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Annie: Hey friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm really happy to be here with you today. We've got a great show in store.

I hope you heard our little drop-in invitation yesterday. But if not, remember that our big group, our Chase the Funners are going through Chase the Fun together starting today. You can still get in on that. Don't worry. Just sign up at the link in the show notes. Or you can pop over to my Instagram to read day one if you don't already have your copy.

I'm gonna post up today five, so that gives you time to snag your own copy and I'll slide into your inbox every 10 days or so, to give you some encouragement and share some of my reflections as we all Chase fun together. I'm really excited to get started.

Before we dive into today's conversation, a quick word from one of our amazing partners, BetterHelp. We all agree that showing up in our everyday lives as the healthiest version of ourselves is the goal, right? We're doing the best we can to take care of ourselves physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally.

How we care for our minds affects how we experience our lives. So it's important to invest time and care into keeping them healthy. There are plenty of ways to support a healthy brain like bathing in Scripture and doing puzzles or prioritizing rest. But when we need a little help, there's also Better Help Online Therapy.

Having someone to help us sort through our experiences, our thoughts, and emotions so that we can take care of our mental health is a game changer. I know my own counselor has been invaluable to me in learning to catch destructive thought patterns and learn more helpful habits to replace them with.

BetterHelp is online therapy where they match you with your therapist in under 48 hours. You can talk with your therapist via phone, video, and even live chat only therapy sessions. So you don't have to see anyone on camera if you don't want to. And it's more affordable option than in-person therapy.

My friends get 10% off their first month at betterhelp.com/thatoundsfun. Again, that's betterhelp.com/thatoundsfun.

Intro: Today on the show I get to talk with my friend Sharon Hodde Miller. Y'all, I love Sharon. She's a teaching pastor at Bright City Church in Durham, North Carolina, which she co-founded with her husband Ike. Also a big fan of Ike.

She is a prolific blogger and contributor to all the publications. You may have read her work at Propel or Her.meneutics or She Reads Truth, just to name a few. And her books, *Free of Me* and *Nice* are so good, y'all. If you have not gotten *Free of Me*, if you have not gotten *Nice*, you need them.

But her newest book, *The Cost of Control: Why We Crave It, the Anxiety It Gives Us, and the Real Power God Promises* had me feeling like Sharon had been reading my mail, if you know what I mean. I was practically offended. It was that good. You guys, I think we're all gonna benefit from her wisdom in this area.

So here's my conversation with Sharon Hodde Miller.

[00:02:58] <music>

Sharon: I saw your interview on Jodi Benson.

Annie: I did yesterday. Ariel.

Sharon: You know I love Disney. I saw that, I was so excited.

Annie: Have you read her book?

Sharon: No.

Annie: Okay. I have it if you want to take it.

Sharon: Okay.

Annie: It's amazing. You're gonna love her.

Sharon: Is it like a memoir?

Annie: Yes. She's just like Ariel. She is Ariel. And in real life she's best friends with Belle. I know. I know. Tell me why you love Disney. I didn't know where we're going, by the way. So tell me why you love Disney.

Sharon: I am a Disney girl. I'm a Jamie Golden cousin Disney Adults. She says that with like a sneer kind of but I embrace it, and welcome it and receive it. I'm like a Disney Adult.

Annie: Really? And you love it. Do y'all go a lot?

Sharon: So I grew up going and-

Annie: To Disney World?

Sharon: Disney World. I grew up going. And then when we got married, I had never been.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Sharon: And I said, "You can't understand me if we don't go to Disney." So we went and I pulled him in. So we started going pretty regularly. We would go every couple years. But then when the pandemic happened... Actually, this crystallized for me that I wasn't Enneagram seven. I actually didn't know for a while.

The way that I coped with the pandemic was by watching this series on Disney Plus called the *Imagineering Story*. Have you seen this?

Annie: No, but I have heard about it. Do I need to?

Sharon: You need to watch it. It's like if you love Disney, nostalgia-

Annie: I do.

Sharon: ...it'll speak to the startup side of you, the risk taker side of you, the dreamer side of you, because it talks a lot about the risk that he took and how much failure is a part of the creative process, all of that. So I started watching this on like a Loop during the pandemic.

Annie: Oh my gosh!

Sharon: And then that was my gateway into Disney podcasts.

Annie: What? Okay, I don't know this world but I'm interested. There's like a whole Disney podcast world?

Sharon: Yes, there is.

Annie: Oh, Sharon! Okay, what are you listening? Are you listening to people who go to the parks and have tricks? Are you listening to history of Disney?

Sharon: No, no, no. History of Disney.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Sharon: So there's two different podcasts I listen to that go into the history of Disney. A fun fact I just learned is that Doritos were invented at Disneyland.

Annie: What? I didn't know that.

Sharon: When Disneyland first opened, they had vendors, different vendors. So one of those vendors was Frito-Lay. And so they had a restaurant called Casa de Frito, which sounds really authentic. And they were throwing out the old tortillas and someone said, "You should fry those and turn those into chips." And that's how Doritos were invented was in Disneyland.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Sharon: So I listen to two that are history. It's really fascinating.

Annie: Do you know their names off top your head so we can link to them?

Sharon: One is called Connecting with Walt. One is called Disney History Institute.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Sharon: I know.

Annie: I'm so into this. This is awesome.

Sharon: And then there's one called The Imagineer Podcast, where they interview more... I think probably interviewed Jodi Benson. And that interviews more Imagineers or animators, that kind of thing. And then there's one called DIS Unplugged that is... it's like an umbrella family of podcasts but they go more into sort of current events, you know, things that are happening in the park. It's becoming a problem.

Annie: No, I don't think so. I'm having a great time. The other thing you're gonna love about Jodi Benson, as you're saying, is this was so under the radar, but she always say Disneyland and Walt Disney World. Always. Walt Disney World. It was never Disney. She says Walt Disney World Magic Kingdom. Walt Disney. I was like, "She's saying Walt every time."

Sharon: Yeah, that's what it's called.

Annie: Yes, it is Walt Disney World.

Sharon: That's where Walt Disney want us.

Annie: Have you heard this? They told the story... I heard this in the Keys of the Kingdom tour, where you get to do that. Have you done it yet?

Sharon: I haven't.

Annie: Okay. If you're a Disney Adult, you really need to do the Keys of the Kingdom tour because it's like half a day but you get to see all sorts of wild stuff. And when you go on the ride, you get to cut the line. And your tour guide is in your ear on the ride pointing out things to you. It is so cool.

And part of it is you go underground and you see the back and forth. But in it they tell the story of how because Walt was sick when Walt Disney World was being built, that Roy hung the plans for Walt Disney World on the ceiling of Walt Disney's hospital room-

Sharon: He was still making decisions from his hospital room.

Annie: Yes. That is wild to me.

Sharon: So I need you to watch the Imagineer story and then text me.

Annie: Okay, I will. I'll do it. Do you have a favorite ride?

Sharon: That's really hard. Probably Pirates of the Caribbean.

Annie: Really? The one at Walt Disney World with Magic Kingdom?

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Is Magic Kingdom your Park of choice?

Sharon: Yes.

Annie: Me too.

Sharon: That's the best ride but it's like a classic and it takes me back to my childhood.

Annie: That's how I feel about Peter Pan. Peter Pan feels like... every time I ride it, I'm like, "You know this isn't like a great ride, but it's really colorful and it's really nostalgic." I have a real thing for Peter Pan. I just think I love that movie.

Sharon: And I need you to know this is how Disney podcast gets started.

Annie: Oh my gosh. Is that the next one launching on the That Sounds Fun Network? Sharon and Annie taught Disney and Jesus. Oh my gosh. Two females teaching on Sunday mornings and at Walt Disney World.

Sharon: I think the world needs that.

Annie: Okay. You know what? I don't hate it. I don't hate it. I'm very interested. I'm gonna trim it up. And my other favorite is Little Mermaid. I think the Little Mermaid is really sweet. Your secondary Park in Florida?

Sharon: Epcot.

Annie: Epcot. I haven't done Epcot since I was a kid. I need to go do it.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Okay. I want to do Food & Wine Fest or food and... Food & Wine?

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah, that's what it is.

Sharon: Yeah. And there's a new Guardians of the Galaxy right there.

Annie: And it's awesome?

Sharon: I haven't done it. It opened in the last few months, but it's supposed to be awesome.

Annie: Okay, we are Disney people. Here we go. Are we the first faith-based Disney podcast? Okay, here's what we're gonna just start because I already mentioned it. You are a teaching pastor at your church. I am also on the teaching team at my church. I don't often call myself a teaching pastor but that is because I haven't done seminary and don't have my PhD. You do. What do you have your PhD in?

Sharon: It's technically an educational studies but the topic is on women and calling. And even more specific than that, I looked at why evangelical women go to seminary because not many women go to seminary in general, and even fewer evangelical women.

So I was curious, among the women who chose to go, what worked? What encouraged them to get extra training and extra education to steward their calling when so few of their peers do the same? So it was a really, really amazing project.

Annie: Which school did you go to?

Sharon: Trinity Evangelical Divinity school.

Annie: Okay. There's a Harvard degree right now that is about faith and public life, and I am like... And you have to do it there. You have to move there. It's a one year program. Maggie Rogers just did it, the musician.

Sharon: Oh.

Annie: And I am so temp... as if I could get into Harvard. But I'm so tempted to try that.

Sharon: That is interesting.

Annie: But I'd have to quit everything for a year and go to school. And I don't know if I can do that. Dear everyone, don't panic because I don't know if I can do it. But are you glad you did it? Are you glad you took that time to study?

Sharon: Yeah. You know, I never wanted to be a professor. Like I never wanted to be in academia. Pastors don't need MDivs to be pastors. The disciples, many of them were uneducated men. So it's not that we must have pastors who have gone to seminary and gotten PhDs. But we do need some. You know, we need a diversity of gifts and training. And that is becoming rarer.

People with advanced education are then taking that and going into ministry. But we also happen to live... we're in the Raleigh Durham area that is one of the most highly educated areas in the country just because we have Duke and UNC and NC State, and there's some other schools as well. So we are like per capita, have one of the highest ratios of people with PhDs in our area.

Annie: Wow. Oh, that's cool.

Sharon: So our people are... they're very smart. They are well read, they're also curious. They won't take your word for it-

Annie: Oh, wow.

Sharon: ...just because you're the pastor and you say it. You have to back it up. And I thrive in that environment. I love that environment. I love how it pushes me and it keeps me from getting lazy and how I'm teaching and how I'm thinking.

My husband has his PhD is well. His is in theology. But I think God... we didn't know this at the time, but I think God was preparing us for the very particular context in which we'll be doing ministry.

Annie: Do you have a master's as well?

Sharon: Yes.

Annie: Okay.

Sharon: We both got our MDivs from Duke Divinity.

Annie: Wow. So are y'all friends with Kate Bowler? Were y'all there at the same time?

Sharon: No.

Annie: I know you're friends with her. You mentioned on the books. I know you are.

Sharon: Actually, Kate and I aren't like friends friends. Like we know who each other are. She was actually... I don't think she was there... I think we just missed each other. So we have a lot of friends in common.

Annie: Wow. Also, why didn't you put Dr. Sharon Hodde Miller in your book?

Sharon: I'm from the old school... Do you know Karen Swallow Prior?

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: She's very formal about this too and I kind of take her direction. She said that you're only supposed to use the doctor in the professional context in which you received it.

Annie: Wow.

Sharon: So if I'm not in an academic environment, then I don't go by Dr. Miller unless I was teaching.

Annie: Okay. Wow.

Sharon: There you go. The more you know.

Annie: My pastor at Cross Point also has his doctorate and doesn't tell anybody. And I think what you just said about you and Ike is so true to what he says is, is he said, "I didn't want my education to close a door that God was opening."

Sharon: Right.

Annie: And so he was like, "I did as much as I could to open up any doors so that if God had a thing He wanted me to do, that the world wouldn't say no." And that's what you guys have done for your community is going like, Where you might have said no to Annie teaching you because of my lack of that kind of education, professional education... Is that the right word? Like actual Divinity School, they're listening to you. That is amazing.

Sharon: Yeah, it's fun.

Annie: Do they call you Dr. Miller at church?

Sharon: No. They call me Sharon.

Annie: "Annie, they don't even... Nobody calls me Dr. Miller." I'm now only going to call you Dr. Miller. I'm here for that.

Sharon: Okay.

Annie: You know, our friends who get the AFD Week in Review emails on Fridays get to submit questions. And Cheryl had a really interesting question. She also is a female pastor. And she said, "I struggle to find connection with other female pastors because there aren't many in my area. What advice for cultivating and supporting both locally and globally other female pastors?" How do we find that? I mean, that's what your degree was talking about is how do we find these other women who are pastoring?

Sharon: It's really hard. I just was reading some research from Barna that was saying pastors across the board are burning out at just historic rate. But among women, it's even higher. And I think a lot of that is because of the loneliness and the isolation where you don't have any peers who understand exactly the challenges that you're facing.

So what she's naming is real, and it's really, really hard. I have struggled with it. I continue to struggle with it. One of the things that I have had to be really proactive about is reaching out to women elsewhere.

Annie: That are leading in other fields? Is that what you mean?

Sharon: Actually, other women who are leading in their church-

Annie: But just not in your area.

Sharon: But not in my area.

Annie: Got it.

Sharon: Because there just aren't that many. So I have friends in California. I have mentors in on the West Coast. There are friends who are not nearby at all. So I've had the sort of piecemeal it together a little bit. And so that has been just a bummer honestly. It is very, very lonely. But for Cheryl... Was that her name?

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Just to say that if you're feeling that this is hard and slow, I think that is normal. At least that's been normal for me.

Annie: Are you seeing women pastors burnout like we're seeing male pastors burnout?

Sharon: You know, it's hard to say because I don't know that many female pastors. I had posted about it on social media after I read this research, just asking for women's stories anecdotally. And a number of women did respond and said just juggling family and parenting and the job... And that's not just true of the church. It's true in any field. Women tend to be juggling more of family and work at the same time. And that gets really, really difficult.

So I think a lot of women are feeling that it's the isolation... Again, this is not just in pastors. I think this is women leaders across the board are burning out faster than male leaders right now. So I don't know a ton... Honestly, because I know more male pastors, I'm hearing more from men who are having a really... I think everyone's just having a hard time right now. It's a hard season.

Annie: Sometimes when I imagine it, I picture when male pastors burnout, it's like a firework show. They just blow up everything. I mean, we've watched it in our church. But I feel like women pastors and women leaders are like the end of a bonfire. They aren't a firework show. They don't blow in general. This is all bell curve and I'm making assumptions and generalities, for sure.

But it feels like when women burn out, they say, "I just decided to stay home because I couldn't handle both anymore, the pressure of both. I needed to focus in one place." Or "I'm moving to a different role," or whatever.

And it is the same pain and it is the same cause that the men are doing. Our two genders just express it so differently. Does that feel true? I feel like women just disappear. They are peers of ours that have stopped writing and speaking and podcasting, and people just go wait a minute, "Hold on. I haven't seen anything from her in six months." And men end up in religious news services because of what they do to their family and their church.

Sharon: Well, I will say I do know a number of men who have also decided, "I'm done. I'm done." And it wasn't dramatic and it wasn't bad. The last couple years it's really difficult to express how hard it has been on pastors.

Annie: You write about it in *The Cost of Control* because you write about like 2020 was pandemic and election and social upheaval.

Sharon: Yeah. And I think there's a similar strain on teachers. I mean, we're seeing historic levels of teachers leaving as well. I think there's a similar strain on doctors and nurses specifically. So it's not even just pastors. But yeah, pastors are across the board really suffering right now.

You are seeing in the news... This is what makes it really hard. You see in the news these like really bad stories where they burned out and they really hurt their church. I actually suspect that is not the majority of how male pastors burn out. I think it probably is much more "I don't want to do this anymore. I'm leaving the ministry." And you don't hear those stories.

But because the majority of the burnout stories we're hearing is about these really toxic stories, there's no place for pastors to go and say, "I'm hurting." Because it's kind of you go on social media and pastors are sort of the persona non grata right now and so no one wants to hear about the hard time you're having as a pastor.

So I think there's a lot of people that just want kind of healing from church hurt instead. And so it's really hard. It's a tricky... There's people everywhere are needing healing of different forms.

[00:20:21] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about one of our amazing new partners, [GiveDirectly](#). You know when someone asks what you want for a gift-giving holiday and you think to yourself, "A gift card. What I want is a gift card because that way I can decide for myself." And what I end up with will actually be what I need.

Well, the same idea can really apply to charitable donations too, right? People in poverty are the experts on their own lives just like you and I, and their own needs. What they're missing is the funds to make sure they have those needs met. Not to mention that not all people in poverty have the same needs. So why send them the same things?

GiveDirectly is a nonprofit that lets you send money directly to people living in poverty with no strings attached. In the last decade GiveDirectly has delivered over \$550 million, you guys, to over 1.2 million people across 11 countries.

So when you give cash, you entrust individuals to invest in what they need most instead of donors or aid organizations deciding for them. Hundreds of independent studies have shown direct giving can have really positive impacts on health and nutrition and income and education and more.

Studies show giving money without strings attached can more than double incomes, increase school enrollment, and entrepreneurship, decrease skipped meals, illness, and depression and cut domestic violence by 1/3, all without decreasing hours worked or increasing spending on temptation goods like tobacco and alcohol.

After you donate, GiveDirectly delivers your funds directly to someone living in poverty. Because they efficiently run the whole process from donations to delivery, about 90 cents of every dollar you donate goes directly to a person living in poverty while the remaining 10 cents covers the cost of getting that money to them.

We can end poverty in our lifetime. That's why we tell you about things like this. We want to be a part of that. Direct giving is an efficient, proven, and empowering way to help. So visit givedirectly.org/soundsfun and your donation will be matched up to \$500. Let's go. That's givedirectly.org/soundsfun.

Sponsor: And I've got one more amazing partner to tell you about, [Brooklinen](https://brooklinen.com). I don't know if this is true where you live, but even though school is getting started around here, the sticky summer temps are sticking around. Luckily for us Brooklinen is here to keep you cool and living in comfort at home and on the go with their best-selling bedding, loungewear, and towels, and more.

Brooklinen is home of the internet and Annie F. Downs' favorite sheets. It was created by a husband and wife duo to provide customers with hotel-level home essentials. They offer everything from snuggly sheets to cozy towels and robes, loungewear accessories, and much much more.

By working directly with suppliers, Brooklinen cuts out the luxury markups and passes the savings back to their customers so you can get their incredible products

at a reasonable cost. Brooklinen launches new products, colors, and patterns all the time for their sheets, towels, and robes. Think bold pops of color and adventurous prints with some limited edition collection selling out in as little as a month.

If you're a warmer than average sleeper, make your entire bed feel like the cool side of the pillow with Brooklinen's signature crisp, breathable, classic percale sheets, and replace your heavy winter bedding with their lightweight comforters for the ultimate breezy light as a cloud feel.

And since each is crafted with smooth, long-staple cotton, you'll be drifting off to sleep in no time while staying chilled throughout the night. Y'all I cannot tell you how much I love my sheets from Brooklinen. Everything I'm saying to you is true. It's so cool in the evenings.

And even outside the house, Brooklinen's effortlessly cool loungewear collection includes classic tees, shorts and more that will keep you comfortable throughout the last summer heatwaves, thanks to ultra-soft breathable jersey and cotton fabrics. Y'all, these are the actual softest tees I've ever put on my body.

And if you're not sure where to start, you can shop with ease thanks to Brooklinen's online quiz. Say it with me. We love a quiz. Whether you're looking for the perfect set of cooling sheets, lightweight towels, or breathable loungewear, their quiz is the best place to find a curated list of high quality products perfectly suited to your unique preferences.

You don't just have to take my word for it either. As a matter of fact, check out Brooklinen's website to read over 100,000 five-star reviews from people all around the world. Yes, you are that right. They have over 100,000 five-star reviews.

And for a limited time, Brooklinen is offering free pillowcases with the purchase. Okay. If you missed out, you can use a promo code THATSOUNDSFUN anytime for \$20 off, plus free shipping on your order of \$100 plus at brooklinen.com. But right now free pillowcases. That's brooklinen.com, promo code THATSOUNDSFUN. Head to brooklinen.com, use the promo code THATSOUNDSFUN, which is what I'm literally about to do to get some free pillowcases and some new sheets.

Remember that the show notes are your one-stop for links to our sponsors, transcripts of the shows, and your chance to sign up for the AFD Week in Review. And we'll email everything to you. So it's all there for you in the show notes.

And now back to our conversation with Sharon.

[00:25:30] <music>

Annie: I mean you and Ike lead the church together. Are you teaching equal amounts? Do you teach the most? I mean, in the book you talk about y'all's power dynamic as part of control.

Sharon: Yeah. So he was teaching more, especially when my daughter was an infant and a toddler, and she's now going into her last year of preschool. So my life is starting to shift. I'm having more free time during the day. And as that shifts, I am teaching more and more. So right now, it's probably pretty evenly split.

Annie: How have you all handled your burnout moments?

Sharon: Very differently. Ike, in the beginning, he went to a very dark place. When everything shut down, he went into this kind of existential fear that... Because our church plant was only a year and a half old. And so he was kind of like, "Are we going to survive? What's going to happen?"

So then on top of that everything was politicized. Then we had, you know, dealing with conversations about race, and that was very heated and hard. It was all this happening at once. And one thing that he has been really, really open about is that he is an adult child of an alcoholic. He's actually working on his first book about it-

Annie: Oh, wow.

Sharon: ...and it's gonna be really healing for a lot of people. But one of the effects of being an adult child of an alcoholic is they are prone towards codependency. And we had never noticed that in him because we don't have a codependent marriage. But what became clear after a while is that he had become codependent with our church.

Annie: Wow.

Sharon: So he was trying to manage how everyone was feeling and felt like it was his responsibility. And when he couldn't do that, he just became emotionally exhausted. So he hit a wall hard. I responded very differently to the pandemic. I was like, "This is a great opportunity to innovate."

Annie: And you watch the news a ton is what you say in the book.

Sharon: We were out of sync for a while because I was like, "Let's innovate," and he was like, "What are you talking about right now?" I was like, "This is great. We can try it for models of church." So I was sort of bright-eyed and bushy-tailed about church at the beginning.

But on the other side of it, when we've had all these, like hard conversations with people in our church, and there's been so much upheaval in churches, like a lot of people have left and come. And for me, there's been a lot of relational fallout from the last two years of ministry, and that is coming home to roost for me like right now.

So I'm realizing I'm angry all the time. And that a big work for me in this next season of ministry is going to be forgiveness. Like that is my spiritual work right now.

Annie: Wow. In the midst of releasing a book, the Lord's like, "Hey, you know, you're putting out a book about not having control of anything. Forgive everyone." You're like, "Okay. Yeah, it's not nice. Give me a break."

Sharon: It's been a ride.

Annie: One of my favorite quotes in your book is you said, "Humans cannot tolerate uncertainty." I mean, I stopped on that page because I was like, That's actually it. The reason we even have to forgive anyone is because we couldn't tolerate the uncertainty of what happened, and what it said about us, and then whatever the what happened is.

When I read that quote I thought, "Is this why you had to write that book? Is it because the uncertainty that you were experiencing, that your church was experiencing, that your family was experiencing, like, did you just have to work that out?"

Sharon: Oh, yeah. I mean, when everything first happened, I was not... The loss of control of our church was really hard for Ike. That was not hard for me because as I said, I had been noticing problems with the model of church that we were doing, and I've been looking for ways to be creative about it. So when everything shut down, I thought, "This is great. This is an opportunity."

But my issues with control came out in completely different ways. One was, our kids were home all of a sudden. My youngest was two. We were homeschooling. I believe teaching children is an actual spiritual gift. I do not possess it. So I'm having to teach my children and then we're also leading our church at the same time.

So I felt out of control every day. I was yelling at my kids all the time because they're so loud. Someone recently said to me, "I've never met pastors' kids like your kids."

Annie: You're like, "Say more words."

Sharon: My kids are very loud.

Annie: I love it.

Sharon: They're not like good, little Christians. They are very loud. So I felt like I could exert control over them by being louder. So that was a control response. So I'm yelling at my kids every day, so I'm also having to apologize to my kids every day. And then I'm also, like I said in the book, I'm responding the way most people did by just being on the internet all the time, trying to figure out what is this virus? You know, what is it going to do to us? Are we safe? Are we not? How's it spreading? When is this going to be over? You know, all of that.

So I'm constantly on my phone, you know, reading the news, reading the latest data, all of that. I had his one control response, I had mine as well. And I'm watching the people in my church who are responding similarly. They're on the internet, they're looking for advice, or giving advice. All of this is an attempt to exert control over a situation where we have suddenly lost control and certainty and predictability.

And as I watched this in my church, in people online and myself, and realizing, "Okay, this is bringing out... it's exposing our issues with control. What should I do? How should I shepherd my people through this?" And realizing in the past whenever I'd heard someone talk about control, it was always like, "Well, you just need to not-

Annie: That's right. Trust Jesus more. That's not helpful.

Sharon: You just need to surrender.

Annie: I'm like, "How many times can I physically open my hands and it not changed my life."

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: I know.

Sharon: I was like, "Well, yeah, that's true, that's right, that's Biblical, but it's also not helpful." And that was when I realized, "Okay, I need to come at this a different way and understand it in a way that actually motivates me to walk away from this thing." And that was the birth of this book, *The Cost of Control*."

Annie: One of my other favorite parts of the book is where you talk about how the illusion of control is so powerful that actually if we just convinced ourselves we have control, we actually feel better. What is that about? Why is that so right and why am I so embarrassed that you like read my mail about that.

If I think I have control, I'm fine. It's when I don't think I have it... Because how many times have we both said like, "I knew I didn't have control, but now I really know it" But I knew I didn't have it. I'm like, "No, I felt great because I thought I had control."

Sharon: Yeah, exactly. That was fascinating. I have a chapter called The illusion of control. It's a psychological term. I think we've all used that phrase "the illusion of control," but it's an actual psychological term that was coined, I think, in the 70s to describe this practice where we will think we have more control than we actually have.

One really funny example that I mentioned that they've done studies on this that show that casino players will shake their dice harder for a higher number when they want to roll a higher number, or they'll shake the dice softer to roll a lower number. And that doesn't do anything.

Annie: It doesn't do anything. But I'm like, "I get it."

Sharon: But people do it all the time. And it's this illusion of control. What was even more fascinating is they did further research showing that when we think, just like you said, when we think we are in control, we actually do feel better. So there's measurable-

Annie: It's unreal.

Sharon: ...psychological benefit. The problem is that eventually is shattered. And I think that's what ultimately happened in the pandemic is we were living in this world, thanks to our technology, where we were promised ever-increasing predictability.

You can use GPS to go where you need to go. We have a weather app to tell us what the weather is going to be in an hour. We have shipping updates that tell us exactly when your package is going to arrive.

And this made us feel so good and so certain. And it made us feel like we had increasing mastery over our world. And what happened in the pandemic was this market correction of reminding us, No, actually you do not. But because you nurtured this in yourself over time so deeply because this illusion was so convincing, what happened is your spiritual muscles of faith actually atrophied in

the meantime. So suddenly we found ourselves unprepared to live in the actual world.

Annie: I mean, it's even happening right now still at airports. We're like we think, Well, if that flight says 7:35, I will leave at 7:35. And a lot of them are not going as well as they used to go. And your baggage is not always getting where you want it to go.

And yet we are flying from one side of our country to the other that used to take weeks in a wagon. And so you go like, the control we think we have, we do not have any. And you talked about this in the book, too, that like we're the safest generation that's ever lived and we're more worried than any generation that's ever lived about our safety.

Sharon: Isn't that fascinating?

Annie: Yes. And our technology is better than it's ever been but we feel we need more technology for more control.

Sharon: Right. Yeah, exactly.

Annie: What is wrong with us? This is what your book has done to me is it's given me so many words. Sharon, what about this? What about this? What about this? So what do we do?

Sharon: The answer is not, you know, then, Well, you just need to let go and let God.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: You know?

Annie: It's not working for me. That's not working for me.

Sharon: So the ark of the book is really kind of biopsying control. Like I really wanted to get into why we struggle with control, where did it come from, what are the different ways that we seek to have control. That's super important.

One of my favorite chapters in the book is the one on knowledge and information as a form of control. You rely on this as a tool of control. And exposing it. I don't think we realize how much we're taking our control issues to the internet instead of to God.

Annie: Yes! You better say... Somebody paused right there because they're like, "I'm not sure. I'm not sure about Sharon. It's just too much"

Sharon: So I look at that and then I look at the cost of control. And this is what ultimately was motivating to me was realizing this was a law written into all creation in Genesis 3 when Adam and Eve reached for more knowledge, more godlike power and status than they had, they were essentially reaching for control. God had given them power, love, peace, He just hadn't given them control.

So they break that boundary and immediately after they experience anxiety, they experience shame, they experience relational division. And this is the cost of control. And it is one that we are doomed to reenact again and again, again, anytime we reach to control something God hasn't given us to control.

One of the obvious things that I have in the subtitle is it creates anxiety. That you reach for control to soothe your anxiety but it actually exacerbates it.

Annie: I wrote that down. I wrote that exact thing down that it increase amount of control. Actually, it has increased our anxiety.

Sharon: And you experienced this in like low stakes examples where... You know, I mentioned tracking the package and how you'll hit refresh, you know, to see, "Where is it? Why isn't it here yet?" So you refresh. And you go to it thinking, "This is giving me certainty. This is giving me predictability." But when you hit refresh in that darn package hasn't moved, you're back where you started, you're just as anxious as before.

So we experienced this in low stakes ways. But we also experienced anytime you have a loved one who's making self-destructive decisions and you're trying to stop them, and you're doing everything in your power to make them make the choice that you know that they shouldn't make. And the anxiety that you feel! And you think it's because of the situation and it is a little bit, but it's also because you're trying to control something that you cannot control. And whenever we do that, it creates anxiety.

So I really wanted to name that there is a cost to trying to control. It's not an if, it's a when. That reframed for me, whenever I was in conversations with my husband where I'm trying to make him make a certain decision and suddenly stopping myself and thinking, "Okay, I can try and control him, I can pressure him, I can manipulate him, you know, whatever, and he will make the decision that I want him to make, but it will cost our marriage, it will cost our intimacy." And I might not even see that today. It could be five years from now.

Annie: That's right. You're just planting the seed of that cost right now, but you may not see the fruit right away. Wow.

Sharon: And that was the thing that really motivated me to drop that like a hot potato because I understood it wasn't just that I shouldn't control but that it will cost me when I try. So once I kind of realized that, it was really helpful for me.

But then it raises the question, "Well, do we just let go and let God?" afterwards. What helped me was to look back. We see in Genesis 3 that Adam and Eve have freedom. They have peace. They have love. They have everything essential to thrive. And then all of that is broken because of this grass for control.

But if we turn back to Genesis 1 and 2, we see that even though Adam and Eve didn't have control, one thing that they did have was agency. They still had this power to influence themselves and situations around them. It was just this power with limitations on it.

So the final chapter or chapters of the book is looking at what is the God given agency that we see in Genesis 1 and 2? And how can we put down control to pick back up this power that God had given us in the beginning?

Annie: There's one line I want to read to you that I would love for you to talk about. You said, "We can be in control or we can be in community, but we can't be both." Dude. Is that true?

Sharon: Yeah. Is that in the chapter on autonomy?

Annie: Autonomy, yes. Which I want to talk about, because I'm like, "What's the..." I wrote down, "Is autonomy different than independence?"

Sharon: Yeah. That's a good question.

Annie: Thank you. My dad loves when people say that. So thank you for saying. He always calls me.

Sharon: Those are probably synonyms, I would say. That might be a wrong answer. But I'm just gonna-

Annie: I think you're right.

Sharon: Those are probably synonyms I would say. But they are-

Annie: In that chapter is where you said, "We can be in control or we can be in community, but we can't be both."

Sharon: I think there is a slight difference in nuance. I'm a verbal processor, so I'm thinking this out loud. I think independence is a little bit more about pure freedom whereas autonomy is a little bit more like self-governance. So it's like independence is freedom from and autonomy is much more like you can't tell me what to do.

Annie: Ah, yeah.

Sharon: I would say that's probably what the difference is. So I got there.

Annie: Yeah, you did. You did. She's a doctor, everybody. That was Dr. Miller right there. That was Dr. Miller. That's amazing. Okay, so in that chapter is where you say we can be in control, we can be in community, but you can't be both.

Sharon: Yeah. In the section on different forms of control, things that we use to feel and control, one of those was autonomy.

Annie: Do you want me to read the others real quick? Can I do that?

Sharon: Sure.

Annie: This is how we control. Knowledge and information, power, money, autonomy, theology, and shame. Dude, this book, Sharon. Okay, go ahead. Talk to me about it. Talk to me.

Sharon: So autonomy, we live in a culture that highly prizes personal rights and is hyper-individualistic. Part of that is actually for very good reason. You know, we have seen the abuse of power, we have seen, I mean, slavery. The institution of slavery is an infringement upon a person's agency. And to some extent, I think, some autonomy is God-given.

So there's a very good reason why, you know, with the Catholic abuse scandal, the Southern Baptist abuse scandal, the USA Gymnastics, you know, there's all these different stories of abuse of power where people's agency and autonomy was infringed upon-

Annie: You have a great list in the power chapter, because there's all sorts of things like when your boss makes your employee work crazy hours, or when a parent is too harsh with their children, and when a leader has a... if organization has a culture that is fear-based. So power isn't always sexually connected.

Sharon: Yeah, exactly.

Annie: But so often, it is literally, I can make moves that you cannot make.

Sharon: Right, exactly. That's a great point. So there is an extent to which this correction is needed. And I really want to affirm that. But what we are also seeing in our culture I would say is an over-correction into this territory of "you can't tell me what to do."

As Christians, this is a really difficult line to walk because the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray is, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, not my kingdom come, my will be done.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: And so a lot of the language that you see people using about themselves, like, "You can't tell me what to do with my body. You can't tell me what to do with my family," that is Kingdom language. And as Christians, we should be troubled by that.

So I wanted to come at this from a different angle and name that autonomy when we put this hyper emphasis on it and absolute ties it that it becomes about control. This is about your kingdom.

One of the ways where we really see this come home to roost is whenever you're trying to be income unity as a church because we have this vision of church in Acts 2, we see it again in 1 Corinthians 12, where we are this interdependent family where we rely on one another. And when one person does something, it affects the whole body.

That is scripture's vision of the church, but that is irreconcilable with this absolute emphasis on autonomy. So that's why I say you can be in control or you can be in community, but you cannot be both. And that's not to say, and I can't emphasize this enough, that is not to say if you have a pastor who's telling you, "You don't get to think for yourself, I think for you," or "You don't get to interpret Scripture, I do that for you," or "You don't know what's right, you need to believe me..." That is a cult and you need to get out.

Annie: Right. Give us a call, we'll tell you that's a cult. That's exactly right.

Sharon: So there is a spectrum here. And it's really, really important to name but to also be careful of swinging in the opposite direction where we're not allowing anyone to speak into our lives anymore.

[00:46:08] <music>

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And now back to finish up our conversation with Sharon Hodde Miller.

[00:49:41] <music>

Annie: I like that you write about the work you and I have had to do around your ability to change people's minds. Because autonomy is so high in our culture that even... And you and I experience it a lot on the internet of people yelling.

I just need to tell you on microphone. I think I've said this to you in real life as well but I'll say this in front of everybody. You handle social media backlash, if you want to call it that, or unhappy patrons to your social media with such strength and kindness.

Are you afraid and you're not showing it? Are you mad and you're not showing it? Or do you feel as peaceful as you read? Because you're not trying to change their minds necessarily. When I read that in the book, I thought, "Well, I see her act this out every day on social media."

Sharon: So what you're referring to... there's another chapter where I talked about knowledge information as a form of control and how I really struggle not on social media, but in my own church, from this illusion that if I could just download the right facts into people's brains if I could just walk them through scripture, if I could just show them these are the wise counselors, these are the experts that we sought to make this decision. And if I could just put that in their brains, that they would

change their minds and they would agree with me. And that is false. That is just not how it works. I was trying to control them.

And instead, it was causing anxiety in me. I was laying awake at night rehearsing these conversations, and thinking, "If I said it this way, if I said it this way, I would change their minds." And I was straining my relationships with them. For those of you that haven't read the book, that's what Annie's referring to. But as far as social media-

Annie: Do you feel like those are very different? Because to me, when I was reading the book, I thought, "Well, this plays out in her social life."

Sharon: I think I caught on a lot faster to the limited influence of social media to change people's minds. I think I hung on in my actual lived life to the relational power of that. And it's still honestly just as limited in some ways. But on social media, I think you can tell pretty quickly if someone is there to engage you sincerely or not. And if they're not, I just don't spend any time on it.

Also if someone comes at me in a really mean way, you are telling me about yourself, because I would never go on social media and just start attacking strangers. And if I did, it would be because I'm not doing okay. So I feel like I'm able to discern that pretty easily on social media and I'm increasingly convinced that the most important work of Christian leaders, pastors, authors right now is to model how to engage social media wisely. And that is almost more important than what we are saying.

Annie: Wow.

Sharon: And sometimes that means just not responding. That I'm saying something just as loudly by not responding.

Annie: You know, when I see this happen to me or any of our friends where something we do causes backlash, online, this control concept was really powerful to me, reading about that, thinking about the internet and going like, "Oh, man, all we can control is ourselves."

Because one of the questions I wrote down halfway through the book is I said, Is it important to determine what we do have control over? And you answer that by literally saying, like, next to nothing except yourself. Right?

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: So how things play out on socials and real life for our friends listening that are doctors, nurses, that are teachers, I mean, the most piece we can have is just rising. We don't control anybody else. Right?

Sharon: Yeah. And that's really hard. You know, one piece of social media is you also can't control what people think of you. And that is really painful. Because there are times, and I've experienced this in ministry, where it wasn't just that someone disagreed with you, but they impugned your faith, or they impugned your character. And that is really hard when you really care about your work and you really care about the people that you're reaching.

And I had to do with that specifically... And this is kind of going in like a little bit different direction than what you just asked, but probably people just need to hear this. One thing that I had to work through at the end of the day was that I'm not getting anyone into heaven and I'm not setting anyone free. Only Jesus does that.

So if people don't like me or think badly of me but they still are good with Jesus, then that has to be enough for me. And that's really hard. That's really hard. But that's something I've also had to really work through in the last few years.

Annie: Me too. There's something about our public lives that gives permission for people to say online whatever they think of us. And recently when I had a whole bunch of people get mad at me at once, it opened up this door for a lot of fringe people to go, "Oh, yeah, I've been meaning to say here's how I feel about me." And I was like, "Where are y'all coming from? What are you saying?"

And as I was reading your book and thinking about it, I just thought, Oh, yeah, in the end, I think we all love Jesus. And so therefore, we are all going to end up together in the long run. And I have to be great with that and lose the control of that and let it go.

Sharon: Yeah, yeah.

Annie: So one of my takeaways also that I've been thinking about because of stuff going on in my real life with some of my friends is, it also feels like the illusion of control can really lead to having a secret life.

Sharon: Yes. Yeah, exactly.

Annie: So will you talk for just a minute about like why do we not need to have secret lives? And what does it actually look like for the women who are listening? Because in my head, I see a mom sitting by the pool listening and she doesn't realize... I mean, everybody knows when they have a secret life. But she hasn't

called it that. Would you kind of define what it's like to have a secret life and why our illusion of control plays into that?

Sharon: I want to recommend... So by the time this airs... I did a three-part interview series with... The first one was with Jess Connolly about the cost of controlling your body. And then the second was with Derwin Gray about the cost of controlling your church. This is all on YouTube.

Annie: And we'll link straight to these.

Sharon: This is about to release. It will have released by the time this interview airs. But my last one is with Beth Moore, and it's about the cost of controlling your image and your reputation. And she goes into this. She tells this story of how when she was, you know, young woman like a teenager and how she would basically leave her house.

And by the time she got to the other side of the street, she had turned into a different person. She would kind of leave that other life behind. No one knew it was going on. So I highly recommend anyone who is hiding and maybe knows it, you know, to some extent that you should tune into that interview. It's just such a sweet word of grace.

But that is another cost of control is when we're trying to manage what other people think of us is that we end up becoming really deceptive. What was your question exactly about?

Annie: It's just what you talked about. Kind of define what a secret life could look like? Because it's not just having a whole secret family. It can be so much more insidious than that.

Sharon: I mean, actually my second book, *Nice*, really was kind of a deep dive into how a lot of us are disciplined into this image of nice girl Christianity. And what happens is we become so good at cultivating the exterior that the interior just completely rots.

The metaphor that I actually use in that book is like a Christmas tree. That you've cut it off from its root system, but you decorate it. And then for a time, it looks beautiful. But because it's been cut off from its root system, this tree is actually dying.

And there's a lot of people in the church that that is their reality, but they don't even realize it. I guess what I would want to say to anyone who's listening, you might not know that. That was another thing that Jess Connolly said in my interview with her is a lot of women will say, "I don't struggle with body shame. I feel great about

myself." And she'll say "No, you're not free. You just have an 18 point plan to like keep yourself together. And that's not freedom, that's control.

I think there are a lot of people where you've lost the sense that you are constantly holding it together and you're managing, you know, what people think about your kids, and you're managing what people think about your marriage, and you're managing what people think about your career or your appearance, whatever it is.

And I want you to know that the anxiety that that creates in you and the fear that that creates in you and the fragility that that creates in you, you don't actually have to live that way.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: And that freedom, the freedom that we are offered in Christ is not actually hypothetical. It is actual. And if you don't feel free, you aren't. That's a major cost of control is not just the double life that you unintentionally create for yourself, but that you're just not free, you're not actually free and that you can be. And that's why I wrote that book.

Annie: I hope Amazon puts *Nice* and *The Cost of Control* in like, "If you buy this, also buy this," for our friends who didn't get it. And you and I talked about *Nice* on the podcast back in... he he, let me look it up. Back in Episode 164. So people can go back. And we'll link to it so they can hear it.

The end of the book, I don't want to give it away because I want everybody to read it. But it's also not a novel. It's help. But you talk about when we're dealing with control, we name it, we order it, we create it. Like literally looking through Genesis 3, this whole thing. Genesis 3 tells us how to do it.

One of the ways that Adam brought order but didn't bring... he didn't control the animals, he brought order to them was by naming them. So our friends are gonna order this today. It's still pre-order today.

Sharon: Yes.

Annie: So then get the free audiobook and a group setting guide. So they can go order today and get all that if they go to... what's the website with all the information?

Sharon: They can go to sheworships.com.

Annie: Great. Okay. Again, we'll link to that in the show notes. So they do all that today. But the book is not gonna get there till Tuesday night or Wednesday morning.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: What's the move today to when you realize like, Oh, yeah, I'm trying to control everything, and I'm losing my mind, and let go and let God?

Sharon: So I would say two things. The first is God doesn't give you control but He does give you agency. And I go into depth about what are different forms of agency. And one very, very simple one is simply self-examination.

We see this in Genesis 3, where Adam and Eve rebel against God, they hide. And then the first thing that God asks them is, Where are you? That's a rhetorical question, because God already knows where they are. That is asking them to ask that themselves. Where are you? Where am I? What have I just done?

And they are unable to answer. Instead, they deflect and they blame. And that's usually what we do when we're in control is we give an excuse for why this is the right response instead of taking a b and just self-examining, Where am I? Why am I responding this way? What am I trusting in more than God? What do I think is going to give me more security than God?

So that would be my little teaser of like one form of agency. There's six or seven, I think, that I list. You don't think of self-examination as a form of agency but it's really, really important one. So that's the first thing I would say.

But then the second thing I would say has nothing to do with agency at all and more to do with grace. Because we know we shouldn't control. We know sometimes control is about idolatry. It's about believing my life would be better, you know, if I was in the driver's seat. I get that language from Jennifer Dukes Lee has a great book on control. So we know there's a sin component to it. But we also wrestle with control because we live in a Genesis 3 world, but we were created for Genesis 1.

Annie: Wow.

Sharon: And part of the reason we wrestle with control is that the world is not as it should be. And the world is broken. And we do love people who make terrible, difficult, destructive decisions. And it is not wrong to desire security and stability. And it's not wrong to want to heal what is broken in the world.

So I also want to speak that word of grace over people. That to not feel just shame and guilt about wrestling with control, but to know that some of what your soul is

crying out for, God agrees. And that is why He sent His Son ultimately to heal what we cannot.

Annie: That's good. Sharon, I cannot wait for everybody to read this book. I love books that I walk away and have like, "Here's what I should do." And I love books that I walk away. And I'm like, "Oh, wow, there's so much for me to do." And then you've done that with *The Cost of Control* where it's like, "Oh, I have... I just took another book like this into counseling and I hand it to my counselor, I said, "This is our problem. Here it is. This is the next one that's going with me." I'm gonna be like, "Jennifer, look at this book. We have a problem. Annie has a control problem."

Is there anything we didn't say about the book that you want to make sure we say?

Sharon: I don't think so.

Annie: Okay. I can't wait. I will link to the videos and to the preorder stuff. Diane Langberg... you quote her a couple of times: Redeeming Power. That book changed me. She's coming on the show in a couple of weeks. I am very scared. I'm nervous. She seems very tough. I mean, her book is very straightforward. I feel like I'm gonna be like, "Hi, teach us?" Have you met her yet?

Sharon: I haven't. No.

Annie: Great. Well, we'll bring her on the Disney pod too, don't you think? What are we going to call our Disney podcast?

Sharon: I don't know.

Annie: You guys help us out. Name our Disney podcast.

Sharon: Annie and Sharon Disney Adventure. I don't know something like that.

Annie: I like where you're going. No idea is a bad idea. You guys, listen, all of you listening, in the comments on this Instagram post, just start telling us what we should call our Disney pod.

Sharon, thanks for the work you do. You're just one of my very favorites. I'm so grateful.

Sharon: Thank you.

Annie: I'm really, really grateful. You know, the last question we always ask. You've done this three times now. Because this show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you. Ye

Sharon: I knew I was gonna have this question and so I was thinking about it, because I think my previous answers have not changed. I think the first time I was on I said Christmas Hallmark movies. And that's still the same.

Annie: Great.

Sharon: And then I think the last time I said Disney and that's also still the same.

Annie: Which by the way, I need to tell you. I don't know if I've said this on the show yet. In November, our friend Jenna Claire that was in Wicked is starring in a Hallmark Christmas movie. She is the... I know. If everyone could see your gasp. She is the main character in the first ever period piece Disney Hallmark movie. It's set in the 50s. It's amazing.

They're starting to show commercials now. I screamed like a school girl when I saw her face on the bottom of the Hallmark Channel.

Sharon: Oh my gosh!

Annie: You're gonna love it.

Sharon: My mouth is just hung up.

Annie: We have a friend who is a Hallmark Star.

Sharon: That is amazing.

Annie: I know. So those answers are still both true.

Sharon: Yeah. Actually, I'm gonna get really philosophical here.

Annie: Oh, good.

Sharon: Because I was thinking about this morning because I knew you're gonna ask me this question. And I was like, "Well, I really enjoy..." I brought my friend Jenna with me and that's been really fun.

Annie: She's lovely.

Sharon: And I like being in Nashville with my friend.

Annie: Lady Bird Taco?

Sharon: Lady Bird Taco.

Annie: What did y'all end up doing for lunch? I didn't even ask.

Sharon: We went to GreenHouse, actually.

Annie: Oh, GreenHouse. Okay.

Sharon: And then my kids the current age that they're at is like super-duper fun. There's actually a lot that is fun right now. So I just feel really grateful. And I really love this exercise of just thinking through that. There is a lot that is fun right now.

Annie: Good. I feel like we are so quick to say when seasons are hard, and we're slow to say when they're good. Because there's this weird feeling about like if I say things are good, I'm gonna curse it, which is not how God works or B people are gonna think I'm bragging. And no they aren't. We're allowed to have good seasons. It's just fun. And the Lord wants you to forgive everybody. Good luck with that. That's so fun.

Thanks for being here, friend. I can't wait for people to read *The Cost of Control*.

Sharon: Thank you.

[01:07:31] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, don't you love her? She's so smart. She's so direct, but kind. She just is not messing around. You guys, this book is so, so important. Make sure you grab your copy of *The Cost of Control* and follow Sharon so you can tell her thank you for being on the show today.

And don't forget to pop to that link in the show notes and sign up to be a part of the big group of us, a thousand plus already signed up are going to be Chase the Funers altogether. Is it going to stick? I don't know. I like the name. We're gonna see what happens. But remember we start today. Let's do this together, friends.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that's how you can find me. And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you. I'll do the same.

Today what sounds fun to me is my cousin's wedding this weekend. Oh my gosh, I cannot wait. It's gonna be so fun. So I'm very excited to see my family. Get on that dance floor and have a great time.

So y'all have a great week. We'll see you back here on Thursday with my new friend Laney Hayes. Y'all, this is a show you requested. After Walker Hayes was on, you said, "We got to hear from his wife." And we got her. So come back on Thursday. You're gonna love this one. See y'all then.