask them on. "Oh, maybe they'll say yes and then we can be their friend" and you know, whatever—

Audience: [Laughs]

Amy: It's a little sick. But we love it and here's the amazing thing. So God gave Cheri the word rest; she was kind of resisting it. We had these we had these interviews lined up. We really didn't know what they were all going to be about, and y'all interview after interview after interview women talked about rest and rest and rest. And it was what I needed, too. And so God just — He's just doing miraculous things. It's amazing.

Cheri: Well, and I'm going I'm going to go off script.

Amy: Oh okay. Wow.

Cheri: Look at me. Look at me and my bad self.

Amy: [Laughs]

Audience: [Laughs]

Cheri: Okay, three years ago I couldn't go off script. It'd be like [breathes quickly]—

Amy: We're—

Cheri: What do we do? What do we do? It's not written down?

Amy: Me, too. And we're so proud when we're spontaneous. We're just so proud.

Cheri: [Laughs]

Audience: [Laughs]

Cheri: We're being spontan-u-ous. But so we decided at the very—and this was your idea—at the very beginning to put into writing, kind of, the conditions under which we would keep on working together, and you had a litmus test for how we would know if we kept going with the podcast and it was deeply spiritual. Share it with everybody, please.

Amy: It's very, very spiritual, and it was - and my number one criteria was are we still having fun?

Audience: [Laughs]

Amy: [Laughs] Because life had been so-so serious, so hard, so sad, such a drag for me with my first book—you should buy it, like...

Cheri: [Laughs]

Audience: [Laughs and claps]

Amy: [Laughs]

Cheri: Okay, hang on I have to break in, because I got to read that book before it ever went to press. I-she-we actually argued over something in that book—

Amy: Yes. [Chuckles]

Cheri: —and you were very gracious in hearing my opinion. I got to endorse that book—it's an amazing book. If you don't own it already, you really should buy it.

Amy: It broke my heart, but whatever.

Cheri: Oh my goodness, you are not a sales person tonight! [Laughs]

Audience: [Laughs]

Amy: [Laughs] But I was like, "If it's not fun, I am not doing it." And hey! We're still having fun!

Cheri: Oh yeah.

Amy: And this is so fun being here with you.

Cheri: Okay, but then there was something else you wanted to talk about.

Amy: Oh.

Cheri: You wanted to talk about our exit strategy.

Amy: Oh.

Cheri: Like we hadn't even started and she was already trying to break up with me.

Audience: [Laughs]

Cheri: [Chuckles] But Amy introduced me to this whole concept of candid conversations, of being candid up front, because you had just been through a whole slew of friendships that dissolved. And so you said, "Cheri I want to put all my cards out and I want you to hear me out, and then I want you to put all your cards on the table and I will hear you out." And, talking about a blessing that has extended into many of my relationships, and, and when I start getting into the, "Oh, I don't want to talk to this person—people pleaser—I don't want to offend them, I don't want to inconvenience them, I'll bring it up on a better day." Like when is a good day to bring up a conflict, really, you know?

Amy: [Chuckles]

Cheri: 'Cause if it's a bad day I don't want to make it worse, and if it's a good day where we're having a great time, do I really want to bring up a conflict? And I'm like, okay, but Amy has taught me how to be candid and so I've learned to start a lot of conversations in the interest of candor—

Amy: It was out of pure desperation y'all. [Chuckles]

Audience: [Chuckles]

Cheri: [Chuckles] It was [...]

Amy: It was just out of pure desper—but it's worked.

Cheri: Okay back to the script. Sorry.

Amy: Okay.

Cheri: Amy, we're going to talk about our baddest bad rule...

Tonya: We'll be back next week with part two of the first ever Grit 'n' Grace getaway recorded live from Lake Geneva.

Cheri: Yeah.

Tonya: All right. Another first that I want to talk about, and I didn't mention it earlier because I wanted everybody to just really get the feel of what that was like to be there at the getaway.

But, I want to talk about your first book together. Before I let the two of you talk, I want to talk about your launch team because, oh my word. You both know, I have a history with launch teams. Hands down best launch team I have ever worked with, and this, I think, is why. Just hearing about Friday night at Lake Geneva really reinforces it, is the two of you are in real life exactly who you are on the podcast, and exactly who you were in the book, and it resonates.

What I would love... In fact, let me just read something really quick from our launch team if you don't mind. Here's from one of our launch team member who says, "I cried for the first time ever while reading a nonfiction book. If I had been reading a paper copy, it probably would've been soggy, tears of release. I hadn't realized how much the spirit of perfectionism had derailed my life, had held me back from so many opportunities and was at the root of my issues with procrastination." Then you both brought that in real life at Lake Geneva. Now our listeners get to get this in your book, *Exhale*. I want to hear from you what that was like to bring that Grit 'n' Grace message into a book together.

Cheri: Okay. Well, now neither of us can speak because we're all choked up. You've led us into the launch team Facebook group this morning, and I went through an entire box of Kleenexes. What it was like... Well, first of all, working with Amy is just so easy and the principle for the podcast, that we will keep doing it as long as we are having fun, stayed true for the book. That was really cool. But realizing that this message that has resonated with our listeners for almost three years now on the podcast is able to make into print, and is now having the impact on our readers that it had on us, as God has been walking us individually and then together as we process life together and praycess life together, seeing it have the impact we had kind of hoped it would, seeing that it's having an even greater impact, kind of like...

I mean, what I saw in the Facebook group this morning, with the launch team, is kind of like the experience we had at Lake Geneva where it was... At Lake Geneva, I turned to Amy at some point I said, "I don't think we're doing this. I don't actually think this retreat is about us at all. I think God is showing up and showing off." It was fun to write the book together, but now I just feel like I'm sitting back and going, "I don't know if I really wrote that book after all."

Tonya: How about you Amy? What would you say?

Amy: Well, I think what you just said is one of the biggest compliments, the highest compliment, that Cheri and I could have, which is what you hear on the podcast is who we are in real life, and it was who we were at the retreat, and it's who we are in *Exhale*. I think that's one of our huge values is that we're going to be transparent, because we want the spotlight shone on Jesus. We don't need to be the heroes of these stories, because we're not the heroes of these stories. We tell a lot of kind of ugly stuff about ourselves, don't we, Cheri?

Cheri: There's plenty to draw from.

Amy: With a purpose, not just so you pity us or anything, but with the purpose of showing that God is at work in our lives, and God can be at work in your life in the same kinds of ways.

He never does the same thing twice, that's the beauty of it, but, yeah. The comments in the launch team were incredible, and to read comments where women were already implementing some of the ideas we've put in the book, and seeing change in their life already. That's what had me crying and doing praise hands, too, yeah.

Tonya: Well, I think, as the person who's leading the team, right? First of all, can we just be honest? I'm not doing a whole lot of leading in there either. That is 100% Jesus. But these women are reading this message, and they've been listening to the podcast, and it's like they hear it for the first... I shouldn't say that. It's not that they hear it for the first time. They're believing it for the first time. That's the shift I'm seeing. I'm hearing women talk about how they were turning down things. They were saying no to things that they knew they should have said no to. They thought they'd feel bad about, but then said they felt free. They felt peace. Like every promise in the book is coming true to them. Here's what I'd like, if it's okay with the two of you. I'd like to offer our listeners the opportunity to pre-order, *Exhale*. Would that be okay?

Amy: That's okay with us. Oh, yeah.

Tonya: Here's where I have to step in and put my launch team leader hat on and let our listeners know why pre-orders are really important, because the book comes out in June, but you can pre-order now. You can pre-order from Amazon, from Proverbs 31. I mean you can find a way to get it. But the best way, I think, is to go to [exhalebook.com](http://exhalebook.com), and the reason I suggest that is because then you can see what your pre-order bonuses are, and I'll let Cheri and Amy explain those in a moment.

But pre-orders are so important for authors, because they actually dictate whether Amazon or other online retailers will feature a book as a new release, and more than anything, they validate the message of the book. They let people know that there is already an established readership clamoring to get that book in their hands. None of us can do that for the book except for the people who actually dip into their wallets and pre-order that book themselves. Why don't we let them know, and Amy I'm going to start with you, about the free bonuses that they're going to get when they do make that choice to pre-order at [exhalebook.com](http://exhalebook.com).

Amy: Well, we've got three, and we did that on purpose because we don't want to overwhelm you, because the book is called *Exhale*. The first one is the expectation evaluation, which is a tool to help you assess your own expectations, and others expectations for you, to see if they're reasonable or not.

Cheri: The second one is called the No More Faux-pologies Challenge. It's a five-day challenge to help you notice and weed out needless apologies.

Amy: The third one is called Breathe a Prayer. Some of you may have heard of breath prayers. They are these little short prayers of faith, and this is a list of breath prayers for you when you need to rest.

Tonya: Wow. Those all sound like exactly what I need. I can't speak for our listeners, but I know that I am very excited to find out more at exhalebook.com. One thing that I will say, and I think that this holds true for all of us, right? When we do our pre-orders it's a really good idea to take a picture of the receipt, isn't it?

Amy: Yes. Because that's exactly what you'll send in to... Cheri, help me out.

Cheri: It's [orders@exhalebook.com](mailto:orders@exhalebook.com). The order buttons for all the major retailers such as Amazon and Proverbs 31 are all on the exhalebook.com website and full instructions for getting the bonuses.

Tonya: Oh, we appreciate that those of us who need full instructions. Full details at [exhalebook.com](http://exhalebook.com), and we are just going to be so excited to hear what you have to say.

Cheri: We hope you've enjoyed episode 151 of Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules.

Amy: Head on over to [gritngracegirls.com/episode151](http://gritngracegirls.com/episode151) where you'll find our show notes in the transcript.

Tonya: I'm your guest host, Tonya Kubo, and I will be back next week for part two of Grit 'n' Grace live from Lake Geneva.

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 break it.

Tonya: Break it.

Amy: Break it.

### **Outtakes**

Amy: And Cheri, who is our genius idea girl, had this great idea. Oh, so sorry. Oh, my gosh. Cheri just talked to me. What the heck! Hold on. She said, "I just got this for a good idea." Okay, sorry. So, Cheri, who is our genius...