

## TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 145: GENERATE JOY IN CRISIS

I'm Jill Baughan, and you're listening to the podcast called Find Joy...No Matter What.

This is Episode 145.

If you're in a tough place right now, your joy may seem like it's hiding--or gone.

I understand. But it's still there, I promise, just waiting to be resurrected. And this podcast is designed to help you do just that...no matter what else is going on in your life.

For just a few minutes each week, I'll tell you a story--one that just might inspire a way to uncover a piece of joy you might be looking for. Then, we'll consider how it might speak to your life, because even though you'll hear quite a few of my stories during our time together, I believe you'll find your own in every one of mine.

Finally, I'll offer a benediction to send you into your day--or into your night.

So. If you're up for doing joy shots with a friend today...have a listen.

You are no stranger to crisis.

But just to be sure we're on the same page in the next ten minutes, let's agree on a definition: Crisis (for our purposes) is *a time of great danger, difficulty or doubt when problems must be solved or important decisions must be made; a vitally important or decisive state of thing; a point at which change must come, for better or for worse.*"

And if you've lived this definition, you are in good company...with the likes of singer Amy Grant.

Three years ago she had an undetected birth defect that required open heart surgery. And if that wasn't enough crisis for a while, along came another surprise last summer.

Emily Yahr, who writes for *The Washington Post*, tells it like this:

*When Amy Grant [was recently awarded] the Kennedy Center Honors, it celebrated the career of a superstar who broke barriers in contemporary Christian music before she crossed over to pop and mainstream audiences and established herself as an artist beloved across genres and generations. The lifetime achievement is a natural occasion for reflection, which makes it incredibly bittersweet that when it comes to the most recent significant event in her life, Grant can't remember anything.*

*She doesn't remember how she fell off her bicycle that day in late July when she was riding with a friend at Nashville's Percy Warner Park. She was unconscious for about 10 minutes and doesn't remember her nearly week-long hospital stay, where she was treated for a concussion*

*and a shoulder injury that would eventually require surgery, along with cuts and abrasions. Her doctors said if she hadn't been wearing a helmet, it could have been much worse.*

*She's not exactly sure about her first memory after the accident. She recalls her husband of 20-plus years, country music icon Vince Gill, and their family and friends gathering at her home, but it's all a blur. Really, her main takeaway is the slowdown that came during her recovery.*

*"It has been the quietest season of my life," she said. "I've been on a treadmill going about .5 miles an hour merging onto interstate traffic."*

*"There are times in our lives where we can just be so busy that you're present, but you're also ticking off that list of things that need to be done. Or somebody sits down for a conversation and you're giving 100 percent attention, but you also can't make the next thing on the calendar completely go away," Grant said. "That was the biggest adjustment."*

*Fall tour dates were cancelled and doctors advised her to limit her screen time. She suffered some memory loss, and although she's perfectly fine to recall many things, she started a journal called "Writing to Remember."*

*"I was just trying to remember people's, like my extended family, names," she said with a laugh. "Every conversation would start with 'Are they dead or alive?'" (Gill, always one for jokes, likes to say that he now has her believing he produced the Beatles, won Olympic gold medals and he was right about the curtains in the living room.)*

*It's hard to snap out of work mode when you have been working your whole life — especially when you're the kind of person whom friends describe as someone who always puts others first, inspired by her Nashville-based great-grandparents who put an emphasis on philanthropy. But since the accident, Grant has found herself appreciating her days and the people in them in a new way.*

*"The timing of this ... it's really given me the opportunity to look at the majority of my life," Grant said.*

*And she won't forget the lessons she's learned in the past several months.*

*Grant said that the friend who was with her on the day of her accident told her that after regaining consciousness, Grant kept saying three things: "I can't believe I still have my teeth." "Something is wrong with my shoulder." And, finally, "I needed this."*

What?

*She says "I started to think about..." "What energy do I have left and how would I like to use it differently?" "It's been such a gift."*

*I loved music before anyone was listening. I wrote songs because it helped me understand life. And I woke up saying, "I still have that same toolkit: **music as a healing force.**"*

I was really encouraged by Amy's words when I had my own crisis recently, being diagnosed with breast cancer. I mentioned in Episode 141 that my first response, after hearing my diagnosis, was to spend a couple weeks wanting to go around with a baseball bat, whacking at random things.

But I'm learning that in a crisis like this, you (meaning me, but I'm not all that different from you) eventually come to a point when you calm your impulse to commit violent acts against inanimate objects (although I wouldn't mind another dish-breaking session in a rage room), and you square your shoulders and say, "Well. Okay. Dear God, how are we going to do this?"

And then He tells you to channel your "inner Grandma Mary"—the nickname my mom's granddaughters gave her spirit of fortitude—in order to move forward.

And then you listen to your husband as he tells you, "You will take this and make something good out of it...because that's what you do."

And then you believe him.

And then you write a podcast episode (#140) about channeling Towanda, your assertive, warrior-like alter-ego.

And then you tell your people what's going on, because even though telling them bad news is unpleasant, you want them to know. And you would like some company on this road.

And then together with your people and God your Father and your Friend, you use this point-at-which-life-will-never-be-the-same to spawn good, which sounds fairly counterintuitive. However, I have learned that there are actually a number of possible ways to generate and multiply joy, even in a crisis. Here are two:

For one, it's really important to

1. Pay attention to any shred of good stuff that comes your way during the crisis. Writer Phap Linh says that *Part of the art of handling a feeling of pain and generating a feeling of joy, is noticing what kind of story we are telling in our mind about that suffering...So we need to have the courage to recognize the good in us and in the world...*

Amy Grant slowed down, and reflected on the "gift" of this quiet season for her; I'm working on my own perspective in that department, but I will say that just about every episode of this podcast can give you some ideas with that.

2. And second, it's really valuable if you share that share good stuff. Why? Joy leaks and spreads. You may be reluctant to do this, not wanting to bother other people, or appear weak yourself.

But Linh says this: *that's how we transform suffering. That's how we generate a feeling of joy. Do we really think that our feelings are ours alone? Do you think your feelings stay within, that they don't leak out?*

*I once did an exercise with a group of friends: I asked them to pair up and one of each pair had to share with the other the most inspiring, wonderful, joyful thing that had happened to them in the past week. And the listener had to remain completely indifferent; feel nothing while the other person shared an amazing thing that had happened to them.*

*And the result is clear: it's impossible.*

*When somebody starts sharing their joy, inspiration, and passion, you feel it. Because that feeling is not only theirs; it doesn't end at their skin. So when we generate a feeling of joy it is not just for us: it has no boundary...It is not something small, it is not trivial.*

*To generate a feeling of joy is a powerful, courageous act; an act of resistance. We need to do that, both individually and collectively, share with each other, and learn and find new ways to inspire each other.*

It's why I share Amy's story—and will continue to share mine—with you. It's why I hope you will share yours with me. And us.

And so, my friends,

Maybe you're in crisis right now. If you're not, you have been and you will be, because that's just what is. But whether you're in the middle or on either side,

May you understand that God has placed in you a healing force to help you through crisis,

And may you be willing to mine your life, relentlessly, for the good stuff,

And when change must come, for better or for worse, may you know that even then we can generate joy...

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know someone who is in crisis right now, I invite you to share this podcast with them, and subscribe yourself on iTunes, or wherever you listen to podcasts. Or you can go to my website at [jillbaughan.com](http://jillbaughan.com), click on a podcast episode and sign up to receive

episodes in your inbox. Just don't miss a single one, because I so look forward to being with you again soon.

Generate some delight, even now, my friend. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...

NOTES:

"Amy Grant opens up about Kennedy Center honors, recovery from bad bike accident." *CBS Mornings*, December 12, 2022.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8Aqr6SOqx4>

Brother Phap Linh. *Generating Joy and Embracing Suffering in Times of Crisis*. November 26, 2021.

<https://plumvillage.app/generating-joy-and-embracing-suffering-in-times-of-crisis/>

*Crisis*. [https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/crisis\\_1](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/crisis_1)

Yahr, Emily. "Amy Grant conquered Christian music. That was just her first act." *The Washington Post*, November 29, 2022.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/arts-entertainment/2022/11/29/amy-grant-kennedy-center-honors/>