

[00:00:00] <music>

Annie: Hi 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. Well, technically, I'm very happy to be getting knee surgery today as well. So, say a little prayer. It's very easy. It's no big deal, but that's where I am on this Monday.

And we have got a great show in store for you. I'm gonna be listening right along with you as I recover on my couch.

Before we dive into today's conversation, a quick word from one of our amazing partners, [BetterHelp](#). Here's the thing. We take care of our clothes by washing them according to the care instructions. We take care of our cars by taking the mechanic and paying them a lot of money to fix one little thing. Okay, that literally just happened to me, so we're just talking about it.

But how we take care of our minds affects our daily lives in big ways. So it's important to invest time and keeping your mind healthy. There are plenty of ways to support a healthy brain, things like getting enough rest and staying rooted in Scripture. Another great tool in the tool belt is therapy. You know this. But it's a staple in my rhythms of caring for myself. It is the next thing I go to today.

BetterHelp makes it both affordable and convenient with online therapy. BetterHelp offers video, phone, and even live chat only therapy sessions. So you don't have to see anyone on camera if you don't want to. You can be matched with a therapist and under 48 hours, which is very fast, y'all. You can be on the road to better mental health like this week.

So our listeners get 10% off their first month at betterhelp.com/thatsoundsfun. That's betterhelp.com/thatsoundsfun.

Intro: Today on the show I get to talk with one of my dear friends, Jordan Lee Dooley. You may remember her from when she joined us before on Episode 187—go back and listen to that one—or on the That Sounds Fun tour live in Indianapolis back in June of 2021.

She is a national bestselling author of *Own Your Everyday* and she hosts The SHE Podcast. She founded the Own It Academy, a digital education company, and Soul Scripts, a words company known for its phrase "your brokenness is welcome here." It's one of my favorite sweatshirts that I own.

She is a dreamer and a go-getter. Her newest book, *Embrace Your Almost*, is so good, y'all. This is the perfect time of year to read this book. It's about making the most of the middle and pursuing meaningful goals that align with what matters most.

Y'all are gonna find this conversation so encouraging and inspiring. And don't we all need a little more encouragement and inspiration, especially on a Monday?

So here is my conversation with Jordan Lee Dooley.

[00:02:41] <music>

Annie: Jordan Lee Dooley, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

Jordan: I am so pumped to be here in your new space too.

Annie: Welcome.

Jordan: I wasn't here last time. It looks amazing.

Annie: No. The first show you were on we were in person at the office when I was at church. And then you were a live guest on tour. Those were the last two times you've been on.

Jordan: Yeah, I haven't been into your new space and you haven't been here, so it's fun to see.

Annie: Welcome. Welcome. Okay, so you have your office at home. Let's talk business for a minute because a lot of our friends listening own small businesses. You and I own small businesses. You work out of your house, though.

Jordan: Mostly, yeah.

Annie: So what's been that decision? Because you also have multiple people who work for you. Y'all just do virtual.

Jordan: Mostly virtual. I mean, I had an office, I want to say it was 2018 and 2019.

Annie: In your house or did you hire a space?

Jordan: No, it was a space. And I liked it. But I just felt like I wasn't going there enough for me to justify this... And I still had a lot of people working virtually. I only had like

a couple local. So I kind of got to the point where I was like, "I either only have to hire people locally to make it worth my while, to like go and be with people."

So I just found I wasn't using it as much as I thought I would. And so I was like, "Well, all right, we're just gonna keep it simple." And then COVID hit and all the things and I was like, "Well, we're just gonna do the home thing for now."

Annie: How do you separate home and work?

Jordan: I mean, it's a challenge. I admit it can be a challenge. So when we moved into our new house, creating a new space that felt unique from the rest of my house. I really poured a lot of time and energy and resources into creating a space that felt like an office I wanted to be in. So I think that helps a lot just having that designated office space.

And I try to give myself the mornings to be honest. I used to try to rush in there and then by 11 I'd be distracted with something.

Annie: Really?

Jordan: So I actually try to spend my mornings getting my personal and life and house stuff done, so that I go into work, you know, in air quotes, if you will, I go into my office from like eleven to four.

Annie: There's some business theory about finding your very best hours. Yours is eleven?

Jordan: Yeah. It's like right around lunchtime I'll work for like an hour or so, take a quick lunch break, and then I'm good for like the rest of the afternoon.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Jordan: I try to do that. I do not like starting working first thing in the morning. I'm not good at it. It's so funny. I've been sleeping till like 9, 9:30 late and Matt's like, "What is wrong with you?" I'm like, "I'm an entrepreneur for a reason."

Annie: I don't teach school anymore for a reason. I don't have to be there at 7.

Jordan: Exactly. I like to get up at eight or nine, do my workout, make my breakfast, do any little house stuff I want to do, and then kind of roll into my office around 11:30. And it works.

Annie: If I had a dream scenario, which I'm laughing out loud saying this because I'm like, "Oh, yeah, yeah, I actually run the company, so I can have a dream scenario," I would get here at 8 and work until 2. Because I'm like my strongest, best working brain from 9 to 12. And then... I love meetings. And so then meetings in the afternoon, and then I can go work out, have an afternoon.

Jordan: I love that. So it's like opposite.

Annie: So how did you discover your best hour?

Jordan: I'd always heard that it's best to be proactive in the morning and reactive in the afternoon.

Annie: Proactive in the morning and reactive in the afternoon.

Jordan: ...or just in the first half of when you're working because your brain is most fresh. But I just kind of found... And I don't dislike working in the morning. I just do better if it's kind of late morning, early afternoon. And I think it's just because I don't feel like I'm rushing. I think that's the thing. Like I don't really have to get up early, rush, go get-

Annie: Do you do lunch meetings?

Jordan: Yeah, sometimes.

Annie: I never do lunch meetings.

Jordan: No?

Annie: No. I just am like, "Take me out of my sweet spot for 90 minutes front to back. No, can't do that."

Jordan: But that's also at the start of my... I haven't gotten too deep into my... So sometimes what I'll do is like the first couple of hours... I'll occasionally take a lunch meeting if I have to. But what I like to do if it's like the best case scenario, I like to work from like 11 to 1, 11 to 2 on my creative stuff. Like working on a book manuscripts, working on a slot, anything that takes creative energy.

And then I tell my team, like, "From like 2 to 4, 2 to 5, that's when I want to do interviews or meetings." So we try to structure it that way. Sometimes it doesn't work out that way. But that's like my-

Annie: Yeah. It's 930 and I've got you here. So, sorry.

Jordan: I'm thrilled to be here. This is still like work though.

Annie: Good. I feel the same. One of my favorite things to learn from you and talk with you about is how to run businesses. Because I think there's a lot of women... And we know from our friend Christie too, there're so many women who want to run businesses that don't know how they are doing it out of their house. I did it out of my house for a long time. And separating that home and life and work... I mean, I can't do it.

Jordan: I think the other piece of that is, it really depends on your personality and the way that you work. But I think it also depends on your season of life. Like we've done a lot of hosting with, say, families kids. When I have kids in my house, like infants, it's really hard to work in my house. But it's almost like I don't know how I would lead either. So it can be a challenge just in navigating like what works best.

And I think what I really had to learn in business is I always kind of followed the advice of like, this is the best way to do it. And I felt like it was like watching myself into a box. And I just finally had to start asking like, "What works best for me. And how do I thrive? How am I getting stuff done? Am I getting stuff done? Okay, great. Like moving forward."

You know, you just kind of define like what works best for me in my season of life. What I did three years ago is different from what I'm doing now.

Annie: That's right. There was a time where working at my dining room table was the most beneficial thing for me to ever do. And it was great. So I think about our friends who are surgeons, or our friends who are teachers, or who work at a restaurant, and they're like, "I wish I got to pick my best hours, but the school is open from 7 to 3."

So for our friends that have jobs that are not entrepreneurs-driven, that are just you go to work-driven, how would you suggest they find their sweet spots in that?

Jordan: That's a good question. When it comes to if your hours or what your hours are, you really don't have much say over that. But I also think you can try to be creative about how you... Like, for example, even in a lot of jobs, there's certain types of work that you're doing.

So find what is easy. Am I better just getting my administrative work out of the way in the morning? Let me just knock out all of that. And then I can be more relational

in the afternoon and maybe work on presentations or take more meetings, or vice versa. I really like doing meetings in the morning.

So I think you can still in some ways. I mean, it depends on what your role is. But I think just trying to figure out. Or maybe if you're a teacher, saying, "What's my favorite topic to teach or my favorite subject? Can I do that early in the day when I have most energy for it? Or the thing that I hate the most maybe I should do early in the day."

But I think you can kind of within the boundaries that you have. Just kind of find what works best for me so that I can still produce the results that I've been hired to produce, but maybe do in a way that feels a little bit more manageable for me too.

Annie: When I taught elementary school... What triggered me even thinking about this is you saying, "Figure out what works best for you." When I taught elementary school, Friday, I would stay at work so late because I would get everything ready for the next week. And it gave me my best week. Because I was like, "Yeah, I'm at at school, at work until 6:00 or 6:30 on a Friday. Okay. Then I go to dinner with my friends. But everything is ready so that I'm not thinking about it Sunday night."

Jordan: And that's the other thing. Like the Sunday Scaries.

Annie: Oh, the Sunday Scaries.

Jordan: Like the anxiety.

Annie: Do they still happen for you even though you own your own company? They do for me.

Jordan: Not really as much.

Annie: Not much?

Jordan: A little occasion. It depends on the season. Like if I'm leaning into a book launch or something, I'm like, "Oh my gosh." But I think that that's another big thing if you feel like, you know... And we've really tried to implement a rhythm. And we need to get back into it. But there's been times, especially in really busy seasons where we've tried to implement like a 24-hour break from social media zones.

Annie: I do it.

Jordan: And that is mostly like we turn them off on Saturday nights, and that goes mostly through Sunday. And so I don't want to feel that like, "Oh, gosh, I gotta get back on my phone and do stuff." So trying to prep like Thursday night, Friday night for that I think can also be huge even if it takes a little bit of sacrifice in those days.

Annie: Sunday morning I met a couple at church and we were exchanging contact. And the husband said, "Oh, we don't bring our phones in to church. We don't have any way to take it." And I was like, "You don't bring your phone to church?"

I was like, "That is the smartest thing I've ever heard." Because you're all together and you're inside for an hour. Well, brilliant." I was like, "Man, the rules people have around their phones... But for you and I, our work is so based on our phones that we have to take them with us.

Jordan: And that's the other. I'm here in Nashville to speak at a business conference. And one of the things I mentioned in my talk yesterday was just how the running joke kind of an entrepreneur community is leave your nine to five to work 24/7. So even going back to what you're saying about like, well, what if you have all these strict hours you have to work on everything else?

While there is flexibility in the entrepreneur community, with a job job, a lot of times you can kind of clock out. Versus as an entrepreneur, you may have like, "Oh, I work 11 to 2," but like your brain is constantly... Like you don't clock out. Somebody's still pinging you at 9 p.m.

And you've got to really try to draw those boundaries. But it comes with its own set of challenges. So I don't know that one's easier than the other but it's just interesting how we end up kind of always being tuned in even if you're sitting at our desk working for these five hours or whatever.

Annie: My dad's a CPA, and he's owned his own business for my whole life. And he called me this morning as I was getting ready and was asking about some stuff I'm worried about with work. And I was like, "Yeah, it was hard for me to fall asleep." And he said, "Well, you shouldn't worry about this." And he goes, "But I couldn't fall asleep last night either." I was like, "Oh, this is just the life of an entrepreneur sometimes." We trust God. You and I trust God with these companies we run but also-

Jordan: Also there's very real things that you have to handle in the moment or problems you have to prioritize, you have to put out problems, you have challenges you have to deal with. It's just kind of the nature of it.

Annie: Yes, we just live with it.

Jordan: And it's on you.

Annie: So you're running a business and you also just put out *Embrace Your Almost*. So you and I are similar in that while we're running businesses, we're writing books. How did *Embrace Your Almost* become your next book? Why was that right after *Own Your Everyday*?

Jordan: Well, it's so interesting how God works because my first book, *Own Your Everyday*, toward the end, I started talking about when you're not where you want to be and when you're not where you thought you'd be, very briefly. But there's like a little declaration at the end of *Own Your Everyday*. Like, "I may not be where I thought I'd be, but I am where I'm supposed to be." And like kind of just believing that.

That was before I knew anything about not being worried. I thought I knew something back then. But it was just interesting how that just happened to be worked in toward the end of the book. This book wasn't planned, it wasn't planned to be like... they're not a series, but it was almost like this natural follow-up that kind of happened.

It originally had a slightly different approach. The core message kind of is still similar in that a large part of this book is about really taking a step back and reconsidering like, what is actually right for me? How do I define success in a world that's constantly saying I should want it all?

So originally, we were gonna kind of go with the title of like *Own Your Ambition* or something like that. Sounded a little too series-ish for my publisher. So we kind of were trying to figure out what's the next best title. But then what was interesting is then-

Annie: That's good for people to hear that we all take titles into meetings and like, "Here's my dream book," and then titles... None of my books are named what I thought they'd be named when I started, except *That Sounds Fun*. We have to hold titles so loosely.

Jordan: Loosely. Truly. I mean, they had a good point that sounded like thinking it might sound too businessy. I was like, That wasn't really the intent and it wasn't even about being like a boss babe, but I could see how that could come across from the outside looking in.

So anyway, point being, just as the book was being written, it was also as COVID was hitting and it was as I was going through personal setbacks and crises in my life that were just kind of throwing off all my plans. Because right as I signed the contract for this book, everything was going according to plan in my life.

Annie: Wow.

Jordan: Every checkbox had been checked off. I felt like, "Ooh, easy." And I think because I had, I want to say, kind of early success in my life, which I'm thankful for, it kind of, I think, trained me to think if you just do all the right things everything will work out." And then all of a sudden, out of nowhere, it was like I got hit with seven different curveballs, and I was doing all the right things and things were going wrong. Really bad. Really wrong.

So as I was writing this book, it really kind of morphed into this message of unmet expectations, but also how disappointment and expectations and setbacks can really become an opportunity. They feel like the world's biggest obstacle, but they can also be an opportunity to get clear on: what do I actually value? Where am I going? Why am I going there?

And also really learn to sit with contentment. What does contentment really look like, especially as Christians? Because I think there's a lot of false... not false but half-truths around it or we have this idea of what it is and we think, "Well, I'm not good at that. If I'm not sitting here feeling happy all the time, I must not be content."

So it was the story of my own wrestling through: how do you deal with unmet expectations? How do you deal with everything was working out and then it went sideways, or I thought I'd be here but instead I'm still here? What just happened? So that was kind of what I walked through.

And then also I think what the world walked through. A lot with canceled weddings, and job losses, and everything that we experienced. So it just kind of all came together in this way. But it wasn't what I set out to write originally, which was kind of crazy.

Annie: I like how you write about in the book, but the faith part is what can really mess with people of like, Wait, I'm praying and I'm talking to God, and I'm obeying as best I can, and this is not going the way-

Jordan: I actually feel like I'm being punished.

- Annie:** Yes. What do you do with that reality? Because that's reality. That's not something you're making up. That's not all those where you're like, "Put the lie down and picked up the truth." The truth is the bank account is empty. The truth is we just broke up. The truth is I'm not pregnant. The truth is my business is failing. How do we hold both of those things? That's hard for me.
- Jordan:** I think there's a lot of cliché advice out there. Like, "Love your life. Build a life you love." And you're like, "What if life's really hard and hard to love right now." And it's not that you don't have good things happening in your life, but there's a lot of things that feel really... or even just one big thing that feels outstanding. And I don't mean outstanding as awesome. I mean like pending, like not happening.
- Annie:** Outstanding payment.
- Jordan:** Yeah, literally. I think there's a lot of cliché advice around that. And especially in the church we're just told like, "Be content." And I think we think that means like, Sit around, sing Kumbaya and be like, "I live my life," right?
- Annie:** Yeah.
- Jordan:** I think what I really had to learn through various different types of setbacks, both personally, professionally, globally, all the different things, I started to lean into this concept of what does it mean to like your life?
- Annie:** Wow. Versus love.
- Jordan:** Right?
- Annie:** That's interesting.
- Jordan:** Like, for example, I love my husband, but somebody's I don't like him or whatever, and vice versa. And I think that's kind of the challenge of like, how can you lean into making a lovely existence right where you are? And what I've learned is, that doesn't mean you quit longing for whatever feels out of reach. It doesn't mean you just go, "Oh, well, God is good. So therefore, I don't care for that anymore." That's just such a fake response.
- I think it's more learning to hold both disappointment and possibility in the same hand. So in the beginning of the book, I tell this story of this first garden I started, which was a royal failure in terms of the harvest. I got four kale leaves that summer.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Jordan: Not four plants. Leaves. Leaves.

Annie: Four leaves.

Jordan: I could barely make a salad out of that.

Annie: Oh, that's so funny.

Jordan: Anyway, we got barely any fruit from this garden. And it was interesting because as I looked at that garden, I remember thinking, This kind of is a failure, but at the same time, what I learned about gardening, what I learned about myself, what I learned was slowing down, that actually was a lot of growth.

So in terms of the physical harvest, that felt like a failure. But in terms of how I grew, it's actually success. So my point is, I kind of realized I couldn't look at these four kale leaves as a failure and a reminder that I didn't really get what I wanted or I can look at it as a reminder of what's possible.

And I think that's kind of where you hold both disappointment and possibility in the same hand. Like, hey, just because it hasn't happened doesn't mean it can't. But so far my experience has shown me it doesn't really work out. So I could wrestle with both of those things.

I think the challenge is ultimately, what can I do in this season even if the business isn't going how I thought, even if I haven't met the person I thought I would meet by now, even if XYZ isn't working out? That doesn't mean I stopped longing for that, doesn't mean I don't have a day where it really sucks. It doesn't mean I don't really struggle with it. It just means that in the meantime, like how can I move and how can I make the most of the middle?

Annie: How can I move? What a great question! In the meantime, how can I move?

[00:18:22] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about one of our amazing partners, [Awana's Talk About](#) resource. You're probably familiar with Awana. They're an amazing organization that facilitates child discipleship in churches everywhere.

Well, their Talk About family devotional resources bring things home. Talk About helps you lead your kids through the gospel prayer, worry, forgiveness, and more with the truth of God's Word.

In today's culture, peers, and influencers are competing for your child's attention. And that's one of the reasons we created the MiniBFF book club and the MiniBFF Podcast is we want to be on the team with you of raising your kids and helping hold their attention on gospel stuff. And that is what Talk About does too.

Talk About helps you prioritize the gospel's influence through daily faith conversations at home, in the car, or wherever you're spending time with your kids, on the sidelines of sporting games. I know all y'all are out there right now. I know. I know. I'm there too.

Talk About is delivered digitally to your inbox each week and includes an easy-to-use conversation guide to share scripture with your family, weekly hands-on activities to apply God's word to everyday life with your kids all week long, and bonus materials including coloring pages and memory verses and prep videos, playlists, and more. Y'all, there's so much good stuff.

Talk About is so helpful for those moments when you want to intentionally turn the conversation spiritual, but maybe feel a little overwhelmed about where to start. You can help your kids belong to, believe in, and become lifelong resilient disciples of Christ today with Talk About.

So try one month free with the promo code TSF on talkaboutdiscipleship.com. Again, the promo code is TSF, like That Sounds Fun, on talkaboutdiscipleship.com.

Sponsor: And I've got one more amazing partner to tell you about, [ButcherBox](https://ButcherBox.com). You guys, I'm so happy about this. Box of meats. Y'all know your girl Annie can be a little bougie at times. So usually when I think of high quality meals, it's in the context of a special occasions only restaurant situation. But with ButcherBox, I can make it a special occasion in my own kitchen any night of the week.

ButcherBox takes every bit of the guesswork out of finding high quality meat and seafood that you can trust. Their selection includes 100% grass-fed beef, free range organic chicken, pork that's raised crate free, and wild caught seafood. Yum, y'all. It's all humanely raised with no antibiotics or added hormones.

So you get to choose from a variety of box plan options from curated to customize and change your plan whenever you want. Get what you want delivered right to

your doorstep with free shipping for the continental US and no surprise fees. Those are the kinds of surprises we like, right?

ButcherBox has exclusive member deals so you can save big on your favorite cuts, some that can be hard to come by the grocery store. And they'll send you recipe inspirations which I appreciate, guides, tips and hacks, some are even personalized, so you can cook up mouthwatering meals.

Okay, there's something so nostalgic to me about a good beef roast in the crock pot. So you better believe I was excited to get a chuck roast in my box tossed in with some carrots and onions and potatoes. And y'all, unbelievable. And the leftovers fed me for some days.

ButcherBox has basically revolutionized my grocery list. And it will for you too. In fact, you can take chicken breasts off your grocery list. ButcherBox is offering our friends an incredible deal that they've literally never offered before. You guys, they've never offered this before.

Free chicken for a year. Free chicken for a year. Get two pounds of free-range organic chicken breasts for free in every order when you sign up at butcherbox.com/tsf and use the code TSF. Claim this deal. Free chicken for a year, my gracious. It's at butcherbox.com/tsf and use the code TSF.

And now back to our conversation with Jordan.

[00:22:13] <music>

Annie: We send out an email on Fridays to our AFD Week in Review friends and we tell them who's coming on the show the next week. And Robin's question is along these lines. "Especially after a tragedy, how do you refrain from living in fear? Like how do you not live once bitten twice shy kind of life?"

Jordan: Honestly, that's a really good question. And I think for a little bit you do.

Annie: You do. You have to, right?

Jordan: That's human. I don't think there's this just like, "Oh, darn." I think you do.

Annie: That was terrible. Can't wait to try again."

Jordan: Yeah, exactly. I mean, even in my own life, especially when things have gone really, really wrong and have been tragic, there was times I was like, "I need a

break." And I think it's okay to feel like maybe I need to take a step back and to really work through processing.

And I think a lot of times we want to jump right back on the wagon of like, "Oh, that didn't work out. Let me go for it again." Or we completely avoid it forever. And I think there's a sweet spot in the middle where it's like you can actually say, "Maybe I just need to take a step back."

And another really good piece of advice that I was given that I love to pass on, and I wrote about this in the book, especially after like loss or hardship or heartbreak or something like that, sometimes it feels like, Forget even trying again to whatever that dream was, how do I even get back to life? When something sets you back so far and feels like a gut punch, it's like, "What do I do with that?"

I was struggling with: how do I get back to life? How do you go back to business as usual when it's not business as usual? You've just been totally blindsided, or whatever. And my mom gave me really good advice, actually. Because I was totally discouraged. And I was like, "I need a break. I'm freaking out. I don't know what to do."

And she's like, "What if you just try to do one normal thing a day?" And I was like, "What do you mean? What do you mean normal thing a day?" She's like, "Make a list for like the next seven days of just one normal thing you're going to try to make sure you accomplish." And even if the rest of the day just kind of feels like awash, you're kind of in a blur, have one thing that just feels like a step forward.

So I just started writing things down. "I'm gonna go to dinner with friends tomorrow. I'm gonna go on a jog the next day. I'm gonna..." I don't remember all the things.

Annie: One normal thing a day.

Jordan: So that can be really helpful-

Annie: That's really helpful.

Jordan: ...just when you're trying to recover from a blow in life. But if you've experienced fear, maybe because you've just experienced failure in an area or something that felt like a failure, another way that you can think about that is like one step a day.

The example I give in the book is, let's say you want to start a bakery but in the past you tried to start a bakery and it royally failed and it was really heartbreaking for

you. And it's always been a dream of yours, but you're like, "I don't know if I can go through that heartbreak again. What if it doesn't work again?"

So instead maybe taking one small step approach. And what I mean by that is maybe you don't open a bakery right now. Maybe you plan out the next like 10 to 15 days. And you don't have to do them all back to back to back. But it's like, "Okay, in day one, maybe I'm going to try out a few recipes. Day two... You know, it may not be consecutive, but the next day that I work on this I'm going to have some friends and family sample those and give me feedback.

The next day that I'm gonna work on this, day three, I'm going to try to perfect those things. Day four, I'm actually going to go to some local bakeries or local coffee shops and see if I can place them in local cafes. Rather than like taking on the stress and the capital and the burden and all of that, like, "I'm going to open a bakery," actually test out your idea with really small steps.

So I guess my point is, you can take the one-step-a-day approach, if you feel like you've put a dream on the back burner because it's burned before or you're afraid of failure. And on the flip side, you can take one normal thing a day approach. If you've been really knocked down in your life, and you're just like, "How do I even get back to life? How do I go forward?" Sometimes just not throwing yourself back into business as usual, but saying, like, "Okay, what's one normal thing I can do?"

And what I found was when I started doing one normal thing a day in kind of my season of tragedy and setbacks and suffering, within four or five days, I was kind of more motivated. I was like, "Oh, and I can also throw in laundry and I'm also gonna go finish this work project."

I was starting to find that like once I kind of slowly allowed myself to get back in the groove of things, doesn't mean that you're ready to throw yourself back at like trying whatever went wrong, but it just helps you kind of move forward and keep going with a little bit less of that anxiety.

Annie: A couple of the questions we got in around that, especially about singleness and not being married yet and dating. Of like, how do you embrace your almost today? Now, you and Matt, who I adore, have been married forever?

Jordan: Five years.

Annie: But y'all are twenty...

Jordan: Seven.

Annie: Seven, yeah. As I'm listening to you, I'm going, "Oh, yeah, what does it look like for us to embrace our almost before we get married?"

Jordan: Or before you get... It's really any season you're gonna be in.

Annie: Yes.

Jordan: A big thing that I learned... One of my big almost was I almost became a mom multiple times. So in a similar way it's like a relational thing where I thought I'd have a family by now. And I don't. And you might think, "I thought I'd be married by now." So different situations, same kind of underlying idea.

Annie: That's what we're talking about. For anybody who knows how to want knows what it's like to want.

Jordan: Totally.

Annie: It's a different thing, but we all want.

Jordan: So anyways, all of that said, I remember that, especially after my second loss, I was feeling like I wanted to busy myself. I wanted to just distract myself, move forward. You know, try to almost not have to think about things.

And I reached out to a friend who actually walked through something very similar and I said, "Did you ever just feel like you wanted to fill your schedule and get really busy?" I just said, "I want to fill this emptiness." A lot of times we can feel this way after a breakup or after a relationship didn't quite work out. And she said, "Yeah, but you don't have to fill it though." She goes, "I really believe this is your boot camp to learn to be more still and present, which is something you will need in the next season when it finally comes."

Annie: Wow.

Jordan: And I was like, "Okay." But it was so empowering to me because my normal reaction is just like, "Fill your time with..." And I would have just filled it with work.

Annie: Me too.

Jordan: I would have just filled it with work. And I think we can do that. And it's like we can fill it but with really intentional things. So I started to look at this kind of as

like a boot camp season is where... I really, in the book, even encourage you to think about like, okay, maybe you're in your own boot camp season, maybe you just went through a breakup, maybe this like valley to waiting for the person or waiting for the next season has taken a lot longer than you thought.

So there was like five or six key things that I did during my boot camp season. One of which was learning new things and just getting really curious. So one of the things I did is I asked my dad to teach me to play poker-

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Jordan: ...which is so random. I just was like, "I think that'd be fun." So I asked him to teach me. He took me to like a random casino, taught me on the video machines so I can learn.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Jordan: And I won 100 bucks. I was like, "This is great."

Annie: You're like, "You know what? I'll just gamble."

Jordan: Like, "I love Jesus but I'm at the casino. It's fine." With my dad. But I learned how to do it. I thought that was fun.

Annie: I love it.

Jordan: And then I also learned more about gardening. I learned more about how tomatoes grow.

Annie: You learned smart things, Jordan. Like learn something new while you got the time.

Jordan: A big thing we talked about I think is like when we're preparing for the next season. And what I'm telling you is don't go read marriage books because we don't know what the next season is gonna look. But you are preparing by doing things that make you a more interesting and well-rounded person.

Anyways, learning new things was big for me. I learned more about women's health because I was curious about that. I learned more about gardening-

Annie: Oh my gosh, you've learned a ton.

Jordan: Yeah, oh my gosh.

Annie: I feel like you're a doctor in a lot of ways. Sometimes you post things, I'm like, "Oh, she's learned everything medically."

Jordan: I feel like I've nerded out. I look back I'm like, "Why did we ever need to learn what a parallelogram was? We could have learned what endocrine system was. What is going on?"

Annie: That's right.

Jordan: "We need to reframe school." Anyway. So all that said, learning new things is a great thing you can be doing in that season to make you more well-rounded, to fill your time with something meaningful that's going to be really intentional and keep you slow and present, not just like hustle the next work thing or the next accomplishment. So that's huge.

Another thing that we tried to do is I tried to find more hobbies because I tend to turn like anything I like doing it to work or just don't have hobbies because we always claim like, "I don't have time." So anyways-

Annie: Dear everyone, she did quotes, "I don't have time."

Jordan: Yeah, it's true.

Annie: I've actually stopped saying that. I've stopped saying that. I catch myself and I say, "I didn't choose to use my time." Because I'm like, "We all have the same 24 hours."

Jordan: It's true. So I started reading more because I write a lot but I wasn't reading much. So I just started finding fiction books again for the first time in a while. I started gardening. You know, I just started trying to pick up... I started doing some more decor stuff for my house and DIY projects.

I really found, especially if you're kind of busy type person, busy body, you appreciate something being productive. Finding hobbies that actually give you fruit to enjoy your labor. Not just like, "I'm doing something to then go put in a box." Like if you don't think you're going to display your painting, maybe don't paint as a hobby. Maybe garden so you can actually like see the fruit of that.

Annie: Or cross stitch.

Jordan: I love that.

Annie: Because I'm making something.

Jordan: Yes, you're making something that you can either gift or use or enjoy in your house or eat or whatever. So a hobby that produces some sort of fruit or outcome that feels meaningful to you.

Annie: That is really smart.

Jordan: It's huge. Learning something new. Serving. I had a friend that really in her single season... So she was single most of my marriage. She just got married about a year ago. And I remember a couple years ago, she was really struggling with loneliness. And she shared with me, she's like, "I started volunteering in a nursing home."

And I remember thinking, "You did? That's cool, but why?" She was like, "I just feel like I'm really struggling with loneliness and so I wanted to go serve those who are probably struggling with loneliness even more."

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Jordan: And I was like-

Annie: I wish I was that good of a person.

Jordan: I know. I was so touched by that though. I remember just thinking, like, "Wow, that's really intentional." And she said it was very healing for her, life-giving. It kind of gave her perspective on like, "Okay, I do have community and I do have companionship. That doesn't mean I quit longing for whatever feels out of reach, but I also still really can step into other people's loneliness. So that was really impactful for me.

So then after we went through our losses, and a little bit of time passed, and I was like, "I need a break. My brain and my heart need a break," but in that time of my boot camp I was really thinking about, like, "I feel like we need to serve."

Because sometimes when we are so focused on what's gone wrong in our life, we get really stuck in our head. And it's not that that's wrong, like we've gone through hard things, but it really helps to kind of get outside our world and serve someone else's world. So we started serving families in crisis and taking care of kids in our home. That felt really backwards.

And I remember when we first got asked, like, "Do you want to host a newborn?" I was like, "Not really." But also I felt like it was almost like, "I think I need to give."

Because I had a lot of anger toward newborns as if newborns did something wrong to me.

I remember when we said yes to the first newborn and first baby, I remember it was like God... I had done a lot of healing work at that point, it had been like a year later, but there was this corner of my heart that was still really hard and just bitter. And like, "What the heck?" And it was almost like He took his finger and touched that part of my heart and softened it just through serving.

Annie: Wow.

Jordan: And it's not like I did anything that spectacular. I just felt kind of compelled to say yes. And it was something that we had wanted to do earlier in our marriage. So it just kept coming back up and I was like, "Okay, fine, I hear you." And I had remembered what my friend told me about serving in her season of loneliness.

Annie: What's it been like to have kids in the house a lot?

Jordan: You know, at first it was like, "Well, I think we're a little nervous about it." But we've had some really great experiences. We've had some harder experiences, too. What I like about these families is a lot of times the stays are a little bit shorter than foster care. So we'll have kids for like four or five days sometimes.

Annie: Explain to me how you have a kid for four or five days. Is it between foster homes?

Jordan: Sometimes.

Annie: Okay.

Jordan: Think of them just kind of a respite type care.

Annie: Got it.

Jordan: But a lot of times, they're providing temporary reprieve to families in crisis. So maybe a mom is suddenly homeless because she lost her apartment. So now she's got a kid or two kids and she doesn't want to lose her kids. But she's got to figure out how to get back on her feet, find a job, find a home.

Annie: Got it.

Jordan: So sometimes you might have them for a month, you might have them for a couple weeks, or sometimes there's a medical crisis in the family or mom's having a mental health breakdown and needs to get taken care of. So it's them trying to be proactive.

The biggest difference between foster care and safe families is with foster care children are legally removed from the home and the courts place them in more long-term usually settings. Versus with safe families it's like they're kind of on the brink of probably maybe having to be removed but parents are trying to be proactive to just get the help they need.

Annie: Parents need some help.

Jordan: So parents will typically reach out to safe families and they'll say, "Hey, I need a hosting for two weeks while I go to orientation for my job because I don't have childcare" or "because I need to go to the hospital get treated for X, Y, or Z because my younger kid is sick," or whatever. So it's just coming alongside.

A lot of times single mothers or families who just don't have the resources or the community around them that a lot of us would have to say, "Hey, Mom, can you come watch the kids for a bit? I gotta go to an interview." They don't have anybody like that. That's where the downfall and kind of where it can suddenly spiral into something really unsafe. But that wasn't their original intent. So it's kind of stepping in and standing in the gap for those families.

And I felt like that was something we could do because it didn't feel like we were committing to raising a child for two years and then giving them back. But at the same time, we were able to step in. And a lot of times it's preventative.

Annie: And it fits your schedule where y'all can go. "Yeah, we're here this week. So yeah, if someone needs help this week, that's great. But I'm traveling to Nashville for four days and-

Jordan: I had a kid last week for... We had a one-year-old for five days, I want to say. It was just a quick hosting, but it met the need, and then we were able to come here. So it works with what we do, but it also allows us to serve people in our community. And it's really life-giving in many ways. It's challenging in others, but just serving.

And it doesn't have to be in the area of your pain. I'm not suggesting that everyone should do that. I'm just saying like finding a way to use your hands and get in the presence of people and making a difference that you can tangibly feel. And they make a difference in your life too. I don't know. It just brings a little bit of life to a season where you feel like, uh.

So serving, learning something new, finding a hobby that produces fruit. I think there's another one and I'm losing my train of thought on it. What is it? Oh, really taking care of yourself, too? Do I need to flip through chapters?

Another thing I did in my boot camp season was really focusing on like, How can I take care of my health more? Because I think that's something that can go by the wayside when we're busy, when we're distracted with a million different relationships and obligations and things like that. So it just kind of became a season to mother myself.

Annie: Wow.

Jordan: And I think that's a really odd way to say it in some ways. But I think about we sometimes... And I'm not saying you should get pedicures every other day. But I think thinking of if you're in a season of waiting, or in a season of unmet expectations, or going through after a breakup, using this as a boot camp to be like, How can I really not only develop myself and learn new things and grow, but also, what needs tending in my life?"

Maybe it's really developing and working on my marriage if it's not a single season for you. But if it's a single season for you, maybe it's really pouring into my health. Maybe I need to get to the bottom of what is this chronic pain I've had for so long? Or what is this acne I've struggled with? That was a big thing for me. And still it's an ongoing process.

But just the intentionality of saying, how can I tend to the garden of my life? What needs tending? And for you it may be a broken relationship with someone in your family. It might be a health thing for you. But actually really tending to those things that maybe you've kind of just let go because you're so focused on the plant that you want to grow, that it's like, There's some weeds over here I need taken care of.

Annie: I love that you didn't lead with change your body or change something. Maybe you need to go the gym. You're not saying that all. You're saying, Is something hurting in your body? Fix it. Is there something you've always had questions about in a pedicure? Are there ways you can care for yourself?

I think a lot of times it's that revenge body conversation of no matter what you didn't get, you're like, Well, I can be hotter. So take that world. And it's like, well, to what end? To what end?

Jordan: Right.

Annie: Your motivation is not gonna let you keep the thing you think you're about to get and you're not gonna get what you really want.

Jordan: Right. I really think it comes down to like... In the book, I use a lot of garden metaphors and stuff because I really had to learn, especially as an achiever and a business owner, and a go-getter, like life is really more like a garden to tend than a game to win. And we treat it like a game to win. So even what you were saying, I'm like, "Well, I'm going to be hotter," or "I'm going to lose 20 pounds or whatever," okay, that's great.

Annie: Fine. But...

Jordan: But is that really what needs tending? Maybe you even need to nourish yourself and try to heal from the inside out something that maybe... You know, we live in a world full of stress and toxins and things that can just weigh on our bodies, not because we're doing anything wrong, just because we live in a broken world.

Just the awareness of "have I maybe been through a really hard season and that's taken a toll on me physically and emotionally? How can I tend to that?" Maybe it's going to therapy. You know what I mean? But just all of these investments into really growing and developing and becoming a more well-rounded, deeper-rooted, godly woman.

That will prepare you for the next season inevitably. It doesn't mean you need to be taking marriage courses. It doesn't mean you read parenting books. You know what I mean? That's going to make you a better mom or a better wife or a better friend. And it's not fun in the moment, but really looking at like this as a boot camp. And maybe your boot camp is longer than you'd like it to be, but God knows how long we need to be prepared.

Annie: Right.

Jordan: And just like trying to trust that can be hard, but I think it's also really life-giving and it gives some purpose to a time that feels kind of pointless.

[00:38:32] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting one more time to tell you about another amazing partner, the new movie from the Kendrick Brothers and Kirk Cameron called [Lifemark](#). It's opening in theaters everywhere on September 9th. So coming up here in the next couple of weeks. I get to watch it a little early and really enjoyed it.

In *Lifemark*, the main character is named David. He's an 18-year-old living a pretty typical high school life, sports, friends, school. David's comfortable world gets turned upside down when his birth mother unexpectedly reaches out to him in hopes of meeting him for the first time since the day he was born. It's a beautiful adoption story.

And with the encouragement of his adoptive parents, David goes on a life altering journey to make sense of the stories from his past. The movie asks the question, how many lives can one decision and one choice impact? I bet you can guess the answer.

Inspired by a really sweet True Story, *Lifemark* celebrates adoption, reconciliation, and love. If you're looking for a movie that is hopeful and explore so many relational dynamics in really interesting ways, make your plans to see *Lifemark*.

Now, I will say that if you have kids on the younger side of my MiniBFFs, I'd recommend parents watching this one first to be sure you're ready to have the conversations it might provoke. Since it's based on a true story and involves the really complex decisions people make around adoption, I just want you to get a quick heads up about that.

So go see *Lifemark* in theaters nationwide beginning September 9th. You can learn more about *Lifemark* and get your tickets today at lifemarkmovie.com. That's lifemarkmovie.com.

Sponsor: And I've got one last incredible partner to share with you. It's our [Jinjer Essential Oils](#). Y'all, I love using natural products whenever I can. You know this about me. Let's keep any harmful chemicals off our bodies and out of the air. And that's why I've been loving Jinjer. That's Jinjer with two Js essential oil.

Jinjer is a high quality, 100% natural essential oil made from the ginger root. It's free of micro impurities and it comes pre mix with carrier oil so it's safe to use directly on your skin. Their awesome, rejuvenating self-care kit has everything you need for a little attention to your own well-being even in the middle of your busiest days.

I love having it in the diffuser in the podcast studio. It smells so good, and keeps my brain energized and focused. Plus, since it's a compact bottle, it's so easy to take on the go. And the little dropper in the lid helps me not to make a mess. Bless. I would never. Well, you know I would. Trust me, I know you'll love Jinjer essential oil as much as I do.

In this month only, they're having a summer sale blowout, plus my friends get an extra 20% off your purchases. But to get this limited-time offer, you have to visit my special URL, jinjer.us/thatsoundsfun. That's jinjer.us/thatsoundsfun. Don't miss out on the summer sale blowout, plus get an extra 20% off. Go to jinjer.us/thatsoundsfun.

And don't forget we've gathered up all the links to these partners, to the transcript of this episode, to a spot where you can rate or review the show, and where you can sign up for the AFD Week in Review. They're all in the treasure trove of the show notes below. So be sure you take a look.

And now back to finish up our conversation with Jordan Lee Dooley.

[00:41:45] <music>

Annie: In the book, you talk about changing our question from why me too, why not me?

Jordan: Yeah.

Annie: Will you talk about that for a minute? Because I think that our whole lives we're going to have almost. This isn't like something we get over.

Jordan: Right, right. No, it's true. I even talked about, you know, sometimes we look at other people who seem to have it all and it's like, here's the thing. That's probably just a good season that's not gonna last long. And you also don't know the whole picture.

Annie: You don't know the whole story ever, ever, ever.

Jordan: So this whole question of why me I think it's a really natural question to ask when we feel like life has not gone our way, in one way or another, in one area or another. And I remember I was really asking that and wrestling with that in different seasons.

And I happened to be reading this book. It's called *A Grace Disguised*. It was a great fun. It was a book on grief specifically. It was tragic. I mean, the author had lost his wife, his mom, and his daughter all in the same day in a tragic car accident. I'm like, "Oh, my gosh."

But anyway, it was interesting because in one of... So I had a conversation with a friend and I was telling her how he's just wrestling with why me. This is so unfair. I

don't understand." And she was kind of like, "I totally get that." Very empathetic. And she's like, "But also part of me is like, why not you? You're so articulate, you're able to communicate feelings to other people that have walked through things like this, have hardened." She was like, "I just really believe this isn't pointless." She was being very encouraging.

And it was a couple of months after some of the intensity of my grief. So I think if she just said that earlier, I'd have been like, "You should leave now." Because I had to process and I was able to digest that. But it was interesting.

Just shortly after she left, I went back to the book I was reading before bed, and the chapter was literally about that. He basically said, "I want to talk to a man who basically started asking the reverse question of, well, why not me?" And then he said he wasn't a fatalistic person. He wasn't asking that kind of a fatalistic question. He was kind of giving perspective of like, Am I better than maybe a poor baby born to someone on the other side of the world? Did I get to choose all the good things in my life?

Basically he was trying to say like, up until this point in my life so much had been good. I could also ask, why was it so good for me when someone else's childhood was so hard for them?

Annie: That's it.

Jordan: And the quote in there is a lot more articulate than what I'm saying but his whole idea around it was like, you know, so often it's almost like when we ask that question, it's subtly with the undertone of like-

Annie: I deserve.

Jordan: ...I deserve everything to work out just how I think it should.

Annie: That's what God and I wrestle. When that comes up to why not me, what actually I'm asking is, why do I assume I deserve something?

Jordan: I want to find that quote. Can you help me with the book? Let me see if I can find it.

Annie: Have your own copy of your book.

Jordan: It was so fascinating because I just remember-

Annie: Your nails match your book. Beautiful, by the way.

Jordan: I heard that was very Annie Down for me. I didn't know that you did that. And then someone DM'd me, they're like, "This looks like an Annie Downs' feel." I was like, "Wait, what? Are we like soul sisters?"

Annie: Yes. Dah, we know that already. We've known that for years. But yes, whenever a new book comes out, I get nails to match my book.

Jordan: Oh my gosh, that's such a fun idea. I thought it was like being so extra doing that. But then when I heard someone else did, I was like, "Okay, I feel better about that."

Annie: The Yes And is true. You are being extra doing it but also it's awesome. So who cares?

Jordan: Oh my gosh, I'm obsessed. Okay, well, that's really encouraging.

Here's the quote. So it says, "I once heard someone ask the opposite question, "Why not me?" It was not a fatalistic question because he is not a fatalistic person. He asked it after his wife died of cancer. He could no more explain why his life had turned bad than he could explain why his life had been so good up until that point.

Did he choose to grow up in a stable family? Did he have control over where he was born, to who he was born, or when he was born? Did he determine his height, weight, intelligence and appearance? Was he a better person than some baby born to a poor family in Bangladesh?

He concluded that much of life just seems to happen. It is beyond our control. "Why me?" seems to be the wrong question to ask. "Why not me?" is closer to the mark once we consider how most people live. Can I expect to live an entire lifetime free of disappointment and suffering, free of loss and pain? The very expectation strikes me not only as unrealistic but also arrogant."

Annie: Wow.

Jordan: And I just remember being like, "Okay."

Annie: Right. You're right. I know.

Jordan: It's true.

Annie: I feel the same way. When I was reading that part, I just thought, "Man, that is the thing that is the most convicting between me and God is when I go, 'why did that work out? Why did it da da da?'" And I always go, "Well, why not? Why do you feel like you deserve exactly what you want?"

Jordan: Yeah, it's true.

Annie: Now that the book's been out, how's it been, people responding to it?

Jordan: Oh, my gosh, it's been wild. We were actually just out to dinner last night, and a gal came up to me and she was just like, "I read your book, and I give to my sisters and my sisters gave it to all their friends."

Annie: Oh, Jordan!

Jordan: It's sweet to hear those real in person stories. Because you can get so focused on all the things you have to do for it. And I don't know, just to hear the stories of people being like, "This totally changed my perspective. I'm really determined to like my life and to do what I can to embrace this season, even if I don't love it, or even if I've been throwing a curveball or two, or even if I'm dealing with some bigger expectations in my relationships."

And it's been encouraging to hear that and just to know, like, Okay, this was not a mistake. Because in a way, because the book didn't start off with this intention... Like when I started off, I was on top of the world, you know?

Annie: Yeah.

Jordan: So I'm like, "This just feels like a total 180 to know, like, Okay, God had provision over this. And there's such a reason this had to come out now is just so encouraging."

Annie: It's really exciting. I can't wait till six months from now when small groups have gone through it and when book clubs have gone through it, and when everybody's getting to talk through this with other people. This is one of those that as I was reading, I was like, "I want eight of us reading this."

And so for our friends listening who have book clubs, this is a great book club book. Our book club switches between fiction and nonfiction. And so this is a great nonfiction option for book club I think.

Jordan: Absolutely. It allows you regardless... like you can share this with so many different women in different seasons, and people in different seasons because we all have some sort of unmet expectation. And I think it's actually really healthy. Whether it's a group of maybe other singles or other women walking through some other kind of experience, it's helpful to be in a group of people who are in the same season.

But it can also be really refreshing to walk through this with women who you felt like are a season ahead of you, or who have it figured out because then you start hearing their stories and it's, "Oh." Because we compare the one area we feel behind. And then when you start putting all the pieces together, it's like, man, they may feel behind compared to you in their career, even though that may be ahead in their relationship, or in their motherhood or in this, that or the other thing, or their health journey or their, you know, whatever. So it's helpful to kind of get that full picture. And we also have a book club guide for it. I'll make sure to give you the link to that.

Annie: Yes, yes, yes. Is it on your website?

Jordan: Yeah.

Annie: Okay, good. We'll link in the show notes, but also people can go find it. I'm in a mastermind. And one of the things we all did in our last gathering is we picked what we call the queen, not a friend of me, but a queen of someone. We went, "If I could shape my life exactly like someone else, it would be that person."

And the reason we did it was to go, Yeah, but they don't have everything you think they have. Like we weren't tearing people down. We chose people within our friend group of going, "Man, I love how she does her social media, her body is awesome, her work is awesome, her relationships seem awesome." And then we go, "No, what's it really like?" Well, here's what it's really like. You're allowed to have a queen, someone that you look at and go, "Man, it looks like, everything's easy. That's never the reality. And also, what can I learn from them?"

I mean, it just feels like... what is it that Furtick says? We compare our behind-the-scenes to everyone else's highlight reel.

Jordan: Right. Yeah, it's true.

Annie: And that is like embrace your almost.

Jordan: It's true. I think we compare certain areas, like you said, without the whole picture. Actually, I wrote about this in the book, but I remember it was shortly after I went

through my second loss, I believe, and I just had a friend... and I had also had a bunch of business setbacks that year because of COVID. It was really like loss, COVID, loss, lots of uncertainty. And I was like, "My brain can't handle all this." And especially after just being on a track record of like one, two, three, everything working out.

Annie: And then the world stops-

Jordan: So I was like, "I don't know how to process this."

Annie: ...and in your personal life.

Jordan: And my personal life. Yeah, it was a lot. But anyway. And I think a lot of us experienced that too in many ways. Because personal hardships don't stop when the world has a global crisis. Right?

Annie: Yeah.

Jordan: But anyway I remember it was like a few months after that and I was just processing the first half of the year not going at all how I thought. And I had two friends within like a few hours or a couple days reach out to me basically be like... One was like telling me about some big wins she had professionally and then the other one was telling me she was expecting and I was like, "Ah." And I just was so frustrated with it. And I remember thinking like, "Gosh, this is such a reminder of what's not working out in my life and what's painful."

And then I remember all of a sudden realizing it come me back to those like... I don't know. I guess my point is I remember thinking, it could be a reminder of what's painful, but it can also be a reminder of what's possible. It can be both.

Annie: Wow.

Jordan: And then at the same time, I was also struggling with just thinking like, you know, I was behind or this other thing. And then I had this idea to actually text some of the friends that I was comparing myself to, or just different women in my life, even if they weren't the ones I was comparing myself to, and ask if they ever felt behind compared to me. I was just curious.

I was like, "Hey, I've been feeling behind compared to other people. I'm curious if you've ever felt behind compared to me because we're all doing that." And they were like, "I have three kids, but I have never worked a job that feels fulfilling to me. You have an incredible career and impact." And then someone else was like,

"You know, especially when it comes to marriage, I haven't been married yet, but..."

It was just fascinating to be like, There's people that are doing this with me too.

Annie: We're all doing it.

Jordan: So why am I wasting my energy? And it's still a natural reaction that we can feel that way, occasionally, but it's just helpful to kind of be like, "I want to test my hypothesis, not just hypothesize that maybe people feel that way." It was really fascinating to be like, "Oh, so maybe it's actually just that we're all in different places."

Annie: What did we not say about *Embrace Your Almost* that you want to make sure we say?

Jordan: Gosh, that's a good question. I think the last thing we could talk briefly about is knowing when it's time to let go of a good thing.

Annie: Ooh, okay. Tell me that.

Jordan: I don't mean like giving up on something.

Annie: Certainly.

Jordan: I talked about how, sometimes when life doesn't go our way or we have an unmet expectation or a setback or heartbreak, it kind of pauses everything because we kind of were like, "Wait." And like I mentioned in the beginning, that can be an opportunity even if it feels like an obstacle.

And what I think I learned is sometimes it's an opportunity... Like adversity can really create clarity. And I think it's an opportunity to really consider what is it that's right for me and what isn't right for me in this season. And sometimes that means you look at something...

Like, for example, in our experience, especially after our losses and after a lot of trying to reflect, I'm like, "Where do we go from here?" We had bought this home a couple years prior that was kind of like going to be our family home. It was gonna be our dream home. We had this whole vision of what we're gonna do with it.

And as we kind of came into this place of clarity of like, No, our priority is focusing on our health and healing and simplifying, and this home is stressful

because it's always under construction. It's on three acres of constant maintenance. Like it was actually becoming a money pit and a stressor. And I'm like, "I want an HGTV," but I had this idea of this glamorous, you know, it's gonna be this like Chip and Joanna Gaines. It was not.

We had to make the really hard decision to release that. And it was hard. We ended up selling the home but it took us several months to get to that decision, even though we kind of knew in our core like this is something that needs to be let go of because it's really not helping us move closer to where we really want to focus on.

But it was a good thing. And it was something that we had a dream and a vision for. We're gonna paint it white and put a front porch on it and redo the kitchen. And we only got to a couple of the projects that we wanted to do. So it felt like we were leaving the vision half complete.

Annie: Wow.

Jordan: But we knew like just because it's a good thing doesn't mean it's the right thing in this season. We can always renovate a home in the future. So we really had to kind of come back to like, what's the best and the most important thing to focus on in this season? Is it my health? Is it our marriage? Is it my family relationships? Is it something else? Is it my career getting to a stable place? Is it paying off student debt?

Like prioritizing what really matters most in the season or what needs to be the priority in this season. How can I make sure all my other responsibilities which we often call priorities, but all the other responsibilities really fall in line with that and support that?

And if there's something we were like, "Oh, this is just kind of making it prickly, this is making it hard, this is adding stress, this is distracting me from the thing I know I need to be paying attention to," maybe it's something to let go. Or maybe it's something to say, "Okay, I need to take a step back from that."

It can be hard when it feels like you're letting go of a dream or good thing. But I think sometimes the disruptions in life or the chaos that ensues from something going sideways, honestly, makes us rethink a lot of the things we just kind of we're rolling with.

So I think I guess my best piece of advice and encouragement is don't be afraid to reevaluate all that you're doing, why you're doing it, how you're going about it. And

if there's something that needs to change, or maybe be let go or put on pause even if it feels like, "But it's a good thing. Why would I do that?"

Annie: That is hard, though. Oh, it's so hard.

Jordan: It's so hard. It was so funny. This is how hard it is. We kind of both knew we probably need to sell the home and just simplify our lives in the season. But we kind of went back and forth a lot.

And then we had a realtor and we talked with them a bit. Then finally we kind of decided, "Okay, we're gonna go forward with." He comes in, puts the sign in our yard, didn't actually put it on like the internet marketplace, whatever. So it wasn't live yet but the sign was in our yard. For the first 24 hours before he even made the sale live, he was getting texts from people. I even got a DM from someone who was like, "Hi, I think you live in this house and I saw it and I was like, "That is creepy."

And it was the most quaint little beautiful little house inside. So I was just like, Oh, it's so hard." So anyways, we put the sign out the road. And then all of a sudden I was like, "Never mind. I don't think I want to sell it. Take the sign down the road." And my poor husband was like, "Oh my gosh, you're driving me crazy." Our poor realtor... we just kept going back and forth.

So we took the sign out and I had to like noodle on it for another week even though I knew what the right decision was. I mean, it's not always like, "Oh, that's not the right thing. I'm gonna let it go." It can be a rustle and it can be... And I had to talk to 15 different people about it and run it by.

You know, it was a process. And sometimes that's what it looks like. You kind of wrestle to the point where you finally surrendered the thing you know you need to surrender. But that's human. So it's supposed to be hard. I think if it's easy it might not be the right decision. You know what I mean?

Annie: That's right.

Jordan: Sometimes it is blatantly easy and you're like, "Okay, I've been needing to shut this down or whatever." But a lot of times I think we assume that if it doesn't feel easy it must be the wrong decision, when in reality a lot of times it's like the hard thing is the right decision.

Annie: It's true. Man, I can't wait for all of our friends who don't have *Embrace Your Almost* yet to get it. This is so good, Jordan.

Jordan: Thanks.

Annie: This is an important one. Okay, the last question I always ask. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Jordan: Okay, riding on a hot air balloon.

Annie: What? No one has ever said that. riding on a hot air balloon?

Jordan: And I just did it for the first time.

Annie: And did you love it?

Jordan: At first, no. We ran into a tree upon take off.

Annie: No.

Jordan: It was traumatizing. I was like, "What are we doing? Get me out of this thing." But it was incredible.

Annie: What made you get in it?

Jordan: I don't know. It's something I've always kind of wanted to do. And we were in Arizona. It was a sunset tour and we were recording my book trailer and I was like, "Let's do that for the book trailer but really it was because I wanted to do it. I was like, "We'll film it." But it was awesome.

I mean, it was sunrise over the mountains in Arizona. We saw Lake Pleasant out in the distance. The takeoff was a little stressful. But then once the basket stopped rocking and I thought I was gonna die, once I got to the point where everything stabilized, it was incredible. So beautiful. So just peaceful up there, quiet.

And then our landing was actually not as traumatizing as I thought it would be. Because the landing they don't have like brakes. Like you can be smashed into the ground.

Annie: That's what I thought. I just thought, "How does it not turn over every time?"

Jordan: Well, that's what I was a little bit worried about. It was just Matt and I in the basket with the pilot. So I think maybe because there wasn't a ton of people in there it was a little smoother for us. But yeah, it was incredible.

Annie: It was awesome.

Jordan: So I'm like, "We need to do this again."

Annie: Do you buckle up in there?

Jordan: No.

Annie: Oh. You're just freewheeling in a basket.

Jordan: Yeah. Truly.

Annie: Geez

Jordan: You're just like, "I'm at the mercy of the wind." But they know what they're doing. I asked him. It was so funny. We were driving to the location in the van with our path pilot and I'm asking him all about his qualifications.

Annie: Yeah, for sure.

Jordan: I'm like grilling him. But no, it was awesome. And it's so funny because everyone in my family was shocked that we did it because like three months prior to that we had a hot air balloon crash in our front yard.

Annie: No.

Jordan: So they were like, "You did that after you saw people crash?" I was like, "Yeah." And we told the hot air balloon pilots that when we went to the location. They were like, "Oh, that wasn't a crash. That's just a landing. Sometimes we land in a neighborhoods."

Annie: What did you do when they landed in your yard? Were you like, "Is everybody alright?"

Jordan: Oh, my gosh, every neighbor was out just watching.

Annie: Oh, I'm sure.

Jordan: And you hear this like roaring sound. We were sitting in our living room and we were like, "What is that?" We thought it was thunder or something. And then I opened the door and I was like, "Oh my gosh." There was this massive green and

blue like hot air balloon still kind of inflated but laying, oh my gosh, on the road. I felt so bad.

The one thing that made me nervous about the landing was when I watched that landing, they had landed but there was like an older woman in the basket and they tipped the basket over and she fell on the pavement with her wrist. And I'm like, "That probably just broke her wrist. Oh my gosh."

Annie: Someone broke her wrist because-

Jordan: Because the dang hot air balloon landed in our neighborhood. I wanted to run out there but they knew what they were doing. They were just like, "No we're good. We're good." They weren't completely unfaded.

Annie: Did they take backup and go?

Jordan: No. The van came and picked them up. They deflated the whole thing.

Annie: There were victims up in your neighborhood.

Jordan: In front of our house. Not like down the road, in our yard.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Jordan: I was like, "Well, do you guys want any lemonade? How are you doing?" Because they were just standing there for like 20 minutes.

Annie: It's like they have a tracker on it. Wherever it lands the van just goes there.

Jordan: Yeah, they do it. They use an iPad.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Jordan: And said the average flight that he does is about seven miles. Ain't that fascinating? We went over the highway and I was like, "Oh my gosh, if we crash here now, like this is so bad. We were so high up.

Annie: I bet everyone driving was like, "Oh." Loved it.

Jordan: And there were so many hot air balloons around. So you just feel like you're... It's the coolest thing. So it was worth landing into the tree.

Annie: Good answer. Really good answer. Thanks for doing this today. I love you, friend.

Jordan: Oh, thanks for having me.

Annie: I'm grateful for you.

Jordan: I love you as well. I appreciate you.

[00:59:12] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, isn't she just the best? She's the best. I love her so much. Hey, be sure to grab your copy of *Embrace Your Almost* and follow her on social media. Tell her thank you so much for being on the show.

She is such an inspirational follow on Instagram, y'all. She's one of my very favorites. And she makes a lot of reels. So if you like reels, the girl is getting good at them.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, maybe some reels, on Twitter or 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. Well today you know what sounds fun to me is laying on my couch. I sing my little knee after a little meniscus disc surgery and resting. And my parents are in town. So that's my today.

Y'all have a great week. We'll see you back here on Thursday with one of our favorite novelist, one of our most frequent guests on the pod, Charles Martin.

And I gave y'all the warning on Insta story a few weeks ago. Grab his book, *The Record Keeper*, and go ahead and read it because we're gonna talk. We're really talking about the book. It's kind of like a book club thing.

But if you haven't read the book yet, you're gonna love the conversation. But if you have time to read *The Record Keeper* between now and Thursday, do it. It's so good. Trust me you can read this novel very fast. It's amazing.

All right. Y'all have a great week. We'll see you on Thursday.