

5 Telltale Signs You Aren't Letting God Have Control

Control girls often don't realize that they're control girls. I sure didn't.

I spent the first 35 years of my life completely oblivious to my control issues. I knew I was arguing with my husband. I knew there was tension with coworkers. I knew I was frustrated with friends and family members. I just didn't know these things all stemmed from my unhealthy craving for control.

Recognizing I'm a control girl hasn't solved all of my problems, but it has given me a starting point for change. So I want to invite you to ask yourself the question I should have asked long before age 35: "Am I a control girl?"

To help you answer, I'd like to provide five common traits of control girls:

1. You tend to be bothered by other controlling people.

Do you become easily annoyed by that bossy woman who always tries to take over in the committee meeting? Do you get frustrated when someone interrupts you (which, by the way, is a classic control-seeking move)? Does your controlling mother drive you nuts?

I've noticed that the women who are most bothered by controlling people are often quite controlling, themselves. They butt heads with the other control girls in the room who are all lunging for exactly what they are: control.

2. You struggle with anger.

Are you likely to respond angrily when someone doesn't meet your expectations? Do you erupt when someone interrupts your plans? Do you inwardly seethe when someone cuts in or takes

whatever you had your eye on?

Anger is common for control girls. Our anger flares when we lose the thing we want, which is control. And as a rule, both of these—losing our grip on control and losing our tempers—happen far more frequently than we'd like.

3. You struggle with anxiety or fear.

Do you tend to worry about safety precautions, germs or symptoms you're experiencing? Do you obsess over what family members might be saying about you or what your boss might be thinking?

What about fear? Do you imagine the worst when your teen is 10 minutes late? Do you suspect the worst when your husband doesn't answer his phone?

Fear and anxiety are common for control girls because we constantly have to face things that we'd like to control but can't, such as the future, unknowns, risks and the opinions of others.

4. Others send you subtle hints.

If you're a control girl who doesn't yet know it, chances are, other people have tried to tell you. Now, they probably haven't said, "Stop being a control girl." Instead, they tactfully give you subtle cues. Such as when:

- Your husband says, "Honey, the mechanic couldn't hear the sound either. The car is fine."
- Your adult daughter says, "We've been over this, Mom. We want our kids in this school district."
- Your teenage son says, "Mom, for the tenth time. I'm not cold. I don't want to wear a jacket."

All of these are cues that the other person would like you to back off and stop trying to control. You might not see it as controlling, but apparently, they do.

5. God seems distant and uncaring to you.

Does God seem as though He's too far away to notice you or hear your prayers? Do you think of God as too indifferent, apathetic or disinterested to concern Himself with things that matter to you?

If you're suspicious of God's motives or you question whether He cares, you won't surrender to Him. It wouldn't make sense. Only the person who sees God as both sovereign over creation and lovingly involved in the details of everyday life will choose to surrender to Him. The rest, by default, will live like control girls, doing the best they can to get control and keep everything on track.

Laying Down My Burden

Trying to have, get and keep control is not a burden God designed for us to carry. He knows a life spent lunging for control will only cause us to become fretful, frantic, explosive, nagging, exasperating, angry women, who make everyone (ourselves included) miserable. Instead, God invites us to lay down the burden of control and surrender to the One who truly does have control: Him.

Surrendering to God is the way to free myself from my heart's appetite for control. It involves laying down my expectations for how everything is going to turn out in the end—and also in the next five minutes. It means trusting that He sees further and more deeply than I ever could. It also requires that I trust God's intentions, believing that He is for me, even when I don't get what I want.

Ironically, behaving like a control girl is what robs me of the very thing I'm after: peace, security, hope and joy. Yet

these are gifts from God, available only to those who surrender to Him.

Friend, if after reading these five indicators, you've become convinced that you are a control girl, I hope you're also convinced you don't want to be one. Won't you lay down your burden and begin surrendering control to God? {eoa}

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