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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.

Listen, before we jump into this show, today is an important conversation. This is a great time for you to lift up your phone wherever you're listening and text this episode to someone that you know loves Lysa or someone that is living in the middle of a story of pain. This is going to speak straight to them. So this is a great episode to share with your people.

But before we dive into this conversation, I want to tell you about one of our incredible sponsors. This show is sponsored by [BetterHelp](#). You might be into Halloween decorations and hanging up skeletons and scary masks, but if we're talking about skeletons in your closet, that's even scarier. We got to deal with those.

You guys, you know how I feel about secrets. We've got to bring light to the things that we're dealing with in the dark. And therapy is a great tool for processing all of that and finding ways to overcome what you've been dealing with. Listen, Lysa and I are talking about it today. Therapy has changed both of our lives.

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It's done entirely online. It is super convenient and flexible to your schedule. Getting started is so easy. You just thought a quick questionnaire — we love a quiz — you'll be matched with a licensed therapist. Plus you can switch therapists anytime at no extra charge so you can make sure you find the right match for you.

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Intro: All right, y'all. Today on the show, I get to talk with one of your favorites, one of my favorites, Lysa TerKeurst. This is Lysa's fourth time here on the podcast. We'll link to all those previous episodes in the show notes below.

She is that friend to all of us who just isn't afraid to talk about the real and hard things that she's walked through and what God has taught her through. This is why I think this is an important episode for you to share either on socials or through texting because so many people are walking through hard things right now, and Lysa leads us.

Her brand new book came out this week. It's called *I Want to Trust You, But I Don't*. So we're going in on broken trust and what to do with that.

After several painful friendship breakups, the death of her marriage, and other devastating betrayals, Lysa realized she was caught in a cycle of distrust. And this book is the journey to figuring out how to move forward from it.

I have no doubt that there's someone who's broken your trust before and maybe even recently. So you're going to learn a lot from this book and from our friends. So here's my conversation with Lysa TerKeurst.

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Annie: Lysa TerKeurst, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

Lysa: Thank you, Annie. It's always a highlight when I see on my schedule, Annie Downs podcast. So thank you so much.

Annie: It's happening, girl. Listen, here's the thing you need to know. This is your fourth episode and when you hit five, you enter the Hall of Fun.

Lysa: Really?

Annie: So next one is going to get you a plaque on the wall. There are 14 people in it so far. So Hall of Fun is coming for you, ma'am.

Lysa: That is so exciting. Can we eat ice cream sundaes or something together?

Annie: Certainly. Absolutely.

Lysa: Okay. It's a date.

Annie: Okay. So this year, you've done this before, but this year, because it's our 10th year of the podcast, instead of ending the show this way, we're starting with, because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Lysa: What sounds fun to me is an afternoon where there's absolutely nothing on my calendar and I get to decide if I want to be lazy or if I want to be energetic. And that sounds so fun to me.

Annie: Okay. So I can't imagine a lazy Lysa Terkeurst. So give me some description. Because I want everyone to hear what your lazy is versus like "I become one with the couch". So what is lazy for you?

Lysa: I mean, I can become one with the couch, but only for a limited time because then I start getting antsy. But here is what I've discovered about myself. I get a lot of energy and recharging sense if I find something that I can control, especially when I'm exhausted because too many things feel a little out of control.

And so this weekend I had a down weekend and I had some time. So I literally reorganized my entire closet, which is a running joke in my house because I have a good closet and I've had professional organizers come in, but it stays a disaster. But no more. No more.

Today, as of this minute, it's actually not a disaster. But when I was cleaning it out, Annie, I found like 15 pairs of tights and hose. I can't tell you when the last time is that I wore those. And I threw them all out except two, just in case hose comes back. So there you go.

Annie: There you go. That's right. It will happen. We'll wish for one pair in the winter, even if it's just under a long dress. So you're exactly right.

Lysa: There you go.

Annie: Okay, you are a newlywed. So tell me about newlywed life with grown kids, with grandkids. Tell me about it.

Lysa: It's a busy season, but it is a fun season. You know, I never thought that I would get to experience this again because when I went through the death of my marriage, I very much felt like I was signing up for a good life with my kids and grandkids, but that I wouldn't have a spouse. It was a wonderful, sweet surprise that the Lord not only brought someone but brought someone who bonds with my kids so well, who is so much fun.

We just finished having Gigi and Jazz. That's what my grandkids call us, Gigi and Jazz. We just had Gigi and Jazz camp. And so if you are one of my grandchildren and you're over the age of five, you get to come for the most fun week of your entire life.

Annie: It's an entire week, Lysa.

Lysa: Well, kind of. It's Wednesday through Sunday.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Lysa: I know. But my grandkids just informed me that they think it needs to happen twice a year and then it needs to be 10 days each. I'm like, "Let me think about that. No."

Annie: So how many is the five-and-above crew?

Lysa: Okay. Five and above is three and under five, as of the end of this year, I will have a total of eight grandkids.

Annie: Wow. That is amazing.

Lysa: I have five grandkids being born this year, Annie.

Annie: They're all being born this year. It's not just that they're less than five, they're all being born this year?

Lysa: Yeah. So I have three over the age of five and five being born this year.

Annie: So let's zoom out. I love talking to you about this stuff. Let's zoom out on the spiritual look of this. 2024 seems to be a year of fruitfulness in y'all's family. Does it feel like the Lord just like... like at the end of Job, where he just pours it all out in one sitting? Does it feel like that a little bit?

Lysa: It really does. I'm super grateful. But now here's the challenge, Annie. When I was single and going through all of the really hard stuff of being a single mom and picking up the pieces and really being the only parent left for my children and there'd been so much trauma, I remember thinking, "When I have a partner, when I have like someone who can step in and help carry this load that, you know, maybe it would get better." And of course, I had long seasons where I didn't think that was ever going to be possible. But I just thought, If I had that, then it would get better. And it does.

But also I have to work really hard not to attach my hope to that because otherwise I forget that everything is a package deal. Everything comes with celebration, a little sorrow, like great times and hard times. And so it's not without challenge, but it is one of the happiest seasons of my life.

Annie: Yeah. I got a DM from a married woman this week and I had released something about singleness on social media and her... it was probably three paragraphs of this is not as great as you think it is. And as far as she was like, "I understand you want what you don't have, but let me tell you..." Because she got married in her 40s as well and she was like, "Me and Jesus are different. My schedule is different. I have grieved some of what I've lost of my independence and my ability to use my time the way I want to."

And I hear that sometimes from married women, but I was kind of profoundly moved at her being like, this is actually... her pile of grief has been similar to her pile of joy. When that happens, Lysa, I mean, when you're saying that happens, like, how do we embrace both? How do we not let the like... it can be devastating when something that you've always wanted happens, and then there's sadness attached.

Lysa: Okay. Well, in all fairness, I am a newlywed. So Chaz and I dated a year and then we got married in January. So I'm still in that season where it really is as great as like it's made out to be. For the first time, I feel like I am in a marriage where I feel so treasured and so loved. And I'm like, wow, I waited 54 years. I just turned 55. So now 55 years for this. And it is as great as I always dreamed that it would be. And at the same time, it also has these amazing challenges where I'm like, Okay. Because it doesn't fix anything that's really an internal issue with me.

It's kind of like when people say like, oh, I think if I could have a podcast that does as well as Annie's or, you know, whatever. I think we have this thing. Like we think that the spotlight will fix us when in reality, the spotlight only highlights for the world everything that we wish the spotlight would fix. It doesn't fix anything. It just highlights it for everyone to see.

And so, yes, it is as great for me as I say it is, and also it doesn't fix anything internally that I still need to work on.

Annie: As I was reading your new book, *I Want to Trust You, But I Don't*, so much of the messaging from you is, yes, this is about them, but mostly this is now a you thing. Like I think at one point you quote a counselor saying, "Trauma isn't just what happened. Trauma is how you deal with what happened." And so how do we do that, Lysa? How do we do this balance...? I mean, so much of this conversation is about balance. How do we do this balance of what is mine to hold and to grieve and to focus? And like you said, what is the spotlight putting on me and how much do I blame the person who's hurt me or blame the institution that I'm upset with? How do we learn that balance of how much is ours to carry?

Lysa: Well, okay. We're just going to have a raw moment, Annie. I mean, I have had those moments where I just sat down and I almost think it was important for me to have this moment where I gave myself permission to blame as much as I wanted to blame and just get it all out. Because there is a cause and effect. Sometimes when I hear "blame" used as such a horrible negative word, I think it's trying to force us to negate the hardships that come from cause and effect.

Annie: Wow.

Lysa: And so I do think it's important... like there is a cause and effect here. Now, the secret is, get it out and then you've got to release the blame because the blame will start to turn you into somebody you never intended to be. It locks you into a place where you get completely stuck because blaming another person in order to fix that, it requires them to do something. And if they are unwilling or incapable of doing something, then you could get stuck blaming them the rest of your life and nothing is ever going to get better.

So at some point, we got to get it all out and I'm giving you permission, blame, blame, blame, blame, blame, blame. But then let's now decide, okay, I'm going to take agency to move forward because blaming is not going to help me move forward.

Annie: How do we know when that happens? I mean, I'm sure it's different for everybody, but is there like a... did you have a moment of like, Oh, I'm starting to let blame have some power it doesn't deserve?

Lysa: Well, it's not a finish line. It's more like a circle. Like I circle back to it because new things happen.

Annie: Sure.

Lysa: We just had a situation last week where the whole family was together and then for the first time, there were other family members that were there that we hadn't seen in a long time, you know? And it's this awkward dynamic of, wow, I used to be married to this person for 30 years and then I haven't really seen or talked to them in four years, and now all of a sudden they're there at this event. So new grief, new blame, new bitterness kind of circled back into my life. And I just have to recognize, okay, at least it's there. And that just as an indication... it doesn't negate all of the healing work I've done. It's just an indication like, Hey, new grief, new work needs to be done.

Annie: Oh, that's good for me to hear. Because sometimes, Lysa, when I circle back to... this just happened with my counselor where I circled back and I said, "Man, I'm so mad that I'm mad about that again." So you're kind of giving me this freedom of, no, it's probably not that you went back in your healing. It's that something in... we'll use the word "triggered" even though that word can get... you to talk about this in the book that that word doesn't always get used correctly. But it has literally triggered this new level of pain to be dealt with, even if it's in the same genre as the previous pain. So I'm not going backwards. I'm going forwards.

Lysa: You're realizing a new level of grief, a new level of fear, a new level of unfairness, you know, whatever it is. So it's okay. You know, sometimes I think we're so hard

on ourselves. I just want to say, you know, at any time you're on a journey, there's no guarantee you're not going to trip and fall along the way, but that doesn't mean that you're not going to eventually get where you need to go, you know.

But this whole thing, grief is a circle, it's not a finish line. And healing from trauma... It's a circle. It's not a finish line. And I think when we give ourselves permission to just let these feelings come when they come, acknowledge it, and then deal with it, I think that's a much better route than saying, Man, my healing is just not working. No, it's working because you're still focused on getting there. It's just new trigger and indication of unhealed trauma. So deal with the new unhealed trauma.

Annie: So back me up, like, I don't know, 10 years ago. What are you saying to that Lysa? Like when you think about (a) what she has lived through the books, the last three books you've written have been monumental for people and their healing of trauma. And that is true of this one. But you can't have wanted to choose this path, right? So talk a little bit for a minute about obeying God, going into what he's called you to, even if it's not what you wish was your life.

Lysa: Yeah. I think if I were to speak to Lysa 10 years ago, I would say to her, in the next 10 years, there's going to be an abundance of times where you think you're going to die, and just know you're not going to die. And so your fear... the fear is going to hit you and the fear is going to be warnings sometimes. The fear is going to be something that you're terrified is going to happen that doesn't happen. And then sometimes it's going to happen worse than you ever imagined it's going to happen. But at the end of the day, you are not going to die.

And in 10 years, you will find a stronger Lysa who wishes with all of her heart that none of this would have ever happened, but who is determined that because it happened, I refuse to not have a really great life. Really crappy things happen to me, but I've made the choice that that doesn't mean the sum total of my life has to be crappy. It's going to be good. And I survived. I didn't die. I made it through things. I never thought I had the strength to make it through. My kids made it through things they never thought they could make it through.

And if you saw my family text thread today, yes, there are missing people or at least a missing person in my family text thread. But you would think we are the happiest, most fun, seriously crazy family you have ever seen. And so we survived. And yeah, I wish the story would have been different, but it isn't different.

You know Jim Cress. I love Jim Cress. But he says all the time, I think we both said it, that mental health is a commitment to reality at all costs. In reality, I can fully acknowledge what is no longer and what will never be and what is and what I have

the potential to step into. And I'm choosing to say both of those can hold hands, sorrow, and celebration, but I'm telling you I survived and you can too, whoever's listening.

There's someone's listening to this right now. And they're like, yeah, but you don't understand. I promise you, I probably do. Even if the circumstances aren't the same, the depth of pain was massive and you will survive. You will survive. The secret is just don't give up. Do not get swallowed up by this pain.

[00:18:31] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation to tell you about one of our incredible partner, [Ritual](#). Y'all know I love stat and data. So when Ritual conducted the university-led human clinical trial for their Essential for Women Multivitamin 18+, I was really curious to hear the results because I love their multivitamin.

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Okay, now back to our conversation with Lysa.

[00:22:40] <music>

Annie: I am thinking of our friend, Angie Smith, who lost a daughter and that led to such extraordinary opportunity for that story to help other people. The same is true for you. The same... I mean, we're doing Single Purpose League and really trying to serve people that are unmarried in the church. And that's not the story I'd have picked either.

And it just keeps seeming like, as I'm looking around, God keeps inviting people to use the pain they're experiencing to mean something versus just living it. Does that feel true to you?

Lysa: Yes, absolutely. In the book, Annie, I talk about, at the very end, these things called rebellious acts of resilience.

Annie: Yes.

Lysa: What I started to have to do was I did not want to reduce my life down to the limitations of living hurt. Let's just all admit, when there's pieces and parts of our life that don't look like we always hoped and dreamed they would look like, it hurts. Right? And we can so easily reduce our life down to the limitations of living hurt. And I was there for a while. I stayed there and it was awful.

But one way that I started to step out of it was I started to listen for the "I can't's" and "I don't's".

Annie: Oh my gosh, I love this story about the ocean in the book. Jessica Turner, Anne Voskamp making you get in the ocean.

Lysa: Yes. Well, first of all, my ice maker broke.

Annie: Oh, I wrote that down about you fixing it. Oh, we talk about that.

Lysa: Okay. I had a very, I had an overreaction to a very simple situation. Like I highly overreacted to the fact that I went to put ice in my little cooler to take down to the beach, my little sandwich, and my little soda that I just wanted cold and that the ice

wouldn't work. I had such an out-of-proportion reaction to that situation, it was embarrassing. I literally was marching around the kitchen going, "Yet another thing that's being taken from me. If he would have never, you know, betrayed me, then maybe we'd still be married and he knows how to fix things and he would be here and I would have ice. But because all that happened, now, not only do I have all this heartbreak, but also I don't have ice."

And I stopped myself and I was like, Okay, Lysa, um, you're acting like a child and let's just accept that. But we don't want to stay here. I kept saying, I can't fix it. I can't fix it. And then I made myself say, "But what if I could?" What's the worst that can happen? I mean, it's already broken. So what? I try to fix it and it breaks worse. So what?

And so I Googled instructions and I'm a tear... I can't read instructions. So I'm like, I'm not going to get stuck on. I can't do that. So what can I do? Uh-huh. I YouTubed instructions. And as God is my witness, the girl who can't fix anything, fixed that ice maker. And I did the MC hammer dance around my kitchen. Young people will not know what that is, but it's quite a dance. It's quite a move.

I started cheering so loudly and it was a moment of victory, not just about the ice. It was a moment of victory because I was stepping out of living my life and reducing my life down to the limitations of living hurt. So then yes, Ann and Jess came down to the beach and Jess was just bound and determined we were going to go boogie boarding in the beach, like in the water, in the actual ocean.

Lysa: Now, when I say like... if you and I... if I called you today, I said, "Annie, we're going to go to the beach," this is what I mean. We're going to go get chairs. We're going to go get a little cooler with ice. We're going to have just some refreshments in our little cooler. We're going to go read a book. We're going to chat about life and we're going to watch the ocean.

Annie: That's right. But we're going to put our feet in maybe,.

Lysa: Maybe. But no part of that means that we're going to go where shells cut people's feet and sharks eat people and jellyfish sting people. Right?

Annie: A hundred percent with you.

Lysa: So I explained this to Jess and she smiled and carried three boogie boards down to the ocean anyway.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

- Lysa:** So as Ann and I sat our chairs down, she just very quietly put a boogie board down in front of both of us, and then she went and jumped in the ocean. And I rolled my eyes and I said, "I don't do oceans." And I stopped myself and said, "Okay, there's another "I can't", "I don't", what if I did?" And before I could overthink it or talk myself out of it, I grabbed that boogie board, I went and jumped in the ocean. It was a disaster. The wave caught me, flipped me over. My bathing suit bottoms came down.
- Annie:** No.
- Lysa:** So after I pulled my bathing suit bottoms back up, I stayed in the ocean, and for a good solid 30 minutes, I laughed and I hooped and hollered and there was no trauma in my world. There was no betrayal in my world. There was no sadness. There was no defeat. It was nothing but sheer joy. And what a victory that was for me.
- Annie:** Yeah. Did Ann Voskamp up her boogie board? That feels like something we won't see this side of glory.
- Lysa:** You know, I have a little gap in my memory, but I'm going to give her the benefit of the doubt. I think she did. I think we all wound up in the ocean.
- Annie:** That is so impressive. Jessica Turner is persuasive, so I'm not surprised at all. You talk in the book about life-altering versus life-ruining. And I think this is that same vein of the "I can't's" and "I don't's" that the way we language to ourselves determines how a situation pans out in a lot of ways. So will talk about the difference, particularly with betrayal or a lack of trust with people, broken trust of life-altering versus life-ruining.
- Lysa:** Yeah. You mentioned it earlier about this, that... and this was a really significant part of the book. I wrote about "it's not always just the traumas we experienced, but it's the story we tell ourselves because of the traumas that we've experienced". Right?
- Annie:** Yeah.
- Lysa:** So it's not just about the betrayals. It's not just about the broken trust. It's the story we now tell ourselves. And so that story is something that can lead us in one of two directions. Like this situation is horrible and yes, you could definitely write a script that it was life-ruining. Or you can acknowledge that there are parts of what you loved about your old life that will never be so maybe those things got ruined. But instead of telling myself "this has ruined my life," I'm just going to say, "this has

altered my life." So having your trust broken, it is life-altering, but it doesn't have to be life-ruining.

Annie: Yeah. I'm going to read a quote to yourself of you. In the book on page 22, you talk... Well, in this particular chapter... let me find the title of it. *What is this feeling discernment or a trigger*. When you talk about shame, I thought this was so interesting. I have a friend who went through a breakup yesterday and already today on Marco Polo, she said, "It's going to be fine. I've had a busy day at work. It's going to be fine." And there is this shame that I think a lot of women feel after a breakup or a divorce or a broken trust that is, I am not allowed to be weak. I'm going to be celebrated if I get strong and get strong, quick.

And you talk about that shame of how you felt like, "Why can't I just get it together? Why can't I be? I'm Lysa TerKeurst." And my friend did it last night and this matters to her. And she's telling herself today, go to work and be fine. How do we face that shame? I think you've written a really unique thing that I'm not sure people are talking about enough is the shame women feel that they cannot be weak.

Lysa: I think you see it too, Annie, not just in a breakup, but also my friends and I, when I... I have a couple of friends that also went through divorces. So we also found ourselves doing the same thing to manage and make it seem like, Okay, well, you know, like I'm going on a date, but also I'm just looking for a friend right now.

Annie: Right.

Lysa: Or it's like, yeah, I mean, that job sounds awesome, but if I don't get it, it's probably for the best because I don't want to have to be-

Annie: [inaudible 00:31:45] will be too far anyway.

Lysa: And so I think we all do this no matter which side of the coin we're on. But I do want to read this little part just straight from the book. I go through these scripts, like, "Lysa, why aren't you stronger? Can't you just get it together? Mind over matter, get a grip. You shouldn't be so sensitive. You should be able to handle this. You shouldn't make a big deal out of things. You should just get over this and move on. You shouldn't overreact like this." Okay.

So having all these shame scripts inside of my head, which then causes me externally to say, "Oh, I'm fine. I'm fine. I'm fine" but internally, there's a completely different situation happening. And I said, you know what the most dangerous part of all this shaming can do to us is? It can make a short circuit our need for healing just because we're embarrassed to be human. We are embarrassed to be human.

Annie: Wow.

Lysa: Humans sometimes break. We hurt when we break. It takes time and attentionality to heal our breaks. And so I just... I don't know. I don't know why we do this to ourselves. Maybe it's because we're trying to manage our expectations. But in the book, I take it as far as maybe we've quietly quit on hope. Maybe we don't hope is the most brutal risk of all. And maybe we're just tired of taking the risk of hope and we're sick and tired of letting ourselves just be human.

Annie: Yes. But why is that so hard? It's hard for me too, Lysa. I'm having a little knee surgery in a couple of weeks and I just hung up with the rehab guy and I said, "I want to come in as quick as you'll have me come in and you're going to have to tell me to slow down. You're not going to have to tell me to speed up because I want to get better because I am unwilling to be down on my couch for longer than I have to be." Why is that the script in my head? Where do we get these scripts that say being human is insufficient?

Lysa: Because like you said, like we, we want to manage the play. We want to control the outcome. I think you and I are very similar in the fact that if there's two extremes, if there's like the pep rally girl and then the Eeyore girl, you know, like the Eeyore girl, "This is bad. Everything's bad. It'll never get better," you know? To the pep rally girl, "I want to do it as fast as you can. And I'm going to fast-track my healing because that's how I roll. Like you're never going to have to tell me to show up. I'll always show up." Right?

Annie: Right.

Lysa: So I guess what I'm trying to encourage myself with is let's just bring it back to the middle. Like we don't have to have the fastest healing of the knee situation, you know, but we also don't need to have the worst attitude about it either. But let's just bring it back to the middle because I think living in extremes is not sustainable. And I think even if we try to be pep rally girl forever, it's not sustainable.

And then when we come face to face with the breaking off of our body or the breaking of our emotions, and we're forced to remember, we really are human, I think that's where we can just really get into a funk. And so when we try to be anything other than human, we negate our own need for a savior. We have a savior and it is not me, myself and I. I don't want to hyper-spiritualize it and I don't want to leapfrog my healing just to get to like a Pollyanna, you know, place with it all, but man, what we don't trust, we try to control.

And Annie in my, in my really hard "got to be brutally honest with myself", sometimes when I act Pollyanna and I try to fast track things and I try to just handle it myself, basically I am communicating, God, I don't trust you, so, therefore, I'm going to take control now. I'm going to control the play. I'm going to control the narrative. I'm going to control how people see me. It's just not sustainable.

Annie: And I don't think when I do it constantly, it is not as direct as "God, I don't think you can handle it". I cloak it and I'm just doing my very best. Like I'm going to bring my very best. I'm going to do my best. And then surely A plus B equals C. But that is not what happens. So the funny thing is I bring my very best, I try to fast track the healing, and then when it doesn't happen, I blame God instead of me.

Lysa: That's right.

Annie: So then there's a secondary, you talk about this a little bit in the book, but there's almost this secondary pain of "I have a problem. I'm a human. I had a problem with a human that got me here. There was a broken trust of some kind, but now, now I have a problem with God."

Lysa: Yeah, that's hard. It is hard because here's the thing. We do want to be responsible, right? We do want to be responsible. We do want to play our part. But what happens often with me is I want to control the outcome. And so I want to be responsible, I want to do my part, and then I also want to do God's part in case God seems a little busy right now and He's not doing it in the timeframe or in the way that I think that He should do it because what we don't trust, we try to control.

And so flip it around and it's like, when we don't trust, we are trying to control. Right? Basically, I want to write the narrative of my own outcome and then I want to hold God accountable to the outcomes of my own making.

Annie: That's what I do Lysa.

Lysa: And this is where it gets in trouble. Because when our outcome of our own making, when God doesn't follow our script, we can tilt our head and think to ourselves, huh? I know God's good, but why isn't He being good to me in this? And that's the problem. And God's like, Yeah, Annie, I'm not being good in that outcome to you because it would be the opposite of good. It's not good if I followed this outcome for you, therefore, I'm not going to give you the outcome. But if you'll just listen to me, you'll suffer a lot less when you shift your definition of good over to my will and my purpose for your life.

Annie: Yes. And I am the queen of writing the script and then being like, how dare this script not work out? And the Lord's like, "I never wrote that script. I appreciate you, but I never wrote that script."

Lysa: Oh, Annie, I'm the queen of doing it too. I remember like when I was in high school and I was... it's almost like high school and college I would date a guy and we'd go on like maybe two dates and I had already named all of our children, dreamed of what they would look like, you know, and like I had run so far and written the script and planned the outcome that when the guy broke up with me, then I was not only grieving the breakup, I was grieving everything I had attached to that. I was grieving the children that we'd never have. I was grieving my last name not being what I had doodled, you know, my first name with his last name. I mean, I added so much grief.

And so that's a very silly example to a very serious issue because it translates into so much about our life. When we are so bent on outcomes of our own making, we get attached to things that then we have to grieve when God says, No, actually that's not the way the story is going to go. And that's some deep grief. It really is.

[00:39:36] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation one more time to tell you about one of our incredible new partners, y'all aren't even ready, [Great American Family](#). Listen, y'all know how we feel about Christmas movies around here. You don't have to scroll back very far in our podcast feed to see how passionate we feel about talking about Christmas movies.

So of course I need you to know about Great American Media. It is the place to find quality faith and family entertainment with both a television network, Great American Family, and a streaming service, Pure Flix. And y'all, there are so many more fun things to tell you about with them to stay tuned, like stay tuned.

But as we all gear up for Christmas movie season, I need you to know the Great American is bringing you the most original faith and family Christmas content available, offering more meaningful and quality stories than they ever have before to celebrate Christmas as it's meant to be. And you know what else they're bringing you? A cameo from your girl AFD. Y'all, I got to make an appearance and their new Christmas movie, A Little Women's Christmas, which was filmed here in Franklin, Tennessee. It comes out November, 2030. Oh, so fun. I cannot wait for y'all to see this movie.

So we got to prep. We got to get ready. The movies are starting soon. Get your people, get your comfy clothes, and get Great American Family in your life. They are bringing the true spirit of Christmas into our homes.

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And now back to finish up our conversation with Lysa.

[00:41:18] <music>

Annie: A line that you say in the book, I think you need to give us t-shirts that say this: "Control breeds chaos. Surrender produces peace." So in our lives, I'm thinking about our friends listening in our lives is the next step to kind of make an assessment of where there's peace versus where there's chaos and see where we're controlling.

Lysa: Well, let's focus on that word "surrender" first because sometimes people get weirded out when they hear that word surrender. They're like, yeah, Christianese answer, you know?

Annie: Yeah.

Lysa: But what surrender is, is be responsible. Like do what you can do, right?

Annie: Yeah.

Lysa: And list out the things. "These are the things I can do." But also at the same time, surrender really means acknowledge what you cannot do. You cannot make another person change. You cannot control a relationship to reduce the risk down to where you'll never get hurt. You cannot determine whether it's going to rain tomorrow on your event. You know what I mean?

There are things that we can control and therefore be responsible with those, be a faithful steward of those, but very much surrender what you cannot control because that's where the chaos comes from. When we try to control things that are outside of our control, it breeds so much chaos, anxiety, depression, frustration, anger at other people because we want to control and like they need to do what's necessary for me to keep control here.

And so I do think that's so crucial is for in a situation... I just had this the other night. I was sitting on my bed, something happened, I was having a serious thought

spiral. And I can jump to worst-case scenario so quickly. Like if you ever want to have a phone call, I'm like, "Hey Lysa, what's the worst case scenario?" I need not even a second. And I can go ahead...

Annie: "I can tell you, Annie. Here it is."

Lysa: "I can tell you, Annie. Here we go. Here's your worst-case scenario right here." I'm a pro at it. But I was spiraling so bad and I wanted Chaz to keep talking about it and it was getting later and later and later. And he finally just said, "Hey, hon, nothing's going to be solved tonight. We need to stop talking." And I was like, "Oh no, I can't stop talking because you see scientifically my brain is wired for the confidence in knowing. And I've got to get to a place where I feel safe, where things feel right. Like I've got to control this in order for me to go to sleep. Like I got to get it to a good place."

And that's when I had to stop myself. Like I can talk with him and circle this same thing, but it is never going to allow me to control what is outside of my control. So what I had to do to stop the thought spiral is literally write down "These are things that I can do that will help the situation." This, all of this right here, so far out of my control. I can't control what they think. I can't control what they do. I can't control that if they do this, then this might happen. Cannot control any of that. But what I can do is make the decision the healthiest thing for me to do right now, write it all out on paper, stick it in my drawer, and go to bed.

I can control being healthy. I can control laying my head down, making myself go to sleep. I can control drinking four ounces of water, which is scientifically proven to reduce anxiety. I can do that.

Annie: Four ounces?

Lysa: Four ounces, honey.

Annie: Okay.

Lysa: Mm-hmm.

Annie: That's good to know. Just gulp it down.

Lysa: Yeah. In the book I write — truly, I think this was one of the profound points — what we don't trust, we try to control. It's not just about trying to control outcomes. It really is when we've had our trust broken, it strips away from us this feeling, every bit of the parts of love that should be comforting, and it complicates all of that.

I think what people need are tools, not just like sweet stories and good Bible verses. You'll find that in the book. You'll find a friend that understands. But you're going to find many lists where you can go through and find yourself. You're going to find the roots of distrust. Because sometimes, like if I say, I don't trust you, that's such a big statement, but there has to be a root to that distrust. And that's where progress can be made in our relationship.

This book just demanded the need to be super practical because people are super confused and hurt when they get their trust broken.

Annie: Yeah. One of my questions for you is, does the woman pick this up 10 years after a betrayal? Does she pick this up 10 minutes after a betrayal?

Lysa: Well, here's the heart-cold facts, Annie. The average American lies four times a day.

Annie: Oh gosh.

Lysa: Like is deceitful four times a day. Men on average, and I'm just quoting the study, men on average lie six times a day, women around three times a day. Somehow they mushed those together and got four. I don't know. But that's a lot of navigating and emotional roller coasters of trying to feel like what is really true and what is not. And it feeds a skepticism inside of us, not just about the people who hurt us, but also the people who haven't hurt us.

So whether you've had big T trust issues, like big betrayal, big heartbreak, or whether you're just trying to navigate today and make it through all the chaos that's going to happen today, it's so good to figure out a way to base our security, not on making sure we always find the right people who never, ever lie and who never hurt us, but rather creating a stability inside of ourselves that we can navigate the realities of this world without getting crushed by it.

Annie: Yeah. Beautiful. You talk a lot about getting outside. What is that? What's the power of being outside when you're trying to heal from trauma?

Lysa: I think when, for me, sometimes when I'm inside, like my little space of my house, I can get so focused that my heartbreak is the entire world. Like my hurt and heartbreak is the sum total of the way my life will always be and it's the sum total of how the world is and is the sum total, like the person who hurt me, everybody's like that. Nobody is trustworthy.

The enemy's big tactic is to isolate us. And so I can get so locked in and focused and make the sum total of the world, the part that's causing hurt in my world. But when I get outside, Annie, and I look up and I look out, I am reminded there is a big world out there so full of possibilities, new joys that we don't want to miss.

And so, yes, we have to acknowledge the hurt. Yes, we have to heal from the hurt. Yes, we want to be wise about who we trust and who we don't trust. And yes, we want to acknowledge distrust is sometimes the wisest choice we can make. We also want to make sure that we don't make the world, the parts of our world that have hurt us and, and forget, forget that there are good people still out there, and there's good stuff to still do and see and adventure.

Annie: I want us to end on this at the last... Well, for starters, I can't wait for people to read this book. It's out this week. But in the end, you do like some PSs about how your life is going and the process of you writing it. And I loved it. I think anytime an author gives a peek into the journey of writing the book is so fun.

But you do a really profound thing at the end, Lysa, where you write a whole chapter about a distrust with organizations and churches. And first of all, the story that happened in that chapter makes me want to... we ride at dawn, Lysa TerKeurst. You just call me when you need an army. Because I was ready to pull my earrings out and go.

But for our friends listening who think, yeah, I mean me and my spouse are fine or me and my siblings are fine, me and my friends are fine, but my boss where I used to work or the church... what happened in our church, I can't ever trust that church again. What do we do when it's an organization that we can't go have an argument with a building?

Lysa: Well, there's so much deep hurt around this issue and so I don't want to give a bunch of advice here. What I want to say is, let me just share with you my experience. I was deeply, deeply wounded. Because when I announced my divorce, there was an organization that decided to do an ad campaign that said-

Annie: This is unbelievable.

Lysa: "Don't let what happened to Lysa TerKeurst's marriage happen to you. Come attend our conference." And it shook me down. It shook me down to my core and I started thinking, "Wow, I thought it was supposed to make a difference if people love Jesus. I thought being part of a Christian organization or being part of a Christian family or being part of a ministry... I just-

Annie: And say the part that you knew the people doing it. It's not strangers. It's a ministry you have served before.

Lysa: Yes. Yes.

Annie: I'm telling you, I was ready to... Oh yeah. Okay. Keep going.

Lysa: It rocked my world. Like I was just like, okay, that's it. Ministry's a lie. Church is a lie. Christians are... it's all just a lie. I just cannot. And what I realized is that organization is a good organization. They do a lot of good. But they had some people making decisions that made some very poor decisions. They weren't all bad people. Even the people that hurt me, they had done a lot of good stuff, but they made some really poor choices. And it wasn't my job and it wasn't my calling to try to fix them.

Now I do say in some organizations, if God puts it on your heart to stay and to make a difference inside that organization, then do it. I just talked to a woman who has been with the church for 20 years and she wanted that church to have a program to help women who are being emotionally abused and physically abused. And the leadership kept saying, "No, no, no, no, no, it's not important. It doesn't happen. We're not going to get involved." And she stuck with that church. And here we are 20 years later and that church is the number one church that I would send people in Charlotte, North Carolina to go to if you are in a destructive marriage because that woman has made such a difference. But it took her 20 years.

So I'm saying, if you're called to stay and you can make a difference, great. I could not make a difference in this organization, but I did have to take a step back and just say, "Lysa, you cannot control the choices that they made and you cannot control what they did. You can say it was wrong. You can acknowledge that it was wrong, but then you've got to turn that over to God because God will not be mocked."

When someone sins against you, it may look like they got away with it. But the reality of sin is that it comes as a package deal. It's the action that they did, but it's also the consequences that are unleashed when they sin.

And those people wronged me. They sinned against me 100%. I didn't need to see the consequences they were suffering to know that eventually they would suffer consequences. And I didn't have to be part of that. I didn't have to retaliate. I didn't have to seek vengeance. I will never share who the organization is. I changed enough details to where even if you think you could figure it out, you cannot figure it out. I promise you that.

But my job was to turn that part of it over to God and then to make sure the hurt that I had experienced didn't turn me into someone I was never meant to be. At the end of that chapter, I talked about walking into church one Sunday and singing praise songs with a thousand other believers and raising my hands and being so grateful, so grateful that I didn't stay at home. Because if I would have let that situation continue to breed that bitterness, not just against those Christians, but against all Christians, against the church, I would miss one of the most healing, beautiful places that exist.

And that's a gathering of believers who really do love Jesus, who are humans and who sometimes seriously screw up and who are broken and messy. And hey, I wrote the book on boundaries. Good boundaries and goodbyes still applies to that situation. But don't let the hurt they did to you turn you into someone you were never meant to be.

And yes, there are churches who have hurt people, there are ministries who have hurt people, but that doesn't make all church bad. It doesn't make all Christians bad. It just means you got to go find your people and stand with them and worship God. And I'm so grateful that's the path I took.

Annie: Yeah, me too. All right, Lysa, what did we not say that you want to make sure we say?

Lysa: I think the only thing is just that trust is the oxygen of all human relationships. You starve a relationship of trust and you starve that relationship of life and vibrancy. And inside of our heart, when we trust someone, we need both safety and connection. We've got to make sure that we are pursuing relationships that aren't just connections because we have such a deep longing to connect with another person, but who are also safe and pay attention to the red flags and then recognize your trust is going to get broken. You're not going to escape this. All relationships have risks. But when it gets broken, it can be repaired time plus believable behavior. And if it's with someone who is serious about repairing the trust, then they will have enough believable behavior over a long enough stretch of time to where trust can be repaired.

Annie: It's beautiful. I can't wait for people to read this. *I Want to Trust You, but I Don't*. It's beautiful. Love you, Lysa. Thank you for writing this. Thanks for making time for this today.

Lysa: Thank you, Annie, so much. Love you. Love you.

Annie: Same.

[00:57:07] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, don't you love her? Okay, go grab your copy of *I Want to Trust You, But I Don't*. Head over to social media, tell Lysa, thank you for being on this show, and share this episode. Y'all know there are so many of our friends who are suffering through betrayals, through pain. This just feels like one of those episodes where if you put it out there, someone may listen. You may not even know what they learned yesterday in their family or what they learned last week, but this could help serve them. And that is what we do. It's what we want to do at That Sounds Fun is we want to help serve you and your friends. So share this episode.

If you love this one, I bet you'll love our other episodes with Lysa. Those are all linked in the show notes or Episode 882 with Jenny Allen.

If you have any questions from this episode, drop them in the Q&A box on your Spotify app, if you're a Spotify listener like me, or you can send them to us on Instagram @thatsoundsfunpodcast. We'll try to answer all of 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 need me, that's where you can find me.

And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you and I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is swinging through and seeing some friends in St. Louis on the way to a speaking event this weekend. I cannot wait. Love getting to be on the road and seeing y'all out there.

Y'all have a great weekend. We'll see you back here on Monday with... Everyone, buckle up. Everyone, buckle up. We have a new guest we've never had before. I'm such a super fan. Get ready. Darlene Zschech is coming on Monday. Shout to the Lord, you guys. Okay, Monday. We'll see y'all then.