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Annie: The post-holiday sugar crash is real in my life. And let's be honest, finding snacks that have clean ingredients can be tough. But that's why I'm so grateful for [Thrive Market](#). They make it simple to find healthier swaps. And Thrive Market takes the guesswork out because all of their products are 100% non-GMO and free from over a thousand harmful ingredients.

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Annie: Hi friends, and welcome to our very last episode of 2024 with only one day left. I know. But we are here on That Sounds Fun. And I am your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today. What a year it has been. Y'all 10 years of getting to do this together. We got to celebrate so much this year, and I am incredibly thankful for you.

A hundred million downloads of That Sounds Fun. 10 million downloads of Let's Read the Gospels. I can hardly even process all of that. But so many of you have been along for the ride for so many years. And I truly can't believe that I still get to do this. And I have you and the Lord and this team to thank for it.

And in case you missed it, we have a huge year in store for 2025. We'll kick things off on January 6th with our annual epiphany episode, where I'll give you a bit of the state of the union for the year. I have some really exciting things to tell you that day.

And if you miss the announcement here on That Sounds Fun in 2025, we're going to spend the year walking through the seasons together, winter, spring, summer, and fall. There's something really profound about the physical change of a season, but there's something even more profound when we recognize the impact of the season on us spiritually, mentally, and relationally.

So every week we're bringing in a friend to process the season with us. Some you know and love already, and some will introduce you to, but I love that we're going to go on a journey together this next year.

We've also made a TSF seasons guidebook to use throughout the year. As you listen and learn, you can find that at AnnieFDowns.com/seasons, or the link is in the show notes below.

Here's something I also don't want you to miss. We're reading the gospels together again, starting January 1st over on the Let's Read the Gospels podcast. Did we hear from tons of you when we stopped releasing episodes? Yes. Yes, we did. And we heard you.

So January 1, make sure you're subscribed to the Let's Read the Gospels podcast as we go through the gospels in the NLT, the new living translation. And we follow along with the Let's Read the Gospels Guided Journal. This is such a helpful rhythm to kick off your year. So go text a friend right now, tell her y'all should listen together. And make sure you're subscribed so you get a reminder every day in your podcast feed.

Today here on That Sounds Fun, we get to recap this year with another friend that's been along for the ride for a long time, our pal Eddie Kaufholz. Do we recap the year? Maybe for five minutes at the end. You get it.

What an actual treat to get to talk to Eddie every single month this year. And he's not going anywhere in 2025. Annie and Eddie are going to keep talking our way through the year once a month here on That Sounds Fun. And who can actually know what we're going to talk about? SNL, buffaloes, bison, marriage, transportation robes, who can know?

But for today, who better to close out the year with? This actually ended up being a surprisingly important conversation, I think for me and for Eddie. And I hope you're listening in a place and at a time where you can just be on a walk or be on a drive and process some of it with us.

So here's my conversation with our friend, Eddie Kaufholz.

[00:04:12] <music>

Annie: Eddie, Merry Christmas.

Eddie: And also to you. From the waist up I am prepared to podcast.

Annie: Oh boy. And the waist down is just a robe? It's just an ankle robe?

Eddie: I did get a robe.

Annie: You did?

Eddie: I did.

Annie: Update us. It was the talk of the internet, honestly.

Eddie: It was. It was insanely funny how many people sent me this thing called a dude robe. Including you.

Annie: Oh, I got dude-robbed so hard.

Eddie: So hard. They were a reverse sponsor. And yes, Brianne got me a lovely robe at Target, and it has been great, as you called it, a travel robe. It's been a game-changer.

Annie: Okay. A game changer.

Eddie: It's lovely.

Annie: It's a better life in your home with a travel robe. Where does it hit your legs?

Eddie: Yeah, no, that was the concession, because what I learned in the last... I mean, it was really a postscript to our conversation when I accidentally said that, and you were like, "Wait, wait, wait." That made me laugh so hard. It hits right below the knee, just as I believe they all should.

Annie: Now you get it. Brianne just got me the robe I should get. She saves me very often from that last 10% of myself, which is usually the 10% that's going to derail the whole thing. Right? Like, "Great. Get a robe, do whatever. But then I'm going to choose one that is inevitably way too long and too hot." And it's just the mistake is the last 10%. She save me in that 10%.

Annie: Is that the benefit of knowing each other for 20-something years is she knows where your 90 will lead and she knows how...? Like I would imagine you do that for her, too, that when she gets to the 90% of an idea and you know how to cross the finish line with it?

Eddie: Yeah. I think maybe. I think so. I think so. I think also part of it is knowing that maybe that... I think she knows that I think I have the first 90% figured out, but maybe I actually only have like maybe 20% figured out. And then she just watches me walk through the wilderness for a while and then is like, "I'll help you at the little final piece, you know? But it's also like a total trust thing, right? It's too deep for robes. But it is just sort of that like, "I don't know what to do here. Can you help me with this? I can't. I'm going to show you my best and worst thoughts here and just say-

- Annie:** I mean, this is an early seven minutes of series for everybody in our Year in Review. But I think I look forward to when I get married is being like, Oh, we can just... like there's a safe place to just trust and we're going to be fine and you're not going anywhere, and all the things. And then sometimes they do go somewhere, right? Like there's divorce and there's death and there's infidelity and betrayal and all sorts of stuff. And they break your heart. And I know that. Everyone I've dated has broken my heart, not even in breaking up, but just in the middle. Tell me for a minute, what does it feel like when there is that person that you've gone, Okay, I'm going to go all in trust. I'm just going to go all in on trust. And it's a huge risk. But the payoff has to be huge, too.
- Eddie:** It is. But also it's not a singular thing. The going all in on trust was-
- Annie:** It's not like a switch.
- Eddie:** No, no. It's like any other relationship. Like being married is... It's more committal. It's more just like I'm going to keep going all in, but it's no more magical. It's not like all of a sudden we trust each other more because we're married. We have to continue to work for that.
- Annie:** But there had to be a little bit of a once y'all decided to marry each other, like, Oh, this is the person I'm going to do that work with forever.
- Eddie:** It's the committing of the work. It doesn't automatically make the work work. It's the committing of the work. So it's the sticking with it of it all. And I think that's the part of it. I mean, I feel that level, not that same with Brienne, but I feel that level of trust certainly with other friends in my life. Like I feel that in other areas. I feel connections like that, like with my friend Jeffy and with all... it's just Jeff. But I call him Jeffy.
- Annie:** Well, that's how much we trust him.
- Eddie:** Right.
- Annie:** Jeff doesn't become a Jeffy without some serious commitment.
- Eddie:** Right. And he doesn't become that without being asked, like him saying, like, "That's not really what I go by," and me just saying, like, "Sorry, that's what we've committed to." But I do think... yeah, it's yeah... I feel like I'm hemming, but I'm not. It's different with marriage, but the work is still like you can put in the same work with anyone. I think that's the thing with marriage is there's also just like, we're going to show up in the same place every night, which is also a little bit of

like we just showed up here and we need to continue to fight for it just by way of vow and proximity.

Annie: We just like have the same address now. I don't live anywhere else, but I live with you.

Eddie: Which sounds super lame. But it actually matters. Like we want to make this thing that we're doing pleasant. And so we continue to fight for it for whatever... yeah. I just ended it with a "yeah" because I didn't know how to end the sentence.

Annie: No, it's great. It's one of the things I recognize will be really challenging and also one of the parts of that I'm most looking forward to is I will look forward to feeling the safety of that amount of trust with someone.

Eddie: I don't know. I mean, I hear you. I hear you, but I don't think marriage is the automatic of that. I don't know if you can but I know... It seems like I'm missing my words here or parsing them, but I'm not. But I think that safety and that trust can happen outside of marriage. And I don't think it's automatic because it's not.

Annie: But none of my friends are committed to me. Like I don't have committed friends that have said, "I am not leaving." And so I think-

Eddie: I bet you do.

Annie: Not communicated. I don't have any friends that we've communicated, "Hey, no matter what, we are going to make this work for the rest of our lives. I have friends I've had for 30 plus years out of my 44, yeah, but none of us have said, "Hey, I am not going anywhere." So if we bump into each other, if we move cities, if we have a run, if something goes sideways, we will, no matter what, work it out. I've never committed like that to anyone except Jesus.

Eddie: That is interesting, right? Because like you may feel that. Like you may feel that way about a friend but you haven't ever expressed it. And it would be weird to like, Hey, before we dive in here on this pasta, I wanted to just tell you something. It's not a sacrament. It's something you're not... Yeah, right. There's a difference. There is certainly a difference. But I still feel like in your soul of... we've really got into it, aren't we?

Annie: Yeah.

Eddie: We're just getting into it. I feel like in your soul, there's that... It's not expressed at the same level of like death to this part, because that's the real core of it. Like Brianne and I will not quit. It does not matter how hard we may ever want to. We

will not. And that's not to say that others that have made a mistake... like I do not judge that. Marriage is a very difficult institution. Very difficult. I am not that kind of committed to any other person. But I also can't see not being that kind of committed to someone like Jeffy. But it is still not the same. You're right. It is not the same. But yeah, I know what you're saying. I feel like I've helped in no way. That was in no way-

Annie: I wasn't looking for help, necessarily. I was looking for information and experience. And you gave me both of those things. So I'm into that.

Eddie: I just have this thing where like, if someone is single then, because I got married fairly young. So I don't even think I had had a close friend. I don't think I'd had a close friend to the degree that I knew what a friend could be by the time I got married. But I know now friendships that are different than when I got married. So I've never really experienced it, like what it's like to have a friendship as a 44-year-old, where it's just... like friendships at that time were just like we either in school together or were roommates. But it wasn't like-

Annie: Or you're in the same band.

Eddie: Yeah. We were. Or it was like fire tested, right? Like deep. How is it like as you age and those relationships deepen and get tested? Like how do you feel like they aren't what you will experience inside of a marriage?

Annie: Well, I think my first and truest response is I won't know until I've done both and I can tell you. So I don't totally know. I just know there isn't a person in my life currently. I mean, my nuclear family, maybe. Like my cousins, my siblings, my parents, my nieces and nephews, maybe would be the closest to no matter what happens, we know each other. I don't have a friend that I would say, no matter what we have mutually decided that we will know each other. And so there is no place in friendship where I feel fully able to relax into it like a hammock that isn't gonna fall.

Eddie: Gosh, I think that is the exact point that I couldn't figure out how to make. So the difference is I have not committed before God and all of my friends and family to a friend.

Annie: That's right.

Eddie: Conversely, though, I don't feel as relaxed inside of a marriage as I do in other relationships because it's so much work. It doesn't feel more relaxing because it's committed. It actually feels more pressing. Because-

Annie: Yeah, I would imagine that's true. Because if someone does something stupid, technically, I can never call them again. Technically, I can go, I wish you well and ghost them slowly and then suddenly we aren't in each other's lives anymore. And no one ever has to know that I-

Eddie: Exactly. Right.

Annie: But in marriage I won't get to do that. And you and Bri don't get to do that.

Eddie: Right. It doesn't feel more relaxing, but it does feel more satisfying. Like Jeffy, who I would like to announce now, I'm never talking to. This is the end.

Annie: Jeffy, this is our last day.

Eddie: This is it, Jeffy. You don't listen to this show. I know you don't. You're not that kind of friend. But I also haven't committed before God to him. So that's it. We're just done.

Annie: And again, we can do this again once I'm married. Hopefully. And I can go, "You know what, one year in, two years in, here's how that feels similar and different. When I'm dating someone, I experience the safety of I know exactly where he's going to sit at church. I know exactly where he's going to sit when we eat a meal. I know who he's looking for when he walks into a room. Right. So there's this safety of I know I'm someone's first choice. Like if there are four seats saved at church, I know exactly which one he's going to sit in once I decide which one I'm sitting in. And that isn't true with any of my friends necessarily every time.

Eddie: Yes.

Annie: To me, that that thing I feel, I go, Oh, man, I bet this is a taste of always being the safe in the picking and safe in the trust and safe in the like, I'm looking for him when he walks in the room and he's looking for me when we walk in the room. And when it's time to go, you've talked about this before, when it's time to go, You and Bri know what to look at each other and to say that you're both ready to go home to the same house. And I have had experiences with men I'm where I know... I mean, we don't go into the same house, we don't live together, but we know, Okay, we're ready to go. So a life of that feels like something I'm really looking forward to.

Eddie: It is very sweet, that part. And it is something that I definitely take for granted. But that like come... whatever today is going to look like and today could take on all kinds of forms, at some point, I'm going to end up a foot away from Brianne, whether it's, you know, watching a Christmas movie on Netflix or falling asleep or whatever. That is lovely. You know what I mean? That is just nice. We may both be

completely unconscious but I will end up there. That's very grounding. And that's the thing.

The other thing, though, that I found about friendship and marriage is that I have found that many of my friends and I'm not talking about Jeffy, you know, but that it is not a given that my friends... that a lot of people who I see that have good marriages necessarily are each other's real close friends.

Annie: Yeah. I hope my husband isn't my only friend once I get married.

Eddie: No. But I think it's unique... not unique. But I've known, yeah, not only friend, but I've been like I was really close friends with Bri years before we started dating and still are. Like when it comes down to it, Brienne's just always been my pal. That's who I want to hang out with. If I want to go on vacation, I want to go with her anyhow. It's really convenient that we're married, but that's who I already wanted to be like, Okay, what are we going to see and do? But that was a convenience that I took for granted because not every relationship has that. And I didn't realize that.

Annie: I remember one of my college roommates got married and she and her husband moved to D.C. for work. And she said one of the greatest gifts in that season was that it really increased their friendship because we had grown up, quote-quote, in college, we'd grown up in a massive friend group and people had paired off. But we all had a gazillion other friends, you know? Like he and I were good friends. She and a lot of people were... you know, like we had a big crew, and then people paired off and got hitched.

And then they moved to D.C. And I remember her saying this has been so good for our friendship because we only have each other here. And so it has really increased our friendship because we left a massive group and now are brand new in a city together.

Now, 20 years later, they live back in a big community and have friends we've had for a time, and that has expanded again, but around a really good friendship.

Eddie: Right. They've grafted back in as a unit together.

Annie: But Eddie, I'll tell you, I sat with a girlfriend of mine a couple of months ago and she was like, "I want to be really good friends with a guy before I date him and before I marry him, because that's what I've always wanted." And I was like, "Well, do you have any good guy friends right now that you would consider dating?" And she said no. And I was like, "Then you're a year and a half from getting married. Is that what you...?"

For me, I do want to be really good friends with the guy I marry, but I'm not dating any of my friends. I'm dating men that I meet and our friendship and our romantic relationship grow at the same time.

Eddie: Right. I don't think there's a better or worse way. It's just a unique way.

Annie: I don't either. It's what you're choosing.

Eddie: Right. It's just a unique... because I didn't see it-

Annie: You can correct me if I'm wrong, but in my 20s, I only wanted to date guys I was friends with because I was friends with 50 single guys. And so I was like, "Yeah, I've watched you at a bowling alley and I've watched you at a worship service. I'm interested." Right. Full stop. But now I don't want to meet... Well, hey, you know me. I've trolled through my friends. None of them work.

Eddie: You just burned through them.

Annie: I burned through all my friends.

Eddie: Hardcore.

Annie: And so now I'm meeting men and then I'm going, Man, I'm attracted to you. I think you're really fun. I like holding your hand and we're going to be fri... I want to be your friend too. Like I like hanging out with you. But at this point, I don't want to build a yearlong friendship and then start dating someone at my age.

Eddie: Right. But like the Venn diagram of what makes as you would call him a male lover and a friend, what makes those two overlaps almost completely, right? Like you're not going to fall in love with someone that doesn't give you the eye that it's time to leave the party. Ultimately, you're not going to fall in love with someone that doesn't get the joke or you're not gonna fall-

Annie: Technically best friend behavior.

Eddie: Right. So it all kind of merges together. It's not like these people can be super separate. It's just what's the on ramp? I think the college friend on ramp is such an... I was going to say easier, but I don't think it's easier. But it's a much more like... it's a predictable. Like, Okay, this is... I get it. All of our friend groups paired off. We were all in Young Life or whatever together. Yes, that's what we all did. And that's exactly what we did.

Annie: I think it's also interesting, Eddie, too, because... I'm thinking about like Ashley that you know really well that works with me. Whenever Ashley and I are in public or if we're on tour or whatever, we absolutely know what each other's face is the same because we have been very dear friends for a long time and get to be up close co-workers. And then she goes home to her husband. Right?

And so there are parts of what you're saying that are available to me in friendship. They're available to me in my friendship with Ashley. They're available to me in my friendship with a handful of females, you know? The problem is when they're available to me in male friendship, I will fall in love with that guy. You have seen me do it.

Eddie: Yeah. But that's not on not understandable. Hold on. It's stating the positive. That's understandable. Because it's all the same thing. Right? It should all be that way. But it's hard. It's hard for your soul. But it is understandable because it should be that.

Annie: Remind me how long you and Bri have been married.

Eddie: We're coming up to like 20 years. We've been married like half my life.

Annie: Next year is 20 years? Like 25? Did y'all get married in '05?

Eddie: '24. I think I may have screwed this up.

Annie: Is 2024 year 20th anniversary and you missed it? You have one day left.

Eddie: No, no, no, it's not. That's 19. 20th is next year. I know I didn't. I know I didn't. I just got nervous because I realized it was being recorded. But I know I'm not wrong.

Annie: I got nervous, too. Clearly. I was ready to delete this entire episode and help you figure out how to celebrate your 20th anniversary.

Eddie: It's 20th. 20 years next summer will be 20 years. So almost half our life. We've been a little less than half our life. It's a different perspective, different experience. But I will say this is... like when it boils down to it, I cannot even tell you like to me how important the vows are in a wedding. People like to write their own vows and that's fine. But man-

Annie: I don't let them. If I do their wedding I do not let them write their own vows.

Eddie: I usually don't. I usually don't. Unless they're just... Do you make them do the very traditional?

Annie: Yeah. Because before we do the wedding, I go through what every one of them means that they're agreeing to. I've said to every couple, I've done maybe five or six weddings, I say, "Before you break any of these, you have to call me because I stood here with you, too."

Eddie: Right. And that's the whole... Right. Because in reality, you can find a lot of... I say this knowing Ashley, but she can find a lot in you, I'm sure in what she would also find in going home. Not all of it. Right. But a lot of it. You can find a lot of what you would find in a marriage-

Annie: In a decade-plus friendship.

Eddie: Yeah. And you can piecemeal it together from all kinds of people. But when you're married, only the vows encompass all of that. And sometimes on dark days, that's all they encompass. And you got to just be like, we are leaning on this. This is all that we've got, which is always when I'm like, please don't go back to vows that we're just like, I'll always do the dishes and stuff. I'm like, oh my God, no, you won't. You have no idea what you're promising right now.

Annie: The other thing is, this is the one time you're going to stand in front of God and everybody and say the whole thing. So I personally always want my grooms and brides and I want personally to say like, No, this is the thing that for generations people have promised, and the majority of people who are married sitting in this room have said these exact same things. And when he and I say them in front of everybody, it's going to remind everybody sitting out there of what they said the time they said it. And so I want it to be a communal thing like that too.

Eddie: It's steeped. It's steeped in old marriages. Now Bri and I actually added two lines to the traditional vows.

Annie: What did you say?

Eddie: I don't remember the exact wording, but it was "I will love God and pursue God." So basically, I won't quit on God. And "I will love you and pursue you". Like I won't quit on you and I won't quit trying. Because we didn't think there was anything in the vows that were explicitly saying out loud like I will not quit trying. Because there's a lot that... you can say like, love and cherish, death, money, sickness, health, but it's the day-to-day like I won't stop pursuing you. It's like that old, like I'll just keep trying to date you. Like I'll keep trying to... However, you want to put it. Like I'll keep trying to pour into the relationship.

Annie: I love that y'all said you won't quit on God either. When I got ordained April of '23, I may have said this to you, but when I got ordained, when I stood up there, I could cry saying this to you... Well, who knew we were going to get teary on the last show of the year. I mean, I said to every... you know, my family came and a lot of dear friends came and the church staff was there and a lot of my team was there. And I just said in front of everybody, I'm going to ask you to do this two times in my life.

Eddie: Oh Lord.

Annie: And I will never make a bigger commitment than I'm making to Jesus today and to a man another time. These are the two greatest commitments of my life. I still very profoundly feel that something shifted the day I got ordained in my commitment to Jesus. It changed. And the only other time I will ever make a commitment this size... in some ways that you're encouraging me and I have done the "I will not quit God. I will not quit God. Before I ever committed to a man, I committed to Jesus in a new and profound way when I got ordained. And the other time everyone will sit around is when I get married.

Eddie: Who performed the ordination? Pastor Doug is the main one at Cross Point who does it. And then pastor Kevin did a lot of it too. Pastor Doug kind of led the whole thing. Like he's in charge of that at Cross Point. And then all the, um, all the lead pastors from all the campuses and my parents all prayed and did the commissioning part.

Eddie: Your parents crying like crazy.

Annie: Oh yeah.

Eddie: I mean, there's no way.

Annie: I mean, it was just so meaningful to me. I guess in this whole conversation of the safety of committed relationship that changed for me last April, even with Jesus.

Eddie: That there it is. I mean, that one actually... I mean, I don't know if it's more profound, but it's pretty intense. It won't be less intense getting married. Getting married won't feel more intense for sure. Like it's different. But you know that feeling. Did pastor Doug let you keep the sword you were ordained with?

Annie: I wish there was a sword. I wish there was a sword. Did you have a sword?

Eddie: No.

Annie: No. Are you ordained in a denomination?

Eddie: No. No. Are you?

Annie: No.

Eddie: It was the non-denominational thing. I always wonder about that. I had gone down a little bit the path of Methodist ordination, which would have been a whole interesting thing at this point, but-

Annie: I know we talked about that because y'all went to Asbury and I love Asbury.

Eddie: Yeah, I love Asbury.

Annie: You didn't tell me that before, yeah.

Eddie: No. So it's non-denominational, but it's also... it's not less or more. Also people who hear clicking, I'm so sorry, I have a cough drop in, so I can tell this mic's picking up clicking. I'm sorry, y'all.

Annie: I don't care.

Eddie: So it's different levels, your ordination-

Annie: Were you already married when you got ordained?

Eddie: Yes.

Annie: Yeah. Didn't you go to seminary?

Eddie: I did. But I went for counseling.

Annie: Oh, right, right, right.

Eddie: So I went for feelings. I have my master's in feelings.

Annie: Which is so impressive because I don't even have a bachelor in locating my feelings. So I am pretty impressed.

Eddie: I'm pretty sure you have an honorary doctorate at this point. If not, with your last book, you get it.

Annie: Right, right, right.

[00:31:03] <music>

Sponsor: I am so hoping some of you got a [Helix mattress](#) for Christmas because I need you to experience the level of deep sleep that comes with their mattresses. I love mine. I love mine so much. Y'all have heard me say it. I sleep so hard on that thing, so I'm out here making sure everyone knows they need a helix mattress. Also, their dream pillows are amazing too.

The mattress I had before this one was old and I really needed an upgrade. And I'm telling you, the first week I got my Helix mattress, I overslept every day. And their sleep study stats show us I'm not the only one sleeping better.

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One of my favorite features is the healthy swaps scanner in the Thrive Market app. It is so helpful. You just scan a product you love, like your favorite chips or crackers, and the app shows you cleaner, healthier alternatives. We've made some great swaps. Instead of sugar pack snacks, I'm stocking up on brands like simple meals, crackers, chomps, beef sticks, and lesser evil popcorn.

The best part, everything gets delivered straight to my door, so I don't have to stress about searching grocery aisles or reading tiny ingredient lists.

Ready for a junk-free start to 2025? Head to [ThriveMarket.com/ThatSoundsFun](#). And my friends get 30% off your first order plus a free \$60 gift. That's ThriveMarket.com/ThatSoundsFun.

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And now back to our conversation with Eddie.

[00:34:52] <music>

Eddie: Do you at all think in your head what clip they're going to pull for the Instagram reel?

Annie: What's Jenna going to go like, you know, what part everybody needs to see?

Eddie: Sometimes I know, sometimes I don't.

Annie: Sometimes I don't. I know. And she is such a troll as a person for... she is our biggest troll. It's the funniest thing. She always picks for it.

Eddie: I had a huge regret with Jenna and I don't... I know she doesn't know it, but when I saw her at your rehearsal-

Annie: At the Ryman?

Eddie: At the rehearsal dinner at the Ryman, I shook hands instead of hugging because I hadn't seen her in a long time and I didn't know if she remembered me. So I didn't go in for the hug. I could feel it. I felt when I did it that I did it the wrong way.

Annie: Oh boy. I will double-check. Well, she'll hear this now. Maybe that's what she'll pull as the clip is the Eddie did not hug her at the Ryman.

Eddie: She was hoping for a hug, but it definitely felt like, hello, nice to meet you again. It was like, well, no, we know each other.

Annie: She was like, I scheduled you for a gazillion years. Because she also scheduled you and I did a show that no one will ever hear and she's scheduled all those episodes too. So you've really worked with her over the last decade.

Eddie: I feel like know each other. I saw her Baltimore show. We're like friends, but it had been so long and I always default to "I don't think you remember me". So it's okay. And I did the handshake and I could just... I felt something in the relationship step backwards a couple inches.

Annie: Do you know one of my least favorite feelings is when I say "nice to meet you" and at the same time they say "good to see you again". Ooh.

Eddie: Dude, Annie, I cannot believe you have not... I haven't... I can't believe... how do you say "nice to meet you" ever?

Annie: I've practically stopped. I've practically stopped. I've just said "so good to see you"

Eddie: Always. And even if they're like, "I think we just met." I'm like, "Yeah, how are you?" Like you can walk out of a "so good to see you" or "Hey, how are you?" You can walk out of that. It's not even walking out of it. It's just you're so friendly in a few seconds. You're just so happy to see him. But "nice to meet you" you're 50 50.

Annie: You're risking on purpose. You know what you're doing? Yeah. It's bad.

Eddie: Never comment on body in any way.

Annie: No.

Eddie: Even if someone clearly used to have very long blonde hair and now it is short, short red hair, hello, eye contact only. Hello.

Annie: You pretend you don't see their hair change.

Eddie: I would never. Somebody could walk into a room wearing a black t-shirt and jeans and walk out of the room wearing all red sparkles and I would literally go, "How was your time at your meeting?"

Annie: Why? Why? Why would you not notice a haircut? Haircuts are very intentional to be noticed.

Eddie: I gotta be like buddies, buddies close. I would say to you, "Hey, did you get a hair thing done?" But most of the time there is no comment on physical anything.

Annie: Do you know what's funny is I am so much quicker to compliment a woman on the streets in New York that I've never seen before and will never see again than one of my actual friends. Because I'm just shouting her down. I'm just giving her flowers out on the streets of New York and being like, you are doing that coat exactly right. But when it's a friend who you've seen their body and their lives over four years, there's a "do I look better than I used to look? Is that what you're saying? Is this actually not fitting right? There's just, there's a lot more baggage with real friends complimenting them than shouting up people on the street.

Eddie: Right. This is the first compliment you've given me in four years. And it happens to be because of a shirt that you don't even know that I'm wearing like shaping stuff underneath. And now you've made me feel like crap.

Annie: Yes. Yes. But on the street, I don't know any of that. I just know this coat looks so good on her and she couldn't have killed it harder. And so I wish her well. And I tell her. That's one of my favorite things about New York, Eddie is people compliment each other on the sidewalks constantly.

Eddie: Really?

Annie: Oh my gosh. Constantly. It is wild. It is wild.

Eddie: I always thought it was like where black eyes avert, never look at each other.

Annie: That probably is true in parts and in times of the day maybe, or in certain neighborhoods. But where there's more tourists, that's probably true. But in the neighborhoods I frequent and where I live, no. I mean, there was a girl who couldn't get her credit card to work and you know, just like a beep on your phone. And so I just reached over and beeped her in when I beep myself in. And she was like, "Thanks so much. And that shirt..." I was like, "Thank you." I have decided how I feel about it. She was like, "It's perfect." And then never shall two paths cross ever again. I beeped her and she liked my shirt and we were done.

Eddie: Then you read about her in the news because she committed the perfect crime.

Annie: That's right. They would have never found her again.

Eddie: She's like, "I'm going to put on a cute shirt and wait for some unsuspecting girl with a Southern accent to beat me in."

Annie: I need you to know this is the first time in real-time I'm realizing they can trace every time I get on a subway. Huh?

Eddie: Yeah. Every time, everywhere.

Annie: I've never one time thought about that. That if someone was like, where was the last place? Well, she paid for a subway ticket at 57th at 8 AM.

Eddie: She beeped in right there.

Annie: Never in my evers have I thought about that that can be traced. That's great news. Great.

Eddie: Oh yeah. Hundred percent. The perfect crime is happening right now. They're listening right now. The FBI is listening to the podcast.

Annie: Well, they're fans of you.

Eddie: Huge fans.

Annie: Huge fans. Eddie, one major Christmas highlight that we need to talk about. Like this is like a news news article. So d d d d d d d d, breaking news. Have you heard of Tally the Elf? Do you know this Disney World story?

Eddie: Nope.

Annie: Okay.

Eddie: Not a thing. You got to start from ground zero. Other than I know what Tally... I mean, I know what Disneyland is.

Annie: Okay. Disney World where you used to live. Orlando. That's part of this.

Eddie: Which I found out recently and may not be true... I found this out on an Instagram post. "World" has O-R-L on it.

Annie: I saw the same post.

Eddie: And land has L-A in it. Right. But that can't be right because Disneyland is not really in LA, but it's a good way to remember it.

Annie: I mean, that is one of the most fascinating reels that has ever passed across me. And it's on a news thing. It's like they did it in a Sunday night news reel or something.

Eddie: My algorithm is chock full of Disneyland adults doing behind-the-scenes stuff. Anyhow, but I don't know about to tell me.

Annie: This is why I thought Tally the Elf would be... in our Venn diagram of “discover” page would be the dead center. There's a parade every day at Disney World for Christmas. In the parade there are elves walking around. There is one young man named Tally the Elf who is walking around and walking up to people and saying, "What's your name?" They'll say Eddie. And he's looking to see... he has the tally. He has Santa's list. And he says, Nice. And he says, naughty, naughty. And when he did Ashley, he said, Ashleyah, Ashleyah, we expect better of you. I mean, he's very funny. He's very funny, funny.

Eddie: I'm surprised they left that at Disney. That's a little bit... Disney is endlessly positive.

Annie: Yes. You still got time. You've still got time. And sometimes he erases them off the naughty list and puts them on the nice list. He's great.

Eddie: That's amazing.

Annie: Tally's great. Well, going very viral in December. I mean, just like going everywhere, which is, again, I'm shocked you haven't seen him. Now you will because I've said it out loud. This is why we can't have nice things. People have figured out his real name and his address. And so now people started yelling his real name in the parade and Disney took him out of the parade.

Eddie: Oh, no.

Annie: He can't be Tally the Elf anymore because people found his real self and his real life. Why would you do that?

Eddie: Why would you wreck it like that? I know a lot of those performers back from my living in Orlando days. They deeply value the story that they're a part of. They don't want to be a part of the... Ooh. That's got to break Tally's heart.

Annie: I know. It's very sad because the videos are hysterical. He's brilliant at it. And now he doesn't get to be, so says the internet, he doesn't get to be in the parade anymore because people took him out of the fake and made him a person.

Eddie: Oh, that is a hard... Well-

Annie: I know.

Eddie: What's going to happen to him?

Annie: I guess he'll get put somewhere else. But now I'm like, well, now everybody knows Tally's face.

Eddie: I know.

Annie: He still has a face. He does have his fake hair but-

Eddie: But he's going to have his head and like a goofy mask or something. They're going to hide.

Annie: My curiosity is, do they switch him? Because there's these bears that walk around, elf bears that walk around with the elves. I wonder if they'll switch him to an elf bear and let someone else be Tally.

Eddie: Country bear, jamboree bears?

Annie: No. They're like gingerbread-y kind of bear-looking things. They're like cookie-looking bears that are about the same height as the other elves. You know we have someone on staff that used to be friends with some of the characters at Disney. She used to be an employee. You know Heather from the network. She has lots of great Disney stories because she used to be friends with Mulan.

Eddie: Oooh. We had Disney... a few princesses, real-life princesses that went to our church and things of that nature.

Annie: But like take it so serious.

Eddie: And for life.

Annie: To this day Heather will say, "I was friends with Mulan." And I met a Disney princess in Disneyland at a church and she said, "Actually, I was friends with Cinderella for a long time. Would you guys like to go to Disneyland? I can help you get in. I was just friends with Cinderella for a long time."

Eddie: I love that. But I feel like the people on the other side who found out the name broke the contract.

Annie: Yes. Tally didn't break the contract?

Eddie: No, Tally was doing exactly... I had a friend, Stu, who does not work at Disney, so I can blow him up now, but he created a character at MGM back in the day. And he was like-

Annie: What's MGM? I don't remember that. Is that another park? Was that like Universal?

Eddie: Yeah. It's still there. There's three parks. There's Epcot. Well, there's four parks. There's Disney or Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Animal Kingdom, and MGM. It's Hollywood Studios.

Annie: Hollywood Studios. You're right. You're right. You're right.

Eddie: Sorry. It was started being called MGM. That's like when it was... anyhow, he developed his own character and it became super popular, but no one ever... But he would do this thing like man on the street and he would just like get people. He would start with nothing and he would just gather actual people and do a talent show out of people that were just walking by. And he was just this great convener of people. And people loved him, but it was all pre-internet or he would have totally gotten blown up.

Like we all knew it. And even when we saw him there and he said our name, we called him by his character name and he would call like, Oh, it's Eddie and Brianne. But you never break the thing because you know this is such a special thing that he's able to do this.

He was also the MC at our wedding and was magnifique. I mean, just absolutely what you would want an MC at a wedding. But yes. That breaks my heart. Okay. Well, that was a great story.

Annie: Tally. I just didn't know if you'd seen him. What's on your list for us today as we recap 2024, our end of the year review.

Eddie: Importance of marriage covers. That was all.

Annie: Nailed it then. Okay.

Eddie: How was your year? Anything to talk about? This is the last of our-

Annie: Of our recaps.

Eddie: Yearly recaps. And this is also the carrying of the tradition that we've been doing since 2016 together, which by the way, thank you.

Annie: Aw, thank you. Year in Review is one of my favorite episodes. And thanks be to God you've agreed to come on the show continuing once a month in 2025 so that we can just keep talking.

Eddie: Just keep talking. Yes, I forgot. We're allowed to say this out loud now. I mean, you're allowed to, it's your thing. Like everybody always says, why don't you bring back Annie + Eddie Keep Talking? And I'm always like, I understand the heart behind it, but I'm like, we've never stopped.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Eddie: If you want us to call it that, okay. So it'll be on your feed.

Annie: That's right. But we will call it Annie + Eddie Keep Talking once a month next year.

Eddie: And it will still be this. Whatever-

Annie: It'll be what we've done every month of this year.

Eddie: And almost all the time. It never has ever stopped, but we'll continue with the name that you know but it will be less about the pandemic.

Annie: Was there a better title for a podcast than Annie and Eddie Keep Talking? I mean, that is exactly what we have done since 2016.

Eddie: I remember when you said it. Because we were batting around, I don't know, like penguin pals and stuff. And you just like, "What about Annie Keep Talking?" And I was like, Everybody was like, yeah, that's just nebulous enough to mean exactly what it needs to mean, which is nothing. Please don't lock us into a thesis. Just let's roll.

[00:48:21] <music>

Annie: And now back to finish up our conversation with Eddie.

[00:48:31] <music>

Annie: Okay, let's each give 2024 a grade. But it has to be a number grade. So I'm going to give 2024 as a whole, 81%. Barely a B, but not a C. Barely a B.

Eddie: Hmm. That is so hard. Every year, and I wonder if this is just being an adult, I wonder if this is... I listened back to our shows. Sorry. I don't mean to get too... like I go back to our old shows. I wonder if this is age, but it gets more and more polarizing because there are parts of me that are like, this was a 90 percenter. And there are parts of me that were like, this was a 10 percenter.

Every single year seems to be both. Life is so polarizing. Like I can't imagine it being harder than this year. And then there are parts of it that just make me so proud, you know, or that were so joyful. Like there are times I just think of like watching Lucy and Eve and Brienne that I'm just like, you know, I can't... so I guess I'll average it out to like a nice 75-ish, because I want to still pass the class. But I don't want to negate the fact that it was a really intense year. But at the same time, there was a lot of joy and beauty. And at the same time, I cannot... I don't want to be emotional on a podcast. I don't want to negate the fact that Brienne is just such a good friend and such a good wife. And even Lucy are so brave and so good. And they're such good friends. You know, you cannot... That number thing has really thrown me for a loop de loop.

I've also been up since super early this morning in a middle of a really weird headspace. I just got up early. So I'm very heady right now. So this has been definitely an episode where I feel like we're just like, hmm, let's wax poetically. I'm not going to give you a number. I'm going to talk eight minutes about a 75.

Annie: You know what's funny is I had a very similar morning where I sat with the Lord and felt some real direction in my prayer and in my scripture reading. And I was like, Oh, this is. And then a friend of mine, five minutes before we started voice memo'd me a dream that he had that was the same thing that the Lord and I talked about this morning. I'm also here with this heightened, like, God is telling me... God is on the move and helping me. And so I came in a little headspace too of like, man, what a kindness and what an interesting life we get to lead.

Eddie: I think the reviewing of the years has become progressively odder for me because-

Annie: As our year went on going from 2014 to 2024 has gotten-

Eddie: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah.

Eddie: I didn't love the review format starting in 2020 to be completely honest. Like I loved it because I loved the time with you and I loved the jokes, but like 2020 started to get intense and the world of the Kaufholz family has been kind of intense

from 2020 to 2024. And this year was one for the record books. And so it's just been like, wow, man, it's just been wild to look back on a decade. And I'm very not nostalgic, but I also like... there's just been a... it has been. I think I've appreciated the discipline, but I'm also ready for it to click over to 25. Like I'm like-

Annie: I don't think we could have predicted when we started doing like a year in review that the intensity we both experienced in different ways, obviously, in different amounts over the last three to four years would play out in the episodes and be like, oh, I don't want to joke about 2022 and you don't want to joke about 2023.

Eddie: No.

Annie: I did not predict that. I didn't think about that. Because 2014 and 15 were funny and silly. And that's talking about what movies came out, you know? So.

Eddie: Yeah, I will say one of the best moments though, 2024, there were two things: walking around downtown Nashville the day of your show and going to get donuts at some place and meeting I would say half of the people that ended up being at the Ryman that night. Everybody was so sweet. We all ate donuts and drank coffee and chatted about what was going to happen that night. And that I didn't know who the mystery guest was, even though I did and all of that. And then seeing you that night. That has to be like 2024. That was a good part of the year. Like, I know we've talked about it a bunch, but that was a good like... 2024 that'll be... And I saw *Wicked*.

Annie: It is on my list. Oh my gosh, it's on my list. You saw the movie, you mean?

Eddie: Annie, I have never read the book, seen the play. I didn't know the story. I didn't know anything about it.

Annie: And now you only know half. You only know the first half anyway.

Eddie: I sat there with Lucy and learned. I saw it all for the first time, heard all the music for the first time.

Annie: What do you think?

Eddie: It was astonishing. It's absolutely astonishing. Cynthia Erivo is as captivating an actor. She like pulled me in hard. I know we're probably out of time.

Annie: No, no, no. This is what I want to talk about.

- Eddie:** I can't even believe the story. I have guesses about the second half that the whole world must know. But like-
- Annie:** Will you please make the guesses out loud? And I will make no response with my face.
- Eddie:** Do you promise?
- Annie:** Yeah, I promise.
- Eddie:** So I can't figure out in time who's who. Does Dorothy... All of this is happening pre-Dorothy. Like they're in school pre-Dorothy and everything.
- Annie:** Yes, that's true. That's established in act one.
- Eddie:** So I'm trying to figure out if some of the people from the movie turn into Scarecrow, Tin Man, Lion.
- Annie:** Oh, interesting.
- Eddie:** Do those storylines ever connect or is *Wizard of Oz* its own thing? Because you could totally see there are people that sort of have those sort of looks and vibes and characteristics. Like the man that was dancing in the library, that really handsome man.
- Annie:** Fierro. Yes, Jonathan Bailey Fierro. That guy was beautiful on that horse and everything. He's just beautiful. I was like, is that guy like... he can be Scarecrow-y. He has that kind of... like real friendly. And so that's what I was trying... But I don't even know the real character's name. So I'm sure I'm wrong. But I was trying to figure out. That's all I could try to guess, but I don't know anything that happens.
- Annie:** Does it make you want to see the musical before next November when act two comes out or does it make you want to see act two and then go see it as a musical on stage?
- Eddie:** It kind of makes me want to read the book.
- Annie:** I've never read the book, but the book is apparently pretty different.
- Eddie:** Ooh, no. Then I guess the musical-
- Annie:** There's a few more peppers, a few more spice peppers apparently in the book than there are in the musical or the movie.

Eddie: I guess I'd rather see the m... I'd like to see the full musical then.

Annie: You should. You know, Mary Kate is Elphaba in New York until March 2nd. So if you can get everybody up there, January, February, you get to see the premier Elphaba in many people's esteem, the premier stage Elphaba. So I loved the movie so much.

Eddie: Do you love it?

Annie: Oh, it's just a beautiful version of a show I've seen one bazillion times.

Eddie: Was it pretty different? How much did it pull? Did it have like-

Annie: It's almost exactly the same from the musical. I mean, you know, my friends have been in it for a long time. I've gone and seen it in a lot of places. I was a fan before I was friends with them. So I know a lot of the dialogue. I can almost "one man show" that thing probably. And they are very close in a lot... There's some additional for sure, but they're very close in a lot of the dialogue. I thought it was beautiful.

The only downside, Eddie... I said to a friend of mine in New York, the only downside is, you know, some of the beauty of live theater is what you have to imagine being there. And people will never imagine [shiz?] anymore because now they've seen this one director of a movie created. And they'll never imagine the train that takes them to Oz for Ozmania or Wizmania and all that stuff.

So I sometimes am sorry when stage goes to movie. Though *Hamilton*... I would love to see them... I would love to see the same director due to *Hamilton*, what they did to *Wicked*. Because I'd love to see it.

Eddie: It would be amazing.

Annie: It'd be amazing.

Eddie: But it's the Harry Potter effect, right? If you have no interaction with the story, read it because the movies are so dang good. You're never not going to see Daniel Radcliffe as Harry Potter. You're never not going to see Hogwarts as it is.

Annie: Yes. So that's my only complaint about the movie is it will erase my imagination of what I thought [inaudible 00:58:09] university looks like and what I thought it, you know... because in the show there's a very... you don't know. Sorry. In the show, the define gravity when she is flying around in the movie. It's this incredible moment

where they lift Elphaba to the top of the stage and they have this black Cape that stretches almost the whole stage. So she kind of hovers over the audience. It's unbelievable. And it just takes your breath away because she's singing that song and she's 30 feet above you and she's just letting her rip tater tip, you know?

And now they see her flipping upside down on a broom and busting out a window, you know? So it's a little bit different. The imagination has gone from it.

Eddie: Yes. It's interesting to hear your take on it because you are such a student of it. I would love to know what your actual Mary Kate, like your friends-

Annie: They love it. They genuinely love it. I've asked them in a public way and in a private way. They just think it is... And it has done such good things for the musical. It's selling out... I mean, *Wicked* was already pretty sold out, but now it's selling out all the time. And people are really excited about it and they know it. I haven't heard anyone inside the *Wicked* world wish that this had not happened. Everybody is thrilled.

Eddie: I love it. Oh, I'm glad we got to that. That would have felt like a real-

Annie: I know. That was the only real thing on my list. We actually got everything. Tally. *Wicked*. We're once a month next year. Great.

Eddie: Thanks for letting me cough through it and feel through it all.

Annie: Well, thanks for letting me feel through it. Thanks for answering questions that matter a lot to me as I'm moving my life forward.

Eddie: Annie, I'm glad we get to do this next year.

Annie: Me too.

Eddie: Thanks for letting me be on your big show. I love it. I love getting to do this with you, Annie.

Annie: I don't have any real commitments with any friends, but I love that we get to keep talking. So I hope we get to keep doing this for a long time.

Eddie: We're not declaring before the Lord that we're in, but we're pretty close. We're right here. We're declaring before the podcast audience that we will indeed do a podcast.

Annie: That's right, that we will indeed do this. Yes, we're at least committed for one more calendar year and hopefully forever.

Eddie: One more calendar year of continuing to talk, but we've never really stopped.

Annie: That's right. I love you, buddy. I love your family. Thanks for doing this.

Eddie: Thanks, pal.

Annie: All right, everybody, for the last time this year, please go wash your hands.

Eddie: Yeah, bye, buddies.

[01:00:36] <music>

Annie: You guys, isn't he the best? Oh, gosh. I just love him. I love him. I love his family. What a joy that we get to keep talking. I'm so, so grateful. So head over to social media, and as always, tell Eddie, thanks for being on the show. Thank him for his thoughts. And just tell him how excited you are that he is coming back in 2025.

If you want to go back and listen to any of the recap episodes with Eddie from this year, we have got a whole playlist for you linked in the show notes below. And don't forget on Wednesday, January 1st, two days from now, we're reading the Gospels together over on Let's Read the Gospels podcast. So subscribe to that feed. You don't want to miss it.

And we'll be back here on Monday, January 6th with our annual Epiphany episode. 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, or send them straight to us on Instagram @ThatSoundsFunPodcast. There are a lot of people over there, like 25,000 plus. You need to join us if you're not following That Sounds Fun podcast. There is a lot of our seasons talk next year that will be happening on Instagram too. So make sure you're following.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, on my couch this week. Anywhere you may 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 a new year's walk at Radnor Lake. So I hope I get to do that. Happy New Year, friends. We'll see you back here on Monday, January 6th, 2025 for our annual Epiphany episode.