

#82 - The Lazy Genius Finds the Best Way to Do Things

Hi, everybody! You're listening to The Lazy Genius Podcast! I'm Kendra, 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 82 - The Lazy Genius Finds the Best Way to Do Things. I'm a bit of an expert in this department; it's kind of my superpower to find the best way to do things. But the best way can also be the most exhausting way if we're not paying attention. And in this current season with holidays and the busyness that always comes with fall, I think our quest to find the best way to make a Halloween costume and make a turkey and choose stocking stuffers and be a good daughter and a good neighbor that makes the best Christmas cookies... all of it drains us in the invisible background. In this episode, I'm going to share three perspectives on finding the best way to do things so that you're not exhausted before you even begin.

So as we get started, let's talk briefly about what it means to find the best way to do things and why we do it in the first place. Some of us experience this more than others (hello, fellow Enneagram Ones), but a lot of us are constantly on the hunt to optimize our lives, to find those tricks and systems that will make our lives function the way we think they should. Sometimes, those hunts are worth it, and we'll get into that. But often we hunt for the sake of the hunt, for the sake of perfection that we don't know we're looking for but is a constant low hum in our choices and in our souls. I love finding the best way to do laundry and roast chicken and track books and decorate and throw a party and meal plan and all the things. Again, it's kind of my superpower, but without the right lens, it's an exhausting superpower. If we're not focused on the important things, we'll become overwhelmed by *all* the things, and none of us want that. So let's walk through these three perspectives so that our intention is life-giving, not life-sucking.

Number one. The best way isn't always your best way. The best way isn't always your best way. I love the way I do laundry. Love it. I did a whole podcast episode about laundry and thought it was the best way. Then I changed it a bit to meet my needs better, and now it's my best way. I think the way I shared in that episode is a general best way, but it doesn't have to be your best way or even my best way. I encourage you to treat claims of perfection that you see from others with gentleness and flexibility. When people find their best way, they want to shout it from the rooftops so that everyone can experience the magic. We all tend to do that, and there's nothing wrong with it. It's just important that when somebody says "you have to do this; it's just the best" that we hold that idea with loose expectations. Just because it saves your sister or your neighbor or your hairdresser doesn't mean it's going to save you the same way, and that's okay. Because we tend to think the problem is with us and not with the best thing. If it's the best thing or the best way and it doesn't change our lives, we feel like it's our fault, but it's not. The best way isn't always your best way.

If you're looking for your best way, here's my suggestion for how to find it. Have one guru in a category that matters to you. Let's say that your environment - your home, how it feels, how it's decorated - is super important to you. You're really affected by your environment and value how your home plays a role in your life and the lives of others. In Lazy Genius terms, it's something you want to be a genius about because it matters. You've named that and have chosen it as important. In those instances, choose one guru and listen to only that person. Choose one

person who sees home the way you want to see it, and listen to her and only her, at least for a time. That might sound harsh because there are so many voices saying so many good things, but it's easy to get overwhelmed by even good things. If you're in a season of overwhelm but still desire input in the important areas, choose one voice to listen to. You can always add more, but as we all know from our schedules, addition is easier than subtraction. We always seem able to add things, but taking them away after the fact feels impossible. So let's start with one voice for now in the areas that matter. In that home example, I have one person I listen to, and that's The Nester. I don't read words from any other home bloggers or Instagrammers because her perspective is one I love and admire and want to emulate. Her best ways to do things aren't always my best ways, but her perspective gets me closer to my best way than anyone else's, so I don't spend energy listening to anyone else.

So if it helps to have some concrete steps, choose maybe three areas of life that really matter to you. Maybe it's your home, dinner, connecting with your community, reading, modeling creativity to your kids, being available to your friends, your skin... the list is endless and whatever you want it to be. But pick a couple of areas that matter the most to you, maybe specifically in this holiday season, and choose one voice to listen to for now. Allow that voice to get you as close to your best way as it can. So perspective one - the best way isn't always your best way.

Number two. Perfection is impossible. Right? Perfection is impossible. We're all quietly on this quest to find the best way to do everything, but getting there is literally impossible. It's a road with no ending, no destination. I think this point helps us realize when we're searching for the best way to do things for the sake of solving an actual problem *or* if it's just because we want everything to be the best it can be for the sake of perfection. When we slow down, we can usually tell the difference. Are you trying to find the best way to host Thanksgiving because you want to offer a warm, welcoming environment or because you want to prove to your mother-in-law that you can do it? Those are two very different soul postures. If you find yourself searching for the best way because you want to be the best, you need to take a breath. It's not worth it, and that road leads nowhere good. When we accept that the best way might not exist or that being the best is actually not really a thing, we let ourselves off the hook a little. We're more content with the way things are and kinder to ourselves in the process. The quest for perfection uses too much energy, y'all, and we're already in the process of learning how to live from a place of fullness anyway. Don't make that intention harder by searching after something that doesn't exist. Perfection isn't a thing. The ultimate best way in all areas isn't a thing. Let it go, and you'll be better equipped to move into number three.

And number three is know when good enough is good enough. Did you just cringe? Is good enough a dirty word? Maybe a little. Good enough just feels like a copout sometimes. If there's a better way or better yet the best way out there, why should we stay content with good enough? You don't always have to. Finding the best way isn't bad; it just gets bad when we seek perfection for perfection's sake and tell ourselves that we're the problem when a best way doesn't work for us the way it works for someone else. Good enough is sometimes a beautiful gift, and we need to get better at accepting good enough.

How do we tell when good enough is good enough? You might have to dig a little deep here, but it doesn't have to be therapy-level deep. When you find yourself frustrated with the way you do something and feel like there's got to be a better way, pay attention to the energy around the frustration. Are you frustrated with how "good enough" still hasn't met the need of a problem that

matters to you? Is that frustration aimed at the problem or at yourself? Are you carrying any kind of comparison along with the frustration?

Let's go back to that home example. If having a home environment matters to you and you're listening to your one guru and recognizing that the best way isn't necessarily your best way and letting go of the quest of perfection, *but* you're still frustrated, consider whether your frustration with your home isn't tethered to some kind of comparison. Maybe you feel badly that your home doesn't look and feel like a friend's home. Maybe you get upset with yourself that you can't do what looks so effortless to others. Maybe you're nervous to invite anyone over for dinner because you're afraid they'll notice that everything is just good enough and judge you for it. If your energy around your frustration with "good enough" is self-focused or has the stench of comparison on it, it's time to be okay with good enough. Because guess what? When we compare ourselves to others or to a better version of ourselves, we'll never actually be content, even if we get as close to perfection as we can. Comparison never leads to anywhere but to frustration. Ever. Have you ever met somebody who seems perfect in every way but still seems discontent with her life? It's likely because she's trying to meet an invisible standard and chasing a finish line that keeps moving. Comparison is the worst and never leads to anything good, so if comparison is your fuel, the efforts required to find the best way will only be exhausting and nothing else. So if you notice that energy, just go ahead and stop. Good enough is definitely good enough. For sure.

Now if the energy around your frustration is focused on the actual physical problem, that's different. If you're frustrated that you can't have friends over because there's nowhere to sit in your living room because your couch is awkward and uncomfortable and you don't know what kinds of chairs to buy and then where to put them, it's okay that good enough isn't good enough. Your environment matters to you and having people in your home matters to you, so seek out a better way to set up your living room. The frustration isn't on yourself and what a crappy homemaker you are; the frustration is aimed at your crappy couch that you've had since college and need to replace. That's when a guru comes in handy because you can seek out your best way from a trusted voice because your frustration with good enough is rooted in something constructive, not in being hard on yourself as a person. Do you see the difference? So how do you know when good enough is good enough? Your energy will tell you that. If you're speaking unkindly to yourself or comparing your good enough with someone else's best, the quest for best isn't worth it. Good enough is totally good enough. But if your frustration is rooted in something tangible and real and not connected to your own self-worth, it's probably worth a few more steps in the quest for best. You'll never get the ultimate best, but you'll be closer to what you need than you were before.

So to recap, if you keep these three perspectives front of mind when you're on the lookout for the best way to do things, you'll be less frenzied in your quest for best and instead will be content when good enough is good enough. Hold those expectations loosely. Truly be a genius about the things that matter and 100% lazy about the things that don't. You can't find the best way to do everything, so spend your energy where it makes the most sense. And to my Enneagram One friends, good enough is okay. You're not going to come apart. Moving towards good enough being good enough is a path of growth that is surprisingly life-giving. Don't knock it or be afraid of it.

Alright, guys, that's it for today! Come hang out with me Thursday on Instagram! I'm @thelazygenius and show up live every Thursday around 12:15pm EST to chat about that week's podcast episode, so come say hi and ask your questions.

I hope you feel encouraged in letting go of the constant quest for the best. You don't have to always find the best way, so be free. Fly my pretties, fly! Actually that's a weird analogy because I'm not a witch and you're not creepy monkeys. Forget it. You know what I mean. Let it go! And I will not sing Frozen now. Promise. Thanks 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 time!