

[00:00:00] <music>

Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today. Get ready, my friends in the U.S., for a holiday weekend. We are happy to celebrate that with you as well. Hey, make sure you listen to this whole show because we've got some really fun stuff to tell you at the end, and every word that our guest says is brilliant. So we got a great show in store. I hope you'll stick around to the very end.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I got to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Athletic Greens](#). Okay, since summer fun is getting started for a lot of you technically this weekend, yo summer, you are here, it is definitely that time of year when some of our healthy rhythms start going to the wayside. Well, I'm all about enjoying yourself, you know this, and enjoying what you eat on vacation. There is an easy way to maintain a foundation of nutrition.

AG1 by Athletic Greens is such a simple way to incorporate the nutrients you need. Even when you're out of your routine or traveling, it's hard to keep track of all the vitamins and supplements we need to take, right? So when it comes to things that will help us prioritize our health, it is easy as adding one scoop of AG1 powder to cold water instead of keeping up with multiple different products.

Every scoop is packed with 75 vitamins, minerals, and whole Foods-sourced ingredients of the highest quality. They give us major benefits like gut and mood support, boosted energy, and even healthier-looking skin, hair, and nails.

Here's what I love about AG1 too. It is delivered like clockwork every month, so it is super easy to make it a daily habit. You don't have to set a reminder to order it or worry about running out. Plus the single-serving travel packs, listen, I live by these. The single-serving travel pack can be thrown in your purse or your carry-on or onto the bus when you're out on tour. It is truly the healthiest thing you can do in under a minute. With AG1, being good friends to our bodies each day is really that simple.

If you're looking for an easier way to take supplements, AG1 is giving you a free one-year supply of vitamin D, let's go, and five free travel packs with your first purchase. Listen, those first five are going to get you somewhere. You're going to love them. So go to athleticgreens.com/soundsfun. That's athleticgreens.com/soundsfun to try it out.

Intro: Today on the show I get to talk with my friend Pastor Kyle Idleman. Kyle is the senior pastor of Southeast Christian Church, one of the largest churches in America, just north of us here in Louisville. He and his wife, Desirae have four children, live on a farm where he does approximately no farming.

But he's also a bestselling author of several books. I've loved the ones I have read. And the latest, which we're going to talk about today, *When Your Way Isn't Working: Finding Purpose and Contentment Through Deep Connection with Jesus*, it comes out next week on June 6th. It comes out really soon. If you are stuck or exhausted or feel like you're failing over and over, it's something which I think is all of us at some point, this conversation is for you.

When our way isn't working, we've been conditioned to Google our way out of it. But today Kyle talks about what it looks like to actually find contentment in the Lord. This is so important, y'all. Going into the summer where things maybe slow down and your rhythms are a little different, and I don't know about you, but I kind of do some life assessment at this time of year and thinking about where things go for the rest of the year. And this conversation really helped shift some things for me, and I wonder and hope it will for you as well. So here is my conversation with our friend and Pastor Kyle Idleman.

[00:03:25] <music>

Annie: Kyle Idleman, welcome to That Sounds Fun.

Ptr. Kyle: Annie, it's great to be with you.

Annie: What a treat!

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah.

Annie: Did you just drive down today to do a bunch of things like this?

Ptr. Kyle: I came in last night because the traffic between Nashville and Louisville can be rough. But, yeah, I'm excited to be here.

Annie: Okay, well, I'm very grateful. I want to tell you this. I'm also just before we start recording, but I want the world to hear it. I've spoken twice at Southeast at women's events or other kinds of things. And when we were talking about you coming in, my COO, Ashley, said, "They have some of the greatest hospitality we've experienced."

Ptr. Kyle: Oh, that's awesome.

Annie: And that's true. I mean, we remember that stuff. So thank you.

Ptr. Kyle: I take no credit for it, but they do a great job. I love that.

Annie: I think you can take a little credit for it because if you didn't care about hospitality, the people who serve with you wouldn't care about hospitality.

Ptr. Kyle: Okay, well, I'll take a little. I'll take a little.

Annie: I'll let you take some credit.

Ptr. Kyle: Thank you.

Annie: As your team listens to this, were they to listen, they can all hear that we-

Ptr. Kyle: They are awesome.

Annie: Even those of us who tra... And you know this. You travel a ton. Even those of us who travel a ton, we remember. We don't forget the experiences we have in places. And there's places we go back and places we do not go back. Right?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah.

Annie: So thank you for how your church welcomes people.

Ptr. Kyle: That's awesome. Absolutely.

Annie: It's awesome. How long have you been at Southeast?

Ptr. Kyle: I have been there for right at 20 years.

Annie: Wow.

Ptr. Kyle: I was a church planter in California, and then end of 2002 moved to Louisville to be a teaching pastor. And then like four or five years ago, stepped into the senior pastor role.

Annie: What do you know at 20 years of ministry that you didn't know at 10?

Ptr. Kyle: I know that there's a lot I don't know. The more you do it, the more comfortable you become with we don't exactly know what we're doing, and there's a different level of joy when you recognize what Paul talks about. You know, His strength is made perfect in our weakness. That feels so much more freeing now than 20 years ago where I thought a lot more of it depended on me than it really did.

Annie: A lot more rode on our backs. Yeah, it really does.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah. I talk about this moment where I realized that I was... We were moving out of a house and I was pushing a really heavy desk out of an office. And at the time, my four-year-old son came and started helping me push the desk and he got frustrated with me because I was in his way. He thought he was pushing the desk. And that moment for me kind of that helped me recognize I'm doing this sometimes as a pastor leader where I feel like I'm pushing the desk, but really I don't have much to do with it. That feels very freeing. When I was younger, I carried too much of that weight.

Annie: Yeah. You were the four-year-old. Me too.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, I was the four-year-old.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Ptr. Kyle: Exactly.

Annie: Okay, so you're in Louisville.

Ptr. Kyle: Mm-hmm.

Annie: We're talking just months after the Asbury outpouring.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah.

Annie: What do you think?

Ptr. Kyle: Well, I-

Annie: Do you want to talk about this? Is that okay?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, let's talk about it. No, it was great. In fact, we just had the president of Asbury come speak to our staff about some of the things that he learned as far as specifically Gen Z and how the Holy Spirit showed up there to bring peace and hope.

Annie: And they seem to steward it so well.

Ptr. Kyle: He really did. They found kind of that right tension between letting it be a little bit messy while still really trying to provide the right kind of support for it. Early on, like the first week of it, I thought, I really want to go check it out, but it was a really busy week. So I went to bed on a Saturday night. I was supposed to preach Sunday

morning. I went to bed on a Saturday night and I said, "God, if you want me to go check this out, then wake me up before 3:00 a.m. and I'll go."

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Ptr. Kyle: "I'll just get in the car and go." Because I wasn't going to have any time to do it. So I tried to help my side of it by taking a little melatonin and sleeping through the night. Like at 2:40 something-

Annie: No.

Ptr. Kyle: I woke up and so I grabbed my 18-year-old son. We hopped in the car. He hadn't gone to bed yet, so we hopped in the car and drove to Asbury. It's about an hour from my house. And got there around 3:30 in the morning. And it was really powerful.

Even when I came in there, a few people came and said hi to me. We're pretty connected to the school. They were letting the students own it, which I thought was beautiful. And there was repentance and reconciliation, which I, you know, for me as a pastor, those are the kinds of things you're looking for in those moments. And-

Annie: Right. We're not looking for volume.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And you know, it was the opposite of performance, right? It felt very pure that way. So, yeah, it was very encouraging. We had a number of students that were very much impacted by it too.

Annie: What do we do now? I mean, in the middle of Christian culture, that was the thing for a month. And I so honor how they stewarded it, that it was not live streamed and it was not... It was like, "If you can get here, you can experience it. But this isn't a thing we're making all over the internet." And yet it still managed to do that. And then there were these little offshoots everywhere, and a lot of... We had one at Cross Point where there was a service with a bunch of Gen Z and I mean, they prayed at Cross Point for hours one night.

Ptr. Kyle: Oh, that's awesome.

Annie: But what now? What do we do when stuff like that happens?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, I think that's a great question. One of the things that we talked about was just trying to... the language we use is "catch the wind", right? Like we can't create the wind, we can't make it happen. But when the Holy Spirit moves, we want to receive

it. You know, we want to be ready. So we've tried to together create some opportunities to catch that wind. You know, we've tried to share different stories.

But inevitably, what I think or what other people think it should look like, the next thing should look like, I think the danger in that is you try to control it and make it fit. And we have a lot of people in church who wanted to do that. Like, "Okay, we need to do that here."

Annie: Oh, people everywhere.

Ptr. Kyle: "We need to do it here." And like, Well, I would love that, but we're not going to... You know, the minute you try to turn it into a formula and program it, you've kind of missed what was so powerful about it. So our heart is just to pray for more of it. You know, God, please do more of... it might look different, might be more start, more personally, but please do more of what you're doing there.

Annie: Do outpourings like that end because something went wrong?

Ptr. Kyle: I tend to not think that they end.

Annie: Hey.

Ptr. Kyle: I tend to think that, you know, it's a little bit of the sour seed idea that there are seeds that get planted and some of them really grow and go. And if you study some of the revivals over the last hundred years, specifically at Asbury, over the years, you get to see it. You just don't see it in the immediate months, right? Like you start hearing stories of somebody who was there and here's how they were impacted. So, you know, I'm having faith that it's not over. It's just different.

Annie: We work a lot with Christian Appalachian Project, with CAP, and they do a town in Kentucky. So when I think of Kentucky, I think of really low-income areas, I think of Louisville that has really wealthy patches, and then Asbury. Right? So what is God doing in Kentucky? What is Kentucky with the Lord?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, you know, I moved from Los Angeles to Kentucky, right?

Annie: Right.

Ptr. Kyle: So there was a little-

Annie: Very similar.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, yeah. A little bit of cultural whiplash there. People like to say when the world ends, you want to live in Kentucky because everything happens 20 years later there. You know, there's a little bit of that. It's not as true in Louisville, certainly. But what I see in Kentucky and in Louisville specifically is that, you know, it's a big enough city but there's a lot of small towns. Meaning like if you talk to somebody in Louisville and you say, you know, "Where did you go to school?" They'll tell you their high school.

Annie: Yeah, yeah.

Ptr. Kyle: That's how they tend to connect to other people. You know, they've lived there for a long time. So helping there to be a spiritual renewal, spiritual revival that begins in homes and families and in Kentucky or in Louisville, where I'm at specifically, that's what we are praying for working towards, and what we get to see a lot of.

Annie: Yeah. I think it is so interesting to pay attention to all of that the longer you're in a place. To go like, "There's a reason I'm here and God is doing something here He isn't doing in other places."

Ptr. Kyle: Yes.

Annie: It is fascinating. Well, Pastor of the pod, Kevin Queen, how are y'all friends?

Ptr. Kyle: You know, over the years, Kevin and I have just connected in different ways. We have a lot in common: churches we pastor, our kids are similar ages, different challenges we've had. We both became senior pastors at a similar time. We were both teaching pastors for a long time. So, you know, we just have a lot of overlap, a lot of parallels.

Annie: Are we allowed to say you're coming to Cross Point?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah. Yeah, I think so. Well, I don't know that he's announced it, but I don't think it's a secret.

Annie: I am thrilled that you're coming to preach this summer.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, I'm excited to.

Annie: That's awesome. Thank you for coming.

Ptr. Kyle: I can't wait. I love Cross Point.

Annie: What a gift! It's so fun in the summers when pastors share each other's worlds with each other. It's one of my favorite things.

Ptr. Kyle: And, you know, for us, it's so encouraging for me to be able to go and see, Oh, wow, look what God's doing here. And it's inspiring and also challenging. It helps you be more open to some things He wants to do where you're at.

Annie: Are you going to get some time off as well?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, at the end of the summer.

Annie: Okay, great. Okay great.

Ptr. Kyle: At the end of the summer.

Annie: One of the things you write about in *When Your Way Isn't Working* is you took a three-month sabbatical. Originally supposed to be one month, then it ended up being three. How do you not get bored? Clearly I've never done three months. So how do you not get bored?

Ptr. Kyle: Well, it was purposeful, right? So one of the things that I was encouraged to focus on from other people who had done this is, hey, take a month to rest. You know, take a month to receive. Where are some areas you want to grow? How do you want to hear from God? And then take a month to reenter and dream again.

Annie: So the first month, rest. Just do nothing. Produce nothing.

Ptr. Kyle: Produce nothing. What you said there is a big deal. Like, don't focus on output, just focus on input. My life was and can be really out of balance where I say yes to everything that's output and don't have a lot of inputs. And having a month where you're not on stage, you know, you're not behind a microphone, you're not working on a deadline, it's really good for your soul. So focusing on input for a month was a big deal.

Annie: We shut down here for the month of July. Everybody gets time off-

Ptr. Kyle: You do it every year?

Annie: Yeah.

Ptr. Kyle: Oh, wow.

Annie: Yeah. And I'm gone for the whole month and I get off line and everything because I was realizing that if I took a week off for vacation, it was day five-

Ptr. Kyle: Exactly.

Annie: ...before I was like, "Oh, I'm starting... I have two days? I have to drive home today from the beach and I go back to work the day after?"

Ptr. Kyle: 100%.

Annie: I wasn't actually resting. So our team gets a couple of weeks. I get a month. Tell me what happens when you go longer than one month? I know my one-month rhythm—we've done it a couple of years. I don't know what happens when you get two and three months.

Ptr. Kyle: The shift in what you're focusing on does help. So that second month is more receiving. I would visit some other churches, start reconnecting with some pastors, thinking through things that I want to do differently, spending time thinking about... well, for us, we became grandparents during that month.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Ptr. Kyle: So I had my first grandchild. So that month was more focused on growth and just praying, "God, what are the new things you want to do in me? What are some things that I've been missing?" It was a time of maybe another word I might use is realignment, where you're just taking-

Annie: Oh, wow. Wow.

Ptr. Kyle: ...some intentional steps to see where you're out of alignment and need to realign.

Annie: Wow. Given the chance to do it again, I assume you will do another sabbatical to rest because we've got 50 more years of ministry, hopefully, right?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah.

Annie: Would you do three? Would you do six?

Ptr. Kyle: That's a great question.

Annie: Thank you.

Ptr. Kyle: I mean, it's too soon to answer. Like right now-

Annie: You're like, "Downs, my book is just coming out about this."

Ptr. Kyle: Right now I'm like, No, I don't think I would. But I think that's part of the way you know it is helpful is you come out of it and you're not... The idea of taking three months away right now does not seem very appealing at all. I'm sure there'll be a time for it again. But I will say six weeks would make a lot of sense to me. I think there are some things that happen after, you know, three or four weeks where you miss things and you're missed in a way that's probably pretty healthy.

Annie: And also the world moves on in a way that's probably pretty healthy of me...

Ptr. Kyle: That's also great. That's great-

Annie: ...to be like, "Something I didn't know? Great. What a great reminder. Humble thyself before the Lord.

Ptr. Kyle: A hundred yes. That is so true. Like cognitively I knew that reality, but you know experientially that's different when you recognize, Oh, that really is true. Like God can use anybody to do anything anytime anywhere. Like He doesn't have to have me. There's something very freeing about that and humbling as well.

Annie: I remember after *Reckless Love* came out like the next year, Cory Asbury took a year off. Like got off. And I was like, "What? Right now? You're top of the pyramid." But it was the same thing of like, I need to remind myself that producing isn't everything and that also the world can actually move forward with God without me.

Ptr. Kyle: Well, I talk about this in the book. But for me, that's how I knew I needed a break is I was trying to produce and it wasn't happening. Like it was more work. It was draining and warming out. I went away to do some writing and I thought, "Okay, I've got like a week and a half. I'm going to knock a lot out, come out, you know, with a bunch of content." And like after a week, I have four pages.

Annie: I remember reading it.

Ptr. Kyle: And it felt like, "Okay, I'm putting a bucket into a well and I keep pulling it off." And there's nothing-

Annie: There's nothing in there.

Ptr. Kyle: There's nothing there.

Annie: Yes.

Ptr. Kyle: And that was a significant red flag for me of like, "Okay, this isn't working. I need to take time to refill." To me, that was a pretty significant indicator where it feels so burdensome instead of like a joy.

[00:18:42] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about one of our amazing partners, [Storyworth](#). Hello, Father's Day is right around the corner. How in the world? This year is flying by. Is this what happens when you get older? That is what my grandfather said. But now I am feeling it. But this Father's Day, you can give your dad or really anyone special in your life a gift that is truly unique and meaningful, a gift that will make him feel special and loved. And that is Storyworth.

Storyworth is an online service that helps you and your loved ones preserve precious memories and stories for years to come. It is a thoughtful and meaningful gift that connects you to those who matter the most. Every week, Storyworth will email your loved one a thought-provoking question of your choice from their vast pool of options. These are questions you may never have had a chance to ask, like, what's the bravest thing you've ever done in your life? Or if you could see into the future, what would you want to find out?

After a year, Storyworth compiles your loved ones' stories, includes photos, and makes it onto this beautiful keepsake book that you'll be able to share and revisit for generations to come. Listen, I gave it to my dad, Mr. F. Downs, and my mom and I cannot wait to get their final book and to read all of their stories and answers. In fact, this is reminding me that I haven't gotten the email in a couple of weeks that they've filled out their questions. So I'm going to remind them to go do their Storyworth question for this week.

Here's what's cool too. The book itself is amazing for any member of the family to go back and read. But the journey of writing it is also a gift and a chance for my mom and dad or your dad or anyone to get to think back through meaningful stories and memories and document them for our family. It's just so special. So give all the dads or special people in your life a unique and meaningful gift you'll cherish for years. Give them Storyworth.

Right now, for a limited time, you'll save \$10 on your first purchase when you go to storyworth.com/thatoundsfun. That's storyworth.com/thatoundsfun to save \$10 on your first purchase. Storyworth.com/thatoundsfun.

Sponsor: And I have one more amazing sponsor to tell you about. This episode is sponsored by [BetterHelp](#). May is crazy-town for me. Is that same true for y'all too? I mean, I cannot catch my breath this month. And June doesn't slow down that much either, thanks to going on tour and seeing so many of you on the Here For You tour.

But if I'm not careful and don't plan time to rest and process everything going on in me and around me, I can quickly find myself in a bit of a mental spot that I don't want to be in. This is why I love counseling, you guys. It can give you the tools to find more stability in the chaos so you can keep showing up for yourself and for others.

BetterHelp is an incredibly easy option. It's entirely online. It's designed to be convenient, flexible, and to fit in your schedule. When your schedule is busy, you don't have to worry about not having the time to drive across town for an appointment because your session can be done right from home. You just fill out a brief questionnaire, we love a quiz, to get matched with a licensed therapist. And you can switch therapists any time for no additional charge so you're sure to be working with someone who is a good match for you.

I've benefited so much from counseling. Here's the real truth. You have all benefited so much from my counseling. And it really matters to me that you know about accessible counseling resources like BetterHelp to help you navigate your emotional, spiritual, and mental health, too. It's one of those things to make a priority, even in the midst of the craziness because it will help you navigate it all.

So find more balance with BetterHelp. Visit betterhelp.com/thatoundsfun today to get 10% off your first month. That's betterhelp.com/thatoundsfun.

And now back to our conversation with Kyle.

[00:22:18] <music>

Annie: The first sentence that I read that made me like have a moment where I had to stop was already on page 25. So it did not take you very long to ruin my life. But you said, "When we've put in the work, we have certain expectations of what will be produced."

Ptr. Kyle: Mm-hmm.

Annie: That is not the gospel. But that is true of me. I mean, my biggest frustrations and disappointments are when I think I've done my part and we do not get the results that we want. When you're talking to other pastors, when you're talking to men that are leading, when you're talking to women that are leading, when you're talking to

men or women who are stay-at-home parents, is that a big red flag? Is that one of the moments that we need to really pay attention to?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah. For me, that surfaces in frustration. So where I just feel frustrated because I'm over here, it's not that I'm not putting in the work, it's not that I'm not being disciplined with my effort, but I'm not getting the results that I expected. I know other people that when they're in that position they get more discouraged, you know, a little bit more sad. I just get mad.

Annie: Yeah, me too.

Ptr. Kyle: I just get frustrated. Do you?

Annie: Yes. I just get mad. Do you like the Enneagram?

Ptr. Kyle: A little bit. I mean, I'm not against the Enneagram.

Annie: Sure. Sure. Do you have a number which you believe is closely associated to you?

Ptr. Kyle: I am told that eight closely is connected to me.

Annie: Oh, okay. Okay. Interesting. I am also more of a... I'm Enneagram seven with a strong eight wing and aggressive is how we handle things. So anger and frustration are emotions I'm very familiar with, though, because I'm female Christian from the South, I didn't know anger was what I was feeling.

Ptr. Kyle: Yes.

Annie: So. But now I do. Now I know.

Ptr. Kyle: Well, I felt that there was something healthy about, you know, being frustrated. I didn't like to use the word anger. Right?

Annie: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ptr. Kyle: I like to say frustrated because that felt a little bit more spiritual than being angry.

Annie: More spiritual. Right.

Ptr. Kyle: But yeah, for sure.

Annie: You did a really cool job in the book of defining the stages of anger when you're talking about frustration. I thought this was really cool because you talked about

mild irritation, provoked frustration, personal indignation, and uncontrolled rage. Why do we need to know those four? Why does that matter when we're thinking about our spiritual lives or our family life or whatever?

Ptr. Kyle: Well, you know, in Ephesians, Paul talks about anger being a foothold, right? In Hebrews, it talks about the root of bitterness. That it starts here and then it grows. And by the time it reaches a certain place, you know, the indignation, rage stage, it becomes really hard to rein it in. And it does a lot of damage. It does damage not just to your own soul, but to the people around you.

So being able to recognize it and get some perspective, I think, early on helps a lot. But, you know, I need help with that. Like, I don't see it very well in myself. I need my wife to say, "Hey, you've not been yourself lately." Or I talk about this in the book. I had a friend of mine who just very gently said to me, "Hey, I have a friend who is an executive coach that I think you need to go see."

Annie: Oh, yeah, I loved it. t

Ptr. Kyle: When he said it, I'm like, "Well, you know, an executive coach. Maybe that's a good idea And I make an appointment with this guy that he recommended and I get 10 minutes into this conversation and I'm like, in my mind, "You're a therapist. You call yourself an executive coach." So somebody like me, like-

Annie: I love that you strike it through in the book, therapist, and you strike through executive coach. It cracked me up.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah. So I got a little tricked into that. But I needed someone to say to me, "Hey, you're not quite being yourself." You're not realizing how you're coming off. One of the ways I saw this with my staff was it wasn't anything I said or did, it was an expression. I talk about in the book my resting pastor-face needed some work. I was totally unaware of it. Because in my mind, I'm like, well, you know, I am being kind. I have not said anything. I've not raised my voice. I'm not slamming doors. I'm not doing any of those things. But you know, that irritation, they just felt that when they were in the room with me.

Annie: In September, my manager sat me down and she said, "I don't think we're experiencing you the way you think we are." And I was like, Uuuuu, what? You know? Because we all have blind spots. I hate it. But we all have blind spots. There was a lot of grief in my life and family stuff. I was just grieving. So I thought, well, at least I'm showing up every day. And then I can go home and be as sad as I need to be or deal with the other stuff. But at least I'm showing up at work and they are like-

Ptr. Kyle: Oh, I'm right with you, Annie.

Annie: "We are not experiencing you..."

Ptr. Kyle: Tell me again how she said it.

Annie: "We are not experiencing you the way you think we are."

Ptr. Kyle: That's so good.

Annie: Which was a kind way to phrase it. Because what she said is, "We know you think you're doing your best, that's not what we're experiencing."

Ptr. Kyle: It recognizes that you're not doing this on purpose. It's not intentional, but-

Annie: And it was, "So what can we do? And what do you need?" And I was like. "Uuuh, repentance for starters. I guess I need to repent." I mean, one of the big questions I had when I was reading the book, again, the title *When Your Way Isn't Working: Finding Purpose and Contentment Through Deep Connection with Jesus*, how do we know when our way isn't working and we're meant to abandon our way? Or how do we know when we're meant to persevere and like today isn't working, but this is just part of the journey? I think very often we are more inclined to quit on a hard journey than to persevere through it. How do we know the difference?

Ptr. Kyle: You know, one of the hard things I learned about myself in this is that when things get really hard, I work harder. Like I double down on my own effort and determination instead of saying, "I need help," instead of expressing dependance on God in the way that I should, what feels like the more spiritual approach to me, what least it did, and still something that I struggle with. But what feels like the spiritual approach is my way isn't working, I need to double down on my effort here.

What John 15 does so well for us is, as Jesus says, "I'm the vine, you're the branches. If you remain in Me and I remain in you, you'll bear much fruit. Apart from you can't do anything." And He puts the emphasis on connection. If you remain. That word "remain" is used like 11 times or abide. It's used like 11 times in that handful of verses. He is reminding them, yes, you've got this huge mission in front of you and there are going to be frustrations and discouragement and you're going to suffer, just stay connected. The most important thing you can do is stay connected.

What happens for me is when my way is not working, that's the first thing to go, because I think I need to produce more, I need to fix it, I need to rescue it, I need to,

you know, come up with some sort of a task list to get myself out of it. So abiding or remaining feels so passive. It doesn't feel like I'm doing anything.

Annie: It's a little ethereal.

Ptr. Kyle: Yes. Yeah. You can't measure it.

Annie: Right. You can't approve it.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah. Yeah. You can't point to it and say, "Look what I did." I talk about, in the book, an example of this for me as a husband, if I come home from work and I know I need to mow the grass and I could go for a walk with my wife, I'll almost always lean towards mowing the grass now because I like it more, I'd much rather go for a walk with my wife, but because when I'm done with it, I'm like, "Look, I got the grass mowed." I did something that you can measure and point to. And that production measurement is super appealing. You know, "Look what I did. Look what I got finished." But the connection is, at least in a cumulative way, is what really makes the difference. And I think spiritually, you know, that's especially true. But because you can't measure it, it's easy to underestimate.

Annie: Yeah, it just feels like when I need to charge my phone, I can actually look and see if it's charging.

Ptr. Kyle: Yes. That's good.

Annie: Because the power source is plugged in and it's plugged into my phone. So all the pieces are working. And then when my life is frustrating or when I feel exhausted or anxiety, I can't actually look at the plug that goes from me to the wall and that or for me plugged into the right cord and the cord plugged into the wall.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, that's really good picture.

Annie: What are some ways that we can say, no, here's how you know you are plugged in even though you can't see it like you can with your phone?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, that's a very helpful picture. I think our tendency, my tendency at least is, if my way is not working and you just feel in way with all kinds of things, you know, my work, my... whatever, my diet, my finances, my marriage, my parenting-

Annie: Schedule, your church.

Ptr. Kyle: Schedule, yes.

Annie: Yeah, all of it. Yeah.

Ptr. Kyle: When it's not working, I want to pick up something that will give me action items, you know, even if I'm reading, trying to address a problem in my life, that's what I'm looking for. Like, what are the four things I need to do differently? So underlining the reality that connection is what's most important. Like, Okay, my tendency is always going to be towards action, and here are the things I'm going to do to produce. I've got to recognize that—that that is in me. And if I don't prioritize connection, it is not going to happen.

So one of the things, you know, it sounds very simple, but I think it's significant is giving God your mornings. If you can do that first thing, if you can give God the first 20 minutes of your day, that connection has a way of setting the tone for the rest of the day.

Annie: Yes. And when I miss it, I know. Everybody knows.

Ptr. Kyle: But it is hard. Because you wake up and you know what you need to get done and you want to get started on it-

Annie: And you slept late. John Eldredge always says you're deciding after dinner if you're reading your Bible the next morning.

Ptr. Kyle: That's good.

Annie: So when I sat up last night scrolling on my stupid phone till 11:00, I was like, "Well, guess what this means? I bet it means you don't work out tomorrow. I know that's not the decision you wanted to make, but I bet-

Ptr. Kyle: That's really good.

Annie: ...this means you're either not going to read your Bible, you're not going to... Something tomorrow morning is going to suffer because of what you're deciding right now.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, that's really helpful. One of the things I touched on in the book is the recognition that in, I don't know, the last five or six years, the more external input I was getting, the less internal reflecting I was doing. And I started to recognize, Oh, there is this direct correlation between the amount of time I'm spending watching shorts on YouTube compared to how connected I am to Jesus. I can't tell you how much-

Annie: I know. I hate it, Kyle.

Ptr. Kyle: ...I didn't want to admit it.

Annie: Don't do that to all of us. Everyone listening just loved you and not for that. It's brutal.

Ptr. Kyle: Well, you know, I feel so defensive of it in the moment. And then when you look at it and you see, Oh, that really is real. So part of connecting is disconnecting. You know, part of connecting well with Jesus and others is intentionally disconnecting from some other things.

Annie: If you knew how many times I have literally thrown my phone out of the room where I read and not out of like, "Look at me being disciplined." Of like, "Annie, you just wasted 20 of your minutes. Get this phone out of here. What are you doing?" To me that's such a good example, Kyle, for you to give us of a way to acknowledge, Are we plugged in? Are we connected?

And is this true for you? Every day does it feel good? But about every now and again, I'll have a morning where I'm like, "That revelation was worth the six days that I sat here and just read and listened to like the three, six, five and prayed and then got up.

Ptr. Kyle: Yes. Not unlike any relationship. The fruit of connecting is not always apparent. But then when something is very difficult or something is very confusing or hard, all of the work you did connecting shows up in those moments. But you can't fake it. Like, if you haven't done it, you don't get to.. It's like you don't get to go into the gym for this one massive workout to make up for all the other workouts you didn't do. It's got to be cumulative. And I think that's right in connecting.

[00:35:33] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation one more time to share about another amazing partner, [Earth Breeze](#). Oh, listen, I cannot wait to tell you about Earth Breeze because it is changing my laundry life. Did you know that 91% of those awkward and heavy laundry detergent jugs end up in landfills and oceans? Y'all, there has to be a better way. And it's not like you can just stop doing laundry. I wish.

This is where Earth Breeze comes in. I am all about finding ways to be friendlier to the earth. And if I can do that while doing my laundry, win, win, win, win, win. Okay, y'all, my new Earth Breeze laundry detergent eco sheets, they look like dryer sheets, but they are not. It is the coolest thing. It's liquidless laundry detergent.

It dissolves 100% in any wash cycle, hot or cold. I do everything in cold, and it is never... I'm always afraid there's going to be a clumpy mess. And there is no gloppy mess. They totally dissolve. And there's no measuring, no accidental spills, which, as you can imagine, I've done often. And no heavy plastic jugs. Just toss the sheet in and you are good to go.

Plus, you're not giving up any quality either. Earth Breeze gives you a powerful clean every time. I love the way it smells. It's great for all laundry lifestyles, even sensitive skin. And their eco sheets are hypoallergenic and dermatologist tested. Earth Breeze is compatible with high-efficiency washers, greywater systems, and is septic-safe.

They offer flexible subscriptions that can be adjusted, paused, or canceled by you at any time. No contracts or fees. And you know what? As travel picks up for all of us over the summer, it is way easier to pack Earth Breeze in a giant jug of detergent, if you want to do some laundry on vacation or for me on tour. Better for the planet, better for your suitcase, better for your clothes. Give Earth Breeze a try.

With their risk-free 100% satisfaction guarantee, listen, if you don't like it, Earth Breeze will give you a full refund, no questions asked, and no returns necessary. It is worth a shot, you guys. I really like it. I think it's been awesome. So switch from the old-fashioned goo to something new.

Right now my friends get subscribed to Earth Breeze and save 40%. You guys, four-zero. Get out of here. So go to [Earthbreeze.com/thatsoundsfun](https://earthbreeze.com/thatsoundsfun) to get started. That is [Earthbreeze.com/thatsoundsfun](https://earthbreeze.com/thatsoundsfun) for 40% off. [Earthbreeze.com/thatsoundsfun](https://earthbreeze.com/thatsoundsfun).

Sponsor: And one last amazing partner to share with you, [Shopify](https://shopify.com). Listen, y'all know that sound. That is right. It means another one of you is out to shop at our online store at shopanniefdowns.com and it is powered by Shopify. I hope you're grabbing a copy of *Chase the Fun*. It's on sale at shopanniefdown.com and go through it with us starting on May 30th.

No matter what you're selling, Shopify simplifies doing it online and in person so you can just focus on successfully growing your business. So what small business have you been dreaming about starting? Maybe you make candles or soaps or baked goods or jewelry. Whatever idea you have, don't let the technical logistics keep you from getting started.

Shopify is the commerce platform revolutionizing millions of businesses worldwide. They have what you need to help get your products in the hands of the right people. And what I love about them is no matter how big you want to grow,

they can empower you with the confidence and control to take your business to the next level.

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They give you complete control over your business and your brand without having to learn any new skills. Plus, thanks to 24 seven help and an extensive business course library, Shopify is there to support your success every step of the way.

Now it is your turn to get serious about that passion project that you want to get out in the world and try Shopify today. Sign up for a \$1 per month trial period, that's brilliant, at Shopify.com/soundsfun, all lowercase. Go to Shopify.com/soundsfun to take your business to the next level today.

And remember if you didn't catch that link or any of the links about our sponsors, you can always find all that information to the links in the show notes below or in tomorrow's AFD Week in Review email which you can get by signing up in the show notes.

And now back to finish up our conversation with Pastor Kyle.

[00:39:53] <music>

Annie: I found this true in *Not a Fan*, which I loved, by the way. I remember where my office was. I remember when we got the book and I wanted you on the podcast so bad. And I don't know why it didn't happen. So this feels like a dream that I've had for years. But I love *Not a Fan*. But this is true in this book, too. You find these little nuggets in Scripture that I have never seen.

When you're talking about Elijah's fatigue and what happened with Elijah, will you talk about that? Because I think so many women need to hear what happened to Elijah because of what happens to us when we are tired and when we are. I mean, men, too. But, you know, women don't always acknowledge that sleep may be helpful.

Ptr. Kyle: Yes. And what's interesting about that story is, I don't talk about this in the book, but the last sermon I preached before I went on my sabbatical was Elijah and a blind spot for him of a fatigue.

Annie: Wow. And then you said, "See you, guys, for Christmas."

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah. I'm going through his life and I'm describing my own in some ways and not really recognizing it. But what I love about that story is how tender God is with Elijah when he is exhausted, he's frustrated. He's frustrated with other people, he's frustrated with God, and he's not really holding back from any of that. And God, you know, provides some shade and tells him to sleep. He wakes up, God gives him some food, tells him to go back to sleep. "You're not ready. Keep sleeping."

Annie: I think it's important for people to hear Elijah was like, "I want to end my life."

Ptr. Kyle: Yes.

Annie: And God said, "Go to sleep, have something to eat."

Ptr. Kyle: Yes. Yeah. What's interesting there is, you know, Elijah was very much in victim mode, right? He was like, "This isn't fair. I've done what you've asked me to do. I'm alone. There's nobody else but me." None of that was true. But instead of God saying, "Bro, none of this is true. You're saying this, it's not what's real. God says rest, and then we'll talk about it," you know?

Annie: Yeah, yeah. "Have a snack. We're going to be fine." The part that moved me so much as I've never looked at all the factors of what got him there, so I don't read through those, if that's okay. You did an incredible job passing this out. I love the whole book. This could have also been its own book. So if you want to write a whole Elijah book, I will buy it. But extended isolation, he'd been by himself a ton. Difficult conversations. Which I think is really important to say to people that like, if you're having... if you're walking some teenagers through some really hard stuff, that is exhausting.

Ptr. Kyle: It is. It's really good.

Annie: ...in unique way. Strained relationships, prolonged uncertainty, spiritual warfare, and physical exertion. Will talk about prolonged uncertainty? A lot of our friends listening, everyone does not have everything they want. Wish they were married, wish they had kids, wish they had a different job, wish they lived in a different place. There's so much uncertainty about what's God going to do next. How does that exhaust us?

Ptr. Kyle: You know, I experienced some of that dynamic during the pandemic. And the way that I experienced this as a pastor leader was I was running sprints without realizing I was in a marathon. Meaning that I was going hard thinking, "Okay, I can do this for a month."

Annie: That's right.

Ptr. Kyle: "Okay, I can do this for three months. You know what? It's not going to be any more than a year. I can do this for a year." And then you get a couple of years into it and you know, your adrenal glands are shot, you're physically worn out, and you weren't pacing yourself at all. I would have been fine for three months. I would have been fine for six months. But after enough of that time, it's like racking up a bill that's going to have to be paid.

And, you know, being able to honestly assess that, like one of my struggles and I think Elijah was just way too, at least I tell myself to make myself feel better. But one of my struggles is I am positive to a fault until I'm not. Like I can see the good in things, I can be optimistic about it, I can look at myself and say, "You're good. You've got this," and I'll be the last one to know that I'm on empty. That can be a positive thing to look at and say, Okay-

Annie: Well, people love people like you leading.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah. Unless they-

Annie: Until they don't.

Ptr. Kyle: Until they don't. That's right. Unless they run out. So recognizing when you are in a state of prolonged uncertainty, whether that's in a relationship, whether that's finances, you'll do well for a while. But don't assume that just because you did well for three months that you can do it another three months. For me, what I needed was rest like Elijah. But the other thing I needed, which God gave Elijah, was I needed an Elishah. I needed somebody that was going to help share that burden with me and would help carry some of that weight.

Annie: Who is that?

Ptr. Kyle: Well, God provided a few people like that for me. So He brought in one of my wife's good friends that I was friends with but became much closer to, you know, throughout this. And then we hired somebody on staff that became more of a partner in ministry. So some of the things I felt like I was alone in, I could say, "Hey, can you help me with this?" I could hand that off to him. And I really underestimated how much I needed that.

Annie: And that is so encouraging. As someone who's not married yet and a lot of our friends listening aren't married yet, it's so encouraging for you... You write beautifully in the book about your wife. But to say in these other moments, it was

not only my spouse, and my spouse and my kids. It was this friend and it was this coworker. God does not have one person in your life that's supposed to meet all the roles of your support system.

Ptr. Kyle: Oh, and my wife was telling me that. She was like, "Hey, you can't be asking me to do all of these things. Who else are you talking to about this? Who else are you...?" Because I would share any of that stuff with her and she would encourage me. But she would also say, "You need some of that."

Annie: How does comparison factor into all this? How does comparison encourage discouragement?

Ptr. Kyle: You know, I know it gets talked about a lot, but it just is so true that the social media approach to measuring yourself, even if it's subconscious... I just think it's... it gets talked about a lot, I guess because it's very real. And recognizing that even if you don't mean to do it that way, that becomes discouraging if you're just looking at your life through that lens. If your connections with other people are primarily online and through social media, I think that those comparisons become discouraging even though you don't realize that's where it's coming from. Because you're subconsciously comparing yourself.

I would never consciously do this. You know, I've raised three teenage girls. Maybe they would do this, when they were teenagers, more overtly. I would never look on social media and say, "Well, look at his whatever. Look at his family or look at his church." I would never consciously do that. But I'm still registering, you know, those things. And so I think in-

Annie: And deciding what to do with them when you register it.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And then I get caught up and, you know, you're doing the same thing. So I think being conscious of that and not underestimating it. I think it's more significant than we realize.

Annie: I don't do that very much either. It just isn't my nature. I compare about other things. But about two weeks ago, I spiraled over a peer having a massive growth in their following. I mean, I was laying in bed being like, "My career is over." But I was like, "What is going on?" So what I had to do is I came in the next morning and I went straight to my manager, Kelly, and I was like, "I need to tell you what's going on in my brain." Because I don't have a spouse to process things with at this point in my life, I have to come in and go like, "I have to get this out of my mouth and you tell me, yes, everything is over because this other person has grown their audience or no, everything is actually not over and it actually doesn't matter, and we get to celebrate them because of the good work they're doing."

Ptr. Kyle: That's good.

Annie: So having someone else come in at that Elishah moment for me... I mean, I wrote down Instagram numbers because it was happening the days I was reading your book, and I was like, "Oh, no, it's everywhere."

Ptr. Kyle: It's like real-time.

Annie: "This doesn't happen to me. I don't do this very often." But man, it only takes one little thing to all of a sudden spiral into this. It was never about them. It was me feeling like I wasn't succeeding.

Ptr. Kyle: Did sharing that help give you a perspective?

Annie: Oh, yeah. Because then she's like, "What are you doing?"

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Annie: We're very close so she's very direct. She said, "We're not experiencing you the way you think we are." But it was very helpful. I knew it was a version of confession of saying there is a dark part of my heart that does not want this person to succeed because it feels like it's costing me success, which is not true. So it was a bit of confession which mattered.

Ptr. Kyle: And there's something powerful about saying that out loud to someone else.

Annie: Yeah. Just it takes out the darkness, right?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah. Yeah, it does.

Annie: What does confession look like for a pastor? Who can you call and confess to? Because you can't do it on a Sunday morning?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah. Yeah. Well, you can, a little. And I think you need to, a little. You know, you have to be wise about it. But I have a mentor group that I stay pretty connected to that I really don't have any secrets from. I'm trying to think if that's changed since.

Annie: You're like, "Since we met a month ago, are we good?"

Ptr. Kyle: So I have a group of men like that I trust. And then I have pastors, other pastors you've mentioned Kevin, people like Kevin, where if I'm struggling with something, I wouldn't hesitate to reach out to and tell them that. I think that at least

this generation of pastors compared to what... I think we're doing that in a way that's healthier. You know, leaning on each other and kind of being honest with some struggles with each other. I think we've learned a lot about that. So I have some guys that are that way for me.

Annie: That just almost feels like, if we want to jump back to our metaphor, it just almost feels like, here's another way, you know you're plugged in. You don't have any secrets.

Ptr. Kyle: Well, one of the things I learned, I talk about this briefly in the book is, you know, I learned the value of bearing one another's burdens, which is similar to what you did in your conversation. "Okay, here's a burden I have." You can't fix it. You're not going to be able to change my numbers or my following overnight, but this is just something that I'm carrying.

During my sabbatical, I started this process with a pastor friend of mine where we would call one another once a week and we would just tell each other three things, hey, this is hard for me right now. And we went into it with the agreement that we were not going to try to solve it or fix it. We weren't going to say, "Well, I've been there and this is what I did to get out of it."

Annie: Right. Right.

Ptr. Kyle: We were just going to say, "Here's my three hard things." And he was going to say, "Here are my three hard things. We pray for each other and go about our day. And at first it felt silly. I'm like, "Why am I taking time to tell him my three hard things if he's not going to try to fix it, if he can't do anything about it?" And then over time I realize the value and saying to him, "Hey, here are three things in my life that aren't working." And him just saying, "Got it." That burden-bearing-

Annie: That's beautiful.

Ptr. Kyle: ...gave me a lot more strength and help than I realized it would.

Annie: I wonder if that's a really generous onramp for people listening who aren't in a practice of confessing their sin. What if you started by confessing what was hard? And then you grow rapport with that person so that the day you do need to say, "And there's these two secret things I haven't told anybody,"

Ptr. Kyle: Yes. Yeah.

Annie: "And while I'm telling you what else is hard, let me tell you these two other things." That's such a great honor. Thank you for that. That was really helpful. Okay, what did we not say that you make sure we say?

Ptr. Kyle: I would just say that for me, the order of production and connection is what made all the difference. When my way wasn't working, I kept focusing on production as a way I was going to produce my way out of it. And I also thought production earned my connection. That if I produce more, God was going to somehow connect with me, you know, like, okay, now you can connect. When I started to prioritize connection, the production came. It overflowed out of the connection. And I just think that there are a lot of us that that's where we're at. We understand they're both important, connection and production are both important, but we've just mixed up the priority of the two.

Annie: That has to be true in parenting, and that has to be true in romantic relationships with your partner. And that has to be true... I experienced that in dating and in friendships. That if you're working so hard to get the production part but not connecting. It's the wrong order.

Ptr. Kyle: It's wrong order.

Annie: So if it works with your kids, it works with God.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, that's true. Yeah, that's right.

Annie: Getting that right. Pastor Kyle, you are such a gift. Thank you for making time to do this today.

Ptr. Kyle: It was a lot of fun, Annie. Thank you.

Annie: I enjoyed it. Okay, so speaking of fun, the last question we always ask.

Ptr. Kyle: Oh, yes, that's right.

Annie: Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Ptr. Kyle: So I knew this was coming.

Annie: Okay, good.

Ptr. Kyle: I had lunch with a friend of mine and I was like, "What should I say when she asks this question?" And I told him what I thought my answer would be. He's like, "You had to do better than that." That doesn't-

Annie: No. He judged your fun?

Ptr. Kyle: He judged my fun.

Annie: Rude. We don't do that around here. We don't do that around here.

Ptr. Kyle: Well, right now, fun for me is watching a football game with my six-month-old grandson who cannot watch football, who doesn't understand what's happening. But I love it.

Annie: Listen, we have a two-and-a-half-year-old in our family, and my dad is just the best granddad to. He wants everything. He's like, "What sounds funny to you." "Anything with Sam." Just actually anything with Sam.

Ptr. Kyle: 100%. That's where I'm at.

Annie: Who is your football team?

Ptr. Kyle: Well, I don't have a team that I especially cheer for. I mean, I watch it every Sunday. That is my decompressing-

Annie: NFL over college?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, these days. So, yeah, watching-

Annie: So just anybody?

Ptr. Kyle: Part of it is because NFL is on a Sunday after church.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Ptr. Kyle: And there's nothing like watching people hit each other on Sunday afternoon to make you feel better.

Annie: You know, the only time I turn TV on during my Sabbath, which is usually on Saturdays, because my rhythms look like your rhythms, is soccer.

Ptr. Kyle: Okay

Annie: There is something about putting my full attention and cheering energy into something that has no spiritual significance for me and I have no power to change it that just feels so relaxing. So I get it. On Sunday just sit there and let it happen?

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, absolutely.

Annie: What's your snack? Do y'all have a football snack now?

Ptr. Kyle: Not really. No. We have this place in town called Mama's Wings, and they have the best wings. So I try to pick up some wings when I know my son-in-law is going to be there and will knock him out.

Annie: Okay, next time I'm up there-

Ptr. Kyle: Mama's Wings.

Annie: Mamas Wings.

Ptr. Kyle: Yeah, good stuff.

Annie: I mean, y'all's hospitality is already extraordinary. But you can also say-

Ptr. Kyle: Legit. That's good.

Annie: Well, thank you for writing *When Your Way Isn't Working* and sharing with us today. I think this is such a gift for people.

Ptr. Kyle: Thank you, Annie.

Annie: So thanks.

[00:55:10] <music>

Annie: Oh, you guys, isn't he the best? I know. I know. I just think he's so smart and so sympathetic. And I just appreciate all the work he's put into this experience and this book of I'm telling us there is a way that will work when your way isn't working. I'm so grateful.

Grab a copy of the book, *When Your Way Isn't Working*. It will be a great read for your summer mornings. I'm telling you. Go follow Kyle Idleman on social media and tell him thank you for being on the show. And if you're anywhere close to a church, any time you're visiting, driving through, or if you live around one of their campuses, make sure you stop in. It is a beautiful place to go to church.

Okay, We got a couple of exciting things to tell you. We were saving it till the end. But you guys know you are not ready for what is coming in June. Number one, we

leave next week for the Here for You tour. Oh my gosh, next week, which is brought to you by our friends at Africa New Life. Oh, next week.

Y'all, Carlos and I and our whole team are getting on a bus, we're hitting the road to come talk about community, meet you, guys. It is going to be the best. It's not too late to grab a ticket for you and a friend. So just head to hereforyoutour.com and come see us. A lot of our VIPs are sold out, but there are seats in the room for you. So hurry, hurry, Grab your ticket. It's not too late, but it's about to be. So get your ticket at hereforyou.com.

And number two, we just dropped the trailer yesterday and y'all are excited. So am I. But for the entire month of June here on That Sounds Fun, we are talking about dating. We're going there, you guys. We've invited experts on topics like attachment theory, sex, the five love languages, and the Enneagram, of course. Plus at the table with me and our expert every week will be some of my real-life friends, both male and female, who are also navigating the dating scene right now. We're going to talk about the apps and red flags and breakups and all the things. You do not want to miss it.

So whether you're single, currently dating, or even married, listen, there is something for all of us to learn here. And for our married friends, these are some really helpful conversations for you to understand what is going on in culture for the 50% of people in your community and in your church that are not married yet. So join us. It is going to be called... Are you ready? Summer Lovin'. Yeah, we called it Summer Lovin'.

It is a That Sounds Fun podcast series about dating in which we restore hope and dating and bridge y'all to helpful conversations, practical resources, and amazing experts so that you see changes in your dating life. You are going to see changes in your dating life, I promise, starting with you. So I'm really excited about it.

Stick around here. Share with your friends. You can go on my Instagram or go on the That Sounds Fun podcast Instagram, and there are graphics for you to share. The way we share hope is by sharing hope. So share with us. Please share with us. Invite your friends. Share by sending in a text, share by posting it on your socials. You have no idea how one share and one invitation might really change someone's life and give them hope they have been longing for. So partner with us in this. It would mean the world.

Okay, so we heard what sounds fun to Kyle, y'all know what sounds fun to me, Summer Lovin' sounds fun to me. Oh, it's going to be so great, you guys. And now we get to hear what sounds fun to one of our friends who's listening just like you.

All right, Renee, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds funny to you.

Renee: Hi, I'm Renee from Waukesha, Wisconsin, and what sounds fun to me is celebrating my 34th wedding anniversary with my husband in Lake Geneva while our youngest is at church camp this summer.

Annie: Do you know how much I love Lake Geneva? Do you know I've been there?

Renee: No, I didn't know that.

Annie: I spoke at the summer camp, the girls' summer camp at Lake Geneva.

Renee: Yeah, we walk past it sometimes when we walk on the trail.

Annie: I love that place. Okay, can we talk for just a minute about that part of the world, Michigan, Wisconsin, and how you all love summer camp-like family things? I mean, that is y'all's thing in the summer, huh?

Renee: Yes, it is. Because, you know, it's not that warm here the rest of the year.

Annie: So that is when you get out. Okay. That is also the first place I ever had cheese curds.

Renee: They're amazing.

Annie: They are amazing. It's the best. So are y'all in town compared to where the camp is when y'all go and stay?

Renee: Yeah, because the camp's on the lake. So we're like 10 minutes from the lake and they have the trail that goes around the lake so we always walk part of it.

Annie: Oh, that's awesome. Good answer. I love Lake Geneva. This is just a Lake Geneva fan podcast at this point.

If y'all need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, in Nashville but about to get on a bus. All the places you may need me, that is how you can find me. And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same.

Today what sounds fun to me is getting in the car and driving to see my family as we celebrate Mother's Day and Father's Day on this long holiday weekend. So y'all

have a great weekend. I hope you get to jump in some water, be with some people that you love, eat a hotdog or a hamburger. Is a hot dog a sandwich, you guys? This is the question.

And we will have a show for you on Monday. No better show for Memorial Day than our friend Drew Holcomb. Y'all, his new album, a conversation with him, this is what you're going to want to play when you're riding on the boat, when you're commuting back home from wherever you spent part of your Monday getting a little bit sunburned and getting ready for summer to kick off. So we'll see you back here on Monday on Memorial Day with our friend Drew Holcomb. Y'all have a great weekend.