



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Managing Your Home and Time – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Emilie Barnes

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener-supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

**Emilie Barnes:** The woman out there is struggling, she's juggling all these balls in her life that are representing all of the things that we become overwhelmed and frustrated with, and that includes our time with the Lord, our time with husband and family and career and church, and all the things that are being thrown into our lives.

**Roger Marsh:** The stresses on a modern-day mother can be a lot to handle. That voice you just heard was that of our guest today here on Family Talk, Emilie Barnes. She identifies with the overwhelmed mother and really made it her life's mission to alleviate that burden and pressure. You'll be listening to a classic broadcast of Family Talk here today, a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, and I thank you so much for joining us for this special broadcast.

Today you're going to hear Emilie Barnes continue talking with Dr. Dobson about her book, *Survival for Busy Women*. Now, even though Emilie Barnes passed away in 2016, we hope that you'll grasp her profound wisdom through this interview and how it applies even today. Emilie Barnes was a best-selling author of more than 80 books and was also a highly sought-after speaker as well. Today, she shares more practical time managing and money-saving tips for moms. Emilie also reminds mothers to prioritize personal time for themselves in the midst of their busy schedules. Well, there's a lot of content to get to, so let's get started. Here now is Dr. James Dobson to continue his discussion with author Emilie Barnes on this edition of Family Talk.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Emilie, I appreciate you coming back and talking a little more about the very practical aspects of getting organized, which is obviously something that's desperately needed. In fact, you started the program yesterday, as I recall, saying that you got a lot of the ideas that you've now implemented in your home and family and in your seminars from Scripture. And the Bible does talk about organizing a home. Proverbs 31 is probably the best example, but another one, Proverbs 9:11 says, "I, wisdom, will make the hours of your day more

profitable and the years of your life, more fruitful." That's really what you're trying to do on behalf of the people who come to your seminars, isn't it?

Emilie Barnes: Oh, we want to be able to give the women out there not only the hope, but to make it more fruitful for them so that our lives are going to be full and we're going to not feel guilty by the time our children are grown thinking, "I wish I would've done more for them." Or, "I wish I would have taught them more." We're always going to make mistakes and maybe feel that we wish we would've done more. But today to be able to have the time in the hustle bustle of life is really a struggle to be able to get that time.

Dr. James Dobson: Think of what is asked of a working woman, I mean a woman who's employed outside the home, to get up in the morning and if she has small children, pack them off to a child care center or a babysitter of some sort, make sure that they have what they're going to need for the day. If you don't have a child care center, trying to find somebody to come into the home and what to do when they're sick or what have you, go off and work all day, maybe eight, nine hours by the time breaks and lunches are added in there, come home, come by the store, pick up the food, prepare it, clean it up, get the baby in the bath water and get him ready for bed, change the diapers, all those things. How does a woman do it? Plus, maintain a relationship with her husband, maintain a relationship with the Lord, maintain her body, exercising and getting rest and so on. That's impossible. That can't be done.

Emilie Barnes: Dr. Dobson, there are women out there who I see who are doing it. But you see, the thing is if we can do it and not have to work quite so hard at doing, it's a little easier if we can do a few things the night before, set out the children's clothes, have one of the children pack the lunch, have another child set up the table for breakfast the next morning if it's nothing more than cereal bowls, but those things are going to help relieve some of the pressure and the stress of the mom.

Dr. James Dobson: Allow me to paraphrase what I said, I said, "It can't be done." It can't be done without some effort and organization. If you just take it as it comes, you'll be in absolute chaos in that kind of lifestyle.

Emilie Barnes: The woman is on her way home, as you said, from her career, picked up her children, run into the supermarket to pick up whatever she can quickly, dumped it onto the stove when she got home and turned it up real high hoping that it's going to cook quickly as the children are getting in the refrigerator because they're starving to death and the milk spills all over the kitchen floor and the cat and dog are licking it up and the children are crying. So the woman out there is feeling that, especially at that five o'clock hour. And I think that is an area that we can really give them some hope with. You see, the woman today is thinking, planning, doing something for over 750 meals a year. Now that's a very major part of our lives. So if that's such a major part of our life, doesn't it stand a reason that that's an area we should be organized in?

Dr. James Dobson: Ought to do some planning there, right?

Emilie Barnes: That's right. So we suggest that we do a weekly meal planner where if she wants to sit down with the family, and I suggest that we do this as a family, "This is what our situation is. We have so many meals this week that need to be prepared. How can you help me? Would you be willing to sit down and let's plan a menu planner for the week?" And the children will say, "Oh, let's have spaghetti on Tuesday night and let's have tacos on Thursday night," or whatever it may be. So right away there's meal planning, it can be done. One of the children, depending on their ages, could sit down and write it into the little meal planner. Another child can start making out the marketing list. So we do this as a family, a-

Dr. James Dobson: It becomes a togetherness thing instead of something that divides you.

Emilie Barnes: ... team. Mm-hmm. All right, so then we've got our meals plan, we've got our marketing list made. Now I remember when our daughter Jenny was 16, the first thing she wanted to do was drive a car. So I thought, all right, if Jenny wants to drive the car, that's going to be fine. So I gave her the keys to the car and the marketing list. And I said, "Jenny, you get to do the marketing for this week." Now our market is two miles from our house. When Jenny came home, she had driven 38 miles. Now, teenagers will do that. She had-

Dr. James Dobson: The shortest distance between home and the market.

Emilie Barnes: I mean, she wanted to drive the car, but at least she did come home with the groceries. I was grateful for that.

Dr. James Dobson: She'd come home with Hershey bars and Snickers and-

Emilie Barnes: And five of her friends who she'd picked up along the way. But it was bringing this family unit together, getting some help. So she would do the marketing. And then when the children were little and I did the marketing, I took the children with me to the market. Now, when you have five children, it's not really exciting to think of going to a market, but I wanted to teach the children. So we would look at labels, we would read labels, we would make price differences. We would see what was the better value for that, so they learned about money. When we got home from the market, one of the children unloaded the bags. Another child put away the canned goods, another child put away the dairy products. Another child began to clean the vegetables.

I knew, because I had a menu worked out, how we were going to eat this week. I knew how many times I was going to need a veggie platter or vegetables in a stew. How many times we were going to have a salad. So all the greens went into the kitchen sink, they got washed, cleaned, cut, chopped, parred, whatever had to be done. I made one tossed green salad, and that was for the whole

week. And in Tupperware in a refrigerator, you have a salad for the whole week. You don't need to clean veggies four times a week.

Dr. James Dobson: It didn't become progressively brown through the week?

Emilie Barnes: Not if it's stored in a good airtight Ziploc bag or a tight seal, it's wonderful. So when we needed a salad, what did we do? One of the children went to the refrigerator, pulled out a couple handfuls of lettuce, put it in the bowl, and we had a wonderful tossed green salad. So how many times did we prepare? You see, one time. So if you take time here to prepare, it's going to save you more hours in your day at the end.

Dr. James Dobson: And only one trip to the market.

Emilie Barnes: And one trip to the market. Now what happens because of that, we save money. And women have told me they save from 16 to 24 dollars a week on their grocery bill by doing nothing different, but just pre-planning their meals.

Dr. James Dobson: Less gasoline back and forth to the store, unless your teenage daughter drives all over Southern California.

Emilie Barnes: But the exciting thing about it is you bring home things that you know what to do with, because when you're in the market and you're hungry and you don't have a plan, you're throwing things into the cart you don't even know what you're going to do with it when you get it home.

Dr. James Dobson: You've even suggested in your book, *Survival for Busy Women*, that you should lay out your grocery list as the market is laid out so that as you're coming around, you're picking things up in the order that they appear to you.

Emilie Barnes: Exactly. And be sure you look down below, you can find sometimes the same item down below for a lot less than if it's eye level. And they'll put things at an end of a counter as a sale item, but in all reality, it is on sale, but it's not on sale, the price is not less. So those are things we watch out for. And couponing. Oh goodness, women tell me-

Dr. James Dobson: You save money with that now. But coupons take time, don't they?

Emilie Barnes: Well, that's true, but you've got children and her husband and maybe he can help cut out some coupons for the things that you use. You've got a menu planner now, so you know what you're going to need for this week. See, it all goes back to the plan, but the coupons are wonderful because a lot of the stores will give double sometimes triple coupons. I've seen, and I've heard women who walk out of the grocery store and have easily redeemed \$15 worth of coupons and so that's cutting down on their grocery bill. So if you figure they're saving 10 to \$14 and you add another few dollars with coupons, why my goodness, you see where you can go with that?

Dr. James Dobson: There's also a sense of satisfaction from doing this thing with the least number of steps and the least amount of energy isn't there? I mean, you not only accomplish the goal, but it helps with self-esteem a little bit to feel like you're an efficient manager of your own family. Is that what you found?

Emilie Barnes: Right. It makes us feel so good and so proud for what we've done about ourselves. We want to tell everyone. And I think that's one of the things that becomes contagious with the women who have read the books and gone to the seminars, is they tell someone else and they're so excited about what they've done, we feel better about ourselves. We're going to have more time to love our families, our husband, our children, our Lord. It flows into every aspect of our life. It's so important.

Dr. James Dobson: Emilie, the women who come to your seminars and you begin talking like this, what's their reaction? Are they saying, "Well, that's fine for you. That's who you are. I'm just not that kind of organized person." Or do they say, "I see hope."

Emilie Barnes: Most of them have not tried it, and if they had tried it, they would be really excited about it, and they do see hope. And one of the things I really want to share is I want it to be practical, I want it to be simple, and I want them to feel that they don't have to do it all. If we would just do one thing that would be toward cleaning or organizing something, we're going to feel so much better. If we clean one silverware drawer or one shelf in the refrigerator, that's all we need to accomplish today. Tomorrow we'll clean one more shelf or one more drawer because the woman today has so many things that she's involved in and she can't maybe go beyond one item.

And then one of the wonderful things that I like to share with women is, because they're going to have more hours in their day, is that they can then begin to share love with their family and with their husband, and to do some special things, lighting a candle, have a few little flowers, making a basket of love with maybe some special food that a husband particularly likes or a child particularly likes, and sitting down in the backyard or at the park or on the floor in front of the fireplace or wherever it may be, and just say, "I love you and I'm so proud to be your mother and the maker of a home for us."

Dr. James Dobson: That's what Shirley does for us, and I love it. She's an incurable romantic, and she does those little things that make family life so meaningful.

Emilie, how much time per day does it take to run a family? Let's suppose a woman has two children, eight and three. How much time should she expect to spend out of her day in keeping that home organized, keeping good meals on the table and keeping things clean?

Emilie Barnes: Dr. Dobson, it doesn't take that much time. The reason why it seems like it's so much time is because things are chaos, but when we begin to put them in focus, and that is what we talked about on the 15 minutes a day in cleaning and

organizing, 15 minutes a day will really give you a jump on feeling free. Now, meal planning and cleaning and all those things are only going to take what you want to put into it. I don't know, I can't say it's going to take you two hours a day when in all reality it may not take you two hours a day. For the woman out there who right now feels overwhelmed, she is going to think it takes a lifetime, but 15 minutes is all she needs to invest.

Dr. James Dobson: It's 15 minutes a day propaganda. I mean, can you really do that? Charles Atlas promised to make me a muscular man in 15 minutes a day when I was a kid, that never worked. Can you really get it done in that? Can you really make a significant difference in 15 minutes, minutes a day?

Emilie Barnes: I believe it is realistic, 15 minutes a day. In fact, it probably wouldn't even take that long.

Dr. James Dobson: In my book, *What Wives Wish*, I think I told a story, and this is true, a neighbor of mine who would get behind, get disorganized and her husband was coming home and he always came home ravenously hungry, and he would become very upset when he walked through the door and there's nothing going on. It is obvious that the meal hadn't even been conceived. She would run in the kitchen and cut an onion in about 12 pieces and put it in the oven and turn the oven on, that's all. And within about 15 minutes, that house smelled like something great was going on, this beef stew or something was coming and it took the pressure off her so she could get in there and get a meal fixed. I don't know if you would recommend that approach, but-

Emilie Barnes: Oh, I think it's a great idea.

Dr. James Dobson: You do lean heavily on the practical in your book, don't you?

Emilie Barnes: Yes, we really want to be practical. Because I believe that's where the woman is today, to be able to love her home and her family and have time to give of herself. And then I believe too, and I can almost hear what the woman is saying right now, "What about me? I'm giving, giving, giving, and what about me? Is it okay to take time for me?" And I want to say out there to those women, yes, you take time for you. And if husband doesn't buy you flowers, you buy it for yourself and give yourself a little bit of love. If you've never done dishes by candlelight, try it. It's wonderful. Number one, you can't-

Dr. James Dobson: Dishes by candlelight?

Emilie Barnes: You can't see the dirt that way. It has a way of just soothing you, quieting you, making it feel special. Even the job of doing dishes can be a wonderful special task. And we need to be proud that God has made us a woman and given us hands to be able to do the dishes and care for the children and to love our husbands, and to teach our children and love our God.

I used to take the things that had to be done around the house. I put them on little individual pieces of paper and put them in a basket, and then once a week the children would draw out the basket, the jobs that they needed to do, so they'd draw two or three jobs. Well, when they drew the job of doing the dishes, they got real excited. And people say to me, "Well, my children never get excited about doing dishes," but this is when I did. And I never told them when I would do it or if they asked, I never did it, but I would throw some change into the bottom of the kitchen sink the sudsy water would be in and I would maybe throw in a hundred pennies or four quarters or five nickels or two dimes or whatever it was, so they knew that sometime that week they were going to be rewarded above and beyond, and those little hands would go into that sudsy water scooting around in the bottom to see if there was some change at the bottom of the kitchen sink.

Dr. James Dobson: And if there wasn't, did they wash the dishes anyway?

Emilie Barnes: They did wash them anyway because maybe tomorrow there would be.

Dr. James Dobson: Emilie, I get the feeling you enjoy being a woman. Is that correct?

Emilie Barnes: I love being a woman. I think it is the most wonderful thing that God has made. Being a woman has a lot of heart. I think we're kind of mystique. We have a capability of doing so much. We have the capability of doing two and three and four things at one time. A lot of times men have a difficult time with that, but we can cook a meal, talk on the telephone and diaper a baby all at the same time.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, that's true.

Emilie Barnes: And love our family. I do love being a woman, thank you.

Dr. James Dobson: You are a grandmother now.

Emilie Barnes: We have three adorable grandchildren, and I think that's one of the joys of my life now. I feel that there were things in raising our children that I wish, as I look now, I would have done differently. I think any woman could say that, and I did a lot, but God gave me a wonderful opportunity, a second chance to feed love and to feed Christ into three special little children, grandchildren that he's given us.

Dr. James Dobson: Emilie, there's a lot of pressure on women today, isn't there? Not just to get the home organized, but there are expectations that weren't there a hundred years ago. No matter what a woman does she feels guilty, either guilty or bypassed by life. If she has this career that she went to college perhaps to prepare for, she feels she's missing something at home with her kids. And if she's there with her kids, somebody's criticizing her because she isn't using the potential that she has. She can't win, or at least many women feel that way. Do you sense that,

that there's a lot of agitation over what does it mean to be a woman and what is expected and how can you meet those expectations?

Emilie Barnes:

Yes, I do feel that the woman is feeling that. And it has changed so much from the '50s when I was growing up that we didn't have the outside pressures that we have today. But see, that's the other thing, I'm really feeling that we are going to be going back to more the traditional values because we've seen, we've come from three decades now and we are looking back and we're seeing, it didn't really work all that well.

And that's how more hours than my day started for me. Our children were reaching high school age, women were coming into the home. I was teaching a Bible study and they said to me, "Well, how do you do this? How do you have coffee and tea and the children all organizing your dinner in the oven and all of this?" And I began to say, "It's simple, this is what you do. You have a plan, you make your marketing list," and so on and so forth. Well, then from that, they said, "I want my neighbor to hear about this." And one thing led to another, and before I knew it, we had a ministry and it started from the home.

Now, I have a woman today that has just started a business from her home, she's been working outside of her home for over five years as a secretary in a church. And I've shared with her, just begin to get a business card, let people know you have a typing service. Well, she has. And do you know now working full-time in her home for the last two months, she's making more money than she ever did when she had her job outside of her home. God is honoring and blessing it. She has time for her family. She's getting her home organized. You see, God is honoring all of the things that she always desired, but it wasn't until she left the workforce outside her home and began to build that within her home. Now, I'm not saying that every woman needs to do that, but I am saying that we are creative women, and if we'll take our creativity and the things that God has given us, we can build some mighty wonderful businesses right out of our home.

Dr. James Dobson:

It occurs to me that it's easier to share your faith from the perspective of organization than disorganization because if you're organized, you have something people want, you have something they admire, you have something they look up to. And when they see a woman whose family is under control, organized and happy, it's a whole lot easier for her to have a ministry. Your ministry grew out of just that very concept, didn't it?

Emilie Barnes:

It did. It grew out of the home. And I wasn't asking for it, but God gave it to me, and God gave me the experience of the years prior so that when I am able to share it with women, it comes from experience and I really trust it comes from the heart too.

Roger Marsh:

Well, what inspiring and encouraging words from Emilie Barnes in her conversation with Dr. James Dobson here on Family Talk. Now of course, Emilie went home to be with the Lord in 2016, but as you were listening, if you've been



inspired to apply some of her time management lessons to your life and family, you can still learn more about her legacy and her ministry and also her books by visiting [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk).

Now with Christians, we know that the Christian life is supposed to be perfect, absolutely wonderful, rich, beyond our wildest dreams, all of our relationships are peaceful and there's joy unending. Well, maybe it doesn't always work that way, and maybe you find yourself right now going through a very, very difficult season in life. Well, when God doesn't make sense and when the circumstances in life don't add up, sometimes our faith can feel like it's crashing down all around us and that we can no longer trust God because well, He didn't meet all of our needs or all of our desires.

Well, the truth is, the Christian life can be extremely difficult at times, and there are things that will happen, tragic circumstances that God allows that we might never understand this side of Heaven. Fortunately though, even though God doesn't always make sense, you can make it through these challenging times. And Dr. Dobson's written an outstanding book on the subject called *When God Doesn't Make Sense*. And now our team here at the JDFI has put together a free ten-Day email series based on that landmark book. Every day you'll receive messages that explore the depths of hardship and examine its purpose. Our prayer for you is that after you spend a few moments each day reading from the wisdom of Dr. Dobson on this subject, you'll be strengthened in your faith as you learn why dark valleys can bring life's greatest blessing, a closer walk with the Lord.

Now, it's free to sign up for this outstanding ten-Day email series. All you have to do is go online to [drjamesdobson.org/when-god-doesnt-make-sense-series](http://drjamesdobson.org/when-god-doesnt-make-sense-series). And remember, you don't have to put an apostrophe in the word doesn't. Again, that's [drjamesdobson.org/when-god-doesnt-make-sense-series](http://drjamesdobson.org/when-god-doesnt-make-sense-series). Also, if you are interested in receiving a copy of Dr. Dobson's book featuring that same title, go online to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk) and you'll find all the information that you need to finish that request. Well, I'm Roger Marsh inviting you to join us again tomorrow for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Till then, may God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow in relationship with Him.

Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.