

Grit 'n' Grace — The Podcast

Episode #198: How to Lose the Old "Control Freak" Label

Okay, buckle up,

Amy, we are going to get real right from the start of this episode. I'm so tired.

Yeah, you look so thrilled.

So last week, Barb talked about five control loving behaviors that made us both, like squirm the whole time she was talking about them, she used the acronym shine. So because we need our listeners to squirm along with us, we're going to go ahead and remind them real quickly the S did for stonewalling h helicoptering I interrupting interfering, inserting, and for nagging and he for excessive planning. So which one of these shine behaviors has been rearing its ugly head.

So which one of these shine behaviors has been rearing its ugly head the most for you lately?

Oh my goodness. Well, it was so clear to me which one it was. It's the eye. The eye gets me the interrupting, interfering inserting, and I didn't have to think very much about this because it just happened to me. Barry and I had gotten away for a little break and a change of scenery and gone to my parents beach place. And I don't know what it was. I was just feeling particularly free, right?

Oh, no.

I just went on

a little commenting spree on Facebook. And every little thing that got under my skin, I left a comment worth the price,

interrupting, interfering, inserting, and listen, that night, I woke up in the middle of the night, started having commenters regret odo and there was one that I will went and I took down and I just pray that my friend didn't see. It wasn't made. It was just inserting where I shouldn't have inserted, you know. And so I just realized that this control in me, and this is a one trait that I have an anger that pops. I don't consider myself an angry person. When I get angry about people not seeing things the way that I do, and it pops up, especially in social media. I don't think I'm the only one.

Considering my feet I'm pretty sure I'm not

sharing. How about you which ones of these?

Oh my goodness, well, so for me, I identify with both the age, the helicopter and the E for excessive planning. And, you know, we've talked about this before. I'm not just the helicopter. I'm the snow plow like helicopter means hovering above the person while they're actually there. I take it one step further by being the snowplow who goes and clears the way before anybody shows up, and then I'm nowhere to be found, you know, when things have been, have been cleared away, and this came to a head for me actually last Friday, and oh, my God is talking about being blindsided by this control, loving behavior. I mean, me, I did not see it coming in the least. So our family had been talking about and planning to watch Hamilton together. And we were going to do it on Friday right after it came out. And we figured out the perfect time to do it was about 1030 in the morning because of other scheduling things. And so about 10 o'clock, I get a text from Anne Marie that she has a headache and so that we should go ahead and watch without her. Okay, so you know, my house, you know that I have a big bay window for on one side of the living room and then another pretty large window on the other side. I was in the middle Have hanging dark sheets and tablecloths and heavy blankets, because I wanted to recreate the theater experience of you know, when you and I went to the perfect setting, Mike, you know, because how could you possibly watch it enjoy Hamilton with it being daylight, you know, it had to be dark in order to actually be able to enjoy it. And Daniel just happened to have brought home a nice new, larger screen TV that he got at a used electronics place and he had gotten the sound system all set up. So it was working amazingly and you tested it all out. So that was working perfectly and we had the couch all set up perfectly. And we oh we also tested the day before logging into Disney plus and making sure it worked like

you know.

Okay, I hope our listeners are laughing too. Because of course, while I was doing all of this, it felt like what everybody would do this felt like the normal thing. To be doing and so I got the text that an MRI wasn't feeling well and I did not know what to do I absolutely froze with absolutely no idea of how to respond to this. And you know the end result is the three of us did watch it we did enjoy it you know, of course it was as as good and in many ways you know, I enjoyed differently not better or worse but differently as the movie. But for the rest of the day. I really started having this sinking feeling that things hadn't happened the way they were supposed to and wishing I had waited and it was over time that I became aware oh my goodness, I had gone ahead I had done that helicopter thing where I had planned like nobody knew I was going to hang up the the things to black everything out and make it a perfect you know, theatrical experience and, and because things didn't turn out the way I had explained in the other thing is there was no there was no option B in my mind. Like when I got Her text

I was my first response was not I'm so sorry she has it has a headache. My first response was she can't have a headache

ruining everything.

So yes, good old H and E helicoptering and excessive planning and both of them I did not see myself doing it in the in. In the moment. I only recognized it about 24 hours later when I was processing my own disappointment.

Well, at least your family got a great experience. My family got this. I saw a meme about somebody who had planned a Hamilton themed dinner. So I read the name to my people, and I was like, Oh, here we go. We don't have any of that.

I love it. You know you are such a role model of having the lowest possible expectations, keeping the house super safe. That's a role model of flat lazy, but anyway.

Well, this is Cheri Gregory. I'm Amy Carol, and you're listening to grit and grace, the podcast that equips you to love who you're not love who you are, and live your one life well.

Today we're processing what we learned from Barbara is author of surrendered letting go and living like Jesus.

Last week's interview and this week's Convo are made possible in partnership with compassion International.

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We have been looking forward to this convo for several weeks now ever since we had our amazing interview with Barb, thank you so much for introducing me to her for introducing all of our listeners to her. You know, I'm still remembering how, how nervous I was going into that interview, and how grateful I felt coming out of it.

You know, Barbara is the can we just brag on her for a second? She's like the whole package. She is so godly. She is so wise. She's an incredible communicator and a saner she's dropped a gorgeous man. You know, anyway, I'm not just love her more every time I interact with her.

Well, and here is one of the things I have to admit I love so much. She gave us she gave us the the wording *For those who you're not*. So this is where we're going to start. We're going to start with *losing* who we're not. And here's here's the statement and she even said this, *you're not a control freak*.

me *You're not a control freak*. How does it feel to hear me say that to you?

It's crazy, right? Because we've, we've called ourselves

that

for so long and I'm like, really? Wait, what? Are you sure?

I'm positive. Okay, so to say it to me, I want to hear it. I want to see what it feels like.

You are not a control freak.

Oh, oh my goodness. Three years. It sounds way too good to be true. Okay, so listeners, listeners, I want to say this directly to you. Are you ready? You're not a control freak. Like how does it feel to hear bad and I love how Barb said, We don't Want to be labeled by what we struggle with? She said God's beautiful, lovable, capable daughters. That's who we actually are. And control freak is an identity. So we're going to lose who we're not we are not a control freak, you're not a control freak. She said control loving, that's the phrase she used is a behavior that Jesus can help us with. So from control freak to control loving from that identity to a behavior so

oh

my mind is a paradigm shift. I can just feel that well I can feel the old wiring starting to loosen and the new wiring starting to go together. So how does this paradigm shift? What does it do for you Amy?

Well, it's amazing. I do not know if I have mentioned this. I have never had a vanity plate before license plate. But I have one now Did I tell?

No, I was so excited. You let your hair go gray and now you have a vanity plate. What is

Amy Carol's is on this SEO lady man.

It says word girl on it. Because I didn't know whether to do wordy girl because we've talked about that as my superpower. But I was like, well, word girl has layers to it. But anyway, so but this layer that Barb has given us is so important because I believe that words are so important. Now to be clear, I'm not in the camp of name it and claim it or like, you speak things into existence. I'm not in that theological camp. However, I do think Scripture speaks very powerfully to the influence and power of words in our life. And when we label ourselves control freak, and we take that on as an identity that feels really set in stone, doesn't it? Like if it's part of our identity, then we feel like well, it's woven into my DNA. It's just part of who I am. But if we talk about we have control left behaviors, change the words that we

use to describe ourselves. It really does shift into something that's malleable, that Angel and I really thought about how Barb gave us words that tap into our growth mindset that taps into the truth that our brains are created as neuro plastic right that they are changeable. And so behaviors are changeable identities less so and so I just love that she gave us better words to use and our words and how we talk about ourselves really does shape how we think and how we behave so many times.

Hmm, so true. I love all of that so much.

So what does this shift from a control freak to control loving do for you, Sherry?

Well, first of all, it gives me hope. And I love to use the word malleable because here's the thing. The older I get, the less knowledge But my body is like I woke up this morning and everything creaked and hurt. And I've got this thing in my neck and I'm having to stretch more and all that kind of stuff. So I feel like my body is getting more and more set in its ways. And so it's exciting to know that even though I'm getting older, the parts of me that don't have to be set in their ways are my thoughts, and my feelings and all of that is still capable of growing. So it brings me so much hope that even after all these years change is not just possible, but change is happening because God is at work in my life and in all of our lives. So that is so exciting.

Exciting and so encouraging. I texted my friend Kenya the other day, oh, I had a technology fail. And then I learned and I actually did it and I said, Look, this old dog can learn new tricks. Me She told me I'm not allowed to say that anymore. We don't say that anymore.

I love how you snuck it in one last time.

All right, well, let's move on to love who you are. Okay, so we'll have you start with your statement of who you are.

Well, you know, she Barb gave us a list and one of them. The first one is I'm not in control of others or outcomes. And so based on that, I'm saying, I am a woman who lets people be I've taught. I've taught so many times on the podcast about my husband, Barry, and that his greatest gift to me over the years

has been that he lets me be, he doesn't try to control me. He doesn't try to control the way I behave, how I think what I say. Now, I'm not saying that there's no accountability at all, but I'm just, I'm just saying that he doesn't nitpick me. He doesn't try to control me. As I have and others in the past and so, I am really working to be a woman who lets people be and what I'm getting a lot of practice. Because during the pandemic, our oldest son is home. He's on furlough from his job. So he reminded his dad says something about a job the other day and he said, I actually have a job. Or like, Oh, yeah, he does his job. And so, uh, but, you know, when you've all parents of adults know this, that when these these babies are born in your house and you grow, they grow up in your house, it's really hard to break the habits of telling them what to do like you did when they were little and so I'm, I'm really having to practice not speaking and not advising and not controlling and not you know, trying to to make all the things happen that I think The way I think they should be happening. But here's the beauty of it. You've used this terminology Sherry that I love. You know, we talk about vicious cycles, and then you give us an opposite, which is a victorious cycle. Is that right? No, you gave us the opposite, which is a virtuous cycle. I knew I didn't have that word quite right. But both of them work right. Even in the virtuous Victoria. So we've been talking about victory

credit for either one.

But when you, you step back, you surrender you allow people to be and you let God work, and then well, he works. When

we get out of the way we make room so God can do his thing.

So we let him work. And then we see him work and it builds our faith. And so this surrender thing and giving up control can be a virtuous thing. Taurus

cycle, huh? All right. So you are a woman who lets people be so listeners. Take that on and here's, here's the way I'm going to say it. You are a woman of prayer. And I chose this one based on Barb's statement when fear tempts me to flee, fix or force my way, I will stop and pray. And so I said, you are a woman of prayer or I am a woman of prayer. And originally I wanted to put prayer wire, but I accidentally typed worrier, which is actually so much closer to the truth. And honestly, warrior feels way too far out of reach. At this point, it feels too aspirational, almost like I'm trying to lie to myself and Gods so a woman of prayer feels a little more within reach. And so, um, you know, I love how Barb

said and here's the thing when she was actually saying to us when fear tempts me to follow Fix or force my way. I was like, Oh, I do all three. And then she's like, I will stop and pray. I'm like, Oh, I don't do that one very well. So I, you know, and here's the thing, I had an incident over the weekend where I did all three, I did the flee, I did the fix, I did the force. And I did them all repeatedly in the span of a very short period of time. And I didn't even think about praying until like, hours hours later. But here's the thing. Instead of beating myself up and yelling at myself and say, You are such a control freak that you didn't even think to pray while it was happening. I had this pause moment where I realized I can pour my time and energy into beating myself up and I haven't only knows I have plenty of practice with that. Or I could use that same time and energy to say, okay, you are a woman of prayer and then start to pray at that point, like in the aftermath, so good just because it wasn't true of me. In the middle of the incident doesn't mean it's not true at all. I may not have prayed when I wish I had, but I realized I can pray starting right now.

So powerful. You know, I saw a picture of this years ago just exactly what you were talking about. I had just joined the Proverbs 31 team, and we went with compassion international to Ecuador. Well, it's a spectacularly beautiful country. But there was one day in particular, we left the city of Quito. Our team got on a bus we drove out in the countryside, stunningly beautiful. It's the world's largest exporter of roses. They have volcanoes. Yeah, they have volcanoes. With lakes at the bottom of them. We drove out in the countryside, we're going on over the countryside and, and then we drove up into the mountains. Now, here in the United States, a lot of times there is poverty in the mountains, but then there's a lot of water in the mountains, because people are buying vacation homes and things, but in Ecuador is largely impoverished communities in the mountains, people who are kind of eking out a subsistence living on the mountain side, but we drove up this curvy road and we turned this one curve. And there was this beautiful little white stucco church with the red Tile Roof just exactly what you think of where it was Sunday or going to go to church. And so we get off the buses and there's this line of the or two lines actually, they made like a an aisle for us of the most beautiful children you've ever seen in the most exquisitely needle, needle pointed outfit. So it was their traditional dress and heavily heavily embroidered outfits. And each of them have roses and they handed us roses and we went into church and and evidently in Ecuador, it's not like mamas are are telling their babies stay away from strangers because we have piles of children on top of us during the church service, which just made me so happy. And but when we finish the church service, our compassion leader said, Hey, listen, we don't want you to make the mistake of thinking this is the norm. Because Ecuadorian mothers do exactly what Americans mothers do, which is they before church, especially because they knew who the guests would be here this week. They got the biggest scrubbing in the bathtub of their life on a Saturday night and put in their prettiest clothes. But we want you to go home with these children to see what they really live like. So my friend Luann Prater and I climbed in the back of this little red pickup truck and we went down this track and then it was it was really a road and then a track and just

kind of less and less and we climbed out and took this little path to Dolores. His house. So Dolores was a woman whose husband lives primarily in Quito. He was a builder and so she lived at home alone in the house as the only adult but evidently her husband came home every once in a while because there were also six children

and that house with

Doris, here's Dolores, this basically I mean, she was raising these kids basically on their own while their father was making a living for them and key time and, and we walk into the Doris's blue brick cinderblock house, and and I started looking around and the like I said, The walls were cinderblock. And, and there was plastic sheeting under the roof sort of as the ceiling and probably the kids catch the leaks the drums at night and then the floor was either just rock mountain rock or it was probably swept you know, dirt that was Clap really smooth and, and there was a little pile of maize over in the corner. But that was the only food that I saw in sight. And then the Doris took us proudly her husband had built the house to the second room which was the bedroom where she and all six of the children slept in one bed. All right, so this is the setting and we're talking to Dolores and listening to Dolores and and Luann Crider who is a prayer warrior. At the end, she said to Dolores Dolores. When we go back to America, we're going to tell every woman that we know about you. And we're going to ask them to pray for you. What is your most important prayer request? Well, we were we were speaking through interpreters either Luann or I knew Spanish and and so the interpreter interprets to Dolores and Dolores speaks and then you know so there's a whole pause Huh. And in the pause, I answered the question for Dolores in my head. I was like Lord Jesus, Dolores needs a real ceiling in this house because this looks this looks cold we She needs a source of heat in here these mountain Knights I know has to they have to get really cold and Lord you see that little pile of maize there you know that's not going to get this family very far. Could you feed them and and and Lord, could you provide another bed for Dolores? Pretty sure she has knees and elbows in her head all night long. And so I'm just making this huge prayer list for Dolores. And finally the interpreter starts to answer with Dolores is answer. And I was stunned. Dolores said my biggest name my biggest prayer request is that I would teach my children to love the Lord every day of their life. And it took my breath away Sherry because there were so many physical needs that Dolores had surrendered to the Lord. She knew he he knew all those needs, as she prayed about what really mattered, what was really eternal. And it just taught me such a lesson that a woman that was living in poverty was so rich as she was raising her children with the help of compassion, and the support that they gave her to make provision for family, that she was raising her children to love the Lord all the days of their life.

Wow. Oh, yeah. And, you know, that's really what Barb's entire message came down to and as I've been processing it ever, ever since I've been thinking, and I watched my mind spiral off, and I realized there I go again, making it way too complicated, making it all about me making it all About my preferences making it all about non essentials. And Barb brought us straight back to what it what actually matters.

Let me scroll up really fast here cuz well where is it? I will be editing all of that out.

Met Oh, it's probably in Where did I put it?

Um, I was looking for the subtitle of her book, but I'm obviously not finding it so it doesn't matter. Okay. Um, Alright, so now I need to scroll back to where we were. Sorry about that. worse. Um,

okay, so I'll let you start off with the live your one life well, and segue into my question.

So Cheri, let's start talking about how we live our one life. Well, what questions Should we ask ourselves based on what Barb taught us?

Well, again, I'm just going to go ahead and quote Barb here. Because in response to the listener question, which really is always my question as well, when it comes to this whole topic of surrendering and the question was, do I have to just very gently and kindly said, What, basically, I'm going to paraphrase her, when it comes to the control loving behaviors? How well are they actually working for you? And when I take the time to ask myself, how well is my way, actually working for me? There's only one answer. Like the answer is never Oh, well, you know, it's actually working really well today. Thank you very much. I think I'll pass on surrender. The answer is always when I stop and I look around, I'm like, Oh, look, 100% failure rate after all these years it still has a 100% failure rate.

Wow. Yeah. So,

Amy, what action would you have us take?

Well, you know, I love a list. But today, just one thing. Choose surrender today. I mean, I think this choice, it's kind of like our family's motto, choose joy. I mean to surrender is it's moment by moment, isn't it? And, and sometimes, it's like you just shared in retrospect, like, Oh, I really blew it, but right now, I can surrender. Yeah. And so that's my one action step today is to choose surrender.

Right? And the scripture that goes along with these two episodes with BB,

Matthew four, four, Jesus answered, It is written, Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. He's our provision. And he is he's the one who is truly and Control and say surrender is always a good thing.

Hmm. So what's the grit in all of this for you?

Well, it's still the choice, right? I still have to really stop and think and remember and choose surrender over my over my attempts to control knowing that the power and paste that I want for my life, that's what's on the other side. Hmm, how about the grace for you?

Um, you know, it's very similar. I think the grace is that God gives us the choice, he doesn't force it. And when we don't take that choice or make that choice, he doesn't shame us. He doesn't hold it over our head. When we choose to surrender he is so thrilled that we are in alignment and we are connected to him that we are trusting Him. And you know, after all these years of, of trying and failing to move on from that control, freak identity That God still invites us to surrender. That is amazing grace right there.

It is.

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Check out our web page at [grit and grace the podcast.com slash Episode 198](http://gritandgrace.com) there, you'll find Our transcript links to Barb's website and social media and a direct link to order Barb's book *surrendered letting go and living like Jesus*.

Well, Amy, we're here. I can't believe we're actually here. Like, we're still here. And we are right here right now.

It is unbelievable. Just a few months ago, we thought we were saying goodbye forever. And now we're wrapping up Season One of *grit and grace* to point up,

grit and grace, no podcast.

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the podcast.com slash support.

We'll be spending the next couple of months recording and editing the episodes that will be airing in September. I'll start that again. We'll be spending the next couple of months recording and editing the episodes that will start airing in September. We might surprise you with a minisode or two but we'll be back weekly in September.

For today, grow your grid. Embrace God's grace. And as he lights the path along the one beautiful life he's planned for you take the next step and LIVE IT!

