

Girls Night #221: Don't Quit: How to Stick it out Even When you Want to Give up – with Bianca Juarez Olthoff

0:00:05 - Stephanie

Hey friends, welcome to Girls Night. I'm Stephanie May Wilson and I'm so happy that you're here. Each week, I have a girlfriend over and we talk through one of the biggest questions we have about our lives as women. We're talking about friendships and faith and relationships and self-confidence, about our calling in life and how we can live every bit of our lives to the full. Life is so much better and easier and absolutely more fun when we navigate it together as girlfriends, and I cannot wait to get started. Friends, I'm so excited about today's episode. Today we're talking about how to build more grit and resilience in our life and how to keep going even when things feel really hard.

If you're anything like me, you've had moments in your life where you know you're supposed to do something. Maybe it's your career path you're supposed to pursue or a dream you want to accomplish, but at some point along the way you meet some resistance. Things start to feel hard. We can't get over something that happened in our past that makes us feel like we're not good enough. We feel like we're falling short compared to everyone else around us, and we start to wonder if maybe we're just not cut out for this. So the question is how do we move past those obstacles? Do we give up or do we keep going? And if we do keep going, how do we find that grit, that resistance, that perseverance that it takes to continue forward? To help us answer these questions, I invited my dear friend Bianca Juarez Olthoff back onto the show.

Bianca is a best-selling Christian author, speaker and podcast host. She also recently released her brand new book called *Grit, don't Quit*. In it, she helps readers cultivate perseverance, embrace resilience and embark on a life of purpose, and that's what she's helping us do today. Here are just a few of the things that she's going to be teaching us. She'll talk to us about how we can train our brains to be more resilient, how to keep going even when things feel really hard or painful, how to combat feeling like we're falling short or falling behind, how to hear from God and continue pursuing what he has for us, and so much more.

Whether you're trying to figure out your next steps in life, in a relationship or in your career, or you've hit a really hard spot in any of those things, this episode might just be the nudge you need to keep moving forward. I hope so. All right, you guys? I'm honestly thrilled about who we have on the show today. This is one of my favorite people. I have looked up to her for, honestly, years, years and years. I have loved her work. If you ever get to hear her speak in person, like get tissues and get ready for goosebumps. She's just an amazing communicator, an amazing person. Welcome to the show Bianca Juarez Olthoff!

0:02:46 - Bianca

Thank you so much. That introduction is so kind Steph. I think people also need to know that we legit know each other. It's not just some cold call. We go way back. I was thinking about this. Bri and Joey have been married for six years. Yeah, six years. Then we knew each other before that. We've known each other for at least seven years.

0:03:11 - Stephanie

Yes, Do you know that? We probably talked about this? Oh my gosh. Okay, you guys, forgive this diversion for a second Right. Shortly after college I moved to Atlanta north of Atlanta to work for a missions organization. I had been there for like three days. Someone had told me to read Bob Goff's book. Loved us, I did. I decided to tweet before it was X or whatever. I tweeted at Bob Goff saying, hey, reading your book, because he was coming to whatever conference was in Gwinnett, Georgia. Do you know what I'm talking?

0:03:51 - Bianca

about Catalyst. It was Catalan. Yes, girl, I knew, I know where you're going with this one. Yes, I do.

0:03:55 - Stephanie

I tweeted at Bob Goff, kind of not totally knowing who he was. He tweeted me back and said hi, do you want to be my guest for this conference? And I was like, is this a for real thing? Like I don't know who is this guy? And everyone was like, yes, this is for real. Go. Like he's the best, this is the best, like okay. And so I went and there was. I think that's where I met you. I met you like in.

0:04:19 - Bianca

I think we did the room or something.

0:04:21 - Stephanie

I was so excited because I had been such a fan of yours for so long and it was just such a fun thing. So yeah, I'm like you know, I'm 20, zero years old. I don't know, I don't remember I had nervous and I just moved to a new city and I'm standing there next to Bob Goff, who I just met, and I'm like so excited and this is hilarious, honestly, because I always say, like, when people say you just said, like, oh, I've been such a fan, I'm like I don't have fans, I just have friends.

0:04:46 - Bianca

But like literally, like now, here we are all these years later and I'm grateful and we don't. I don't want to, I don't want to put on like as if it's deeper than what it is. But when we do connect we don't talk often, but when we do I mean just before the podcast I felt very safe with telling you just kind of like, how life has been from a very honest perspective. I think the reason why people love listening to you and trust you is because you are an open space. You feel very safe. I'm a witness and a testament to that. Like, though we've only hung out in in real life only a couple of times, you're just a very safe person. So I say this on the air so everyone can hear that the person that you are on the podcast and online really is who you are in real life. So thank you.

0:05:27 - Stephanie

Okay, now I have goosebumps. Now I have goosebumps. Okay, all right, don't cry, we're fine, we're fine, okay. So listen, thank you for that, you're welcome, okay? So for anyone who doesn't know who you are, we're going to change that in just a second. Tell us who you are, what you do, and I would love to hear a fun fact about you.

0:05:45 - Bianca

Okay, so fun fact, we'll start there. Stephanie and I were in a wedding together in Costa Rica, and when I say like in a wedding, no, we were not bridesmaids, because there were absolutely zero bridesmaids, so everyone at the wedding there was only like what stuff? Like 20 people.

Yeah, you were dancing like that and there you were the bridal party, so shout out to Brianna and Joey for bringing everyone to Costa Rica. So, um, yes, so that's my fun fact that we were actually in in, at, in, at slash a wedding together in Costa Rica. That's my fun fact. But my name is Bianca, what is all tough. I hail from the great state of California, aka the promised land. Uh, in addition to being a church planter, I'm also a podcaster, a writer, a speaker and, like a wannabe chef, seven like in another world and another life. I I really wish that I would have hopped on the early TikTok chef train and I think I would have been ticked off famous making recipes. I'm not kidding, cause I love cooking and I love sharing recipes and I love bringing people on my table, because that's that's really where life change happens is around dinner tables, and having earnest and honest conversations is how our church started, but more so. I think that's how some of the best relationships, conversations and life change has happened as well. I love that.

0:06:54 - Stephanie

Uh, I feel like in another life or maybe in my future life. I want to be like a food critic, but not a critter, more like a, more like a food, like a food blogger a food writer.

0:07:04 - Bianca

Yes, yes, so I'll cook. And then you write.

0:07:07 - Stephanie

You write up stories about me, all positive ones, all positive ones, because, listen, I'm just anyone who wants to cook for me, I'm. There's no way I'm writing a single bad thing. I'm so happy, just keep, keep feeding me. Yay, um, I love that so much. So you have a new book that just came out and it's called grit don't quit, and I want to hear all about the book. And I know from from experience that when you are writing a book it's. You can only write a book after you have lived it. Girl.

0:07:34 - Bianca

So every time. So my next book is on how to be rich and skinny. Cause, I want to live through that baby. I want to live through that.

0:07:40 - Stephanie

Every time I go to like Barnes and Noble, I just want to like hug all the authors, cause I'm like, oh there are a lot of tears in this one. Yes, oh, man. So tell us like what, tell us about the book and tell us about the really the story behind it.

0:07:55 - Bianca

Okay, so this is where I want to start, cause I know there's going to be some podcast listeners like, oh gosh, we're going to talk about a book. No, we're not going to talk about a book. We're going to talk about a feeling, and the feeling that every single one of us will face if we already haven't faced, we will face in our future is this desire to throw in the towel. We feel like we've been knocked down in life once too many times and we just don't feel like we can get back up.

I think for me, I love to write out of place of, yes, living through and this like lived experience, but also just kind of raising a, like licking my finger and sticking in the air almost prophetically, to be like what is going on in culture that is not being said, that needs to be said. Let's speak to that, cause I think that with every pain, that there's a purpose that can be produced from that. But we need to articulate and identify like what it is and where it is. And so for me, I'm I'm guys, as I mentioned, I'm a church planner, so I know that there's not everyone on the podcast is a person of faith. That's totally fine. What I'm going to say is going to be good information whether you believe in Jesus or not, so you're going to want to listen.

But for me, I just saw. I saw entire, not just people are always like this next generation. You know these Gen Zers. No, I'm talking about culture as a whole. With a touch, a tap, a swipe, you can get groceries delivered to your door, you can get a meal delivered to your door, you can get a booty call delivered to your door, and everything has been instant access to access between Instagram, instagram.

We get everything now, and so when something is hard or we feel like we have to try it, something it's we've bought into the lie that it shouldn't be this hard. My marriage shouldn't be this hard, being single shouldn't be this hard, starting my business shouldn't be this hard. But I just going to scratch my head and say, when did we think it was going to be easy? And so we are training an entire culture, entire generation of people, my generation, the next generation, to just walk away. When someone hurts your feelings, walk away. If you know someone at church said something that offended you, walk away. Your husband smells, walk away.

You know, it's just like all these, all these easy excuses. I just want to say, like no to the victor goes to spoils, like quitters never win and winners never quit. So can we not just talk about and tell people you got to be resilient, but how do we create practical ways for people to build great resilience? And so, whether or not this isn't a book or whether or not this is me preaching, whether it misses me just talking to you in the podcast, my heart for people that feel like they have been knocked down, they can't get back up, is to whisper over them and blow wind into their sails and remind them if you are not dead, then God's not done. Get back up and let me teach you how.

0:10:28 - Stephanie

Okay, I have seven million questions. Tell me. I love that so much and I love like get back up and I'm gonna show you how Like I'm gonna walk you through this. Because I think, like going back to cooking, I'm a recipe person. I'm especially in areas where I'm unsure, like the kitchen. I'm great at the table, not great in the kitchen. I just like I'm afraid I'm gonna get it wrong, and so having someone take me by the hand and walk me through it at least help me get comfortable and then I can start to like wiggle and throw my own spin on something. But so I just love that you're walking us through this. I wanna know from you, like when you look at your life, what are some things that have happened for you personally that have made this message so important to you.

0:11:20 - Bianca

Oh, okay, so we can get honest on your show, right, 100%, yeah, okay, so I would okay. So the traditional answer that I think I would give most podcast is you know, I'm a first generation American. I'm a daughter of immigrants. I was illiterate up until the age of 12. I wrestled with obesity my whole entire life. I mean, there's a number of things where I can look back and be like, oh yeah, maybe I can write a book on grit and resilience. But I'll be honest with you, Stephanie, in the last year and a half I have been forced not just to theorize about resilience or preach about being gritty. I've had to live it. And so when you say that there's sometimes that you wanna walk through Barnes and Nobles and hug the authors, it's because I have lived this book out more times than I'd like to admit or even count.

And so the book was actually birthed out of a conversation that I had with a woman. I sat across from her, a woman from church, a number of years ago, and she was going through a divorce and she was in a really dark place, and she said it's not that I want to take my life, I just wanna go to sleep and not wake up and I was like encouraging her and I was like coaching her and she said, yeah, but you don't understand, Bianca, I'm not like you. I didn't have to learn how to be resilient. Now, this woman came from a place of privilege and she was given a lot and she had a lot of financial wherewithal and she also had a lot of great pedigree. And I sat across the table from her and it hit me oh, she thinks resilience is synonymous with poverty, and what I wanna step back and say it's whether we come from a place of privilege or a place of poverty, we all have to learn the ability to get back up. We all. And, side note, a lot of the book is written from a scientific perspective, because people will use this nomenclature in this language like oh well, I'm not resilient. No one ever taught me how to be resilient. It's not a gene, it's not something you're born with. It's something you could actually develop and grow. Now some people are more optimistic, but that's not resilience.

And so I was really birthed out of sitting across the table looking at someone who I cared for and saw her not wanna live and I, okay, now I'm gonna sound crazy and someone out there is gonna be like this chick is a little odd, but, steph, since 2020, I have seen like such a darkness over the globe. I'm gonna call it like a spirit of depression and anxiety and a suicidal, just darkness that I have spoken and granted. I wanna be very forthcoming. I'm a pastor, so I get to speak to a lot of people and I'm astounded. I'm astounded people that have families and wealth and great jobs and yet can't get out of bed in the morning. It breaks my heart Like, literally, I have a lump in my throat and I just wanna remind people like, whatever is weighing on you I

don't want to demonetize or cancel any of the pain that we want very real pain, legitimate pain, that we are going through trial, trauma, tribulation. I don't wanna take anything away from that, but I love you too much to let you live there, because, though you might be there right now, that's not where you're gonna live. So let's build a plan so we can get back up when life knocks us down, and so that's really like the impetus of it, and I love that.

You said that you are a chef that loves a recipe. I'm actually the opposite. Like I go to the kitchen and I'm like, okay, it's like a challenge to me. There's this show on Food Network called Chopped and you get this basket. You have you seen it? Okay, you're nodding, you get it. Yes, I freaking love Chopped, because I will always open up my cabinets and I'm like, oh, I've got this garlic chili place from Trader Joe's. Oh, I have these like frozen shrimp, oh, I have this sweet potato and like I'm making like these crazy recipes.

And so I feel like I have been thrown in the proverbial kitchen of trial, trauma and tribulation. I've gone through a lot as a church planner, as a stepmom, as, again of my family, of origin, all the other stuff that I feel like I have language, practical handles and science. I spent a lot of time. I didn't have an ambition of writing a book on resilience. I just started reading books on resilience because I needed to learn how to be resilient, and one of the things that I saw was there's books that talk about Brazilian people, there's talks that give science about like the brain and resilience, but no one's teaching me how to be resilient, and so I wanted to create something in the market that it was like if I go in the kitchen and whip up something I know it'll be nourishing to people, and people will leave my kitchen table feeling full, and that's what I want. When they read the book, they feel like, wow, I know what to do now on how to practically get back up.

0:15:44 - Stephanie

I love that In the beginning, when we're like before we can even be resilient, we have to like take a step out. Right, we have to try something. We have to put ourselves out there for something, because you can't really like get knocked down. Otherwise you have to do something, and even that step is really hard. Talk to us about how we like get up the maybe it's also grit, the courage to try something in the first place before we even, and then we'll talk about what happens when we get knocked down.

0:16:25 - Bianca

Yeah. So I mean I love that and I love that you're speaking to the before. So someone out there started a business, someone out there embarked on a romantic relationship. Someone out there decided they were gonna try being friends with someone new again. So we put ourselves in these situations where there is this vacuum, there's this hole, there's this need, there's this desire, and when it doesn't happen or doesn't outwork in the way that we think, we feel like I should have never done that that was wrong, when the truth of the matter is no, that I mean, maybe it was a wrong decision, but more often than not it's.

People think resistance is synonymous with you're not supposed to do it and what I'm kind of like scratching my head and saying like no, resistance. The very thing that's needed for resilience and resistance might be the very thing that, when you get past whatever is blocking

you, that it will prove to you like no, I am called to be in this relationship. No, I am called to be this entrepreneur. No, I am called to go back to school. And so I think when we talk about, like building resilience, I want to. Okay, first of all, let's make this like super practical Cause. Right now it feels like very theory over resistance, resilience, resilience you know what? Okay, Stephanie, I spent research out of MIT, stanford, yale, uci, and I started on this rabbit trail of neuropathy and neuropathology, like the power of our brain.

Because if it's not a genetic trait, if resilience is not a genetic trait, then what is going in our brain? What do we need in our brain to help us become resilient? And so I put this in the book. And because I'm a preacher, they all begin with P. I mean either I'm a preacher or I love Sesame Street, but like just to help our brain remember because, honestly, simplicity is what our brain loves. So these are the three P's of resilience. People think like, well, how do I know from resilient person, it's something that you can train your brain to do. So the three P's of resilience the first one is perspective. What does that mean?

Perspective is an honest assessment of reality while maintaining hope. Perspective is looking at a situation. Let's say, your marriage is struggling. It's you saying I'm so frustrated with the stage of my marriage but I'm in counseling. I'm so frustrated with my marriage but I'm committed to love my spouse. So perspective is an honest assessment of reality while maintaining hope.

A lot of this science came out of prisoner of war survivor, alan Stockdale. This is he invented the Stockdale paradox and what he realized is that people that had a false sense of hope, the prisoners of war that were like we're going to get out next week, they're going to save us by Christmas, they're going to get us by Easter, they were the first ones to get sick, the first ones to die or the first ones to mentally break. And yet those that were like hey, I have hope that one day we're going to get out of here, but let's be realistic about this situation, because this junk is serious, those were the people that made it. So. Having an honest assessment of reality is absolutely key. So that's perspective.

The second key ability to people who are resilient is that they have the ability to pivot. What does that mean? Well, the French word is bricolage, and bricolage is taking two things that otherwise wouldn't go together, putting them together to find a solution. So I'm going to give a Bible reference for, like the word nerds and vacation Bible schools students out there. But like there's this story out of the book of Joshua, and Joshua is leading people into the Promised Land and the first city they hit is Jericho, and Jericho is known for its walls. These walls were unscalable. Well, we have walls in our life, walls that feel like are so high. What are we going to do? We can be like the children of Jericho, children of Israel, and instead of scaling the walls of Jericho, they marched around them. What is that ability to pivot?

We've heard the adage when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. I just want to take that a couple of steps further and like maybe it's because I'm a hustler, or maybe it's just because I want people to get this. It's beyond when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. It's like when life gives me lemons, I want to plant the seeds. So I will sow these seeds and future generations will eat the fruit of my orchard. I want to pivot, not just for me, but for the next generation. So,

number one's perspective, number two, is the ability to pivot. And lastly, which is the hardest one, and I want to be sensitive to this is purpose, and ultimately, it's finding pain out of purpose. And so there was a yeah, there was a French psychologist that was a Holocaust survivor in Auschwitz, and Victor Frankel wrote Man's Search for Meaning, and he was actually the pioneer of meaning.

Making. What is meaning making Meaning. Making is finding meaning in whatever situation and or pain that we're in Now. This is hard. This is really hard as Christians, as people who follow Jesus. Paul put it this way he says that all things work together for good for those that love the Lord, those that walk uprightly and love the Lord. Well, that sounds really good and it's very cute on Pinterest and we could put a meme on it and everyone would like it. We put this inspirational song on Instagram and then it gets lots of likes.

What does it really mean? It's this understanding and belief that whatever I am going through, it's going to be for God's glory and for my gain. And it doesn't make sense and it doesn't mean it's easy. I may not like it, I may not want to do it, I may want to quit, but I'm going to stay the course because I believe that, in the end, my pain will have a purpose. What is that? It's redeeming the pain and if you exhibit those three qualities a good perspective, the ability to pivot and finding the purpose in whatever pain you're in, you are a resilient person and no matter these, these three characteristics can be used as a grid over Elon Musk, to Paul the Apostle to athletes, to entrepreneurs of successful CEOs that are in the C-sweets and are in the Fortune 100 companies. I guarantee you these three attributes are hallmarks for people who are resilient, pretty and successful.

0:22:12 - Stephanie

So how do we like I love that it's not a gene those three things make total sense. Like I'm picturing examples of each of those how do we cultivate these things in our lives, like, if we're like I don't know how to, I don't know how to, like I'm scared, I don't know how to pivot, I'm afraid of, I don't want to fail, I don't want to be hurt, like I think that's kind of what I'm coming back to first is like, how do we get started doing something in the first place?

0:22:44 - Bianca

So much of it, Stephanie it's such a good question. So much of it is our brain. I have a whole chapter on neuropathology and like what our brain thinks, and so you had spoken about. Hey, what gives us the gumption, the unction to stand up and actually try something? Well, our brain is very, very powerful. And if our brain so think of your front lawn. You live in Tennessee, so I'm almost positive that you have a front lawn. I live in California, so I have like a little patch that we call a lawn. But I want you to think of your front lawn. And if you don't have a front lawn now, think of the front lawn that you had as a child. And I want you to think of this patch of grass. And if you were to continue to walk the exact same path on this patch of grass, what would happen to that patch of grass?

0:23:30 - Stephanie

You could get trampled down, maybe eventually die, yes, but and so you were creating a walkway, a pathway.

0:23:36 - Bianca

If you continually walk on the same path, you're creating a pathway. Well, if your brain's the exact same way, if you continually think the same thought, guess what you're doing? You're actually creating grooves in your brain that are telling you what you can and what you can't do, and so what I want us to do. And then Steph I'm using this example if you stop walking on that path, what's going to happen? Going to grow back. The grass will go back. The same thing is with our brain. So if we keep on thinking the same negative thought repeatedly, we're going to form a pattern in our mind that will make us think this is impossible. I can't do this. So if you study the brain, negative thoughts Okay. So I like thinking these are very, very simple. So I'm going to take brain science and then make it really basic. So negative thoughts for our brain are like Velcro and positive thoughts for our brain are like Teflon. Velcro it sticks, teflon it slides off For some reason, and scientifically it's called the negativity brain bias.

Negativity bias in our brain is that our brain actually understands negative and our brain can't believe or trust the positive. So when you keep on thinking. Maybe someone spoke over you as a child you will never be an entrepreneur. Or maybe someone told you you are just like your father and your father is a quitter, an abandoned and a drunk and an alcoholic whatever. Or someone told you you're never going to be able to stay married because no one in our family stays married. Do you know that that will be a path that you will always think about and that you're walking on the same patch of grass again and again and again? So what do we do? Every time that that negative thought comes into our mind? We take that thought captive. Now, if that sounds familiar, Stephanie, as someone who is a follower of Jesus, all the apostle says that we take every thought captive and we make it subservient to Jesus. Oh my gosh, are you kidding me? Are you telling me the Bible and science are coexisting? They are, they are.

So the big thing for me is, as a person of faith I'm not going to hide this from any of the listeners this book definitely is peppered with scripture, because the truth of the matter is no matter what positive confession you try thinking, no matter what manifesting you try thinking, our negativity bias will find it really, really hard to believe that we can be anything else than what we believe about ourselves. So what do I go to as a literate child who's a daughter of immigrants, who is dirt poor, who is obese her entire life, who struggled academically? Where do I go for my validation? What am I going to sit here like a dove campaign and look at myself in the mirror and say, oh, I'm beautiful? No, but I'm going to go to the word of God, where God's word says that I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I'm going to go to God's word where he tells me that there's a plan and a purpose for my life, plans for good and not of evil. I'm going to go to God's word and he's going to tell me, as it says in 1 Peter, that I am a royal and elect generation called to tear down strongholds. Greater is he that is in me than he that's in the world. And so for the listeners out there, especially people of faith, it's like you don't have to try to believe something about yourself, that the world will try to give you some script. No, the word of God wants to wash your mind new and say, no, you are more than a conqueror, you are more than able, because Christ is able. Nothing is impossible in the hand of God. And so, even for those that are not

Christians or Christ followers, let me tell you, the things that you say about yourself will become true, because you're going to be paving grooves in your brain the moment you take your thoughts captive and you replace them with a different thought. My twin sister, Jasmine. She does a lot of work around like brain and language, and she says choose a different narrative. So Jasmine's all business and I'm all Bible. So for those that are not believers out here, I'm going to give you this word choose a different narrative.

When a narrative comes in that says I'm a failure, I can't do this, I suck. This will fail. Choose a different narrative. And in choosing a different narrative, the narrative has to again I go back to perspective it has to be rooted in truth. So let's just say I'm looking at myself in the mirror and I'm really proud of myself. I've taken really good care of my body in this season. I've lost weight, I'm working out, I'm meditating, I'm going on walks. I mean, look, here's my freaking Stanley. That's like the size of my head. I'm drinking all the water.

But if I stare in the mirror and I see myself and I tried to tell myself Bianca, you're a supermodel. It's so farfetched that my brain's not going to believe it. So when you choose a different narrative, the narrative has to be realistic. So I'm going to look at myself and I'm going to see the pudgy parts, I'm going to see the stretch marks, I'm going to see the cellulite, and I'm not going to say, oh yeah, you're totally a supermodel. What I am going to say is thank you, body, for treating me so well. Thank you, Bianca, for making good food decisions. Thank you for being gentle with your body when your body needed a nap on Saturday afternoon. You are treating your body well and your body will treat you well. I'm wrote a different narrative, so power of the mind is super important when we not just becoming resilient, not just becoming gritty, but really healing a lot of the brain trauma that had been spoken over us by others or even ourselves.

0:28:41 - Stephanie

Like everyone just needs to sit and take a breath for a second. Yeah, I'm just. Oh gosh, tell me. We were talking earlier about like instant gratification and how the second we feel resistance to something we want to quit. The picture in my mind is like hiking up a hill. At the beginning you have like I'm a horrible hiker. I'm from Colorado. I don't know if you know that I'm born and raised in Colorado. Terrible hiker. Like I don't belong where I'm from. I'm just like I can ski. I don't love it. I like try snowboarding, because all the cute boys were doing it anyway. So I don't like hiking. But if someone-

0:29:34 - Bianca

I don't know if I'm from Colorado. I was going to throw so much shading. Bring it on, I know, I know.

0:29:39 - Stephanie

I've failed you. I'm sorry. I know guys, if someone talked me into hiking though, maybe I'd be like, okay, I can do this. And I start up the hill and I'm feeling pretty good, but, like, pretty quickly it's going to get hard and my legs are going to start to shake or, you know, like burn, or like I'm going to get winded, I'm going to be hot. I'm going to be like and that's true no matter what we're doing Like the first date's great, the second date's great, but like, at some point you're going to

have a conflict. Or like building a business, it sounds fun at the beginning, but at some point you're going to be like this is really hard. What have you learned about? Like just getting ourselves to continue putting one foot in front of the other? Because that's hard. You know what I love?

0:30:25 - Bianca

It is so hard. It's so hard and I just want to normalize hard. I think sometimes people think that hard is the excuse to quit. And what I want to say is just because your progress is an obvious doesn't mean that your effort is not working. Just because your progress is an obvious doesn't mean that your effort isn't working. And so let's take like a seedling. You know, we have a seed and we plant it in the ground and like what? Do we expect a harvest the next day? No, it takes time. So we have grace for a seed and we see a little seedling. We're not going to yell at the seedling and say, hey, how come you're not a tree yet. And then, when it becomes a tree, we're not going to yell it and say like, hey, where's your fruit? And we expect the same thing for ourselves. So what would it look like to give ourselves grace in learning something new?

My friend, I've been playing tennis for actually since COVID. I needed something to get out of the house that was like safe and I could go just play by myself. And so I've been playing tennis for about three years and when I get into something like, I get into it. And so I've been trying to convince my best friend to also join and of course, she sees Cocoa at when the US opened and now she feels like she wants to play tennis and she signed up and she's in New York. So she was there for the US open and so she signed up for a tennis lesson and I was so proud of her and she said you know what?

I felt so stupid and I kept on telling myself oh gosh, you're so stupid, you're so stupid. Then I realized, no, you're doing so good for someone who's never done this before. And it hit me, Stephanie, I'm like why don't, why don't we talk to ourselves like that hey, you're doing so good and you've never done this before. Like, hey, new mom, you're doing so good and you've never done this before. Hey, entrepreneur, doing so good, you've never done this before. Hey, new teacher that's starting school in September, terrified out of your mind, with 30 new kids that you feel like you love, but you want to beat them simultaneously. Hey, you're doing a really good job because you've never had that classroom before. I feel like we need to encourage each other with a little bit more of that. Like, hey, you're doing so good, you've never done this before.

0:32:21 - Stephanie

We need that on like a mug. Can you take care of that? We do yes.

0:32:25 - Bianca

You know what I should sell it? I should put it in my store and sell it. I should put it in my store.

0:32:28 - Stephanie

Yes, you can pick it up when they throw it out. There you go. Seriously, I love that so much, and the new mom thing was the very first thing I thought of of just like I felt so stupid, and I felt stupid, so overwhelmed and so like, and also that's not a moment you can like quit either.

0:32:47 - Bianca

So like that's exactly.

0:32:48 - Stephanie

You know, can I just like stop hiking? No, this child needs to be fed. People will die. You can't give up. People will die. But yeah, you've never. You've never done this before. When I started this podcast I've talked about this, everyone's heard me say this a million times but I had the idea, wanted to do this, but I was so intimidated by, like, the tech. And then also, you know, I don't know, do I have something to say for an hour? Like, does anyone care what I have to say for an hour? Am I going to be so bad at this? And I had like kind of a similar thought although I like this one better, just, it's okay to be a beginner. And so I wrote that on a sticky note in my horrible handwriting and stuck it on my microphone and just was like, well, I'm new with this, but so is everyone who started a podcast, and I guess maybe I'll get better as I go, and and like I did, and I just I love that. It's even you're doing great, you've never done this before.

0:33:42 - Bianca

And you know one of those things just in line with that, because both of us are broadcasters and when I first started a podcast, I had those same feelings like oh my gosh, what am I doing? So I think that we need to find what fills a brave and what works for us. So you found a method that's for an hour. I'm not that ballsy Can I say that on your show? Yeah, can I say ballsy? Okay, so I'm just not that brave. I literally said I was like, okay, you can do this for 30 minutes. And I found a method that I liked. I liked the format for 30 minutes. And so I feel like someone out there, like you, can still do something hard that still fills within your wheelhouse, and so it's okay to be a beginner and it's okay to figure out what the system that works for you. So add that sticky note to your next microphone Stephanie what works for you.

0:34:25 - Stephanie

What works for you. This is this is okay, you're going to have to. You can correct my theology because this is probably off, but this is something I've thought about for years. People always say like, do you have peace about that? And that has always made me crazy because I'm like when, when you say, do you have peace about something like I'm picturing like a hug from my dad or like you know sheets at the end of the cool sheets at the end of the day, or like a hot shower or like a good nap or something like, that's to me what I picture.

And when I've done anything good in my life, that is not what I have felt. I have felt like terror, insecurity, like crippling doubts, fatigue, like all, just all of those I don't know I just have. I've never felt, I've never felt like a hot shower at the end of a long day. That's not what peace feels like to me in. Or that's not what I've felt when I've done anything that's good in my life. And so I'm like I wonder if we need just a different mental picture of what like peace from the Lord. Is that it's like you're you can. Being scared is not a sign that you should quit. It's just, at least it hasn't been for me. Do you like yeah, I'm sure you hear that all the time People talking about like well, if you have peace about it, like all the stuff that's worth doing in life I've never felt like restful about. Is that just me?

0:35:52 - Bianca

So I'm hearing, okay, so I'm hearing you say this phrase that I've heard before at anyone that has been in church has probably heard that phrase before like do you have peace about it? Well, the meta narrative is we're really asking do I have confirmation? Because that's what really people want. People want confirmation. Should I date this person, should I take this job, should I move to this city? And so when people say, like, do you have peace about that, I feel like I wanna take the Christian-y language. I call it Christian-y's. Let's remove the Christian-y's because Christian-y's is very confusing. Because you're over here, like peace about it? I don't know, peace feels like a hot shower or a hug for my dad. So we have to understand.

Oh my gosh, this is another podcast for another day, but let me try to synthesize this and I don't wanna lose people who are not followers of Jesus Like listen, listen. You can go ahead and replace this with whatever your theological belief is, but Stephanie and I are gonna go on a quick rabbit trail. So, Stephanie, how we all hear from God is very different, and you can, I can take you to. If we had time, I would take you through scripture and say look it, david heard God and got confirmation through God with feelings. In fact, psalm 51 and Psalm 91 talk about him prophetically feeling what Jesus would feel later on in life.

There's also people that get confirmation through God through knowing, like Paul the apostle, he knew he had to take Timothy with him on his journeys. We have people that get confirmation through God through seeing. In the Old Testament there's Gad this year and Nathan this year. These are people that, like, saw visions or dreams. Joseph had dreams. And then there's people that actually hear God. Paul the apostle was on the Damascus road and he heard the voice of God. Samuel the prophet he heard the voice of God.

And so sometimes people will say, like, do you have a piece about that? And what they're really saying is do you feel like God had confirmed that? Okay, so we've normalized this language, we want to know that we're going in the right direction, and so we're like how can I trust that God is actually speaking to me? It's knowing how God speaks to you. So people who use this nomenclature of like do you have a piece about that? More often than not they're feelers, so they feel a release or they feel something like oh yes, I'm supposed to. I feel like I should take this job, I feel like I should say yes to that person. But, Stephanie, you're not a feeler. That doesn't mean you don't have emotions. I'm talking to you and I really think that you're a knower. I have to be around you a little bit more. But knowers have this gut intuition. They can't shake it, but it's just like this intuitive knowing, like I can't explain it, but I know that, I know that, I know I'm supposed to do this.

There's other people that will get dreams or they'll have visions. The difference between a vision and a dream is when you're asleep, you dream, and when you're awake, you just see something. In the natural, nothing crazy, but you just like daydream. You could see it Like I just I see this home that I'm gonna have or whatever it is. And then, lastly, there's people that actually like get a sense of hearing God. I heard God say this, or he spoke to me this way. And so for anyone out there that is a person of faith, I just want us to get really good at identifying people who are

always like God doesn't speak to me. Yes, he does, you just might not know how he speaks to you. And so for those out there that are like I don't know about this peace thing. What's this peace thing? What you're really wanting is confirmation that God is saying, yes, go forward. Yes, go there. Yes, do this.

And how do we get that? By discerning and knowing the voice of God for our lives. And so I look at you, Stephanie, and I look at the things that you have accomplished and the things that you've done. And you haven't had this big mentor, this social media guide that's led you, or this map. You know that said, hey, you have to do this. You put one step in front of the other and you know that you're called to do this, and so you do it. Somebody else like me that's looking on the outside. I'm like, oh, no way, I need. I have to feel like what God is calling me. I have to feel like I have to do this because I am a total feeler. I'm a total feeler. So I think the question behind the question is how do we confirm that we're supposed to do something? If we are, if you're a follower of Jesus, then how do we confirm that is listening to the voice of God? How do we know the voice of God? By discerning how he speaks to us.

0:39:50 - Stephanie

The immediate. I love that, the immediate application that I see. That is something that we've talked about so much on the show is like another time when people say like you know, when you know, or you just know, is when it comes to like the person. When you meet your person, you know it's. How do I know if this is just a great guy that I've gone on some dates with or if this is the person I'm supposed to marry and it's like you'll know when you know, or like you just?

0:40:15 - Bianca
know I hate that.

0:40:16 - Stephanie
I hate that because I'm not a knower and I never knew.

0:40:19 - Bianca
You know, I never knew what does that mean.

0:40:21 - Stephanie
And then the peace thing came all back up because I'm like, well, I'm freaking out about this now. So is that the opposite of peace, like it's. I mean, it's been a whole thing. But I love that that there are these different like, we have these five senses and that we can get like a go ahead or a confirmation or just like a thumbs up from God in different ways. Yeah, One of the things and this is like not on the list and so this was not on the list One of the places, one of the ways that I've always heard from God the clearest was through my friends and that's why I started this show?

Because I was like someone will be talking to me and they'll share something about their life or about something they read or just whatever, and I'm like that was for me and I walk away from that dinner. It's just totally changed because it's something that they said across the table.

0:41:11 - Bianca

Wow, Brings it back to the table Because God can speak through people, God can speak through his word and God can speak to us directly.

0:41:18 - Stephanie

So I love that Absolutely, totally cosine on that stuff I love that Okay, yeah, we totally took a detour, but we're back, we're back. One of the things that I think is most discouraging on any journey is comparison. What do we do? How do we combat feeling like we are falling short or falling behind?

0:41:40 - Bianca

Okay, so I'm gonna answer this question, but I think that there's some context that's needed. So I mentioned this earlier. But I have a sister. I actually have a twin sister. Her name is Jasmine and she's my best friend. I love her to bits and pieces. We work out every week. We talk virtually every day, but there was some research that came out. By the way, if you know me, I am a data geek. I love science. I love the integration of like science and life and theology. It's so fun. But a huge research case study was done in the 80s and 90s on twins. Do you know? I have twins.

0:42:11 - Stephanie

I was like have we talked about this?

0:42:13 - Bianca

Okay, I'm gonna-, no, no, no, no, I know that, but I do know that you have twins and so, okay, so you're gonna really like love this. But there's a huge research case study that came out in the 80s and 90s and they saw, like the competitive level between twins. And why is that? Because they said that you had a mere identity. You had somebody that had your same life experience, your same age, your same ethnicity, your same feeling of like, everything. All your lived experiences are exactly the same, and so it becomes who walked first, who spoke first, who rode their bike first, who dated first, who got the first job, and so your entire life. There is an automatic comparison Now, and they spoke about the psychological impacts that it does have on twins.

Now, as I was preparing and writing this book, I realized and I was studying two biblical twins, jacob and Esau I realized that, with the advance of social media, though, Stephanie, you are not a twin, you are not a biological twin. You will never understand what it means to be a biological twin. However, on social media right now, you can find somebody with your hair color, your age, your social, economic demographic, two kids, married, entrepreneur, you can find someone that's literally doing your exact same thing, and take a look at their life and say, my God, they have tripled the followers, they have a house that's double my size, they have a bank account that's four times mine. So, without realizing, what social media has done is created mere identities, and this constant comparison is racking our mind. And what it does when we compare, compare at least to despair. I should have put that in the book and I wish I would have, but it really does. Because if we're constantly comparing, we're constantly looking. They

got their first, they did that first, they said that first, they married first, they got that job. Then we are never going to feel like we are successful in our own right or that our time and our space and our pace is right, meaning we will never have the joy that we so desperately long for. And so what happens is that we look for validation in likes and comments and follows and our validation is broken when we don't have that.

And the song from frozen really is a song for our generation or it's actually. It's the song from the greatest showman never enough, mm-hmm. Remember that song where she sings never enough, never, never. Like it, because in our culture, that's what our soul is crying out and it will never be enough, because we're constantly looking at him and her and them and sing what they have and we're looking at what we quote-unquote lack. The reason why comparison leads to despair, compare leads to despair, is Because it will feed the lie, because, remember, a lie is easier to believe. It will feed the lie. This is the Teflon. It will feed the lie. I will never be enough and I will never have enough.

So Using the biblical twins, jacob and Esai to do this like case study, but let's just use Jasmine and I as a case study. Jasmine got married first. Jasmine has a beautiful business and a beautiful husband and a beautiful life. If I were to take a look at her, she got married seven years before I did. She bought a house before I did. In fact, I don't even own a house. I still rent in my house. Like if I constantly looked at Jasmine as the bar in the rubric, then I will always feel like an epic failure.

But if I begin to write and identify what is 6 6 success for me, I Find joy in my everyday. Stephanie, I have a beautiful four bedroom home. I have a 8. Well, you wouldn't consider it a backyard, because you're from Tennessee and you have a real backyard. But but here in Irvine, california, I'm so proud that I have a backyard and I have a California living room which is an outdoor living room, and I'm so proud that I have the car that I have and the family that I have in the support system that I have.

And if I don't deem what I consider to be success, that I will never be happy. And Comparison is the root that well it's, it's a fracture, it's the fissure that will just ruin a foundation. So comparison will literally lead to despair. And I mean it's hard in our culture because we see so many people, we see what so many people have and our culture is so Obsessed with having and accumulating. So we have really got to start. I go back to the neural pathways. We have to start creating new neural pathways in our brain of what is success, are we successful? What do we want and can we celebrate what we have? Can we celebrate how far we've come? Because that's really where we'll find true joy and content.

0:46:44 - Stephanie

Do you have when it comes to all of the inputs that we have in life? Do you have any like rules that you keep for yourself, or boundaries, or like Things you don't follow or things you like, any sort of like safeguards for yourself?

0:47:02 - Bianca

Yeah, I take. I take a day off every single week, and by day off I mean literally the two rules on this day off is that I have to Stand back and say how much I love my life and stand back and say how much I love my God. Some people call that Sabbath, and you can say whatever word that it is, but literally this is the great reset. This is where I turn off social media, this is where I turn off emails, and it's a day where I don't achieve. It's a day where I celebrate and a day where my soul gets to rest, where I don't have to listen to outside voices and I get to be me and if I want to take a nap, I'm gonna take a nap. If I want to eat a hamburger, I'm gonna eat a hamburger on this day. This is a day where I celebrate, where I love my life and I love my God. You want to know something, Stephanie.

Again, I am speaking to people of faith. In this one, there's something called the Ten Commandments are written in the Old Testament. They were supposed to be the safeguards to protect humanity, and when we talk about Ten Commandments, the only one that we break all the time is Keeping the Sabbath holy, the everyone would say oh you know, thou shall not murder. Agree, thou shall not commit adultery. Agree, thou shall not, you know, covet, agree. But then when it comes to like keeping the Sabbath, which is taking a day off and loving God and loving your life, we break it all the frickin time.

And I was so convicted. I was actually in Israel and I was talking to a rabbi about this and he spoke about the seriousness of it and why it was important and how it shaped and shifted their culture. And I was so convicted and I was like, listen, I'm not gonna be all legalistic, like it doesn't have to be this day from 6 am To 6 pm. It doesn't, and that's not how I live my Sabbath. But I do have one day a week that I look at my calendar and I'm like today is my day of rest. Today I celebrate who my God is and I celebrate everything that God has given me. That has been a game changer for me. I love that.

0:48:52 - Stephanie

Um, sort of look gosh. I mean we could talk forever. Last but not least, would you pray for us, for just anyone who's like oh my gosh, needing to build some guys, okay okay, Stephanie, this is so fun because I know that there's people that are not people of faith on the podcast.

0:49:09 - Bianca

But listen, listen, listen. I don't want anyone to think that I'm trying to convert you. I'm really not. I just want to bless you. That's what a prayer is. A prayer is a blessing, and so I want to speak life. In Scripture, it's referred to this word called prophesy. Prophesy means to speak life. I just want to speak life over every single one of your listeners, and no one's ever asked me to do this, so I feel so frivolous. Oh my gosh.

0:49:28 - Stephanie

Yes, Okay, I know it's ever asking to do crazy. Everyone's missing out that I.

0:49:34 - Bianca

So excited. Okay, yes. So for people who don't believe, no problem. I just want you to receive all you have to do. You can keep your eyes open. You keep your eyes closed, but for those that

feel comfortable, you can close your eyes. Just why? So that you can focus on the words of gratitude. So it's fear, the living God, we say thank you, thank you for the life that you've given us, thank you for the air that we can breathe, thank you for the beat in our heart, the think in our head, the blink of our eyes. Thank you for the width of our thighs. Thank you for how you allowed us to see with our eyes. Thank you that you have given us ears to hear and you've given us a heart that knows. Thank you, God, that you are blessing us.

So right now, I pray for every single person listening on this podcast that feels like they're at the end of their rope. I pray for every single person, whether they believe in Jesus or not, that you speak to them. But whether it is a breeze that blows upon them, whether it is just something that brings a sense of peace, whether it's a knowing or a hearing or a seeing or feeling, I pray that you make your presence known. I pray that today we walk in the blessed Assurance that you are for us, that you have a plan for us and that you do want to bless us.

For those that are experiencing pain, I pray that you, that you remember that you meet them in their pain and that you speak to them loudly. Let their pain have a purpose to make the discovery. You in the midst of that, I speak blessings, I speak life and I speak joy, a spirit of joy for those that have a spirit of heaviness. Thank you for Stephanie. Will you bless her. Thank you for the, the hours and weeks and and years that she has sewn into this community. Will you bless her, will you bless her babies, will you bless her marriage, will you bless her business and also bless her upcoming book in 2024. And Jesus name amen.

0:51:04 - Stephanie

Thank you, friends, you guys. Isn't Bianca amazing? I just love her and I loved this conversation. Now, don't forget that if you ever want to find the links for anything we talked about in our Girls Night episodes, you can always find those over in our show notes. Just head over to girls night podcast calm, and you'll find links for everything, including links for Bianca, so that you can pick up her new Book. Seriously, run, don't walk, go get it and follow along with all the great stuff she's doing.

Friends. That's it for today's episode, but we have so much good stuff ahead this season and, with that in mind, now is the perfect time to make sure you're subscribed. Subscribing to the show is the best way to make sure you never miss an episode. It won't send you an email or anything, it just makes sure your phone downloads the latest episode when a new one's released. And I did want to take a quick second to ask you a favor If you enjoyed this episode or if you've been a girls night listener for a while now, would you take just two quick seconds to leave us a rating and a review on iTunes? Those reviews help out our podcast so much and it really would mean the world to me, so if you take two quick seconds to do that, I'd be so grateful. Friends, thanks so much for joining me for girls night. I'll see you next week.

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