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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. If you're enjoying a day off of this Labor Day weekend, sitting by the pool or traveling, we're so glad you chose to bring us along for the ride.

Before we dive into today's conversation, I want to tell you about one of our incredible sponsors, [AG1](#). Listen, I love starting my day with AG1. I really do. I can totally tell a difference when I kick the day off drinking it. I have more energy. My brain is clear. It really helps me start with getting in my nutritional foundation for the day.

AG1 is a nutrition supplement that delivers daily nutrients and gut health support. And it's backed by multiple research studies, so you can trust what you're drinking. When I wake up, I just take one scoop of AG1 with really cold water, and I love to throw in some frozen lemon juice, too. You guys, if you know, you know. And then I'm good to go.

If there's one product I trust with my whole body health, it is AG1. And that's why I've partnered with them for so long. It's easy and satisfying to start your journey with AG1. Try AG1 and get a free one-year supply of vitamin D3K2 and five free AG1 travel packs with your first purchase at drinkag1.com/soundsfun. That's drinkag1.com/soundsfun. Check it out.

Intro: Today on the show, we get to talk about the Enneagram again. Listen, if you didn't catch our EnneaSummer 2024 series back in July, we'll link the playlist in the show notes for you. But today is one of our favorite experts. She's back. We're talking about the Enneagram specifically for moms.

Beth McCord, better known as your Enneagram coach, is here. And her latest book, *Enneagram for Moms*, released this summer. It is such a helpful tool for women trying to better understand themselves and better understand how they interact with their children.

Whether you're raising your own kids or leading a classroom of them, loving on nieces or nephews, or being a spiritual mom to the MiniBFFs in your life, I think you're really going to find this one helpful.

So here's my conversation with my friend and your Enneagram coach, Beth McCord.

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Annie: Beth McCord, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

Beth: Yeah, thanks for having me.

Annie: I am so glad you are here. We were just talking about that you were on Episode 53, 900 episodes ago, and then you also helped us kick off EnneaSummer when the first time we ever did it in 2019, because you are Your Enneagram Coach.

Beth: I am.

Annie: I love it. Thanks for being back.

Beth: Yeah. Thanks for having me. This is going to be so great.

Annie: I know. I'm so thrilled. Okay. So when we did EnneaSummer in 2019, the Enneagram industry, I don't know if that's the right word, was so different than it is now.

Beth: It is.

Annie: And it has gone through ebbs and flows of people liking it, not liking it, the church getting behind it, the church not getting behind it, people getting loud on the internet, people not getting loud on the... I mean, it's just been such a thing. Why do you still do this? Why didn't you walk away when things got loud or when...? I mean, why do you still believe in the Enneagram?

Beth: Well, I'll tell you, because it's my mission statement. So our mission statement says, we're here to help people to understand themselves with astonishing clarity so they can break free from self-condemnation, fear, and shame by knowing and experiencing the unconditional love, forgiveness, and freedom in Christ.

So really the Enneagram isn't even in my mission statement. But the Enneagram helps us to gain that clarity of who we actually are and more importantly whose we are. Now, of course, the Enneagram's not talking about Jesus Christ. That's where we bring the gospel into the work that we do at Your Enneagram Coach.

But so many of us do not have the clarity of why we think, feel, and behave. And that is what Christ is getting to. It's not about our behaviors. It's about the heart. And so wouldn't it be great if we could understand our hearts better so that we can surrender and depend on Him to guide us to be more like Him, but in who He created us to be?

You and I are different Enneagram types. So often, you know, we look at influencers or teachers or read books and we're like, Oh, well, I guess I got to be like that. And we try to morph. It's like, no, let's take a look at how God created you and what does that actually look like to be the healthiest version or another way of saying it, aligned with the truth of the gospel so that your life is full of joy and then it bubbles over into the lives of others.

So that is why I haven't gotten out. And I won't get out because it has so impacted my life, my marriage, my parenting, my friendships, and on and on. And I see it so often the same in other people's lives. So here we go.

Annie: I have found it... I mean, our audience is not surprised to hear me say this, but it has been one of the most healing tools for me. Not painless, right? But healing. I mean, it's been surgical for me where this is really important to get done, but it is going to hurt and it's going to require some healing.

One of our feedback after this summer when we did EnneaSummer with the triads and especially when you do how to do healthy relationship based on your triad, your type, the feedback was there were still a lot of people who can't figure out what number they are.

Beth: Oh yeah.

Annie: Is there a step we're missing? How come.... So my friend listening says, "Yeah, I've listened to all the EnneaSummers, I follow Beth, I follow Annie, I cannot figure out my number." Is there a secret code we're missing?

Beth: Well, yes and no. So we are very complicated beings and though the Enneagram is going to help you to know your main type... I have a book called *More Than Your Number* because you are literally more than your main type. There are your wings, the two, numbers that come off your number with lines, which I call the Enneagram pass. Other people call it lines and arrows. Those are four personalities that you're directly connected to like you're using a ton in healthy, average and unhealthy ways depending on where you currently at.

And then depending on your level of health, you're going to look radically different. So a healthy eight is going to look radically different than an unhealthy eight. Like we're talking Martin Luther King Jr. all the way down to a Saddam Hussein. Like very, very different.

Annie: I mean, Annie 24-year-old and Annie 44-year-old.

Beth: Right. Exactly.

Annie: Two very different Enneagram sevens.

Beth: But your core motivations have stayed the same.

Annie: That's exactly right.

Beth: And so when you read all of my materials, I am constantly pointing people back to the four core motivations that we talk about at your Enneagram coach. And everything hinges on those core motivations. And so if someone's like, I don't know my type, first try to find which of the core motivations. You can go to yourenneagramcoach.com/coremotivations and get a free PDF download on all the core motivations and rank them, like, totally like me, not like me at all and see which ones really resonate with you and then maybe try it on for a day or two.

But, you know, there's so many things happening within you. When I'm really stressed out., I see a lot of my six coming out, even though I'm a type nine. So when I'm in really stressful seasons and I'm trying to figure out my type, guess what? I might be very confused.

Here's the other thing. Type nines and type sixes typically have the hardest time finding their type.

Annie: Oh, interesting.

Beth: Because nine see through all nine lenses and we're just going along to get along. So it kind of just depends on.

Annie: Yeah, probably that.

Beth: Yeah, exactly. Now, the sixes, on the other hand, they are the most kind of complicated because they're contradictory to any two terms. So they can be brave and scared. They can be extroverted and introverted. So basically the sixes are constantly saying, well, it depends.

Annie: Oh, interesting.

Beth: So you bring up one characteristic and a different characteristics and they're like, Well, it depends. So if you're saying it depends, you might want to start looking at the six.

Annie: I never say it depends. I would never. You'd be like, Are you like this? I'm like, A hundred percent. I'm like that. And I would never say, well, you know.

Beth: And I mean, a nine-

Annie: Are you extroverted? Yeah. Yeah. There's never a time I'm like, Oh, it depends on the situation. No, I'm always me.

Beth: And a nine might say that only because it kind of depends on who they are trying to accommodate to, which is very different than a six. A six is very real and authentic. They want to be authentic. Anyway, so, hey, if you're still struggling, we've got coaches that can help you and they'll do a typing interview and they've been well-trained to help you find your type. But some people, it just takes some time and that's okay.

There's so many layers to the Enneagram. You know, we can talk about instinctual subtypes. There's three subtypes to each Enneagram type and then you add the wings and the... no one needs to know all of that unless they're really getting stuck.

The biggest thing is if people can just hone in first and foremost on those core motivations. Even in your own growth, you are going to get so far personally and in your relationships. Yes, the wings impact you. Yes, the Enneagram paths impact you. All of those impact you. But if you were just to focus on the core motivations, you will get so far.

Annie: When we were talking about relationships over the summer, there was feedback. I asked in every episode, are there numbers that don't match? Like if you're getting married or if you are married, are there numbers that don't match? And the answer is always no, every number matches.

There are still friends of mine who say, "I think my life is harder because I'm a this and I'm married to this," or "I'm a this and I'm married to this."

Beth: That's true, but it's also not true. So all two types together, when they're healthy, they are the most incredible couple or friends or coworkers. Anytime any of us are kind of getting into that average mode and definitely unhealthy, the relationship is going to really struggle at different levels.

But yes, even two healthy, let's say a five and a seven. I know a lot of fives and seven marriages and they're doing great, but yeah, they're going to have the struggle of one wanting to constantly go and do and the other one's like, Whoa, I need to kind of be by myself and recharge.

You've got a nine and eight, right? Like that's going to be really hard. Eight loves confrontational intimacy, which is literally the nine's greatest fear, right? So there

are going to be aspects with every Enneagram type that are going to rub up against each other. So you can have two eights together. I know a couple that's two eights and they are fabulous.

Annie: Oh my gosh. I bet they are wild.

Beth: Wild. When they're healthy they're just so amazing. But obviously things can turn on a dime.

Annie: Gosh. Two eights. Beth!

Beth: Okay. I also-

Annie: What a dream.

Beth: One of my closest friends is a nine and she's married to a nine and people might think, Oh, well that's like the best relationship because they're probably so kind to one another. Yes. And they can get catatonic and really not go anywhere in life.

Annie: I bet making decisions is hard in that household.

Beth: Right. "Well, I don't care." "What do you want to do?" "I don't care." "What do you want to do?" So I really want to emphasize yes to the point that any two couple types that are together, no matter what combination, yeah, you're going to rub against each other because you see the world differently or you're at different levels of health or growth or whatever it is, stages of life. We have different life stories, different passions and desires.

So that is not the issue. The issue is, are you growing? Are you taking good care of yourself? Are you able to understand yourself with clarity so that you can become the healthiest version God has created you to be?

Annie: Wow.

Beth: And you're not sitting around trying to correct the other person or fix the other person for your sake. That's God's work to do in and for them. Now, yes, work together, but work on yourself. And self-regulation is so important. Doing your own inner story work, man, that too is so incredible.

Annie: I have a bad block when I'm thinking about who I'm dating about going like, well, I don't know if I want to be with this guy. So talk to our dating friends, our single friends. I am doing a disservice to myself by striking off numbers or having a moment when a dude tells me his number and I go, Oh, golly. So talk to us about it.

For those of us who have not picked a partner yet, where does finding out their Enneagram type rank to you of how quick does that happen? How slow does that happen? And how much does it matter?

Beth: You know, I would say... Well, one, I would say it matters greatly. But I think it depends on what you mean by that, right? If you're doing it to filter someone out, Man, you really are doing a disservice to yourself. Really understanding yourself and what would naturally kind of trigger you or set you off, again, the core motivations mainly, you're going to better understand why any of the types might be unattractive to you in some form or fashion or you're attracted to them. And that's okay.

God gives us just natural desires to move towards certain people and not to certain people. Our family stories play a big part of that. Maybe you dated someone and they were totally not great and you want to stay away from that for one reason or another. So I think-

Annie: Yeah, that's one of my problems is I go, he was a this and I don't want to do that again. And that's not fair to the rest of the eights. It would never be an eight. But I mean, I would love an eight. So in this example, if I had a bad experience with an eight, what my brain is doing is, well, I will never try that again.

Beth: And that's also, I think, what's sad about how people use the Enneagram. They use it as a sword or a shield.

Annie: Oh, interesting.

Beth: And kind of what you're even saying, it's kind of like you're using it as a chisel. Like, I'm going to chisel my man just the way I want it and he needs to be just like this. And it's like it just doesn't work that way. God knows who He wants you to be with. The biggest thing I would focus in on beyond their Enneagram type is are they actively growing and understanding themselves? That bottom line is the most important thing.

If they aren't willing to know themselves... And I'm not saying Enneagram. It could be anything. Like knowing their own story. What activates them? Why do they act certain ways? And they can use a multitude of tools out there. Of course, I think the Enneagram is pretty spectacular.

But all that to be said is, where are they? Are they growing and are they kind of focusing on their walk with Christ and that that's fulfilling to them versus looking at a spouse or a girlfriend that is going to be a project to them or they're going to work

on or fix? And it's like, no, they need to work on themselves and we need to work on ourselves.

For me, the biggest thing is understanding they are in the growth path and they're willing, they're humble. Even if they're the strong types, like eight, they're like, "Hey, I've got some blind spots. I got to work on this. I've got to go do my work over here. You go do your work over there and then we'll meet together and talk it through." That's the most important thing.

Now, of course, knowing one's Enneagram type is so helpful because then you can understand why they're doing certain things or thinking certain things. It's like you and I. In my Enneagram symbol you're a red and I'm a purple. So I've got purple glasses on and you got red glasses on. We think we're seeing the same, but we are not.

And so when we kind of come at odds or see things differently, well, why not I take off my lens for a second and put your lens on? And that's where all these Enneagram resources can be helpful because I can say, "Hey, Annie, when you did that, it landed on me in this way. This is how I see it or feel it. Is that what you were doing or your intentions? If not, where were you or what were you hoping to come across?" That changes the game.

But me knowing you're a seven, I can kind of start with the position of, yeah, we're different and that's okay. But I also need clarity. I can't just let it slip by. We need to grow. So that's what I would say.

Annie: I'm really curious what I'm thinking about. Like, even as we're thinking about where the world is right now in the US, with elections coming up, is anyone not stressed? Like, is anyone operate...? I don't think I know anyone genuinely who is operating with the same ease of life that we maybe felt a decade ago.

Beth: I think absolutely true. I think the question I would say or push back on to all of us, and I'm including myself in this, is the concept that being under stress is wrong or bad. Christ was under so much stress He was bleeding. His sweat, you know.

So being under stress, especially as a human... You know, He was God, so He obviously dealt with it perfectly. But being under stress or struggling or learning and growing, that's not wrong or bad. I think it's how are we doing it? I think that's what really matters.

And so we're all going to go through seasons that are harder or less hard, but we're on this side of heaven. It's all hard. And so where are we fixating our attention? I think first and foremost, that needs to be... He has fully taken care of us. And so

when we look at the core motivations, you have a core fear, desire, weakness, and longing.

When I get down to the core longing, this is the message your heart longs to hear and experience. And people are like, yes, oh my gosh, or I'm trying to get that with my relationships, my job, my parenting. And I'm like, yeah, but here's the cool news. Christ has already satisfied your core longing.

And that's the moment where transformation starts to happen because we no longer have to get it anywhere else but Him. And so when we recognize that, we can come to Him with all the stressors in the world and know that He is going to meet us right where our needs are. But the victory has already been won as He still works in and through us.

That's why, for me, the Enneagram is so important because I am constantly like Jeremiah 2:13-

Annie: Oh, I don't even know. I've never even thought Jeremiah 2:13. Look at you.

Beth: This is like one of my favorite verses. So Jeremiah 2.13 says, "They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, cisterns that are broken that cannot hold water." So a cistern can be like a vase. Back in the days, they would have kind of like a well. So they called it a cistern inside the city. And so when the city had to be fortified and sealed off, they had to put water into it. It's not like a well where it's fresh. They would put water into it.

Well, you know what your water's like on your nightstand the next day? It's kind of like gross and stale. Think about that. But worse because it's been there for a while and animals are kind of getting into it. So a cistern is just not that great.

So think of a pool, so to speak, and you put water into it, but then it's broken. What's going to happen? It's not going to hold water. When it's gross, it's not going to hold water. And so you're constantly having to put water into it and replenish it when literally right next to us is the spring of living water. It's fresh. It gives us life.

And so what God is saying, come right back to me. Everything you need is literally with you right now. So that's where with the Enneagram, we need to use it as a tool to go, Hey, I don't have to shame myself. I don't have to guilt myself. I don't have to judge myself because that's been taken care of by Christ on the cross.

Yes, I need to admit. I need to apologize. I need to own what's going on. But I bring it to Christ knowing that He is working in and through me and there is where rest and joy comes. And so it's not like I'm going, I have no problems in life. No, I have

a lot of things I'm working on, but I know that He is doing that work in and through me. And I can walk through this really, really hard season of life knowing that the end game of it all is His victory and that I'm okay.

So I just think, yeah, this is... I mean, for me, honestly, this is one of the hardest seasons I've been through. And I've been through a lot of hard seasons. And I feel like God is constantly saying, fix your eyes on Me. Actually, I'll show you. This is what I have on my phone all the time.

Annie: Oh my gosh. A sheep.

Beth: And so for those that are listening, it's just this really beautiful sheep and it's nestled against the chest of its owner. But the owner has his hand right where the neck is and he's gently pulling that sheep in. And you can tell that the sheep has finally rested, probably stopped fighting.

The reason why I have that picture on my phone is I'm always forgetting who I am and where I am and whose I am. And so I have that on my phone because I'm like, when I'm feeling like, "Oh, I need to make someone happy" or, "oh my gosh, conflict. What does this mean?" Of course, because I'm a type nine. When all of my things are being activated and I'm trying to get life a certain way and control it, I can look at that phone and go, "Oh, wait, actually my real status is secure. I can calm down here. He's got me." And then reorient my mind in a new and a different way.

But I use the Enneagram to reorient my mind because I know why I'm getting activated and also what's going to settle me.

Annie: Yeah.

[00:21:28] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Shopify](#). When you think about the businesses that are selling like crazy, like Skims or Thrive Causemetics, you know, we love them around here or Magic Spoon, I love that cereal, you typically think about how great their products are and how cool their brand is, how brilliant they are at marketing. But an often overlooked secret is actually the businesses behind the business, the ones making, selling, and for shoppers buying, super simple.

For millions of businesses, the behind the scenes magic is Shopify. And that's true for us too at [shopanniefdowns.com](#), which 40% off all weekend, by the way. We

don't get to put cute sweatshirts or water balls in your hands without the help of Shopify.

So if you're into growing your business, make sure your commerce platform is ready to sell wherever your customers are scrolling or strolling on the web and your store and their feed and everywhere in between. Businesses that sell more sell on Shopify. Upgrade your business and get the same checkout Thrive Causemetics and shopannieffdowns.com uses.

Sign up for your \$1 per month trial period at shopify.com/soundsfun, all lowercase. Go to shopify.com/soundsfun to upgrade your selling today. [Shopify.com/soundsfun](https://shopify.com/soundsfun).

That link and pretty much every other link you could ever hope for are in the show notes or in Friday's AFD Week in Review that we will send straight to you. Make sure you've signed up for that. You can do that in the show notes as well.

Sponsor: Okay, friends, I've got to tell you about an organization that I have loved for over a decade. If you're looking for some really cute fall items, but also want to do some shopping that makes a real difference, you've got to check out [Mercy House Global](https://MercyHouseGlobal.org). Seriously, their fall collection has some adorable pumpkins you can decorate with, fall candles you will love and some super cute earrings too.

Every purchase supports their mission to empower vulnerable women and families worldwide. There are a ton of women around the world who face economic hardships and have limited opportunities. So Mercy House Global shop provides beautiful handcrafted products and a pathway to self-sufficiency for artisans in need.

When you shop with them, you're supporting real women, promoting fair trade and sustainable practices, and providing crucial income to those who need it most. Every item tells a story of hope and transformation.

Visit MercyHouseGlobal.org to browse their fall collection and make a purchase that truly counts. And if you use the code ANNIE, my name, A-N-N-I-E, at checkout, you're going to get 25% off, you guys. Every item provides hope and a step towards a better future. Mercy House Global, shop with purpose, change lives. Go to MercyHouseGlobal.org and again, use the code ANNIE at checkout for 25% off their fall collection.

Sponsor: So I'm headed to New York and it is time to get my [Thrive Market](https://ThriveMarket.com) order ready. It is legit one of my favorite things. I've got some of my favorite snacks and pantry essentials. I want them on my doorstep when I arrive. Y'all know I don't love

grocery shopping, but I love Thrive Market because I can easily shop for healthy groceries without actually leaving my couch.

Thrive Market has a filtering system on their website to make it easy for you to find what you're looking for: Low sugar, high protein, gluten-free, nut-free. Plus, I save so much time and money and I find exactly what I'm looking for all while having it delivered right to my door.

They have some of my favorite snacks. I love all things Siete brand. I'm sure you do too. We were just snacking on their chips and salsa at lunch. It's so good. And if you're in Single Purpose League, you know we bring a cracker snack to every chapter meeting this year and Simple Mills has some of my favorite crackers.

Save time and money by getting it all in one place with Thrive Market. Go to thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun for 30% off your first order plus a free \$60 gift. That's ThriveMarket.com/thatsoundsfun. ThriveMarket.com/thatsoundsfun.

Okay, now back to our conversation with Beth.

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Annie: So your new book, *The Enneagram for Moms*, I mean, that shepherd picture is pretty profound for moms. I have a really interesting life because as a non-mom and I grew up in a city, I live in a city and I live in New York. So I grew up in Atlanta, I live in Nashville, I live in New York.

My friends in Atlanta have middle schoolers, high schoolers, my peers, my exact age. My peers here have elementary and my peers in New York are having kids. And so because of the different cultures there, I have friends my exact age that have newborns and college freshmen.

Beth: And you have me as a friend and I have a grandbaby.

Annie: That's right. That's right. That's exactly right. And so I'm seeing a lot of women mom in a lot of different seasons. So I'm thinking about the moms listening and I'm going like, Okay, *Enneagram for Moms*. Do we need to be starting? Do I need to have a newborn for this book to be right? Or have I missed my chance to be a good Enneagram based mother if my kids are 19?

Beth: Now, the great thing is I wrote this for all moms of all ages. I mean, we're talking like my mom has this book and she's 81. It would be amazing if she were to really get into it and understand one herself, but also understand how I see the world. And for us to have those conversations even now would be so cool.

But it really is for moms of all ages. It's not just for the toddlers out there. I mean, here's the thing. I wrote the book they need, not the book they want. What I mean by that is we can't type our kids. They have to find their own type. And that the earliest is somewhere in their teenage years. If they have kind of those old souls, those minds, the mature minds that they've actually really investigated themselves, which is kind of rare. So that would be the earliest. But it's usually when they're older that they can understand which of the core motivations are theirs.

So then what do you do if you don't know your kid's type? Well, that's where this book comes in. This is really focusing on the mom and her own developmental story. And so, hey, you can start that when you're 81, when you're 61, when you're 31, whatever age you are. This book is going to help you to be a mom that nurtures. But even if you're not a mom, this book is a great way for you to understand your story with your mom and where might she have been coming from? How can you have a new story with your mom?

So I really think that this is going to be a powerful book because a lot of it just speaks to how we as women have just lived our lives in our society and how to use the Enneagram for healing and resources.

Annie: As I was reading the book, I found it so interesting thinking about all my MiniBFFs in the villages I'm in where I am a mothering voice, thinking about my nephew and my cousin's kids that I'm a part of raising them. But then also just going like, Oh, this is helping me in everywhere that I'm a mother. Because even though I'm not raising a kid in my house, I am certainly always asking who's going to take care of me, no matter what the relationship is. And so to do that in a healthy way.

I mean, I know you're a mom, but why was this the next thing you wanted to write? Is this something, are moms asking about this a lot?

Beth: I think so. But honestly, I wrote it for myself. I started using the Enneagram back in 2001 when my kids were one and three years old. They're now 24 and 26. So I started using Enneagram back then because I didn't understand myself.

Like a lot of us women, the first story in the book is I went to the playground at the seminary and all these other moms come out and I'm like, Oh my gosh, she's such an amazing leader with her kids. And she's strong. And then there's this mom over here, she's so creative and deep. And there's that mom over there, she's so fun. Not me.

So I go home and I tell my husband, "Yeah, these people are so amazing. What's wrong with me?" And he's like, "Okay, wait, one, Beth, you just took all their

amazing attributes because when they go out to the playground, they're kind of putting their best foot forward. But you've taken all of these amazing attributes of lots of women and you've created one super woman or super mom." It doesn't exist. And I was like, "Huh, yeah, I can kind of see where you're coming from. Like, I'm literally trying to become something that doesn't exist. All these attributes in one person."

But then he said, "But Beth you also don't know what they're struggling with behind their apartment closed doors, just like you're struggling." I was like, "Wow, you're so right." So it just changed my trajectory. And so then as I was using the Enneagram, I could see more fully how a book like this would speak to not just moms, but women in general. Like, God created you to be you.

And when we talk about the Enneagram, you know, on the front of the book is a bunch of paint brushes-

Annie: Yeah, it's beautiful.

Beth: ...with different splatters of paint. We each think of each of the Enneagram types as being a color. So like me, purple. I'm not just purple. Like, I have a story. I have, you know, likes, dislikes, talents. That all becomes a different shade of purple. So when you walk into Sherwin-Williams, you're not like, Just give me purple. You might be like, Hey, can you give me lavender or lilac?

So we each have our own uniqueness to ourselves. And so what we want to do is to learn more about who He created us to be. When God created me to be a type nine for my two kids, He didn't make a mistake. Now, oftentimes I felt like I am not who I should be, or I'm not strong, or I'm not whatever. And God's like, no, I created you to be a type nine for them. I want you to focus on healing yourself, growing to be the mom that you were created to be, and then give your kids this gift.

Now, here's the big thing, though. God didn't create us to actually create many versions of ourselves.

Annie: Oh, my gosh. I loved reading that in the book where you're like, Hey... because of course I go to the seven step first. And you're like, "If you're a seven, you're trying to raise little sevens."

Beth: Exactly.

Annie: And I was like, That is what I do to my nephew and the other kids. I'm like, let's play games. I'm the fun mom.

Beth: Now, I don't want to overstep here and say, well, then don't be your type. Like, no, God created you to be a seven for your nephew and niece. God created me to be a nine. So He wants us to give our kids a gift that I'm showing my kids empathy and compassion and understanding people. So I'm giving them that gift. But if I'm forcing them to be a peaceful accommodator, that's just not going to work for them.

I mean, let's just take the example of me as being a type nine. I don't have a type eight daughter, but let's say I did. Can you imagine this girl being strong, brave, assertive, saying what needs to be said? I'm going to be like, Yeah, no, we are not doing that. You are too strong. You are too boisterous. That's too blunt. That's too direct. And then all of a sudden we're having this battle because I'm thinking the right way to be is calm, peaceful, quiet. And so I would be trying to force her into being the purple color when God created her to be maroon.

So that's where as parents, we get to learn how we get to be a part of their life, but not creating their life. That is His work to be done. So it's really being curious and understanding our kids, but first understanding ourselves.

And I know a lot of people are there as like, Okay, how do you do all this? You don't. You walk day by day, learning, growing, being curious about your kids, having a non-anxious connected presence and really leaning on God.

Because guess what? Even as a type nine, and I'm, let's say, giving the best of who I am to my kid. And it is the best. Let's say it's really, really healthy and good. It can also land on that child in a way that doesn't make sense to them. That type eight daughter might be feeling like, my mom just wants me to be quiet. And maybe like, I'm not even saying that. I'm not even wanting that. But that's just the overall feeling and tone.

Annie: Oh, interesting.

Beth: And so she might be picking up on something and interpreting it in her world in a different way. So here as parents, this is where if we can have that non-anxious connected presence with God first, then when they say something has hurt them, we don't have to be all defensive and like, no, I'm not doing that. I'm doing... You know, I can be like, "I can see how that may be landed on you that way. Here's where my heart was. But I'm sorry that it landed on you that way. I would love to try to restore that. What would that look like for you?"

I mean, you know, as a type seven, can you imagine like if you had a type five mom, she would want you to really settle down.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Beth: Let's all have our quiet time in our room for five hours a day. That would kill your soul. Now she might be thinking, "Well, I'm giving this as a gift because doesn't everyone's energy reserves get depleted in five seconds?" And you're like, "No." And so even though she might be thinking she's giving you the best to have time alone, man, your heart's like aching, right?

So that's where it's so cool to have these conversations, of course, when they're older, you know. But you can have curious conversations and be inquisitive when they're younger. But can you imagine having that conversation with your mom and saying, you know, how this unfolded in our household, it landed on me like this. I'm sure you were doing the best you could. But it really kind of was hard for me. And my kids have had to do that to us. And it's like, Wow, I can totally see how that was hard for you. And I'm really sorry."

In the book, we talk about how to apologize and repair because it's so important. We will make mistakes, even if we're not intending, like I just said. But it's in the repair. And kids are so resilient and forgiveness. It's incredible. But we have to do the hard work of owning it and asking for forgiveness.

Annie: One of the things I hear my mom friends talk about, one of the shames is when they don't get along well with their kids, when it isn't an easy personality match. It is one of the things that feels like it takes three hours of talking and then... and I'll be in the room with a bunch of moms and we'll be three hours in and then someone will say, "Hey, this is really hard for me because I would never make a decision like that." Or "this is really hard for me because I don't like sports and he always wants to be playing sports" or whatever it is.

Talk to us about that shame. Because I can imagine there's a mom listening who has a 4-year-old and that mom is a two who is so nurturing and so kind and that 4-year-old is an eight or that four-year-old is a four who's feeling everything and the mom can't. What do we do? How do we deal with that shame? Is that a real shame? Am I naming a true thing?

Beth: Absolutely.

Annie: Okay. So how do we deal with that shame when we don't necessarily... when anyone can feel like the reason I don't quote "like my kid" is because my kid's a whatever number?

Beth: Well, I mean, I think first and foremost, we have to understand where our shame comes from. What is the story we're telling ourselves? And that's where the Enneagram can be really helpful. So all of my stories are based on... so the type

nine's false message, this little record player that's constantly either humming in the background or loud and blaring is I can be okay if others are happy and okay. Okay, Annie, when is anyone happy and okay fully, right? Then you add kids into the mix, that's never going to happen.

Annie: That's right.

Beth: So nines can never be happy and okay? No, that's not true. So we have these false messages and narratives in our mind, activations, triggers. So when we understand that, we're able to more... I talk about learning the Enneagram like you're driving on the highway and you start to fall asleep at the wheel, you're not paying attention, and then.... you're going to start veering off the path and you're going to land into a pitfall. Well, that's what we do all the time.

And so all the women out there that are listening and you've fallen into a common pitfall and you throw up your hands, you want to pull your hair out, like, why am I here again? It's because you're doing your thing. We all do very similar things for the rest of our life. I'm going to as a type nine fall into the same kind of pitfall time and time again.

Annie: It's so frustrating.

Beth: It is frustrating. But what if we use that as a, huh, yeah, I keep doing that pattern. Maybe I could use that as a warning sign instead of shame. So what I talk about is using the Enneagram and self-awareness as a rumble strip on the highway.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Beth: So when I start to see myself trying to make everyone happy and then I'm discouraged because no one's happy, that's my rumble strip going, Oh, there I am again. I'm starting to veer off course. Hold on, everyone. I can even kind of laugh about it and I can ask for help.

So for you, if you're constantly going, going, going, going, and you feel like not that satisfaction that you long for, that's where you're going to go, Oh, I'm hitting the rumble strip. And I think you have a tattoo on you that says Savor.

Annie: That's exactly right.

Beth: That is my favorite word for sevens. And so for you to be able to go, hold on, my internal world thinks it has to go, go, go, but actually I need to savor. What does that mean right now? So that rumble strip is so important for us.

And it's the same thing with moms. So when we're using the Enneagram, we want it to be in a way that sets us up to... again, like when you hit the rumble strip, are you freaking out, like, I'm the worst driver in the world? No, it's just like, Oh, yep, hold on.

Annie: Redirect.

Beth: That's how we want to use this. Yes, you're going to have to go through seasons of head trash, shame that we constantly have-

Annie: Head trash.

Beth: Isn't that great?

Annie: Great language. Yeah.

Beth: We have it in our mind all the time. But what if we wrote all of these messages out and realized they're not true? That doesn't mean they don't happen sometimes, but we're using it in a way that we think is going to help us, but it actually is like driving down the highway and we hit the rumble strip and we actually go, oh, you know what? I'm going to take this wheel. I'm going to go right into the pit.

So shame only helps us to get into a shame cycle faster.

Annie: Oh, interesting.

Beth: So what if we use this in a way that's like, huh, "Okay, I'm hitting the rumble strip. I'm safe and secure in Christ. Like this picture of this lamb, I'm safe and secure. Yes, I need to work on this. Yes, I need to own it. But it's been taken care of. Where do I need to redirect myself?"

Annie: Interesting.

Beth: "How is he going to help me in this moment?" For me as a type, whatever, not that person.

Annie: If we're using the rumble strip analogy, sometimes the kid grabs the wheel and pulls us onto the rumble strip and suddenly you're like, "Oh, I was fine. But that behavior or that choice of my kids just threw me into my unhealth."

Beth: A hundred percent. Like for instance, if I, again, had a child that was, you know, very confrontational, well, yeah, I'm going to hit that rumble strip all day long.

Annie: All the time. Interesting.

Beth: So then I have to, Okay, so if that's just what God has given me... And you'll read it in the book. I believe that God created us our type and we're born with our type. So if God hands you, and we can get into it if you want, a can of white paint that has the color at the bottom and I don't know what type it is, what am I going to do with that? Okay.

So when I get activated, let's say I have a four-year-old that will end up... I'll find out is a type eight, okay, so when she's pushing back and challenging me and trying to be... have you ever seen that TikTok or the reel of that little boy going, "Linda, Linda, Linda..."

Annie: Aha. Yes. Yes.

Beth: It's a perfect example of a type eight, because what he's trying to do is actually protect his little brother. And it can be seen as that is wrong and bad. Don't talk back to your mom. Yes. Yes and what if I were to say, "I love your heart. Your heart is really being brave and like voicing what you... you're trying to protect your little brother. That's awesome. But in this instance with your mom, that's actually not the best and right thing to do. And here's why." So obviously age appropriate.

So we want to use the Enneagram to help us understand what activates us so that when your kid is whatever type and they do have those triggers for whatever reason, age, stage of life or whatever that you're like, Oh, there I am.

So when you understand yourself and self-regulate, then you can have a non-anxious connected presence for your kids. That's when you can hear their heart versus being trying to force them into being something that's really not who they are. And then we can be curious and ask good questions and redirect them. But also we get to say what's activating us and why. And that's when our kids can learn what it's like to know ourselves, redirect and self-regulate. Because then when our kids are older, they're like, "Oh, I can own my stuff and I can apologize and I can self-direct because I saw that in my parents and I've been modeled it and now I can mirror it.

Annie: Yes.

[00:42:46] <music>

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And now back to finish up our conversation with Beth.

[00:44:19] <music>

Annie: What do you do if you see the same unhelp in your kids that's in you?

Beth: Oh, that's really hard. I'll give an example of my husband.

Annie: You're like, it's not me, but-

Beth: Well, the reason is, is he's a six and my son is a six. This kind of goes back to what I was saying earlier. So he just wants assurance and guidance and support. And so my son, when he was 18, about ready to go off to college, literally like a month later, you know, we all live in... you know, we're in Nashville area. So we were living in Franklin and down in Franklin, kids down there will pay someone like \$50, \$75 to take some really cool pictures of them for Instagram. I know. It's its own place.

But he's sitting there going, "I can take good pictures. I want to do that in college. You know, that's a great side hustle." I'm a little entrepreneur so I'm like, "You go, son." But my husband is thinking of all the things he may not have considered and so he's bringing that.

So he's thinking he's bringing the best of what he has. "Well, have you thought about this? Well, this could happen and don't get your hopes up" and all of these things. And my son started to cry and my husband was like, "Whoa, what did I just do?" And my son, of course, he's been through all the Enneagram stuff and he knew his heart really well at that time. He said, "Dad, I know that you're trying to give me the best of what you have, but I've already gone through all of that head trash as a six. And just to have the courage to maybe do this has been so hard. You offering that to me has only made it harder, even though I know you're trying your best." And my husband was just like, "I totally get it."

And that's where I think it's so important for us to understand that even when we're giving our best, it might land on someone differently. And so Jeff has had to really think through when he is helping Nate, how much is his story and his perspective actually compounding what Nate's already struggling with?

Annie: Yeah, right, right.

Beth: And how are we actually kind of cheering on? Oh, yeah, good son for being, you know, super cautious and fearful.

Annie: Yeah, right.

Beth: I could easily do that with another type nine. Like, "Oh, yeah, just people, please. Just accommodate. Keep going." It's like, Oh, wait, no, that's the wrong way." So that's where you can get caught up and things like that.

Annie: Because I'm thinking, the *Enneagram for Moms*... I mean, as I was reading it yesterday, it was like, Oh, there's a wonderful stories. There's stuff for each type. It's one of those where you like read and then you go and... it's a resource. It will sit on our shelves forever.

But when we're thinking about our kids, my nephew's four, I genuinely haven't considered what Enneagram type he is. Aren't we supposed to start going, Oh, I bet my kid's a two or oh, I bet my kid is a whatever? When do we do that? When don't we do that? When does that service? When does that not service as moms?

Beth: All of us moms, aunts, whatever you want to name it, we do want to know because it would be this incredible cheat sheet in relationship.

Annie: Yes, right. That's how it feels in dating. It feels like a cheat sheet.

Beth: Also, how to love them well and that they feel loved versus... because for instance, I... and this is totally not Enneagram, but this will prove the point. I don't really like getting real flowers. Now, there might be a lot of people that are like, what?

We were so poor when we were first married, like, when he would give us flowers, I was like, "Dude, you're spending a lot of money and they're just going to die tomorrow. I'd rather you take me out." And so the love language type thing.

But same thing with the Enneagram. It's this ability to shortcut and really know how to speak to one's heart in a fast way. So I get it. I wanted the instruction manuals for Nate and Libby and I know that's what they want from this book, but that's not possible.

And this is where it gets to this whole paint analogy. So when we walk into a paint store as a parent or just anyone with any relationship, we think I'm taking a paint can off the shelf and it's white and I'm going to go up to the counter, I'm going to say, "Put that color in." Like, let's just say blue. "I want a blue color." Could be, you know, for a boyfriend, a spouse, whatever, or my kids. "Put that color in there." That's what I want.

That's what we think we're doing. But what actually is happening is God puts the color in the paint can. And when you watch how this is happening, there's multiple colors going in, right?

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Beth: And they'll eventually mix to be that shade of color. But what happens is it goes to the bottom of that paint pan and it just settles there at first. And so if you were looking at that paint can then, it's like, well, it's still a can of white paint.

So when we're giving our kids or I guess when we think... like when we're giving a relationship, we think it's that. I'm going to force them into what I want them to be. But that color's already in there.

Now, with your kids, life and circumstances are going to mix that can of paint. And that's the same as like age and stage of development. So many different things are happening. So as things are mixing, you know, if you were just to use a stir stick and mix, you'll see all of a sudden there's a little orange and then there's a little green and there's a little blue.

Annie: Right. Yeah. What a great analogy, Beth.

Beth: Thank you. So you might start seeing like... okay, let's say your kid is a type one. Well, all of a sudden you might see a little purple, like their wing is popping up of type nine and maybe the teal. Oh, there's the type two. And so you don't really know what their main type is because we do use all nine types to varying degrees, but we have one that reigns supreme.

So this is where we get to be curious and recognize that God is allowing us to enter this mystery and to kind of investigate and study and ask good questions of our kids. Now, I think it's okay from time to time to go... because I could totally tell that both my kids were not fours and fives. Like there was just-

Annie: Oh, you knew early what they weren't. Oh, that's interesting. I bet it is easier to go, Yeah, I'm telling you, my nephew doesn't have an introverted bone in his body. So we can X off a few. Yeah, that's right.

Beth: I think there's ones that you can kind of cross off and I'm not saying forever, but you know, I'm not seeing that. But I would hold several loosely and just try on a few things. Here's the thing. We all long to hear that core longing message. What if you were just to give your kids all the nine type core longing messages in various ways and see which one really lights them up and they feel seen and heard. That's going to give you a really cool indication.

Look, all teenage girls, a lot of people are like, Oh, wait, now I think she's a four.

Annie: Oh my gosh. Yeah, for sure. At some point we are all fours.

Beth: And it's like, come on. Yes, of course. Like, we were emotional. We have moments. Doesn't mean you're a four. There's so much more to that. But then guys, it's like teenagers, oh, we must be an eight or a counterphobic six because look how, you know, strong and aggressive they are. It's like, no, that is just part of development.

So that's where you have to really be careful when you're trying to do this. I can guarantee you. I literally work with experts in the field and they have younger kids. And as their kids grow older, they're like, well, I really think they're this. And I'm sitting there going, Mm-hmm. A year later, "Well, actually I'm seeing this now." And I'm like, yeah, exactly.

So we want to hold it very loosely and be curious and ask great questions. Date your kids. Take them out and do fun things or connecting things. And you'll start to see different characteristics pop up and then just investigate. And then as you see that can of paint stir up, you will know about when they are, let's say mature enough, as in like they know themselves. Now, not all kids want to know themselves. So, hey, it might take till they're 30.

Annie: And that kid's a seven.

Beth: It might take till they're 30. But when they're old enough, you can say, hey, I would love to know your Enneagram type. Would you be interested? And see what comes about? But it also can still kind of change. Not that their type changes, but their understanding of themselves as they mature. So I just really recommend parents, yes, absolutely be curious, but please do not type your kids. It never works and it never works well.

Annie: It doesn't serve in the long run.

Beth: No, it doesn't.

Annie: Okay, I want us to end on this. You said you think we're all the way born with our type. It's not nurture at all.

Beth: Oh, it's both.

Annie: I think it's both.

Beth: Well, here's the reason. I think you're born your type. But how you are nurtured totally affects your type, meaning how healthy, average or unhealthy you're going to be when you get into adulthood. Your parents they're called to give you the tools and the resources to really live in life. If you have really great parents that are helping you to understand self-attunement, what's going on in your internal world, how to be with people, all those things, they are literally giving you... let's say you're kind of developing a garden, right? They're giving you the right tools to do that. But what if you don't have parents like that? Or you have a chaotic, abusive, destructive household? Well, guess what? They're giving you a snow shovel to help a garden. Like, that's not going to work for you. And so you are going to have to learn how to have those different skill sets. And so all of us, no one has all the tools.

Annie: Yeah, I would imagine every garden in the world has parts that need tending.

Beth: Tending, pruning, understanding how to use these tools better. So no one gets a pass. But I think for each of us to understand, so as a type 9, if I grew up in a very abusive, yelling, emotionally destructive atmosphere, the way I would have thought and approached it would be different if I had a twin sister that was a type 7 or type 6 or type 8.

So as a type 8, they might be like, heck no, I'm going to go after my parent in one form or another, kind of like that little video, you know, Linda, Linda, Linda. Whereas I'm going to become really small and I'm going to hide and I'm going to isolate.

Now, that isolation is a strategy of protection, which is great. We all have strategies that protected us, that got us to where we are today. But now's the time for us as adults to learn what those strategies were without shame, without condemnation, but to learn where they are, to learn how to release them and actually take on healthier strategies that will help us to grow.

Annie: Wow. Oh, this is helpful. What did we not say that you want to make sure we say?

Beth: So one thing I would say is for moms to really focus in on what it means to have good self-care.

Annie: Okay.

Beth: And I guess let's just not even say moms. Let's just say people, right?

Annie: Yeah.

Beth: Because so often-

Annie: But moms are caring for more people than I'm caring for on my day. I go home and my house looks the same as when I left it. So it is fair to say lives are different.

Beth: Because so often, especially in the Christian world, die to yourself. Don't focus on yourself. That's being selfish. It's like, No, Christ took care of Himself, His human body, though He was also 100% God. What does it actually mean to tend to ourselves so that we are literally filling up our cup so that we can actually pour into our children with that non-anxious connected presence? You cannot have that if you are depleted.

And so what's going to happen is you're going to then be reactive in some form or fashion. That could be actually aggressive, passive-aggressive, numbing out, whatever. You know, there's so many ways that we do it. Often moms don't even know what self-care looks like. And they have a hard time having the freedom internally to do that. So that's going to take its own work and strategy.

But I really hope that families give moms that freedom. Like, hey, how can I help you to have good self-care? What do you need? And this isn't just like doing what you think is the most fun or safe. Sometimes it's not fun and safe. Like you learning

how to savor. That's not always going to be your most fun moment but it also is the most healing. And you're replenishing yourself so that you can be the best for those that you're giving to.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. That's really helpful. Thank you for reminding us of that. Okay, Beth, the last question we always ask. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Beth: Being with my grandson.

Annie: Oh, how old is he?

Beth: He's five months old.

Annie: It's the best, right?

Beth: It's the best. I love it. Because I'll be honest, parenting was really hard for me on multiple levels because of my own head trash. And I kind of thought I was going to be in that same position. It's totally different. Like I was getting this new season of aha moments. And like I'm seeing the world differently and I'm healing. I mean, it's just so awesome.

Annie: It's the best. I'm telling you, my nephew, all the kids in our family have just made our family so much better. It's awesome. I mean, I had no idea. I thought it was fun when my friends had kids. It is a different life when my cousins and siblings have kids.

Beth: Yeah, absolutely.

Annie: It's the best. What's your grandson's name?

Beth: August. But we call him Augie.

Annie: Oh, yeah. There you go. That's so cute. I'm taking dinner to a family tonight who just had an Augie.

Beth: Oh, so awesome.

Annie: So I love it. That is so fun.

Beth: Maybe it's them. I'm just kidding.

Annie: Yeah, yeah. Five months in, still doing Meal Train. I support it.

Beth: That would be awesome.

Annie: Why not? And what's your favorite thing about seeing your daughter as a mom?

Beth: You know, it has been such a blessing because, and as a nine, I'm like, Oh, this is so hard to say because I'm not tooting my own horn because I'm honestly focusing on what God has done in and through us. But we have really strived, especially once we knew she was a type two, how to help her to cultivate self-nurturing because she would focus on everyone else.

And in this season, that could be really hard for her because she's a full-time mom. Her husband is a stay-at-home dad. And that could be a really tricky place. I have just seen her take good—

Annie: She's a full-time working mom?

Beth: Yes.

Annie: Is that what you mean? Okay, sorry, sorry, sorry.

Beth: And I've just seen her take really good care of herself. And I just feel so grateful and thankful for the tools that I have been able to glean for the last 20 years to pass those down so that she doesn't have the same struggles—now, she's gonna have struggles—but the same struggles I had. And so for me, I just, I feel very grateful to God.

Now, there's a lot still to work on. I'm actually entering in a new season of deeper diving into some of my story. And it's exciting and scary, but I'm thankful for the things I was able to work through and give to my kids because God doesn't waste anything.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. That's really good. Thanks for your work. Thanks for being here.

Beth: Yeah, thanks for having me.

Annie: You've been such a gift for so many years for—what is that? Seven years now since you've been on the show the first time. I'm so grateful.

Beth: Well, I'm grateful because you got the word out there that I was even here.

Annie: Yeah, you are. You're doing good work. There's a lot of books, but the new one, *Enneagram for Moms*, what a gift. So thank you, friend.

Beth: Thanks.

[00:59:32] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, isn't she the best? Okay, go grab your copy of *The Enneagram for Moms* and go follow Beth at Your Enneagram Coach on social media. Tell her thank you, thank you for being on the show.

If you've enjoyed this episode, again, you can go back and listen to any of our previous EnneaSummer episodes, which can be found in the link in our show notes below.

If you got any questions from this episode, drop them in the Q&A box on your Spotify app if you're a Spotify listener, or send them to us on Instagram @ThatSoundsFunPodcast. We'll try to answer them there.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, anywhere you may need me, that is where you can find me.

And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you, and I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is laying by the pool. I hope you are doing that too. Y'all have a great week. We'll see you back here on Thursday with my friend, Ashley Island.