

2/2/21

Week 6: WFL

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

Jamie Grace

RANDY: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Randy Robison. Sheila Walsh is with me.

SHEILA: Hey, everybody!

RANDY: I'm excited because today we have someone that I got to talk to recently on a daily online show I do called *Life Today Live*. Maybe you missed it or maybe you saw it and thought I want to hear more. Well, either way, we're glad that you're here. Jamie Grace is the author of a book called, *Finding Quiet*. I want to read the subtitle here because this is what is going to speak to you, "My journey to peace in an anxious world." And our world has been anxious for a while now. So we're going to talk about finding some peace. Jamie, so good to have you back!

JAMIE: Thank y'all so much for having me. Glad to be here.

RANDY: We should give people a little bit of a background in case they missed the *Life Today Live* because some people will recognize you from the music side of things. Give us a little bit of what God's done over the last several years of your life and then we can talk about how it wasn't always easy.

JAMIE: Yeah. So I was a little bit of a teen star.

RANDY: A little bit.

JAMIE: Actually, I met Miss Sheila Walsh when I was like a really young teenager out

doing the Revolve Tour. And so I was doing tours and all that stuff literally from the age of 17 years old. And so here I am almost 30, a little bit older now. I'm married, I have a daughter--we have a daughter, but life has just always been very busy and very loud and very anxious at times just with being in the music business. But then also, just my personality. But then also, some of my mental health issues that I've been facing. So I really just wrote this book because I was just realizing that life was a lot and it was just too much at times and I was missing the very foundation that kind of helps to center me in the midst of all this.

SHEILA: I thought it was interesting. There's such a difference...your book is very honest. It is called, *Finding Quiet*. I love it! But there is a difference between going through a situation where you experience some anxiety and having a diagnosis. In my family, we deal a lot with that. I have a diagnosis of severe clinical depression. My son struggles with anxiety. Take us back to when did you first be able to put a name to what was happening with you?

JAMIE: I was 11 years old. I was diagnosed with the full list of Tourette syndrome which is a tic disorder. And then of course, when I start talking about it then I start ticking, as well as OCD, ADHD and then Generalized Anxiety Disorder. It was one of those things where I struggled with both ends of the spectrum when I was diagnosed and wanting to have a cure right away. And then finding out that there was no cure.

But also, it felt peaceful in a way to finally have an explanation for what had been going on. Because like you're saying, there is a difference between the diagnosis and the feeling. I would oftentimes feel anxious and I would feel stressed out and I felt like there was something wrong with me that I couldn't just calm down or go for a walk and be okay. And so in a way it was actually quite cathartic to hear, "Hey kid! Like there are some stuff going on that's not all your fault." And to have that, it kind of helped me prepare okay, well then, how do I deal with it? And are there tools to find to help cope better?

RANDY: The diagnosis obviously is a physical diagnosis, but anxiety and all these issues are not just physical but they're also emotional, they're also spiritual. Where did you go to find some help to deal with it from an emotional and spiritual standpoint?

JAMIE: Any time, especially when my faith, as a young adult comes up, I like to make sure that I acknowledge the privilege that I come from. And when I say that I speak of my family, and more specifically my parents, my mom and dad were missionary pastors of a small intimate church in Stone Mountain, Georgia. I'm really grateful for their faith but also the way that they presented faith to my sister and I both. Which I believe is like the biblical way, in that we watched a lot of *LIFE Today* growing up.

But also, they were very interested in all of the Bible and so they would share with us the parts of the Bible where there were like miracles and healing and stuff like that, but they also shared with us the parts of the Bible about grief and there is a time to cry helping to validate my feelings of frustration and confusion with my diagnosis and with not having a cure right away or a cure at all. It's not that that helped me overnight just feel better. It definitely was a journey to even accepting who I was and who I am, and that is still a part of my journey today. I'm grateful that I have the ability to cope from a biblical standpoint.

One of my favorite scriptures is Psalm 30, verse five and it says, "Weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning." Another one of my favorite scriptures is when Jesus is on the cross and he says, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" I know that's kind of dark for that to be my favorite scripture in middle school but it resonated so much with me because I was like whoa! Like Jesus had feelings too.

So it's not that I'm taking these feelings and I'm running around with them and I'm just angry all of the time, but I'm allowed to feel sad, I'm allowed to feel like this is difficult, like this is challenging. And so that was kind of the first step to anything, honestly, was just having the freedom and the space to feel all that I needed to feel, and to accept that God in all of his incredible ways of healing, some things will be healed in heaven and that is part of the brokenness and complexity of earth.

And so understanding that and accepting that really helped with my journey as opposed to feeling less than or inadequate because I wasn't healed per se or because I wasn't perfect or because I wasn't like my sister or like anybody else. Just given the understanding like, "Hey kid, you've got these complexities but God still loves you. God is still here for you. God is with you in this brokenness and God will be with you in the joy as well."

SHEILA: When you deal with anxiety on a daily basis, do you have spiritual tools or ropes you hold on to that help you navigate through a day when it feels overwhelming?

JAMIE: Oh most definitely. We are a home of intention. There is so much--there is so many affirmations and stuff around this house. There is the silly wall art behind me that says, "Jesus, family, tacos." But there's also, like across the room there is one that my sister designed that says, "Note to self: You can do this." Then we have like different scriptures around the house and stuff.

I've learned to kind of like...don't worry, this is healthy. I talked to my therapist. But I've learned to like, like allow my OCD, like I manipulate my OCD if that makes sense. So my OCD tells me to repeat things over and over. Like it is an obsessive compulsive condition. So sometimes when I'm lying in bed at night I'm thinking about something I said in 2005 and I'm just like Errrh! So what I've learned to do is manipulate that obsessive compulsive need when it comes to scripture and when it comes to truth.

And so I will walk through the house out loud. Like when I feel a compulsive need I will walk through the house and say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Even when there are moments where I have a difficult time believing it, even when there are moments when I'm having a challenging time embracing who God is, I know that because of my mental health complexities I will feel the need to repeat and to find rhythms and paces and things.

So I just try to be really intentional with the music I listen to, with the movies I watch, with what I read so that the things that ring in my head and the things that resonate and the visuals in our home are things of God and are truth.

Another thing that I do as well is I don't shy away from the fact that a lot of times I have anxious thoughts. I think like the first sentence in the book is like I have a daily excessive amount of anxious thoughts. I don't shy away from that. I allow those thoughts to happen. But immediately after I speak truth to them. And so when I have those anxious thoughts that are saying like, you're not a good mom because your kid was crying in the middle of target then I speak truth and say, like, "I am a child of God. I am fearfully and wonderfully made. And I have a one-year-old and it's Target, everybody is hollering in there: It's like everybody is like, "I want this." It is fine! It is Target.

Now again, not saying it's easy. Like this is again, is all my journey and some days I'm like, "Ooh, I did it!" And some days I'm not feeling that so much. But it's all a journey.

SHEILA: I love that.

RANDY: Why do you think that God allows us to live with things like this?

JAMIE: Man. I think there is a whole list of reasons, in a good way I think. I was a really complex kid. One of my other things in the Bible was the book of Job; super normal for a 12-year old to just be vibing with.

[LAUGHTER]

I was like "Bro! Look what Job went through." And I tell you, I always like joke with my family. I'm like, "Guys, one day I'm going to start a church." But they all know that it's just going to be me preaching on Job every week and eventually, like this is not going to fly.

So I read the book of Job a lot. I think that's one of those, any time I'm having a bad day, just revisit it or visit it for the first time. It is dark but it is necessary to read, I think. Because just seeing what God can teach us through things and seeing what we can learn about our friendships through difficult times, and seeing what we can learn about ourselves through challenging times.

But on a very specific note, I mentioned earlier being a part of a ministry called The Revolve Tour, which is how I first met Sheila. And I remember being on that tour like at 18 or 19 years old. That was the first time outside of my church community that I had shared my story of having Tourette syndrome. Literally, after every single event I would have young girls coming up to me saying, "I just got diagnosed with Tourette syndrome last week. Now that you've shared your story I know that it is going to be okay."

I'm not even telling them, I'm not even telling them the miracle story of how my Tourette syndrome is over. I'm up there on stage. I was still a teenager so I was still like ticking like crazy, and like, barely able to get through half of my sentences because of my stutter. So it was not like I was telling them a miracle story. But it's like God has used my story in so many ways already that I know that this is supposed to be part of my story for his glory so that I can tell people what he's done. Though some days I'm like, "Okay, God, we told a lot of people so you can fix it now." Like I definitely feel that way sometimes.

But at the same time I know that everything that I'm going through can be used for God's glory and can be used to help someone else. So I'm just really grateful for that.

SHEILA: Okay, so let's go back to Job. I happen to be studying Job at the moment.

JAMIE: Oh no! Well, you're going to be way smarter than me about it then!

SHEILA: No, no, no, no! Fear not! But the thing I find fascinating is at the very beginning we are told that he is the most righteous man on the earth. But at the end, after all of his suffering, and after everything is gone, what his declaration to God is, "My ears

have heard about you before but now my eyes have seen you." How has your relationship with God changed through suffering?

JAMIE: Oh man! I think one of the most powerful ways I can use to explain it would be through the lens of fatherhood and through the lens of parenthood. I don't want to be like one of those married Christian ladies that's like, "Okay single ladies, until you get a husband and a baby you won't get it." Like I don't want to be like one of those ladies but I'm about to be one of those ladies.

I have learned so much about my relationship with God through struggle but also through parenthood. And I'm sure you know where I'm going with that. It is the concept of you're telling your child to stay away from something. Or you're telling your child not to do something. Or you're trying to teach them something, maybe it is going to be a challenging lesson or you're reprimanding them. But whatever it might be, and through all of that, if the parent is gracious and persistent and patient and loving and kind, even if they never change the situation or they never change the scenario, if they are continually patient and gracious and kind that relationship is going to strengthen.

I think about every time that our daughter has like fallen and hurt her knee or something or every single time that she has gotten frustrated because we wouldn't let her play in the toilet or whatever, every time that stuff happens, like within 30 seconds of her crying she always wants to be wrapped in our arms. She always wants us to pick her up and tell her it's going to be okay.

So I think about that with my relationship with God a lot. I've learned how to be honest with God in a way that is only the way that you would say a child would be honest with her parent. I have had so many times where I'm crying to God and yelling at him and expressing myself and just saying like, not even so much like, "Oh let me quote this thing from Proverbs as the strength of our relationship."

No, I'm like God, why? What's going on? But that crying to him and that reaching out to

him and that yearning for him and that desperation for the Father, it always makes me just want to be wrapped up in his arms. And sometimes it will be days of me feeling disconnected or even weeks or months. But always when I go back to him and I'm just like I want to talk to you, I want to understand you, I want to get clarity, I want to learn from Job, I want to learn from Esther, like what is going on, Lord? It always just makes me want to be wrapped back in his arms.

Again, I'm grateful for having that kind of narrative and understanding from a young age but I also don't think that it's like exclusive to preachers' kids. I think it's something when we see God as a father, we see this relationship that no matter what kind of father you did or didn't grow up with we see a relationship that we all need and that we all can grow and thrive from. And that we don't have to be the strong one, we don't have to be the bold one, we don't have to be the confident one, we can be the child running into our father's arms not always asking for a solution but asking for comfort no matter what the turnout is.

SHEILA: Beautiful.

RANDY: That is. Because we referenced your book, *Finding Quiet*. What is the quiet that you've found or are seeking?

JAMIE: Man, well, in the book it's definitely about every different dynamic in my life. I talk about my friendships, I talk about having gone through some music industry stuff. These days I have to really embrace that it is not always going to be literal quiet. Just total genuine mom life. I don't know, if you guys just heard our garage opening and closing as my husband is heading off to work.

[LAUGHTER]

You probably can't hear this at all but I'm listening to my daughter's noise machine. She is taking a nap and I'm watching her on the monitor right here making sure she is okay.

So there is never, there's likely never going to be an absence of noise in my life. I think it is really cool if you can find that but a total actual like legitimate quiet is quite rare in most of our lives.

So what I'm looking for is the tough love that I have to kind of give myself and remind myself of. Is that it is about not adding any noise; like not adding noise that I don't need right now when I'm overwhelmed by the news or overwhelmed by something I see on social media. Or I'm feeling insecure or inadequate because that mom had on yoga pants and she actually worked out. Like instead of adding noise to it and feeling bad about myself and feeling guilty and complaining, or like getting on Instagram and just swiping through stuff to like disassociate and disconnect, finding that quiet for me means like okay, let me center myself. Let me go have some time with the Lord and actually pursue him right now instead of pursuing my insecurities and all my negative thoughts and my anxiousness.

So it is not always like a total absence of quiet but it is just being intentional about not adding a bunch of unnecessary noise.

RANDY: That's good.

SHEILA: Yeah! And I think we all need that. I think we all need to kind of stop adding to the cacophony that is going on all around us. Jamie's book is called *Finding Quiet* and we'd love to tell you how you can get your very own copy.

But first of all, I want to take you to another part of the world where there is a noise but it's really a cry from a different place. It is a cry simply for a cup of clean water and you and I can provide that in Jesus' name. Would you watch this?

On the mission field:

Open Captions: The global water crisis. 100's of thousands will die this year from

contaminated water

ANNOUNCER: People living in the United States and other industrialized nations read these headlines. But mothers around the world in developing countries live them. Denise Nyuhire has never had a drink of uncontaminated water in her life. And neither had her daughter who died because of a waterborne illness.

Open Captions: I am still very sad about my daughter dying from this water. I am afraid that water is going to kill the rest of my children.

ANNOUNCER: This story has been repeated over and over for mothers in Denise's village. Veronica, a grandmother has lost her husband, three of her children, and most recently, a grandchild to waterborne illness.

Open Captions: I am heartbroken with this drinking water. It hurts a lot that we all have to drink this water.

ANNOUNCER: Our hope is Veronica, Denise, and other villagers will be blessed with an answer to a prayer for clean water. And that they never become just another statistic about death caused by contaminated water.

Open Captions: I would ask if you can help give us clean water. I would also ask God for clean water so that our children could live.

In the studio:

SHEILA: Would you think about that just for one second? That that grown woman, that beautiful woman has never once in her life had a drink of clean water. That's just stunning to me.

The thing that I feel equally weighty is that this is not something that there's nothing we can do about. Sometimes we'll hear about terrible pandemics around the world or

desperate situations and we want to help but there is a limit to what we can do. This is entirely fixable.

Our commitment here at *LIFE Outreach* is to be able to put clean water wells into villages where literally, the children are dying, a grandchild is dying, a husband is dying, simply because they do not have access to a clean water source.

I've been on these trips and walked to the places with mothers and their children and looked at what the water looks like and A, it is filthy. But way more than that, it is the waterborne illnesses, the diseases that are contained in the water.

I heard the story of a mother who tried to get her child some help; tried to get on a bicycle to try and ride to a clinic and the child died on the way there.

We can change this. For very little you and I can make a difference. We have a commitment here this year to put 350 new wells in 20 nations. And Randy, if we all do this together we can do this.

RANDY: We can. And it's, you watch that, it's kind of hard to believe that someone has never had a cup of clean drinking water. If someone said that to you or I, Sheila, we'd be like, "Well here, let me give you a cup of clean water."

Well, that's the opportunity that we have right now today to give someone that first drink of clean water. You know it's so simple. Here's how simple it is. To give one person a cup of clean drinking water, not for a day, not for a week, not for a year but for the rest of their life, the average is \$4.80. I've spent that on coffee recently. So it's so doable that it is almost hard to comprehend.

But because we've been doing this for so many years, because we've got people on the ground in places in 20 nations right now, ready to go, we've been doing this, we know it works. We've done this because of you. We've done this because of other viewers who

have partnered and said, "Yeah, I'll give \$48 and provided clean drinking water for a lifetime." Sure! Of course, who wouldn't? Maybe you can afford to drill an entire well--\$4800. If you can do that, I would encourage you to do it right now.

This is a problem in our world where you and I are the solution. So I'm just asking you to be that solution today. Will you go online, will you go to the phone? Make the best gift you can and know that when you do it, you are that answer to that mother's prayer. You are that refreshing drink to that woman's lips. You are Christ in someone's life. Join us today as we give Water for LIFE.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Dirty disease-filled water. How desperate would a mother need to be to consider giving this contaminated substance to her child? For many mothers and their families living in extreme poverty, this is their only choice.

But with your help they won't have to make this choice ever again. Mission: Water for LIFE provides clean, disease-free water for thousands of children and their families giving them a life free from the fear of death. With your gift today you can help drill and establish 350 water wells this year. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children. A gift of \$48 will help provide ten. \$72 will provide for 15. And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime.

With your gift, we'll send you *Speak Your Name* devotions and declarations on the reality of Jesus. Filled with stunning imagery, these 40 encouraging devotions by Laney Rene serve as a reminder of the power of Jesus' name.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the "Be Refreshed" pitcher. This beautiful ceramic pitcher is decorated with Proverbs 11:25 and is sure to make a lovely addition to your table or home.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our brand-new, inspiring bronze sculpture, “Divine Servant.”

Please call, write or make your gift online.

End of video

On the mission field:

SHEILA: Thank you so much! If the lines are busy, keep calling. We can make a difference in Jesus' name. And you can ask for Jamie's book, *Finding Quiet*. We'd love to tell you how you can get your very own copy. You may be a young woman but you are a deep well, Jamie Grace. This is a phenomenal book. Thank you so much for being with us.

JAMIE: Thank you so much for having me!

RANDY: And thank you for just being such an encouragement. I know so many people watching today were encouraged by you, Jamie, so we appreciate that.

And as always, we appreciate you guys watching *LIFE Today* and supporting the outreaches of *LIFE*. I do pray you will go to the phone, go online, give the best gift you can. And join Sheila and I right here next time on *LIFE Today*.

SHEILA: Bye!