

## EXCERPT



### *Why Do I Feel Like This?*

*Understand Your Difficult Moments and Find Grace to Move Through*

May 25, 2021 | \$18, 240 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4772-3

Sometimes life is a mess, and we get overwhelmed by all sorts of conflicting, difficult emotions. We might be stressed or weary, anxious or fearful, paralyzed by insecurity, or crushed by pain. Worse yet, some well-meaning people invalidate our feelings and tell us to just cheer up and forget our worries. Rather than bypass the reality of our feelings, we need to enter in to them and listen to what they're telling us.

## "You Can't Hate Yourself into Healing"

I remember the first time I heard Chris Tomlin's "Good Good Father." I was a first-timer at a small group for a church I'd been newly attending in Los Angeles. I had a slight crush on the small group leader at the time, so I was very on time, very alert, and very ready to receive. But my divided attention quickly became undivided when the group's worship person cued the music and Chris Tomlin's lyrics filled the room:

You're a good good Father.  
It's who you are. It's who you are. It's who you are.  
And I'm loved by You.  
It's who I am. It's who I am. It's who I am.

I wasn't new to faith, quite the veteran actually, with a resume full of church leadership positions and some sort of record I'm sure for the amount of retreats I'd attended. But something about the words made me feel new, almost like I was seeing the most important thing about God for the first time and hearing his most important thoughts about me. Of all the different things I'd come to believe about myself—via messages from society, media, friends, so-called friends, romantic partners, therapists, teachers, mentors—and of all the different labels, descriptions, and names I'd been given, *Loved* was the one I wanted to hang on to. *Loved* was decidedly my favorite.

*Loved* is the most important thing about who we are. But there sure are a lot of other things aren't there? For starters, we're needy. We need love, attention, and care. We need connection and community. We need to feel important and significant. We need a sense of meaning for our lives and to be purposeful and creative.

We value and pursue relationships, but we get hurt and grow resentful. We harbor bitterness and unforgiveness. We have a hard time letting things go. We work hard for what we want, but easily grow tired, weary, and discouraged. We let self-doubt take over our minds and rob us of motivation and energy.

Sometimes we're greedy and selfish. Sometimes we're self-centered and ungrateful. And at any given moment, there could be an overflow of negative thoughts and emotions that result in deep struggles with anxiety, insecurity, envy, or depression.

Can you imagine what Chris Tomlin's song would have been like had he tried to include the full reality of who we are? I mean, just picture it:

You're a good good Father.  
It's who you are. It's who you are. It's who you are.  
And I'm a needy, greedy, selfish, unforgiving, and ungrateful  
human being struggling with a problem.  
It's who I am. It's who I am. It's who I am.

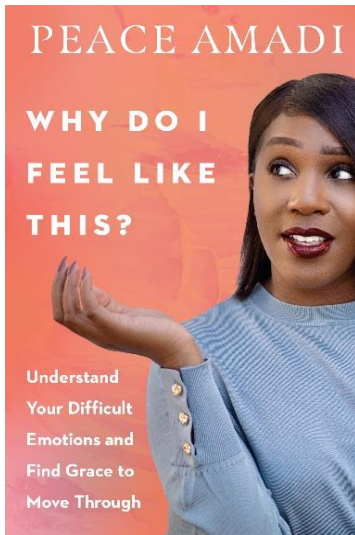


Tara Burns, print and online publicity  
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews  
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media



## EXCERPT



### ***Why Do I Feel Like This?***

#### *Understand Your Difficult Moments and Find Grace to Move Through*

May 25, 2021 | \$18, 240 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4772-3

Peace Amadi is a psychology professor, speaker, children's book author, content creator, and host. She holds a bachelor of arts in psychology from UCLA and a masters and doctorate in psychology from Azusa Pacific University. As a woman of faith, she uses her various platforms to bridge the gap between mental health and faith for the purposes of engaging a deeper healing journey. As a woman of Nigerian descent, she calls for reflection on how healing is affected by culture and family.

Thank God the lyricist kept the song simple. Thank God he had the good sense to focus on what God wanted us to hold on to the most.

Even though we are all of the things above and more, it's okay. It's understandable. Because all of it together is what makes us human. Loving, helping, and serving is no more human than hurting, raging, and struggling. We are all both beneficiaries and captives of our own humanity. We are all just trying our best.

And this is what I would tell you if, like many of my students and clients over the years, you were to burst through my office doors with tearstained eyes and dwindling hope that you will ever heal from your heartbreak. This is what I would tell you if you were to call me late at night, wondering if you'll ever be able to get right. This is what I would tell you if you told me you've lost your zest and your zeal for life or if you let it slip that you're no longer sure you want to be here.

I would tell you that it's okay that you feel this way. I would tell you it's acceptable and all right. I would tell you that you're brave for acknowledging the ugly stuff. I would show you the strength in your vulnerability. Because I'm all about taking the sting out of things. That sting is the pain of toxic shame, and there's no place for it in your healing.

My hope and prayer for you as you move through these pages is that God would fill you with grace, compassion, and understanding. Most of you are great at doing this for others, but I'm asking that you do this for yourself. For the record, if you're struggling with hurt, heartbreak, discouragement or any of the other emotions covered in this book, I don't wish that you stay where you are. I don't wish you endless weeks of pain and frustration. I wish you health. I wish you joy. I wish you freedom. But if there's one thing I've learned as a mental health professional, it's that you can't hate yourself into healing. You have to love yourself right on through it.

If God himself, perfect as he is, can love us in the middle of it all, who the heck are we not to.

—Adapted from the introduction, "It's Who We Are"



Tara Burns, print and online publicity  
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or [tburns@ivpress.com](mailto:tburns@ivpress.com)

Krista Clayton, author interviews  
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or [kclayton@ivpress.com](mailto:kclayton@ivpress.com)



[ivpress.com/media](http://ivpress.com/media)