

## 286 - What's Saving My Life

Hi there! 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 one of my favorite episodes we do every quarter or so on what's saving my life. Y'all like it too because it always has above average downloads. I think we're always looking for language around what's making life easier and better for other people so that we can experience that for ourselves. So I hope today's list will do just that.

Let's start with what my life looks like right now. I don't usually do this, but I'm realizing that our lists of what's saving our lives is closely connected to what is happening in our lives. You need different things in different seasons, so I'm going to share mine with you.

On the work front, things are good! They're a little slower right now which is nice, but we have some good creative energy happening towards a couple of projects. More about that later. But work is really fulfilling right now. My family life is a mixed bag. We have a couple of pretty significant things happening in both of our extended families, and that takes a lot of emotional energy. They also sometimes take time. Kaz and I are doing great in our marriage, but we're also not seeing each other as often as we usually do because we both have things going on from a commitment standpoint but also in regards to these family situations. Plus, we're both pretty tired, so I'll go to bed or he'll fall asleep. So we're good, but also we miss each other a bit. Parenting is a bit of a bear right now which also takes a lot of energy.

Also it's fall, and fall is our busiest season by a landslide. Always, every single year. We have ten family birthdays during the fall slash early winter. So from mid September to the end of December where my birthday is, there are ten birthdays. TEN. You add that to holiday stuff alone it's nuts. But Kaz and I both are also individually involved in a couple of things right now that take us away from home. It's also the first year where we're really in chauffeur season. My oldest has an activity every single day, and it's been a transition to figure out how to navigate that as a family. We're definitely handling it better and it feels more normal now than it did a couple of months ago.

But we are busy. For sure. But just because I'm busy doesn't mean I *feel* busy. Sometimes I totally feel busy, but I'm not carrying my busyness in my body the way I used to. And this is the perfect time to start talking about what's saving my life. The first three have to do with rest.

Number one: remembering the nuance of rest. I did an episode awhile back about the seven kinds of rest, and I really love that episode. I've also been paying attention to where I need to refuel and rejuvenate. I shared this on Instagram a week or so ago, but I had a stretch of days where I had some harder things to process, some conversations that took a lot of energy, and then we had the most fun weekend. We went to the fair, and we hosted community group and I got to cook for people which I love. We did things that make me feel like myself, that are so fun. But those things still required a lot of energy and were not restful, specifically weren't

rejuvenating. A lot of you mentioned in the comments and in my DMs about the difference between rest and recovery. We need to recover before we can truly rest.

I also read something recently about how the opposite of overwhelm isn't rest but wholeheartedness, that we can experience calm within circumstantial overwhelm when we are whole on the inside, when we aren't fragmented. Now I find great healing in therapy. That's why I've gone for a decade. I go every other week and likely will for the majority of my life. Processing my own internal hairline fractures and finding tools to help heal those before they become full on breaks is massive, not only in my mental health in the traditional sense but in my ability to manage my time, process my schedule, and experience rest. So the first thing that's saving my life is paying attention to and remembering the nuance of rest.

Number two: sleeping on my back. You guys. I have struggled with back pain most of my adult life. For a long time, I thought it was because my chest is on the larger side. I've got boobs, y'all. It's just the truth. So I started getting regular massages, hoping it would help. It did help, but it didn't heal. I still struggled with back pain. Every time I would go to see my massage therapist, she'd spend the time just trying to get me to a baseline, and we never had enough time to. The knots in my back and neck are always enormous, and they become bigger the more active my life is. Well, about a month ago, she said, "How do you sleep?" Well, y'all, I sleep on my side like everybody else does. She said, "I wonder what would happen if you slept on your back. The body is actually designed to rest in that way, and I think it could really help you." So I tried it, and at first I hated it. That first night of sleeping on my back was an absolute nightmare. I felt like a robot just lying there, like I was powering down and unable to move. But the next morning, my pain had noticeably decreased. Well, dang it. So the next few nights, I tried to figure out how to sleep on my back without feeling like I was sleeping on my back. I wedge a super squishy pillow up against one side of my body so I feel more grounded, and I also turn my head to the side a bit. That hasn't seemed to impact the sleep negatively at all. Y'all, my back pain is gone. I am not kidding. Just a few days ago, I was really comfortable on the couch but I was on my side and just decided to take my 17 minute nap on my side because it couldn't possibly hurt anything, right? It took me three days to reset and get rid of the pain caused by 17 minutes of sleeping on my side. Bonkers. BONKERS.

Also there's this little massage tool that I've started using that really helps release the pressure when I do sleep funny or roll over or just actively choose to nap on my side. I'll put a link in the show notes.

It's called the Inducer Original, and it looks like a little set of red foam boobs. You lie on the floor for 15 minutes or so with this thing under your neck, and it relieves tension in the most mysterious ways. It does almost what I think acupuncture does with pressure points and release, but there are no needles. It's a fascinating little thing. That was my main mode of treatment for awhile where I would just treat the pain. Then I started sleeping on my back, and the pain is gone. If the pain shows up after a weird sleep, I use the inducer. It's changed my life, y'all. Sleeping on my back has saved and therefore changed my life.

Third and final rest related thing that's saving my life: my television lunch break and naptime. I've shared before about the importance of eating lunch and not working during it. It was a process to normalize a lunch break, and now that I have, I've built on that a little bit and made it work even better for me. Right now in my season of life, I'm doing a lot of reading. More about that in a second, but reading during lunch wasn't doing the same thing it used to. I didn't look forward to it in the same way. So in late September, I started taking my lunch break with a TV show instead. I started with *The Rings of Power* which took about three episodes to really sink into, but I absolutely loved it. That's on Amazon Prime. Then I moved on to *Andor* which I haven't finished but also love. That's on Disney+. And on days where I feel the need for a slower kind of action than *Andor*, I've started watching *Alone* on Netflix. That's the show where the survival experts are dropped into the wilderness and have to survive alone. I have never watched this show, and I am fascinated. I am mostly flabbergasted because you could not pay me enough to go on that show. The winner gets half a million dollars, but you could guarantee me ten million before I even began, and I wouldn't do it. No thank you. But watching it is just fascinating. So eating my lunch and watching a show has been so restful and good and slow and fun but also rejuvenating. I've really loved it.

And then on most days, I follow that lunch break with a 17-minute nap. Not every day merits one because remember - you have to feel physically tired to do it. You have to feel eyelids drooping. The nap doesn't really work without the ability to fall asleep. I mean, it can. You can just still your body and lie there, but the actual sleep does its best work when you're literally about to fall asleep. So I only take the nap if the conditions are correct for me to do so. But that happens four out of seven days a week easy. So I turn on my white noise, set my timer for 17 minutes, and close my droopy eyes. Amazing every time.

### **We'll be right back...**

The number four thing that's saving my life is I am re-reading the *Throne of Glass* series by Sarah J. Maas, but I'm doing it with our beloved Bri McKoy. Bri just finished the series *A Court of Thorns and Roses* which I also recently read and loved, and she asked me if she should read *Throne of Glass* because she couldn't imagine loving a series the same way she loved *Thorn*. Well, I'm pretty sure I love *Throne* more than *Thorn*, so I said yes. Also side note: hearing Bri who is new to the world of fantasy try and keep these titles straight is the delight of my life. Sarah J. Maas did us no favors with using *Throne* and *Thorn* in the first books of two different trilogies.

I typically don't re-read things, but I'm in a season of reading a lot of nonfiction. One of the things that's making our fall busier is a class I'm taking at my church where we're reading a lot of books on faith and theology. It's a class that runs from October to May, so it'll be a lot of reading for a long time. I also have added some books of my own to the list I'm reading for the class because there are topics I want to explore further. So because of this nonfiction reading energy that's pretty heavy and needs to happen every day, my fiction needs to be the easiest thing in the world. So when Bri said she was going to start reading *Throne of Glass* and I knew I needed a re-read, I immediately was like WE SHOULD READ IT TOGETHER. So we are, and

it's been the best. We just text various exclamatory sentences, and I keep sending her photos of who I cast as the characters show up in the story. It's just been the most fun.

Number five (there are seven of these by the way): a new relationship rhythm with my sister! You all heard the episode I did with my sister Hannah two weeks ago, and we recorded the episode a solid week before that. So we are in week three or four now of this new relationship rhythm, and it is the best. To recap, my sister got a full-time job over the summer, and consequently, we fell out of rhythm in how and when we talked to each other. So the podcast episode is the real-time conversation of us trying to Lazy Genius our disconnection. We came up with a couple of next steps, and we've been doing those! We're having our Tuesday phone call, we've gone to lunch, we've had a walk, we've already used the hourglass and air plant language in our texting. It's just been fantastic. So if you have a relationship that feels a little on the fritz, I highly recommend that episode.

Number six, fall sports. I am a huge sports fan of pretty much all kinds, and I love a postseason of anything. I don't love regular season baseball, but I adore postseason baseball. The drama! It's so fun. So right now, we're in the middle of the NFL season which I love, we're obviously in college football season which I like, we're in postseason baseball and in the actual World Series now which is so fun - go Phillies - and, drumroll please, my favorite sport of all - the NBA - has begun its season. Y'all, October is my favorite month for sports, and it has been the best. Just an emotional buoy literally every single day because every single day a game is on. Love love love.

And finally the number seven thing that's saving my life is working on projects. Now, I have a work project I'm working on that I can't really talk about it yet and might not be able to do for awhile because it's very early, but every time I have a project, I feel more like myself. It doesn't matter what kind. If it's a project I care about, it is so good for my mental and emotional health. It can be something for work or throwing a party or working on a cross-stitch gift for a friend's birthday or even going into the holiday season, getting gifts for people. There is something deeply restorative to me about projects. I do love routine and consistency. Those are beautiful things. And there is a spark that happens for me when there's something to keep tinkering away at in the midst of those routines and consistency.

I also think that changing how we see upcoming seasons that require additional time outside of our routines is of great benefit. Instead of approaching the holiday season with dread over having to get gifts for people, reframe it as a fun project you get to start and eventually finish. It's not an obligation but an opportunity to tinker away at something fun based on what matters to you. I can tell when I don't have a project in my life. I itch for it. It's necessary for me. Now, if I don't have one, I can pay attention to how not having one makes me feel and see what I can learn from that observation, but ultimately it's really good for me to have a project. Right now, the one for work is really fun (not all projects are really fun all the time), and I love the project of the holidays. So I feel like that's another area where my sparkle shows up. I really love it.

So to recap, the seven things saving my life are remembering the nuance of rest, sleeping on my back, taking a lunch and nap break every day, reading Throne of Glass with Bri, having a new relationship rhythm with my sister, fall sports, and fun projects. I hope this list encourages you to make your own or even to notice the things that are adding sparkle and groundedness to your life, even if you haven't named them yet.

And that's what's saving my life.

Before we go, let's celebrate the Lazy Genius of the Week! This week it's Kathryn Mease. Kathryn sent me this message on Instagram. "Hi, Kendra! I recently started binge listening to your podcast, and I love it. It's helping this let-me-overthink-this career mama to actually relax a bit. I wanted to share this for any holiday magic maker mamas out there. Santa comes to visit our little girls at Christmas which happens to be my husband's busiest time of the year at work. It's legitimately hard, and he's amazing for diligently taking it on each year. I take on most of the Christmas-ing, so when Santa fills stockings for each of us, mine has been conspicuously underfilled. Buying my own stocking stuffers when I'm already overwhelmed with all the things family, work, and holiday makes me sad, tired, and self-pitying. So this year, I'm buying stocking stuffers for me the same way I do for the rest of the family - all year as I find them. I'm looking at you, clearance rack Rifle Paper Co. notepad. Now my more convincing stocking will contain some things I'm actually excited about without feeling like a sad chore. Thank you for your awesomeness and pep talks. Kathryn." Holy moly do I love this like crazy. Here are a few reasons why, and I'm going to bring in Lazy Genius principles here. First, Kathryn is living in the season. It's already busy, but she's named that it's also her primary responsibility to usher in the Christmas spirit because of her husband's job. (Also Kathryn, I really love how you're honoring your husband in your language. It's really beautiful to hear partners speak highly of each other that way.) But Kathryn is living in the season. She's not resenting it, and she's also paying attention to when she might resent it and doing something about it. She's also being kind to herself by prioritizing her stocking as much as her family's. I love that. Also there is something super important here about adding one small component to an existing routine. Kathryn already has an intention and practice of buying stocking stuffers throughout the year. Because that practice already exists, she can more easily add this new component to it where she also grabs things for herself. It's not building an entirely new system but slowly adding to one that's already working.

I won't go into this now, but this is something I've been thinking about a lot lately. The process of living a Lazy Genius life is slow and builds upon itself. You have to start small and create tiny routines and make one thing easier at a time. But over time, those small steps add up, and they allow you to add one more step to something that's already there, slowly creating a life that feels solidly rooted in what matters to you without feeling like you're always behind. I just love that this example is a reflection of that. Thank you for this message, Kathryn, and congratulations on being the Lazy Genius of the week! Okay, y'all, that's it for today! Thank you so much for listening, and 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!