

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

## Episode #154: How to Overcome the Fear of Change

Amy: Is that what our opening is, is reading those texts?

Cheri: Well, do you think we should or not? I just threw it in there as an idea.

Amy: I think ... I mean, it was so funny but I was like, "Will our husbands like it? Maybe not."

Cheri: Yeah.

We'll just ... It's probably one of those things where you had to be there.

Amy: Yeah.

Cheri: So, yeah.

Amy: Yeah.

Cheri: No. We'll just ... We'll skip the awkwardness of trying to make it funny and then cutting it anyways.

Amy: Okay.

Cheri: So, in case anyone is listening, guys, we had this really funny exchange of texts that would not translate to the podcast. So, we are saving you from the awkwardness of not laughing at us.

Amy: It might make our husbands mad at us too, so, maybe not.

Cheri: Well, this is Cheri.

Amy: And I'm Amy.

Cheri: And you are 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.

So, Amy, we've decided that all of our summer episodes are going to be less than 20 minutes long. Do you think we can actually pull it off?

Amy: I don't know. I mean, the warning we should go in with is that we have actually not recorded for a while. So, I'm like, "There's my friend Cheri, I have so many things to say to her." So, yeah. There are a lot of words that it might require a lot of editing Cheri. I'm sorry.

Cheri: Not a problem.

Amy: But yeah. We're going to keep them short for summer. Short for summer. There we go.

Cheri: I like that. That's a sticky statement. Yeah, I will be editing this down to 19 minutes and 59 seconds. So, there we go.

Well, you know, even though *Exhale* just released on June 4, 2019, we actually wrote most of the content back in 2018. So, we thought it'd be fun to kind of revisit the topics from the perspective of about a years' distance, and besides, we notice that Brené Brown did something like this with one of her books. She kind of podcasted her way through it. So, this basically makes us just like Brené Brown. Don't you think?

Amy: Just like Brené. Absolutely. Just like Brené. That's my new motto.

Cheri: Just like Brené. Absolutely. Well, we wrote *Exhale* for a very specific type of woman, so, talk about that kind of woman.

Amy: Well, so, full disclosure. We talk about this a little bit in the book. That woman is actually Cheri and I.

Cheri: Exactly.

Amy: It's woman who are exhausted from the attempt to be everything to everybody. All the things to all the people all the time and Cheri and I have , you know, we've lived this way. So, we knew how to describe it perfectly and it's funny because the introduction is actually a compilation that Cheri wrote based on a survey that she gave me. So, what you're actually seeing there is a loose facsimile of who I am, and I think I'm probably not the only one. Are you in the same boat Cheri?

Cheri: Oh my goodness. Yes. That whole picture of having pressure, you know, you describe it as the elephant on the chest at 2:37 AM.

Amy: Yeah.

Cheri: For some people it's not the middle of the night. Some people, they do sleep well but it's just that sense of anxiety and for some of us it's above the radar, for some of us it's just under the radar, but it's that sense of internal pressure. So, we asked our interns a couple of questions and we're going to hear from some of them in this episode. We asked, "When you feel your internal pressure rising, what kinds of thoughts are running through your head?" And then, "What's one practical way that you lower or release that pressure?" Here's what Tenneil Register of Reclaimed Seven had to say.

Tenneil: When that internal pressure starts to rise up inside of me, my mind starts racing with thoughts like, "This is it. This is the one that I'm not going to be able to pull off. This is the one where it's all going to blow up and fall apart and then people are going to know that I didn't have it all together." My mind starts doing worst-case scenario of what it's going to look like when everything falls apart and starts to feel like when everything falls apart that I am going to fall apart.

When I get in that situation a really important strategy for me is to be physically busy. Go for a walk, do a 10-minute tidy, go for a bike ride, but physically do something to release that internal pressure so that my mind can settle back down into less selfish thoughts and more trusting thoughts of what God can do for me and that the worst case scenario of it falling apart just means that it fell apart. It doesn't mean that I fall apart.

Cheri: Here's what Lori Young of Authenticity Over Approval had to say.

Lori: I've recently taken a giant leap of faith to start my own business. So, when I start to feel the pressure in my chest I'm usually thinking about how scary and unknown, if I'm good enough or have what it takes to succeed. So, when I'm feeling the pressure I drop what I'm doing and I go for a walk. So, I'll pick one phrase, I have grit and determination, I have grit and determination, and I repeat it in my head over and over and over again, while I'm walking, paying attention to the rhythm of my feet. The reason that I do this, one, is just to get out of the environment that's feeling scary or maybe suffocating. It gets me outside and it gets the rhythm of my breathing back to normal and it resets the way that I'm thinking.

Amy: So, it's been really interesting, because I've been wrestling with this again recently. So, last week, even as the book was releasing we had the opportunity to record the audio book.

Cheri: Woo hoo.

Amy: So exciting, and really so fun, but the oddest thing happened because my anxiety and just insecurities really amped up again.

Cheri: Aww.

Amy: I still don't really know what that was all about. Cheri got some very angry emails and things from me, but I had that same reaction that Tenniel talked about where you have this kind of spiraling downward roll and then you have to say, "Hey, I gotta find a way to stop this." But the remarkable thing was, is that the year leading into the release of *Exhale*, can we just say it was total chaos in my life? Cheri, would you think that's fair?

Cheri: You can say that. Yes, totally.

Amy: I think that's fair.

Cheri: Your favorite thing.

Amy: Yeah, my favorite thing. The girl that hates to juggle plates had so many plates to juggle. So, the year that we were writing *Exhale* I decided to do a major renovation on my home and then our son, our youngest son, announced that he was going to get married two weeks after his graduation and two weeks before the launch of *Exhale*. So, [laughs]

Cheri: Perfect timing. [laughs]

Amy: To say that there were a few things going on during this process would be a major understatement of the situation. But Cheri, can I tell you something?

Cheri: I'm all ears.

Amy: This feels so amazing to be able to say this, and I am bragging on the power of God here. I want to make this so clear. This is so beyond me. But when I think back on the last year, I cannot think of a major meltdown that I've had.

Cheri: Wow.

Amy: Now, listen. I've had my moments ...

Cheri: Sure, sure.

Amy: Don't get me wrong. But in the past, with this kind of schedule and these kinds of emotions tied to many of these things and the kinds of demands that were on me and, you know, merging two families. We would have been talking about multiple major meltdowns. MMM's. And it just didn't happen.

And what I realized is I thought, a couple things were happening, that as I was writing God was working the lessons into my heart and there's also this accountability that comes with writing things down because people start going, now, didn't you say ... Just the other day? Barry said to me, "I don't think that's your plate of trash." Which is a concept ...

Cheri: Go Barry!

Amy: I'm like, "Oh, stop it. Don't use my own words on me."

Cheri: I love it when that happens to you.

Amy: I know, right? So, I can just testify to the power of God in me, but also, Cheri, this feels so good. I can testify to the power of lessons that are rooted in scripture that are in *Exhale*. It is life-changing.

Cheri: I love it. I love it. Well, what I noticed about what both Tenneil and Lori had to say is both of them, interestingly enough, were focused on doing something physical and I thought that was just so wise. It's so easy for me to just stay sitting in my chair, which means I'm stuck in my head.

Amy: You know, I think about my major strategy this year as hard things happen and they did. I think I've learned it from you Cheri, and it's really trying to look beyond the circumstances happening to options. We've talked to Kathi Lipp about this a lot. Like before, I would only see one option and it would be meltdown and failure. But now ...

Cheri: I am familiar with that option. I am intimately familiar with that option.

Amy: But now it's like I'm starting to learn the pause that you talk a lot about, and in the pause I think, okay, so, Tenneil talked about the what ifs I think, and she ... So, I've gotten to this thing and I've read this other

places too, what if ... Okay, let's take that to its natural end. What if the worst thing does happen? What are the options? There are always multiple options about how we can respond and deal with the problem and solve the problem.

Cheri: Absolutely.

Amy: We asked our interns, "What's your number one obstacle to change and what's one practical way you surmount or dismantle that obstacle?" Here's what Mara Scott of maragrace.com had to say.

Mara: I think the number one obstacle to making changes is probably fear. It could be different fear, fear of unknown, fear of rejection. It really comes down to people pleasing I think. The way that I find that I can overcome this is just by stepping out, just doing the next right thing that's right in front of me. That's really what God's been speaking to me about. I just really feel like I just try to do the one thing. What is the next thing he said to do? Maybe the whole thing doesn't make sense, but I just do the next thing and somehow all the little things add up to the big thing.

Amy: And Tonya Kubo of tonyakubo.com said ...

Tonya: My biggest struggle with change is negotiating between who I am and who I think I should be. I've had a lifelong battle with compulsive eating, which only stays under control when I embrace who I am. At 40 you'd think I could have one bite of pie. I should be mature enough to moderate what I eat, right? Except that I can't. I've had to accept that God created me as an abstainer. He didn't create me to be a moderator. And what works best for me is not eating any pie, because one bite of pie is just never enough. That's a fact for me and it's one I actually don't feel badly about, so long as I don't fight it. That's the key to change for me: to stop fighting how I was created and, instead, to embrace it and make the most of it.

Cheri: My struggle with change comes from how much I love feeling competent and change means that I'm doing something new, and well, I know from experience when I'm new at something I'm terrible at it. Like I am the worst. You know, I am not naturally good at anything from scratch. But I saw a quote from Adam Grant this morning that said, "Changing habits is hard. Sometimes you can't progress unless you're willing to regress. One step back, two steps forward." I was like, "No, no, no, no. That sounds like the game I hated the most as a child and as a mom." Like, oh my goodness, it was chutes and ladders where you make progress and you're like, "Yes. I am one step from victory in the promised land" and then

woosh, you go sliding all the way back to where you started. Like I think that's a reforming perfectionist and people pleaser's worst nightmare, is sliding all the way back down.

Amy: You know, that is an interesting picture because I was part of a mentoring program where I befriended and worked with a woman who is a recovering addict. A couple years after we had worked together she relapsed and that was really hard and painful for me, but I talked to a friend who has been an addiction counselor and he said, "Amy, relapse is not the worst thing." He said, you know, "For a recovering addict, progress is longer times between relapse." If we apply that to our reforming perfectionism, right? And the chutes and ladders, we aren't starting back at the beginning, just like my friend didn't start back at the beginning. She had to pick herself back up, but she wasn't back at the beginning again.

Cheri: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Amy: She didn't undo all the progress she had made and I think that's one of the fears we have about trying something new and changing, is what if we start all the way back at the beginning again? But that's not the way it works.

Cheri: There was a great email from Jon Acuff, and he was talking about his daughter becoming a student driver. He and his wife were teaching her to drive. They got these magnets that they put on their car, they're yellow magnets with big black letters that say student driver. It causes people to treat her better on the road and it makes it easier for her to learn because people aren't, you know, like running up against her back bumper honking at her. They understand what's going on and so what he wrote in this email is he said, "What if we could all put a magnet on our lives?" Student writer, student runner, student business owner, student parent. The kinder we are to ourselves during a goal, the longer we'll stick at it and the more successful we'll be. Then he says, "If you're a parent and you're teaching your kid to drive, grab this magnet." If you're anyone else with a goal, make up your own magnet and stick it somewhere you'll see it every day. We're all students.

Amy: Wow.

Cheri: That just ... You know, I'm just rubbing that in this morning because I'm so used to being the teacher, and you know me, I love being the expert but first and foremost we're all students, which is actually really good

news because our instructor is a master teacher and He has infinite patience and grace for each one of us.

Amy: That is beautiful and it goes right with our scripture today, which is one that I ran across that I think is so wonderful and surprising and fits in today so well. It's Acts 4:33. It says, "With great power the Apostles continue to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all." I just thought, "They were new church builders." They were student church builders.

Cheri: Yeah.

Amy: But the power of God in them and the grace of God was so powerfully at work in them all. So, thank goodness for the powerful grace of God that's at work in us as we change.

Cheri: So, what's the bad rule that we're breaking this week?

Amy: Suffocating pressure is just part of life. You know, I think I accepted that for a long time, that feeling that sense of suffocation combined with the question that I wasn't sure that any of it was making any difference, I just kind of accepted it as part of life and it doesn't have to be part of life.

Cheri: So, what's the truth? What's the fact we can focus on instead?

Amy: Jesus creates empowered change.

Cheri: I love it. And you gave such a beautiful illustration of that and, you know, once the files are sent off for the audiobook of *Exhale*, I hope to be able to report a victory. I'm hesitant to say that this is one of the first projects that Daniel and I have done together that didn't result in a meltdown and I wanted to say it today, but I'm just going to wait. I'm going to wait til it's all done. So, tune in next week everybody, to see if ...

Amy: It's a secret.

Cheri: Yeah. Yeah, nobody tell anybody. But we're close. We're like really, really close to the end and wow. I mean, either no meltdowns or longer periods between. That works for me. So, what's the grit for you in all of this?

Amy: The grit for me is believing that change is possible because for so long I lived kind of stuck. I was mired down in that suffocating way of life. How about you? Grace?



Cheri: You know, for me the grace is that reminder that I'm not the teacher. I'm the student. That Jesus is my teacher. He's my instructor, He's the expert and when I start feeling that pressure and when I start feeling the despair over whether I'll ever change, I can trust my teacher because it's not me. I'm the student. He's the teacher. He's the one who leads and he's the one who is responsible for the outcome. My job is obedience. His job is results.

Amy: So good.

Cheri: We hope you've enjoyed episode 154 of Grit 'n' Grace, good girls breaking bad rules.

Amy: Make sure to go to our website [gritnegracegirls.com/episode154](http://gritnegracegirls.com/episode154), where you'll find the transcript, this week's digging deeper download, and a link to a free forward introduction and chapter one of *Exhale*.

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.

Kendra: One of the things that I found, I think the Holy Spirit gave this to me one day. I was so overwhelmed and I kept saying to myself, "I'm so overwhelmed. I'm so overwhelmed." All of a sudden He brought to mind that song by Big Daddy Weave called "Overwhelmed" and the words talk about, "I'm overwhelmed by you." It's based off one of the psalms. So, I just automatically started singing it louder and louder until I was overwhelmed by this song. It settled down some of the thoughts in my head. So, now one of the places I go whenever I can't settle things down in other ways is to sing. I'll go to my car, close the windows, turn up the music and sing as loud as I can. It does something physical that settles down your heart rate. It's pretty amazing.

Cheri: That was Kendra Burrows of [kendraburrows.com](http://kendraburrows.com) with another practical idea for handling pressure and making the choice to change.