

#149 - Name What You're Good At

Hello! You're listening to The Lazy Genius Podcast! I'm Kendra Adachi, and I'm here to help you be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't! Today is episode #149 - Name What You're Good At. This is going to be a short episode, but these are words I think we all need to hear.

Before we get started, I'd love to make sure you're following me on Instagram. We're going to do something kind of fun the next couple of weeks related to this podcast, so if you're not already following me, I'm @thelazygenius. Plus I have a ton in my story highlights with real-time recipes, I just posted a tour of my closet a week ago, and plenty of other stuff. So if you're not on Instagram much or just didn't know that I was, I'd love for you to follow me over there. Again, @thelazygenius.

Okay, naming what you're good at. Why even ask this question? Why would I even ask you to name what you're good at? Because you're too hard on yourself about where you struggle *and* you likely pay very little attention to where you don't. You don't necessarily name where you thrive and where you're gifted because maybe it feels kind of self-centered to say that or maybe you don't even notice is as a strength or a skill because it comes so naturally. Either way or any of the other ways you might think of, naming what you're good at is a simple exercise in being kind to yourself. And to be a Lazy Genius, you need to do that. You need to be kind to yourself and not just in cutting yourself slack when you mess up but in claiming something you're really good at and not being afraid of how that might sound or seem to other people.

Last week was International Woman's Day, and I think that a beautiful call to all of us as women or as people who know women and therefore that's everyone is to cheer each other on in what we're good at and champion our friends when they're brave enough to name something that they do well. You can still be humble and be confident. The definition of humble is to not be proud or arrogant, and the definition of confident is to be sure, to have a strong belief, and to be bold in that belief. You can do that without being proud or arrogant. You can say what you're good at and live it out without it being all about you. So often the things we're good at affect other people. They enhance the lives of other people. Your gifts and abilities and ways of seeing and being in the world are impactful to the world. It's only when you make your gifts and abilities for yourself only that the arrogance comes in, and I'm fairly certain most of you are not in that category. This is a difficult ask because you're so avoidant of drawing attention to yourself. So this is just a reminder that you can say what you're good at with humility. You can be confident in what you're good at and not be self-centered.

So why does it matter to know what you're good at? What happens when you name and say it? I think not saying anything or not naming it for yourself is like having a really amazing chef's knife in your kitchen and never using it. It's having a tool that you don't use. Now I realize if you're good at something, you're likely going to utilize that thing in your life, but by not recognizing that it's a gift, that it's a superpower that you bring into situations, you're not going to go to that particular thing first.

Let me give you an example. Let's say you're really good at listening. You're really good at sitting with people in their pain. It doesn't make you uncomfortable. You don't feel compelled to fix anything. You can just be with someone who's hurting. That's an incredible thing to be good at. But if you don't name that as something that you uniquely offer, you might not see it as valuable when a friend's parent passes away. You send a text, you drop off a meal, both of which are amazingly helpful things, but maybe you see your ability to sit with people in pain as something that's not really valuable because you haven't named it. And the reality is someone who's hurting is often so lonely in their pain but doesn't want to be with anyone who's trying to fix or make things better or is trying to cheer them up. Sometimes we need cheering up. That's also a skill and a gift you can bring to people. But we all need each other, and I hope that if you are the kind of person who can sit with people in their pain that you name that as something you're good at and then use that when situations arise. Open the drawer and grab that tool and use it without being embarrassed or feeling like you're stepping over a line. I think the more specific we are about what we can bring to a situation, the more confident we can be when it's time to actually do the thing.

Okay, so one thing that's important to say is that you're good at more than one thing. This is absolutely true of every single person. You're likely good at a number of things. Some tangible, some not, but they all count. Here are a couple of perspectives I want you to consider as you name what you're good at.

Knowing and naming what you're good at also helps you say no to things that maybe you're not as good at. Or if you are one of those people that's kind of good at everything, name the things you're good at that bring you life, that bring life to others, and focus on those more. Just because you can do something doesn't mean you have to or even should. Naming helps.

Be specific. Don't say I'm not good at cooking. In general, professional cooks are good at cooking because cooking is huge. But you can say I'm really good at making soup. I make a great lasagna. I am really good at baking bread or cooking this particular cookie that I've been baking since I was a kid. Be specific. The generalities are usually where we beat ourselves up. I'm not creative. I'm not smart. I'm not disciplined. I'm not musical. I'm not athletic. Those are all very broad and easy targets for you to be unkind to yourself. I think the more specific you are, especially if you're less seasoned in being kind to yourself and saying what you're good at, the easier the practice will be. Specificity helps a lot. So you're good at doing accents and voices when you read or play with your kids. You're good at bringing different ideas together into one plan. You're good at picking the right song for the right moment even if you can't sing or play an instrument. You're good at making car rides fun. You're good at being genuinely kind to cashiers at stores. Be specific. The more you name these things that you're good at, the more I think you'll embrace them and feel even more whole and like yourself.

A second perspective to be specific to the situation. Let's say you're like me and you just got a flier from your kid's school asking for volunteers to help with the spring musical. My son Sam is in show choir at his school, and they have been working on a huge production of Aladdin for

months now. The choices on the parent volunteer flier were three general times to just come and help do whatever, concessions, both providing the food and drinks and selling them at the performance, selling tickets, doing costumes, and doing set design. Now let's be clear, you guys. Kendra doesn't sew. Kendra doesn't really paint. Kendra is creative but not in the costume set design kind of way. Knowing that made those two particular choices easy to not make, right? Now my husband and I both looked at the others, and Kaz in particular is really welcoming. He is so good with new people. He can talk to any stranger. So guess what he wants to do? Sell tickets. Because of course. That's a perfect place for him because it's a kind greeting, a welcome, and everyone is a stranger but not for long because he'll make them feel excited to come to the play when they buy their ticket from him. For me, I signed up for an afternoon to volunteer for whatever because I'm a good team player. I'm good at making a task feel fun even when it's not. I tend to be good at keeping conversations going especially among people who don't know each other very well. I don't mind asking stupid icebreakers or not knowing certain people. I don't mind introducing people to each other. I'm good in slightly uncomfortable social settings, and I'm good at following directions so being part of a random team for a couple of hours on a Tuesday afternoon is actually a really good use of what I'm good at.

So be specific to the situation. Look at the options of how you can contribute to a social setting, to a party, to a project, to a conversation, and name what thing you're good at specific to that situation and then do it. Don't worry about the other things as much.

So be specific about what you're good at and choose the thing you're most good at based on the specific situation.

This might feel a little silly, a little simplistic, or it might feel like a balm, like the sun on your face on a chilly day or a blanket around your cold feet. You know that deep soul relief we get from certain things? I hope that this practice does that for you. Name what you're good at and then live into that. There's this weird thing in culture, especially in church culture I think, where if you're not outside your comfort zone, if you're not doing something that you're not good at or comfortable with that it doesn't count as much somehow. If it's not a struggle, if you're not suffering, then somehow it doesn't count. And I just want to tell you that's not true. You were made in a very specific way with very specific gifts and talents and personality traits that your people need. They need your jokes, they need your ability to knit them a blanket, they need your homemade bread, they need your playlist you made just for them, they need your direction, they need your ability to think through every detail of an event, they need your hugs. I mean golly day y'all know people who are just ridiculously good at giving hugs, right? It's like they were made to give hugs. And I think that's true. I think we were all made to offer specific beautiful things to the world, but until you name them and claim them which I already regret saying but here we are, you won't really live into those beautiful gifts. You might hide them or think they're not valuable, and I'm here to tell you that they very much are.

So name what you're good at. If you need help, ask someone you know and love and trust to name them for you, to bring them out.

Okay, that's it for today. I hope you feel encouraged, and I'm so glad you're here as yourself and whatever it is you bring to this space. Until next time, be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't. I'm Kendra, and I'll see you next week!