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**Annie:** Hi friends! Welcome to a special Friday bonus episode of That Sounds Fun. Y'all know I love talking to you on a Friday. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm really happy to be here with you today. Today is such a special show as we look toward a Father's Day weekend.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I want to tell you about one of our incredible sponsors. This episode is sponsored by [BetterHelp](#). In today's conversation especially you're going to hear about the crucial part therapy and recovery work has played in Charles and Cassie's life. And it's just a reminder to all of us why we weren't meant to navigate life alone. Processing our mental, emotional, and spiritual health doesn't have to be something we do on our own. And that's why resources like BetterHelp are so important.

If you've ever been on the fence about going to therapy, give BetterHelp a try. They make it so simple and easy to get started. You just fill out a brief questionnaire, we love a quiz, they will match you with a licensed therapist and your session can be done right from home. It's entirely online. It's designed to be convenient, flexible, and fit in your schedule.

Finding a therapist that is the right fit for you is so important. And you can switch therapists anytime for no additional charge, so you're sure to be working with someone who is a good match. I've continued my counseling appointments even while I'm on tour this month. I just think it's really important to prioritize time for therapy, no matter whatever season you're in.

So if you're using this summer to get some pieces of your life in order for, me too, consider giving therapy a try and find the support you need. Therapy can give you the tools to discover more understanding in your life. Find more balance with BetterHelp. Visit [betterhelp.com/thatoundsfun](https://betterhelp.com/thatoundsfun) today to get 10% off your first month. That's [betterhelp.com/thatoundsfun](https://betterhelp.com/thatoundsfun).

**Intro:** Today on the show we're taking a quick break from our Summer Lovin' series as we head into Father's Day weekend and I get to sit down and talk with my friends Charles and Cassie Kelley. You probably know Charles from the Grammy Award-winning country trio Lady A or remember him from the Nashville tour stop of the That Sounds Fun Tour in 2021 when I got to interview Lady A live which was hysterical. If you've never listened to it, you guys, it is so good. It's linked in the show notes.

Charles has recently been on a journey to sobriety. So as we were thinking about a conversation in preparation for Father's Day on Sunday, we thought it'd be so

interesting to get Charles and Cassie's perspective on parenting and family, plus just their whole journey as they step into his first Father's Day in recovery.

I'll give you a heads-up. This conversation is one that's probably not best for our MiniBFFs' ears as we really dive into the topic of addiction. But I think the journey Charles and Cassie have been on is one so many of us are familiar with, whether it's a friend or family member who's walked this road or is currently walking this road, or it's a personal battle that you're all too familiar with yourself.

I so appreciate Charles and Cassie's transparency in this conversation as they share what this has looked like for each of them and their family as a whole, their adorable magical son Ward, and what it has meant for their careers and their faith, and their community. Whether Father's Day brings about a ton of joy for you or it brings up pain or both, it can be both, I hope this conversation gives you a glimpse of what redemption and grace and healing can do.

At the very least it is a good reminder to all of us the hope that we have in our heavenly father, who's working all things together for our good. So here's my conversation with two of my favorites, Charles and Cassie Kelley.

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**Annie:** Cha... Chassie.

**Charles:** Chassie.

**Annie:** Do people do that?

**Cassie:** Is that our Beniffer name?

**Annie:** Yeah, yeah. So, Cassie and Charles Kelley, welcome to That Sounds Fun.

**Charles:** Chassie.

**Cassie:** Thanks for having us.

**Annie:** Happy Father's Day, Charles.

**Charles:** Thank you. I was not even aware, to be honest with you.

**Annie:** Here it comes.

**Charles:** Yeah, it's coming.

**Annie:** It's coming so soon. Okay, y'all, for starters, I'm so glad to have you both on the show. Cassie, do you remember we recorded an episode, like my fifth episode?

**Cassie:** We did?

**Annie:** And I lost the file. We did something on fashion in Nashville or something. Do you remember this? It was at my house.

**Cassie:** I literally have no memory.

**Annie:** I know.

**Cassie:** I'm sorry.

**Annie:** It was in 2014.

**Cassie:** Wow.

**Annie:** It was like one of the first things I recorded. I was like, "Okay, we're gonna do Nashville restaurants. We're gonna do fashion." And then I lost the file.

**Cassie:** And then it never... It wasn't meant to be.

**Annie:** It's gone forever. So this is your accidental inaugural. But Charles, you are back as a fan favorite...

**Charles:** Oh.

**Annie:** ...from our live show.

**Charles:** From the live show.

**Annie:** I know. After we released that, people were like, "We love Charles Kelley. Give him a podcast on the network." So whenever you're ready to make a pod.

**Charles:** You know, I mean, I have to admit I don't know a thing about podcasts. And so-

**Cassie:** Maybe that's what would make you a good podcaster.

**Charles:** That would make it probably interesting. I know. You could help create what the concept would be. I totally could be down for that.

**Annie:** Listen, I heard a buddy tell me that you have like a golf podcast in your heart. Like a golf and gambling.

**Charles:** I do have that.

**Annie:** I'm like, how do we do all this together?

**Charles:** Basically the complete opposite of what this is. I don't know. Obviously, with this journey, I've been down... I mean, I have kicked around like what? Because, you know, I've got a lot of interesting friends, not just in the music business, but just also in the golf world playing some of these programs. Just interesting guys I've gotten to know. Even like my new buddy Ian, that wrote the Enneagram book, like guys like that.

**Annie:** Oh, yeah.

**Charles:** You know what I mean?

**Annie:** Yeah. Ian Cron. We love him.

**Charles:** So it'd be kind of interesting if there was like some sort of something-

**Charles:** How did y'all become bros?

**Charles:** Just randomly through another buddy and we started talking about the Enneagram-

**Annie:** Has he got you on a little bit of an Ennea journey, Charles?

**Charles:** Not quite. Not like Dave. Dave Haywood is deep into the Enneagram. But I do think it has helped a lot with Dave and Hillary how we understand each other.

**Annie:** Man, no kidding.

**Charles:** I think like anything, you know, you can't take that as the gospel. But I do think as far as a communication tool, whether it's baloney or there's some truth in it, it sure does feel like, you know, there's some personality-

**Annie:** Tool.

**Charles:** ...tools.

**Cassie:** Yeah. And just helping us understand ourselves. I mean, I know for me, it's like, am I being insane? Oh, no, I'm just a two on the Enneagram. It gives a little bit of compassion and grace for yourself, for sure.

**Annie:** For sure. And when you're in such close relationship with work and personal, understanding yourself, so you go, "Oh, I know I'm doing this." I did it this week and I was like, "Your feelings are so big right now. It's because you're tired. So let's just keep it all to yourself because you're just tired. Take a nap. Take a nap, Annie." Okay, Charles, tell me how being out on the road has been, how this tour has been.

**Charles:** Yeah, it's been unbelievable honestly. I mean, I had done several shows without drinking on occasion. But I don't know. For me it's like the first couple, I was like, Okay, a little boredom sets in. But I think that's definitely where the drinking would have kind of evolved. It was like, "All right, I'm bored. What's going to make this more fun? A cocktail, man." And it just slowly but surely just escalated and got out of hand. But honestly, it's been really great to feel super present.

I had another friend who's a musician that has stopped drinking, he goes, "Man, wait till you do that first show, and you feel all those nerves and you're not numbing any of it." And he goes, "It's really exciting."

So yeah, the first couple took a few songs to settle in. Because it really was like this crutch, you know, whether it was even like, I don't know, someone putting on their Cape before it just makes them feel, you know, All right, it's go time. But for me, I don't know, once I kind of made up my mind, it was almost easier to make up my mind all or nothing than when I was trying to just control it and have a couple here and a couple... That to me was the hardest.

**Annie:** Or this category is off limits but this one isn't.

**Charles:** Because I have things in my life that was off limits. Like I never really did drugs or anything. I was like, "Okay, that's not something for me." So it was like, "Why can't I just make this one of those things that's off-limits?" I mean, that's easier said than done. Obviously, a lot of work goes into it. But I think with more time that goes by it's just one of those things. I'm just Charles that doesn't drink. And what I found too is half the people don't even know or care. They're way more worried about their drink in their hand than the drink that's not in theirs.

**Annie:** Than what's in yours.

**Charles:** But it too take myself out of certain situations. Like I've gotten maybe 30 minutes in me if I go to like a strictly a cocktail type of party. I mean, even at dinner we had at our house, it was one of those really long three-hour dinners.

**Annie:** I was there.

**Charles:** It was really long. It was really cold.

**Annie:** It was cold.

**Charles:** It was a beautiful event. But I will say about that last hour, I was like, "Where's the dessert?" I was like, "I'm ready for dessert. I'm ready to get in my bed." But that's great, you know.

**Annie:** It was a beautiful dinner, Cassie.

**Charles:** It was.

**Cassie:** Thank you.

**Annie:** It was delicious.

**Cassie:** Thank you. I mean, I'll chime in on how tour has been. I feel like this tour is so different. I saw the second show at the Ryman and I left there feeling like, Gosh, your fans are going to love this show. It just is such a special show if you are a fan of Lady A of just a journey through all of their music.

**Charles:** Much more storytelling and then we do requests.

**Annie:** Every night is a little different, right?

**Charles:** Yeah, it is.

**Annie:** Just wild. Who does that?

**Charles:** And of course we have our basic go-to's that you got to, you know, in there in certain spots but then we have just the freedom. Again, I think we're just at that point now we're like, you know, we've been a band for 17 years, we kind of know what we're doing. We're not afraid of any spontaneous things or any hiccups that might happen.

And it just leaves a lot of spontaneous fun moments with the crowd. This was an idea Hillary had to take requests. And I was like, "Well, that's not going to work because if you ask the audience, you get like 50 responses all the same time. I actually did try that and it doesn't work." And she's like, "No, I mean, like technology. From Instagram."

**Annie:** So we have ways, Charles.

**Charles:** We have new ways. So we play little voicemails here and there and, you know, just different shoutouts. It really is fun. We'll call the people out and then have a conversation.

**Annie:** That amazed me-

**Cassie:** I know.

**Annie:** ...at the Ryman show that you found the exact people who had asked that question for that song.

**Cassie:** Because when they call in and they leave a request, they say, "My name is Susan, I'm going to the Indianapolis show on whatever date."

**Charles:** Then there's eight Susans in the audience.

**Cassie:** So you're like, "Where's Susan?"

**Charles:** No, it does. It loosens the crowd up a little bit. But it really has been fun. Like anything too, I mean, just getting up there and I think everybody feeling comfortable knowing what Charles they're gonna get that night. Again, it almost felt like too towards the end I was drinking to kind of help calm anxiety, but then I realized that drinking was creating so much more anxiety, you know, just knowing... Whether it was on the golf course and my wife going, "All right, well, how many drinks did you have?" And I'm like, "I had cold beers." And it's like, "No, that's a lot." So, you know, just kind of get more honest about it all. It takes a certain element out that I didn't realize had created way more chaos than... I didn't even realize, you know.

**Annie:** How do you combat the shame?

**Charles:** That's one thing, I think, doing a lot of work around it. And realizing too that... You know, I will say in a lot of these groups, I mean, yes, it's a disease value, but I do think I have an addictive personality in whatever I do.

**Annie:** Me too.

**Charles:** You know, whether you want to categorize it as a disease or not, I mean, I would say it's something that can just get a hold of you and really doesn't ever want to let go. I definitely felt a lot of shame early on. And then I think once I dealt with it,

and I was honest about it, and I got it out, and especially honest with Cassie, it's amazing how getting that off your chest then you can move past it. With anything in life.

For me, it's just been a way of life. I think one of the things that always was like, Gosh, what is going to like... I knew I had to stop at some point. I was like, "What's gonna make me stop? And secondly, what's going to finally happen in my life that makes me start connecting to my spirituality?" I would say I believe, but didn't really. Didn't really know. And it's amazing how just every little bit that goes by it's like that connection, and realizing you're not in charge and that there's a purpose through it all.

**Cassie:** When Charles was in treatment and I went out there for family week, his therapist, you know, was we were working on some things, and Charles-

**Annie:** Because you do like group... you do like y'all two and the therapists at point?

**Cassie:** You do the two of you. I mean, again, so much of recovery and alcoholism and then any addiction is connection. They say the opposite of addiction isn't sobriety, it's connection. So we were working on some things and Charles started saying, "And I just couldn't stop," and the therapist stopped him and said, "You didn't know how to."

So I think when you talk about shame or whatever that means when you're in addiction, it's people just sort of blame themselves in so many ways when in reality it's you just didn't have any tools to stop. That's part of, I think, the recovery process is learning what tools are available to combat your addiction.

**Annie:** Charles, when you're asking that question of what's it going to be, what's the thing going to be, I'm thinking about our friends who may be assessing "Is this an addiction I have? Can I stop if I wanted to?" What are some good gates to say to people, here's some questions I started asking when I realized it wasn't just like a hobby?

**Charles:** Well, I can't tell you how many friends have just like... you can tell when they've had those questions themselves they're like, "Man, I'm proud of you." It's like, "Man, I should do that, too. I should try. I've been thinking about it." And I'm like, "Well, if you're thinking about it you obviously know." I think first off, I tried to do it on my own for about three months and I was miserable because I was white-knuckling it. I was doing it for Cassie and the band, just get everybody off my chest for a little bit. I mean, you really have to want to do it. I don't know, for me, it hit a point where it wasn't fun anymore. I used to love it. I mean, it definitely

elevated moments. I mean, even like that song I wrote with Dave *As Far As You Could-*

**Annie:** Oh gosh, it's so good.

**Charles:** ...it's like I don't regret that I started drinking, I regret that it got where it got. I probably wouldn't have had the courage... You know, I have to admit that to move to Nashville if it wasn't for a night, you know, I was up in Winston Salem working and I was just out and you know, I had some drinks and just was like, "I'm so sick of this. This is not the life I want to live. I'm gonna wake up and move." And whether it was booze-induced or not, moved it, you know, get on stage. If I wasn't in that bar that night, I probably wouldn't have met Hillary. I wouldn't have met Cassie. So I don't regret that I was, you know... I just regret that it took on a life of its own. I think for a lot of people it does. And I justified it because it was like everybody around me is doing it too. And it is.

**Annie:** And I can still perform. I'm not pulling all down the stage.

**Charles:** Yeah. And I never got into like heavy drugs or any of that stuff. So I was like, "Hey, listen, I'm a functional alcoholic." I kind of would say at all time as a joke, Oh, folks I'm an alcoholic.

**Annie:** Oh my gosh. So that may be a sign.

**Charles:** But I knew it. I knew I loved it but I was justified because I was like it heightened a lot of moments for me, until it didn't. And it just gotten to that point, you know, we had a couple of nights on the bus and you're by yourself and you're staying up watching like *Breaking Bad* till 3 am and you're on your fifth whiskey in the back of the bus. And next thing you know, you're looking at yourself in the mirror going, "Stop! What am I doing?" And then you're like, "Gosh, just want more." And then you're like, "Okay, now I've got a problem."

So those kinds of little moments were big for me. We had some other specific moments that really led to this. But it just was straining our marriage. First and foremost, I mean, you have to do this for yourself. But I have to admit, I did it to save my marriage. I love my wife so much and our relationship was just getting tethered. The thought of not waking up and being in the same house as my boy crushed me. He's like our whole world. But, you know, they call it the gift of desperation. And because of that, then I realized I want this for myself and then it started making things better for the band, started making things better just in general.

I mean, I was blown away just the amount of support and even... you don't do it for this, but the amount of respect you get from doing it from other people. Because like you said, they want to do it as well. And it's like, it's not this thing you have to be shameful of. Because in the beginning, I was like, "Oh, I'm so embarrassed, I gotta do this." And then it was like, "Wait, now this is actually kind of cool. And this is something. I'm real man now."

Because I always felt like, too, on the road with my bandmates until Cassie was like, I know they respect me to a point is a boss, I'm a hard worker, I show up, I do all those things. But do they respect me as a man?" They could see a lot of that darkness in there. So I feel like now I'm kind of gaining that. And that's the kind of guy I want to be.

**Cassie:** And I didn't even know marriage could be like this. I mean, there's-

**Charles:** We still argue. We still got a little-

**Annie:** For sure. You're still two humans.

**Cassie:** Totally. We're still two married people, you know, marriage is hard. But I mean there could be connection like this. Like, Oh, this is what you guys have all been doing for this many years. Like you have a partner. You have somebody that you can connect with and rely on and trust and, you know, all of those things. I mean, all of those doors have been opened in his sobriety and recovery.

**Annie:** I mean, it's the connection thing. I've never heard that, that the opposite of addiction is connection.

**Charles:** I mean, it's the majority for me. Honestly, I was like I lived one way for 25 years of my life, started drinking when I was 15. And I was like, I've done everything I can accomplishing... There's nothing else. I've seen the highs, we've seen the lows, we've seen all the in-betweens. And I'm like, "Okay, now what can I accomplish in this in the second half of life, this new adventure."

And that's going to be okay, more connection with my family, deeper friendships, maybe get my golf game better because I'm not out there nominated with five cocktails, getting back in shape. That's been great. And probably the highest of that would be connected with my spirituality and seeing where that journey goes. I still have a little struggle defining it. But that's the beautiful thing about this program is like just connecting to a higher power.

And then through that... You know, because I've always kind of believed that we're all... however we grow up, whatever religion your family kind of ends up

indoctrinating you in. We're probably all, in my humble opinion, praying to the same God. We just find ways of, you know, kind of doing it. But I feel like we all have that connection inside of us and we yearn to connect and really feel that.

**Cassie:** Whether that's the Holy Spirit or something else, that piece that's inside of you is the light in all of us. I think that that is such a gift of the program that we get to learn how to connect with that light in us.

**Annie:** Have you lost any friends?

**Charles:** Not really. Not lost any friends. I mean, there's friends I don't hang out with as much but I wouldn't say I've lost friends. Ironically half my golf buddies all are sober. I think the pandemic kind of pulled out all our little insecurities-

**Annie:** Our vices.

**Charles:** ...vices and-

**Annie:** It's true.

**Charles:** ...things we were ready to change.

**Annie:** Is it also because we're 40?

**Charles:** Yeah.

**Annie:** I mean, a bunch of us went out the other night and people were like, "I'm not drinking right now. I'm not drinking." I mean, no one drank at a Mexican restaurant." I'm like, "Is this the 40s?"

**Cassie:** Right. Whether we're getting to the age where it's just like, This just doesn't make us feel good anymore, or a true addiction that you're combating. I think it's all mixed in one probably. Just can't recover-

**Charles:** And probably me too is like, you know, I would see buddies, I'm like, "Man, one glass of wine?" Once I have one I'm like, "Well, I'm already drinking. Why would I like flap-

**Annie:** "See you tomorrow. Yeah, let's go!"

**Charles:** To me it's almost like it's better just be like, "All right, just not do it." Because I know the one is going to just give me the excuse to keep going. "What's two then? If I'm already at two, what's three? What's four?"

[00:20:56] <music>

**Sponsor:** Hi friends! Just interrupting this conversation to share about one of our amazing partners, [Hiya Health](#). When it comes to my MiniBFFs, I always want them to stay healthy, but I know getting them to take their vitamins is a struggle. They want something that tastes like candy and their parents want something that's actually good for them. And that's where Hiya comes in.

Typical children's vitamins contain sugar, unhealthy chemicals, and other gooey junk growing kids just don't need. But Hiya is pediatrician approved and a superpower chewable vitamin. Hiya is made with zero sugar and zero gummy junk but it tastes great and it's perfect for those picky eaters. It fills in the most common gaps in kids' diets to provide the full body nourishment they all need. Plus they taste good.

Formulated with the help of nutritional experts, Hiya is pressed with a blend of 12 organic fruits and veggies, then filled with 15 essential vitamins and minerals to help my MiniBFF support their immunity, energy, mood, concentration, and more. And get this, your first order comes in this really cute glass bottle that includes stickers that your kids can use to decorate it. And then your refills are delivered each month and plastic-free pouches. Love it.

We've worked out a special deal with Hiya for their bestselling children's vitamin. Our friends get 50% off your first order. That's five-zero percent off your first order. To claim this deal, you must go to [hiyahealth.com/thatsoundsfun](https://hiyahealth.com/thatsoundsfun). This deal isn't available on their regular website. It's just for our friends. So you have to go to [hiyahealth.com/thatsoundsfun](https://hiyahealth.com/thatsoundsfun) and get your kids the full body nourishment they need to grow into healthy adults.

That link and pretty much every other link you could ever hope for are in the show notes or in today's AFD Week in Review. So be sure to check those out. And just a reminder that this weekend, Here For You tour, brought to you by our friends at African New Life, is in Chicago tonight and Florence Kentucky/Cincinnati tomorrow night. And then our last run is next weekend and we are in Kansas City, Dallas, and Austin.

If you're still thinking about a great Father's Day gift, get him a ticket and one for you, and come see me and Carlos out on the road. We have seen so many couples, so many groups of friends. And every time the dudes are like, "There are other dudes here?" Yeah, there are. But there's a lot of girls too. For sure, there's a lot of girls.

I'm telling you guys every night of the show is different. Every night is so special. We've got two surprises. We don't tell anybody except the people in the room. You're gonna love that. I can't believe we only have five stops left. So get your tickets at [hereforyourtour.com](http://hereforyourtour.com).

Now back to our conversation with Charles and Cassie.

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**Annie:** Is songwriting different?

**Charles:** Not a tremendous amount different. I think just the content. I mean, I haven't written a drinking song yet. Ironically the Warner Brothers who were very open and honest about their sobriety, they were laughing saying they've written their biggest drinking songs since they've been sober. But you know, for me, honestly, it hasn't. It just made me want to dig in a little bit deeper. But I don't feel any different. I didn't always drink every time I wrote. But definitely, you know, if I had a good excuse to, I would. But it wasn't every time.

**Annie:** I'm thinking about people listening who are parenting through this too. So both of y'all will tell me a little bit how's parenting different with a sober parent in the home.

**Cassie:** I mean, we've explained a little bit to Ward-

**Annie:** How old is he?

**Cassie:** He's seven. ...about why daddy doesn't drink alcohol. We've described it a little bit like an allergy because kids can understand that concept.

**Annie:** Yeah, of course.

**Cassie:** You know, it makes Daddy sick. So he doesn't drink alcohol. Sometimes mommy will have alcohol but it doesn't make me sick. So he understands that concept in age-appropriate way. But parenting, just like our marriage, I mean, I didn't know parenting could be like this. Charles has always been really great dad, and now he's an incredible dad because he has the capacity and the presence-

**Charles:** Or the energy.

**Cassie:** ...and the energy to connect with him. So that has been such a gift to watch too, and just Ward be more connected to him.

**Annie:** Do you feel that?

**Charles:** Oh, for sure. I don't think I'd realized some of the little moments she said. I mean, there was nothing overly crazy, but like couple moments that she had said where he definitely said, "Dad seems a little off or different." It was probably usually coming back from the golf course. But for me, too, like just getting back from the road I'd just be so worn out. Which I gotta admit I was still really worn out yesterday. We were on the road like a week. And I played golf the last day and then played the show and I was like, "I'm so exhausted." I think I went to bed at 5:30 last night.

**Cassie:** He did.

**Charles:** But I woke up at 5:30 and I was like, "Oh, this is kind of cool." But yeah, just being present and not having that excuse too. If I'm like, "I'm tired," I truly am tired. If I say I'm just exhausted, it's not, "Oh, well, you did it to yourself." It's like, "Well, I did it because of work." But he's just such a fun kid, man. I was lucky enough that both my parents didn't really drink much. My drinking kind of started... my brothers and I and all our friends, it just was part of the culture, you know, growing up down there in Augusta, Georgia, and then going to UGA just-

**Annie:** We're good at a couple of things in Georgia: Football, drinking, going to class maybe.

**Charles:** But you know, for me, just with him, it's just... I don't know. I love being able to call myself a sober dad. I mean, growing up, I saw a lot of parents and they were the ones that are "You kids can drink as long as you don't keep in the house." And I'm just like, "Man, I don't want to be that. I don't want to be those parents that too that you see them all drinking at these parties and falling over each other and Ward have to see that and kind of be embarrassed by his dad.

And I wouldn't say I was there, but it could have gotten there. I mean, I could just see where it went. I mean, even in college it wasn't like I would drink every day. I drink on the weekends and all sudden, you get kind of on the road and you start drinking a little bit more. Next thing you know, you know, random Tuesday, Wednesday, for no reason you're just drinking.

So I could see where it was heading. I think that was too one of those things when I went to rehab for a few weeks. When I first got there, I was like, "Oh, I'm not as bad as these guys." Then you're like, "Well, I could have gotten there. There's also degrees to it." Just because you're not falling over all the time or can't... whatever it might be, you got a DUI or wrecked car or whatever it might be, you know when you have a problem with it and you know when you can't stop at one or you can't stop it five. And I think that's when you kind of know.

**Cassie:** I think one thing too for, you know, when you're talking about parenthood, one thing that is pervasive in every person's life who is in relationship with an alcoholic is the hypervigilance that you develop. And especially for me once-

**Annie:** Around Charles or was it hyper around Ward?

**Cassie:** Your whole life. All of a sudden you're just paying such close attention to everything and mitigating and thinking several steps ahead. I think once you are in motherhood, for me, I kind of just assumed, well, that's motherhood, I'm just... Which part of that is. But it was really trying to make sure that Ward was protected from whatever this is, in addition to making sure that Charles was okay, quote-unquote.

So I think if we're speaking to anyone here who is in a marriage, or in a family where they are just noticing the amount of hypervigilance that they have to have or they don't have to have, but that they've developed, they feel, there's a really great program that I'm in and there's a lot of different programs for families and spouses of alcoholics. But, you know, just look into that.

**Charles:** One, it created a little resentment because I felt like I was being parented all the time. Even when maybe I wasn't doing anything wrong, I was like, "I am not a child. Please don't..." So there was a lot of that that slowly but surely is starting to kind of dissipate in a beautiful way, which is great.

**Cassie:** Totally. Everything that is made better in recovery is infinitely better.

**Annie:** Is there a recovery thing, like the family thing you're in? Is there a version for kids?

**Cassie:** There is. There's a teen version. I think that that program starts maybe when they're 10 that they can be in. But there's a lot of adult children of alcoholics that are in my program. You know, a lot of people in my program, maybe the qualifier, that you call them, as to why they're in that program might not be living anymore and their lives are still deeply affected by alcoholism. So, you know, it's changed my life. It really has.

Again, Charles is sober now. I've never been in this program when he has been in active addiction but I know how much it has helped me in his sobriety even that... I mean, if he was in active addiction, it would be truly life-saving.

**Annie:** Cassie, with this weekend coming up being Father's Day, talk about holidays before Charles was sober. What were you praying? What were you thinking about? Like when Father's Day was coming around years ago, the last Father's Days that he was

not sober, what was your experience? Talk to the families who are listening who are about to enter into Father's Day with an addict in their family.

**Cassie:** You know, I think just again going back to that hypervigilance and that anxiety that develops. Like Okay, well, I want to make the brunch reservation here and at this time, but is that going to be late to where he's already going to have been drinking and then it's going to not be fun, and then, okay, well, I'm going to drive home? You know, the amount of details that are constantly in your mind it's exhausting.

I mean, that, again, just saying what Charles said too, that creates the resentment and he's like, "God, no, she's just trying to micromanage all of this." And now I'm more annoyed and I'm... you know, any excuse to drink more. You know, they say sometimes people will drink at you.

**Annie:** Oh gosh, what a fascinating sentence—people drink at you.

**Charles:** Well, I would do that too. Like, tell me not to drink, I'm like, "All right, well, thank you for that. I will show you I'm a grown man."

**Annie:** Wow.

**Cassie:** Or sometimes the alcoholics will pick a fight with you in order to have an excuse to drink more. It's like, "Well, you pissed me off so I had to go drink." So, you know, just that cycle of addiction is tough to get out of without help. But going into holidays, especially Christmas, I know, this past Christmas for us, which was Charles' first Christmas and sobriety was so magical.

**Charles:** It was cool.

**Cassie:** I mean, just the amount of things that he got to witness and be present for and... You know, Christmas Eve. Like Ward is at that just magical age-

**Annie:** I'm sorry to tell you your child's gonna be magical forever.

**Charles:** I know. He's special.

**Annie:** He is like one in a gazillion. He is just a magical person.

**Charles:** He is hilarious. I know. He really is. I mean, obviously, I think that's just the most important... You know, there's many reasons I stopped drinking. But at the end of the day, I mean, I was like, "Okay, this kid is too special. I can't mess this up. I want to be a part of all those experiences." And within it, it's like everything else just got better. So building that trust back.

**Cassie:** But us being able to, on Christmas Eve, listen to Ward. I mean, he at one point was so giddy. He was like, "I'm just so excited." And us being able to just look at each other and be like, "Go, what a gift this is!" We've never had that before. So I think you don't realize going into holidays or going into a Tuesday the burden that it has created just not only on all of the people around the alcoholic, but on the alcoholic too. I mean, that person doesn't want to be that way. We all have just been elevated in so many ways and connection.

**Annie:** Charles, the person who's listening, he's like, "Okay, this is it. I need to quit. I gotta be done," who do they call? What do you do?

**Charles:** Well, of course, I mean, you got AA and all kinds of different places. I think the biggest thing is just being open to try and reach out. I remember being like, I'm not, never in a million years I'm gonna go to some facility like I'm some crazy person. And it took me a few days to settle in there. I mean, I remember feeling like, How in the world did I get here?

**Annie:** Did you worry about people knowing who you are?

**Charles:** Not really. I mean, it just is one of those things I was like, "I'm here, I'm doing this, let's go." But it took me a while. I just did little bit that self-pity. And then it was like, All right, something good is gonna come out of this. And you start getting kind of like, All right.

I don't know. I mean, I think there's a lot of different avenues. And of course, AA is going to be at the top of that list as far as everyone knows about what that is. But there's a lot of different help out there. I think the biggest thing though is community. You've got to be able to share this stuff with people that have been through it and realize that doing it on your own is so much harder. They call it kind of white knuckle. And that just makes you angry.

Half the things I do when I'm in group meetings, I mean, you're really just talking about life, you're talking about stress, you're talking about spirituality. Most of the times we're not talking about alcohol specifically. We're talking about the causes that made us drink and getting to the root causes of those and just being with people. I'm in some groups with guys that, I mean, some of the toughest guys you'll ever meet. And they're as vulnerable. There's nothing non-manly about that. It takes courage to be honest and speak. But it is. I think, you know, no harm is going to come just walking into a room.

**Annie:** Can you go to an AA meeting if you just look it up?

**Charles:** Yeah.

**Cassie:** Yeah.

**Annie:** You can just show up?

**Charles:** Yeah. Of course.

**Cassie:** There's other 12-step programs. But yeah, they're free. And the equivalent for family members is Al-Anon. They're everywhere. You can go to the website and look it up. It's free. Charles, in your industry, which is country music, I mean, what is making the money and topping the charts is beer song and drinking songs. Will you talk a little bit about what's your hope as you continue in this industry as one of the... I mean, y'all are at the top of the mountain globally as a country stars.

**Charles:** I would say definitely we've had our moment, you know, being a band for 16, 17 years.

**Annie:** Yeah. Some people are looking.

**Charles:** But I think for me we realize now that we're never going to be new again. But we want to definitely... what is our legacy? Because, you know, people come along and they're quote-unquote, on the top of the mountain. For us, it's all about longevity. But I think just being true to the music that. I mean, we've got some drinking songs out there, like *Bartender* and *Need You Now*, of course, has that quarter after one, I'm a little drunk, you know. But to me, just being honest to where we are in our own lives and write about that and sing about that.

I think people can tell when you're just throwing something on that isn't you. So I think it would be a little silly for me to be thinking about drinking when everyone knows I'm not. But I would like to definitely have, you know, which is why I wanted to release that song *As Far As You Could*. I didn't think it was gonna be some hit and it's more. I did it because I was like, I just want this out there to tell my story and to show that I want to be more honest in my songwriting and it, you know, came from the heart.

I do hope that there'll be some more, which I think there always is. Country music specifically was in such waves with its sound and its topic matter, and all that stuff. But I think I definitely want to be the band that definitely throws some alternatives out there. You know, we're working on some new music right now but actually about to pick our first single and you know, there isn't any drinking references in those songs. I'm proud of that, that hopefully, you know, we can have something out there that speaks to people that does offer an alternative.

But again, the big thing is there's nothing wrong with drinking. There's nothing wrong with going out there having a good time. My wife still drinks. I mean, most of my friends still drink. I definitely think at times it can be celebrated to where maybe you could, you know, some young kid is like, Oh, I guess I gotta be doing this too.

**Annie:** Yeah, the only way I'm a cool country boy is if I'm-

**Charles:** I don't know. That's a deeper level of conversation and I think want to speak on. But I definitely think that it is nice to have some alternatives out there. Which I've noticed, actually, there's a couple of country artists... I think even Morgan had a song, Morgan Wallen, on his latest record that talked about struggling with drinking.

So I mean, I think, you know, for people to realize that even those guys out there talking about drinking, a lot of them probably are struggling themselves. So I think it's an interesting thing. I mean, I think we definitely can glamorize it a little bit in our genre.

**Cassie:** And not even just in country music. I mean, in American culture in general, alcohol use is everything. And it's so tied to celebrating and mourning, you know, to everything in our lives.

**Charles:** It's always an excuse.

**Cassie:** It's always an excuse.

**Annie:** That's what I feel about Oreos. There's always a reason

**Charles:** I had a great day, let's have a drink. I had a horrible day, let's have a drink.

**Annie:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Cassie:** For myself, the way I'm kind of evaluating my own relationship with alcohol is, okay, am I picking up this glass of whatever because I'm trying to numb something or am I in connection with friends and sharing that time together, you know, where there's a glass of wine or something involved. And I think that makes a difference too of, you know, is this connection or is this numbing? And when you can really differentiate why you're reaching for it, you know, I think that that is-

**Annie:** The connection thing, that is blowing my mind.

**Charles:** Well, totally. I'm getting better at being in social situations without having a drink. That gets easier and easier. I think that's the thing that most people are so afraid of when they stop drinking. "Am I still gonna be fun? Am I gonna be funny?"

**Annie:** "Are people still gonna like me?" Yeah.

**Charles:** And the truth is, I think you find out who your real self is. I definitely have found that I am not as much of a BS as I used to be. Because I've put in a lot of situations where you just have to be nice, you know? And I'm like, "Okay, I definitely was better at it when I had a drink in my hand." But now I'm getting a little bit more comfortable where I'm like, I don't feel like I have to have that. So I think that that kind of anxiety, or just, I don't know, that need to be something else will dissipate.

And again, getting back to our thing. If you're afraid that... no one cares. Half the people... I mean, had a buddy say he was two years sober. We play golf. He goes, "None of you guys knew for two years."

**Annie:** Wow. Right.

**Charles:** We were way more concentrated about our own drinking. I think when that thing is just... You don't have to have it. I think you find out who your true self is. I found out that I love my mornings. I like reading at night with my wife. And now because I'm saving about 1000 calories a day, I ended up eating about 800 of them in ice cream.

**Annie:** I was gonna ask you if something's replaced-

**Charles:** Oh, you got have your sugar fix. So I know have an addictive personality. Which I should do. I should put the ice cream like a normal human being in a bowl.

**Annie:** No, no, no. Straight from the container.

**Cassie:** Straight from the container.

**Charles:** I grab the whole container and I-

**Annie:** What are you eating? What kind is it?

**Charles:** I do mint chocolate chip?

**Annie:** Are you doing like always mint chocolate chip?

**Charles:** Well, I'll do anything.

**Cassie:** There's little cookies and cream mixed in there.

**Charles:** But I can sit there with like the good old Publix mint chocolate chip and knock out half of that without even thinking and knowing I've done it. And then I'm like, "Wow, now I feel awful."

**Annie:** You're like, "Ward, go put this in the freezer."

**Charles:** Actually, that's what I do.

**Cassie:** He's like, "Someone, take this away."

**Charles:** That's it. "Take this away from me right now." So whatever it is, I have an addictive personality. But it's fun though just kind of seeing what else I get into, you know? Like I never really enjoyed working out. I just kind of did it every now and then. But now I'm like, "All right, I like my routine. I like to kind of get out there and take a couple mile run or whatever it is." Man, just different things. You know, going on hikes with Cassie and just finding new little avenues of things that I'm interested in is exciting to me. We'll see where it goes, you know.

**Annie:** We normally go to the Bahamas or take a vacation the week after Christmas, between New Year's. We went back to Harbor Island in the Bahamas, which is the place we love after this Christmas. And that was the first trip kind of vacation we've taken with Charles being sober. And it was so much more fun. Because you wake up feeling good and there's so much more time on your hands that you can do so many more things. I think when you're not thinking about like, "Okay, where am I going to get my next drink? What am I gonna do?" There's so many fun options.

**Charles:** It was kind of a big thing for me, too. It's like, "All right, I'm on vacation, Cassie is probably gonna be a little more lenient. Let me see if I can get a little Bloody Mary here at breakfast or lunch or whatever it is. That is a weird kind of dance. It's like all these little dances you played before I don't have to play anymore. It's just weird when you think about the concept of like, I let a liquid kind of ruin a lot of my life. It's this silly concept, but it's a powerful thing, man, alcohol. And, you know, when it kind of gets its hooks and you're trying to get away from it.

[00:44:02] <music>

**Sponsor:** And I have one more amazing partner to tell you about, [Loop for Women](#) from Gather Ministries. Recently a friend introduced me to Loop for Women, which is a free email devotional written by Jennifer Camp and the team at Gather Ministries. Jennifer's heart for women is so beautiful and her writing goes to the root of what I

think so many of us are struggling with. Questions like, am I enough? Do I matter? Does God see me even when it feels like my life is a mess? I saw her on a Ted Lasso episode, he described his life as a work in "progress". And I feel that.

For nearly 10 years, three times a week, Jennifer has been sending some really helpful content to more than 100,000 women who are already in the Loop community. The content she sends out on Mondays and Thursdays is designed to encounter God through prayer. And it's simple and short, takes about five minutes or less. And then on Friday, she sends a guided kit to help you really go deeper in your time with God. The kits use prayer, music, journal prompts, Scripture, and more.

These encounter kits could be a really great option for your Sabbath when you're wanting to spend more intentional time slowing down and being with God. And one of the best parts, y'all. It is all free, it is all free. And such a beautiful way to help us get into the rhythm of spending time with God each week.

You can learn more and sign up at [loopforwomen.com/tsf](http://loopforwomen.com/tsf) for this free email devotional. Again, that's [loopforwomen.com/tsf](http://loopforwomen.com/tsf).

And now back to finish up our conversation with Charles and Cassie.

[00:45:28] <music>

**Annie:** The last question we always ask is what sounds fun to you? And we're about to do that. But before that-

**Charles:** Ice cream.

**Annie:** Yeah. No, I'm gonna hear about it. Cassie, I'll start with you but Charles I'll have you do this too. Cassie, will you go back and talk to the woman who's sitting in your seat three years ago who thinks, "I am never gonna get out of this. I don't know how to do this."

**Cassie:** Oh, this is gonna make me emotional. Because there was just so many nights where I would just say, "God, either fix this or make me leave because I can't keep doing this." And I read something the other day that was, you know, you develop that codependence when you're in relationship with an alcoholic. And it's like, we just always want to get in that cage with the gorilla. And then all of a sudden you're trying to fix everything, and you don't realize before it is over that you don't have any arms and legs left.

Just you can step out of that cage with the gorilla and get your own help. And there is freedom in that. And whether you're in relationship with someone in active addiction or in sobriety, you have choices too. That doesn't necessarily mean you have to leave your marriage, it doesn't mean you have to change anything other than what's in yourself. Their 12 Step programs, like I said, have changed my life. Reach out for help. There's so many people in your position who want to help you. And know the path to do that.

**Annie:** So you can get help, even if your partner or family member isn't doing it.

**Cassie:** Absolutely. And you can find serenity and you can find peace, even if your partner isn't sober. That help is there. That is a true statement. I mean, if you had told me that I could feel the way that I feel about things last May, a year ago, I mean, that was insane. The fact that we are here now is a miracle. I mean, it's a true miracle. But that is because we have both done this work.

So I think a lot of people who think, "Well, gosh, if that person would just stop drinking, then all of my problems would be solved, I wouldn't be here anymore," that's also not true. The work that you can do for yourself is life-changing. And even if that person doesn't stop drinking, you can still change your life. So...

**Annie:** Thank you. I texted you this, but in the piece with Gayle, I'm gonna cry, at the end where that other anchor says, "Cassie, strength is blinding. That has been true for years. Your strength has been blinding for you.

**Cassie:** Thank you.

**Annie:** And I'd love you too, Charles.

**Charles:** Thank you.

**Annie:** Talk to the person who is you three years ago or two years ago who thinks I'll never get out of this.

**Charles:** Gosh, there's a better way of living. I guess life is more than collecting these fun, heightened, what you thought were fun, heightened moments. You know, that I guess if I was there that, hey, in three years you're going to find out who you really are and what you really love.

**Annie:** Wow.

**Charles:** You know, that it can be an adventure. I think I always looked at it as whenever I was... I knew it was going to happen at some point. Whenever I would have to stop drinking, the fun was over. Party is over.

**Annie:** Pack it up.

**Charles:** Pack it up, you know. And that's not the case. My connection with my wife would actually grow stronger than it ever had before. It feels like we're definitely back to that connection that we had when we first started. I don't know just seeing life with clear eyes. But I think too knowing... You know if I could tell myself then that it wasn't going to be as hard and heartbreaking as I thought it was going to be. I'm not saying it's not hard work.

**Annie:** Right.

**Charles:** But once I made up my mind, I was like, "Gosh, I don't think I have as much of this fear about doing it again like I thought I would have. I don't know. Once you just make up your mind, I think you can completely... That's one thing they say. You never want to say, like, I got this.

**Annie:** Right.

**Charles:** And I'm not saying I got this. I know I constantly have to be working at this. But I do feel because things have gotten so much better, it's like, why would I not keep doing this? It's like, I don't know, there's a beauty to it. There really is. There's a purpose to it. And it's going to lead somewhere for me.

**Cassie:** I think what we've found is the things that you quote-unquote, "give up," you get back just in spades in every way.

**Charles:** Like one of those little weight systems where it's like, I can't lie and say I don't miss this situation. I don't miss this. It definitely made a golf trip a little bit more fun. But then, also on the flip side, well, I used to wake up from those golf trips on the second day and not want to play golf that day or our family vacations weren't... I missed the morning activities because I'm nursing a hangover all morning and all these different things. I now have this stronger relationship with my son and family, our spirits.

To me, I look at things and I'm very realist when it comes to life. I like to look at things and kind of a mathematical plus or minus, and just the pluses are so much more than what you're giving up.

**Annie:** It's been one of my favorite things about hearing you in recovery is I feel like you've told the truth. I mean, you always tell the truth. But I mean, I feel like you've been like, I'm not saying I don't miss it or anything but... I haven't heard a lot of people in recovery give the side of "yeah, I'm still choosing this every day because that was fun." I love that.

**Charles:** I always kind of felt like I was pretty honest with... I mean, I definitely would have some... Trust me, I would lie and hide a lot of drinking stuff but I was pretty honest. I knew I had an issue. I mean, I always thought it was like this funny thing. I was like, "I have an issue, you do too. We all do have. We all drink too much. You know what I mean? I always kind of knew. And I would even share that with the bands. Like, I know, at some point, I gotta stop this, but I want to try to control it first.

And I think that's the biggest thing I just want people to know. Trying to control it and just... You know, I tried to just do beer, just do mine, just do this, that you know, only on certain occasions. If you're really an alcoholic, you can't do that. It will not last. And if you're sober now, picking up one drink is going to lead... And usually what is time and time again here and the stories it always comes back stronger than before.

And I know that. I know in my heart because that time I had done the three months. You know, I kind of taught Cassie and let me have a glass of wine while you're in Paris. And it just made me mad. I wanted more. I remember we got home and I was like, "Well, I'm just gonna do beer and wine. That lasted two weeks. You sneak in it. Next thing you know you're drinking twice as much as I was before. It is a cycle.

**Cassie:** I'll even have friends ask me like, "Do you think he'll at some point just have a glass of wine?" And I was like, "Well, he can't just have one glass of wine. One will never be enough for him. So no."

**Charles:** I do have to admit, though, I do believe in that take it one day at a time.

**Cassie:** Totally.

**Charles:** I think it stresses me out when I think about what I'm gonna do when I'm 60.

**Annie:** 50 more years.

**Charles:** But I feel strongly that I won't. But I definitely know I'm not drinking. I'm not drinking anymore. I don't think I'll drink ever again. But I think you can overwhelm yourself when you start thinking about so far in the future. But I do know that if I did, I guarantee it'd be full bore again.

- Cassie:** But it really is. Like I'll deal with, you know, people will be like, "What if I can't toast my son on their wedding day or whatever." And it's like, "We'll worry about that when that comes."
- Annie:** That's right.
- Cassie:** "But today you're not drinking."
- Annie:** I'm ready for y'all to launch a non-alcoholic drink company. That's what I'm waiting on.
- Cassie:** No, that's the other amazing thing now is there's so many that are coming out right now. There's so many options. I mean, if you love a margarita, you can have a margarita without alcoholic.
- Charles:** There's a lot of discussion about that. My biggest thing like I would have... Cassie had this non-alcoholic wine I had a couple times but I haven't done like in a beer, any of that because it takes so much like beer to me. Also to definitely not like in public... I wouldn't want to have one of those Heineken 0.0 and it's in a bottle.
- Annie:** Right.
- Charles:** Because then it's like, well, I'm doing it because I need to feel... I don't want to test that theory. Because half the people say it's fine, the other half people say it's not. And I'm like, Right now I'm not testing that theory.
- Cassie:** Well, I think, you know, take somebody in recovery out of this. But people that just don't want to drink alcohol, there's a lot of options.
- Charles:** Exactly. And you can still feel social at a party without, you know, water being your only choice.
- Annie:** Right. Sparkling water.
- Cassie:** Totally. Exactly. Now you can have a complex drink that is interesting or pairs well with food and that doesn't have alcohol in it.
- Charles:** Or it's just a good old diet Coke.
- Annie:** There you go. Keeping it right. The last question we always ask. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, y'all gotta tell me what sounds fun to you these days.
- Charles:** Like a perfect day?

**Annie:** Yeah.

**Charles:** All right, here's my perfect day.

**Cassie:** Okay.

**Charles:** I wake up, get to read my book for about 30 minutes, connect with my family, snuggle a little bit, do some stuff, go to the golf course, shoot a beautiful round of 72. It's possible-

**Annie:** Is that 18 holes?

**Charles:** That's 18 holes.

**Annie:** You'd like to hit somebody 72 and 18 holes?

**Charles:** I like to play 18 holes. I like to have a really nice meal afterwards. Like to come home, have a cooked meal with a family. I get to go out, grill some steaks, or whatever. Maybe hop on the pool. And then finish it off with a little *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*-

**Annie:** Yes.

**Charles:** ...and an entire gallon of mint chocolate chip ice cream.

**Annie:** Have you and Barnes talked about this on the road? You know, that's his thing too.

**Charles:** Is that his thing?

**Annie:** Yeah. Y'all got a-

**Cassie:** They're on different buses. So they-

**Annie:** Oh, yeah, I don't know.

**Charles:** I love ice cream.

**Cassie:** Our tour manager, though, who's also sober-

**Annie:** I love him.

**Cassie:** ...and he's an ice cream guy as well. So their bus is-

**Annie:** Oh, got it.

**Cassie:** He's on Charle's bus.

**Annie:** He's a good dude.

**Charles:** Yeah, he's great. He's great.

**Annie:** I really like him.

**Charles:** It helps having someone too that kind of... You know, not keeping an eye but just knowing that you're there and knows the language.

**Annie:** I think that makes a ton of sense. Have y'all finished *Mrs. Maisel*?

**Charles:** Yes, I just did.

**Cassie:** No. The betrayal of watching it without me.

**Charles:** What was the one she used to get really mad when I would go ahead on one show?

**Cassie:** Well, because we, you know, that was like we had a show together.

**Charles:** I know.

**Cassie:** Man, all of a sudden I gotta catch up.

**Charles:** Well, you go in waves. You get into a show and then you'll...

**Annie:** And then get out.

**Cassie:** I was about to say I have not finished *Maisel*. But he has I guess.

**Annie:** It's great. What sounds fun to you, Cas?

**Cassie:** We are renovating a house in the Bahamas right now and the interior design has been really, really fun.

**Annie:** You're so good at it.

**Cassie:** Well, have a great designer that we work with. But what sounds fun to me is what we're planning to do this summer is just going down there as a family and having

lazy beach days and just nothing on the schedule and just having that quality time together.

**Annie:** Thank y'all for doing this today.

**Charles:** Thank you.

**Annie:** I love you guys so much.

**Cassie:** Thanks, Annie. We love That Sounds Fun.

**Annie:** I'm not going anywhere. I'm with you all.

**Charles:** Appreciate you.

**Annie:** We're doing it.

[00:57:36] <music>

**Outro:** Oh friends, aren't they the best? I'm just so thankful. I'm so thankful for Charles' strength and honesty and kindness to share his story, his vulnerability, and for Cassie's just strength, as we said, it is blinding, and her generosity and sharing her part of this story. I've just learned so,, so much from both of them and I'm so hopeful about what the future holds for their family.

Y'all don't miss Lady A out on tour this summer. You know our buddy Dave Barnes is out with them too. I'm telling you, their request line tour is something special. I saw them here at the Ryman and I laughed and I cried but also dah always Annie. So go to [ladyamusic.com](http://ladyamusic.com) to get tickets to that. And you've got to listen to Charles's breakup song with alcohol. It's called *As Far As You Could*. Y'all, you can hear the raw honesty in his voice in this one and it will blow you away. It's available everywhere you love to listen to music.

Okay, so y'all heard what sounds fun to Charles and Cassie, now we get to hear what sounds fun to one of our friends who is listening just like you.

All right, Beth, longtime friend, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, I've been dying to know, tell me what sounds fun to you.

**Beth:** I am best from Beth from Bethlehem, Georgia. Not to be mistaken for the Holy Land. Georgia. What sounds fun to me? Do I have to pick just one thing?

**Annie:** Heck no.

**Beth:** Okay. What sounds fun to me today is today is Max's 11th birthday.

**Annie:** Oh, I love it.

**Beth:** Yeah. Just got out of school yesterday, so he's excited. Has a friend over. We're going to Gwinnett Stripers' game.

**Annie:** Yes. That's the baseball?

**Beth:** Yeah

**Annie:** Yeah. That's the Minor League Baseball team. That's awesome. Do y'all love going to those games?

**Beth:** We love it. We actually love that more than going into Atlanta.

**Annie:** Yeah. I mean, it's Triple-A so you're seeing really good players.

**Beth:** Yeah. We've seen Austin Reilly, we've seen Freddie Freeman, we've seen Brian McCann.

**Annie:** So for people who don't know, there are times when Major Leagues guys when they're doing rehab or when they just are taking a break from the majors, they will put them on the Triple-A and have a play for a couple of weeks and then bring it back up. So you often get to see really good like Major League players alive.

**Beth:** That's right.

**Annie:** That's awesome. Okay, what's your everything?

**Beth:** We saw Freddie and Austin before they went to Atlanta.

**Annie:** Oh, that's awesome.

**Beth:** So yeah, yeah. My other is October Callie and I are going back to Vegas to see Adele.

**Annie:** Oh man, I want to see that show so bad.

**Beth:** Oh, mind blown. It was so incredible when we saw it in December.

**Annie:** It's worth it doing it twice.

**Beth:** Oh, it was worth it.

**Annie:** Okay, I'm glad to hear you say that, Beth, because I've really considered it and I have not pulled the trigger yet.

**Beth:** Go. Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh.

**Annie:** Okay, I believe you.

**Beth:** You might be out of luck right now, but I don't think she's gonna be done.

**Annie:** You're like, Annie good luck getting tickets but...

**Beth:** Yeah.

**Annie:** Oh, Adele it is.

**Beth:** You can get tickets but-

**Annie:** My whole savings account.

**Beth:** Yes. Yes.

**Annie:** I believe you. I believe you. Good answers, Beth. Well done.

All right, if you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find, especially because I'm out on tour. I am so easy to find. I'm Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that's how you can find me. And don't forget you can find the That Sounds Fun podcast on Instagram @thatsoundsfunpodcast.

And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me, well, listen, we did our show last night here in Nashville in the 615 on 615. And I'm just so happy to be heading up to Chicago today. So Chicagoans we'll see you in Naperville tonight. I cannot wait.

Y'all have a great Father's Day weekend. Happy Father's Day to my dad Mr. F. Downs and to all of the dads out there who are raising kids, all the men who are stepping in and helping father children in their community and helping raise the next generation. We are grateful for every man who invests his life in the next generation.

**Episode 475: Charles and Cassie Kelley on the Journey to Sobriety, the Power of Connection, and Combating Shame  
That Sounds Fun with Annie F. Downs**

We will see you back here on Monday. As our Summer Lovin' series continues, we dive into a super fascinating conversation about dating and the five love languages with my friend Craig Allen Cooper as well as my friends Mike and Lillian. You know Lillian. She's on the pod. Y'all have a great weekend. Happy Father's Day. See y'all on Monday.