



LIVE GUILT FREE

BY BOUNDLESS LIMITS

WWW.LIVEGUILTFREE.ORG

CHANGE YOUR RECIPE CARD

By Tanya Curren

At a recent talk that Rick and I gave, Rick talked about recipe cards. We all know what these are, and probably have some special handwritten ones from our mom or grandma. I used to have a ton of them, but with the ease and access of the internet I now just jump online and find something I can make quickly. (PTL for allrecipes.com!)

Visualize a recipe card in your mind. Think about how the specific ingredients are given to create a very specific product. You know that you can follow the exact recipe to get the intended dish, or you can get creative and add new ingredients to make something different.

We are no different. Each one of us has been programmed from a very specific recipe card. The combination of your parent's genetics, discipline style, parenting style, behaviors, habits and rules created and developed who you are. It was a recipe for YOU!

Let's be introspective right now and think about all of the things that you love about your recipe card. What do you love about how you were raised? What was special in your home? What are some of the great memories that helped make you who you are today?

Now likewise, I want you to think of things that you don't like about your recipe card. These are things that you desire to change before you continue living your life in the same patterns, or before you pass them along to your children. Do you desire to react to situations differently than you experienced as a child? Do you want to discipline your children in a more positive way? Do you want to make radical changes to your generational line by doing something radically different with your life?

I definitely want to be clear; this is not about placing blame on our parents or pointing the finger at the way we were raised. In fact, most parents do their best and are just going off of their recipe cards and what they learned from their parents. Instead, this is taking the time to see why you are the way you are and deciding to take control of the things you don't like in your life. It is an extremely positive and healthy way to live, because if you are not introspective and objective, nothing will ever change. I have seen too many people living miserably, yet they are unwilling to stop and make necessary changes to bring them the positive results they desperately desire.

Let me share some things about my recipe card. I have tons of positive things that I am keeping and passing down from my recipe card. I am so thankful for things like being raised in a loving, Godly two parent home, learning to have a hard and strong work ethic, being taught honest and traditional values, and so much more.

But I was also raised to believe that if you had premarital sex, you would go to hell. I believed this for a long time until I studied the Bible and found that it is a sin that God doesn't want anyone to do, but not a

distinct “Go straight to hell/Do not pass go” order from God. As an adult, I’ve talked with my mom and asked her why I was taught this as I grew up. She told me that it was how she was raised and wanted so desperately for her children to remain pure that she passed that belief to us.

I was also raised to believe that if you killed yourself you would definitely go to hell. Well, this obviously made me terrified of ever thinking about committing suicide. So, if you know my story and you know how I was ready to take every single pill in my house in 2007 after being in a struggle for years with prescriptions and pain, you can only imagine the intense burden I felt spiritually, mentally and emotionally as I almost took my life. I was so DONE with all of the pain and feelings of uselessness that I was actually willing to risk my eternal soul. Now that is a horrifying feeling.

But after years of prayer and searching through the Word of God, I don’t believe this anymore. Of course I know that God doesn’t want anyone to kill themselves. But think of the soldier on the battlefield who throws his body over a grenade in an act of heroism to save the lives of other soldiers around him. I don’t believe that he would go to hell, even though he knew he’d die as he jumped. I also don’t think that we can begin to fathom the power and grace of God during someone’s last moments. I know that it was only God’s power that saved me from taking my life, and I watched the power of prayer bring life and energy back into my body.

I’ve taken some of the things I didn’t agree with from my recipe card and have changed them as I teach my son. I try very hard not to make God the spiritual bad guy or Heavenly Cop. My husband and I teach Pierce the facts straight from the Bible, and we tell him WHY God sets the rules as He does. As far as pre-marital sex, it is because God wants us to remain pure and join (become one) with our marriage partner. It is to save us from years of heartache, pain, diseases, and such unnecessary pressure and strife. It is an act of obedience, and we are to obey God’s rules whether we like them or not - just like Pierce is to obey the rules of our home, regardless of how he feels about them.

I’ve looked at other things in my life, too. It hit me the other day that I still buy Tide detergent because my mom did. (Of course, there was her natural laundry ball phase, but we’ll just skip that era.) I also buy the Nature’s Own Whole Wheat bread because that’s what we had in my house growing up.

Do you see how defining a recipe card can be? It can influence the littlest things, like which detergent you buy, all the way up to super important things, like how you define your faith in God. I want you to be able to change your recipe card in your life - for your children and your future - without feeling any guilt.

Remember, doing something different is OK if it works for you and your family dynamic! It’s not an insult to your parents when you make changes to your recipe card. What you are doing is enhancing the product and changing it to make it work for YOU, and that’s a great thing!

Let’s look at some practical ways you can change your recipe card without feeling guilt:

Maybe you were raised in a certain church or religion, but want to have something more. You don’t have to go to the same church that your mama and grandmama went to. You need to be at a place where you feel God’s presence and you grow spiritually. Ask God to guide you to where He wants you to be. He will! God’s desire is to use you in a mighty, effective way here on earth. Don’t be fooled into thinking that He could care less where you are and what you’re doing.

Perhaps you were taught things about God that were not true. It is ok to question things that don’t line up

with the Word of God. In fact, this is something that we must do with everything that we hear today! Man should not be your source, the Bible should always be your bottom line truth. Search the Scriptures for God's truth and ask the Holy Spirit to make the Bible come alive to you. I promise, He will! Once you put in the time and effort into knowing Him more, your faith will deepen and you will be able to discern truth from lies.

You might have been disciplined a certain way that you don't want to pass on to your children. One of the beautiful things about parenting is that you can either pass on or change the recipe of how you were raised to your kids. Pray first and then develop a new discipline plan. Then stick to what works for you.

Maybe you were taught to sweep everything under the rug - hiding your true emotions and not talking about subjects that were too painful or personal. If you want to live your life differently as an open, introspective and vocal person, then this is a wonderful thing! (Welcome to my world!) So many studies have proven that the more you hold in your emotions, the higher your stress level and blood pressure will remain. It is unhealthy to live your life in denial and feel like you always have to fake being ok. You need to give yourself the freedom and share your true emotions as you teach your children to do the same.

For all of my grandparents, you have a unique and special role. You've done your job raising your kids, and now your job is to be the most positive and loving grandparent to your grandchildren. Don't focus on past mistakes. We all make mistakes, and chances are high that your children will make some as they raise your grandchildren.

Focus instead on supporting the rules that your children set for their kids. Be the Godly influence of strength and character that God designed you to be, and pour your knowledge and wisdom into them whenever you can. Our world is changing at a rapid pace, and your grandchildren are going to face things you never even thought of. I'm sickened by some of what I see, and I'm sure I don't see everything.

You are a valuable resource, and I want you to view yourself as such. Again, don't focus on the mistakes you may have made raising your children. None of us can change the past. Move forward knowing you can continue to make huge positive changes in your generational line!

My husband reminded me of something that is so true. Stress drives us to our recipe card. When we are stressed out and tired, we tend to react the way we were taught and all of the positive changes we are working toward fly out the window. If or when this happens to you, don't beat yourself up. Instead, be aware of it so that the next time you are stressed you can try and react a different way.

If you are married, you can point out to your spouse how they reach back to their recipe card. This has brought up a ton of great discussions between Rick and I, and it has helped me to understand him even more. Even after being married for 16 years, I am learning more about why he reacts the way he does and what makes him tick. Rick experienced a lot of negativity growing up and he still battles with negative thoughts.

But the more he practices positive thinking and speaking, the happier he is on the inside and outside. It's a process that takes time, but it is definitely worth putting time into. The more I communicate and understand Rick, the more I am able to enhance our marriage and it helps us communicate in the most effective ways. It is a process that I know will help you, too.

For my single ladies, I want you to look at your recipe card and see what you want to keep for the next 5,

10 and even 20 years. Think about how you react/respond/interact with those around you and be objective about your habits. Do you want to be doing the same things 5 or 10 years from now? If not, then pick out a couple of things to focus on and make the changes for YOU. You know I always say this, but I'll say it again: You are worth the work! Keep what you love about your recipe card, and daily make positive changes to enhance the rest.

Here is my bottom line for you today: You deserve to live the life that God intended for YOU!

This is a life free of guilt, shame, sadness or heartache. God wants you to live a life full of freedom, happiness, peace, and love. You CAN do this by seeking Him daily, staying in His will, being objective about your past and making positive, healthy changes for you and your family. God wants this for you and so do I!

“Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58)

God Bless You,

Tanya



Tanya Curren is the co-founder of Boundless Limits International, a ministry of encouragement and empowerment. In 2004 Tanya Curren was in a life threatening coma for 8 days as a deadly infection ravaged her body. Given two hours to live, she survived only to face the ordeal of a painful three year recovery. She is the author of Broken Places, The Proverbs Devotion Guide, Embracing Change & Conflict, and several other CD's. In her conferences and seminars, Tanya shares with others the life-lessons she learned through her journey to restoration. Tanya travels and speaks at local, regional and international venues, and is passionate about guiding others to have a personal, real relationship with Jesus Christ.