

#176 - Why Fall Reading Might Not Be Working For You

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 episode 176 - why fall reading might not be working for you. There is so much out there about fall reading and fall books and people getting excited, and while you could easily be one of those people - I know I am - a lot of us also feel a little confused in the conversation. Why is everyone so obsessed with reading in the fall? What if I don't know what fall books feel like? When do people have time to read anyway? If that's you, you'll really enjoy this episode, and if you're already pretty steady in your reading rhythm, I think there are some questions in this episode as well as a list of what's on my fall reading stack that could shed some new light on a well worn and well loved pastime.

Before we jump in, two quick things regarding reviews. First, a couple of weeks ago, I announced a giveaway for folks who left podcast reviews on Apple Podcasts, and you guys were amazing and left so many kind reviews. Our download numbers have been up since then, and I think that that surge in reviews had something to do with it, so thank you. More people are learning the Lazy Genius way and feeling better and less stressed about life! You're a huge part of that, so thank you. Because reviewer names don't have email addresses attached to them, I'm going to share the three winners here, and if you are one of these people, would you email us at kendra@thelazygeniuscollective.com? We'll get your Amazon gift card out to you right away. So the three random giveaway winners are drkred504, sandy198128, and upsidedownM. So if you're one of those people, email us, and we'll give you your prize. And thank you to all of you who left reviews. It's amazing.

And the second quick thing regarding reviews is if you have read my book The Lazy Genius Way and have not yet left a review of it on Goodreads or Amazon, would you consider doing that this week? Right now, we have 509 Amazon reviews and 1420 reviews on Goodreads! That's amazing, and there's always room for more. So if you loved The Lazy Genius Way and want to shout it from the rooftops, leaving a review is a great way to do that that helps me and other future readers.

Okay, speaking of books, let's talk about books. I asked y'all what your questions were about fall reading and actually answered a lot of them on Instagram stories which I saved to a highlight @thelazygenius if you want to go check it out, but for the purposes of today, let's talk about the following: why fall reading? Like, what's special about fall reading? How do you choose what to read? When do you read? And I'll share what I plan on reading! Basically, I love making fall reading this amazing quest. I want to capitalize on the particular vibe of fall reading and make it feel legit. So let's do this.

Why fall reading? What is so special about fall reading? And here is where we start: what is fall reading to you? It doesn't matter what books feel like fall to me. You need to choose books that

feel like fall to you. You have to name that for yourself. It depends on where you live, what stage of life you're in, how you feel about the season in general, what you like to get out of your books. There are a multitude of factors that make your fall reading your fall reading, and you do not need to copy how someone else does it or feels about it in order for it to count. In fact, you don't even have to change your reading in the slightest around fall if it doesn't feel any different. It's all your call. So that's the main thing. If you want fall reading to feel important to you, name what's important about it to you, and then make the rest of your decisions based on that. This is how we're a genius about things that matter. If reading matters, you're not going to know how to be a genius about your fall reading if you don't know what matters about your fall reading.

As an example, I'll give you what matters to me. Fall reading to me is reading as much as possible. I love reading on my porch when it's cool, on my porch swing at night wrapped in a blanket, at night before bed, throughout the day when I have time, basically I want to read as much as possible in the fall which I'm not sure is true of other seasons. The reason for that for me is that reading is grounding. It feels like home. So in a season that definitely feels like home but can also be a bit busy, reading helps me be still and aware of the coziness around me. I just really love the peace that comes from reading in the fall. I also like to read things that feel like fall to me.

Which leads us to how do you choose what to read? Much like you'd choose from words to describe your personal style or how you decorate your house or anything else that's unique to you, name some words that describe the kinds of books that feel like fall. Some ideas: cozy, spooky, joyful, mysterious, romantic. Think about genres that feel like fall to you: mysteries, horror, fantasy, dystopian, classics. If you're still having trouble, name a few titles of books you've already read that you're like, yeah that's a fall book. Once you list some out, pay attention to what they have in common in plot, setting, or just how they make you feel.

This doesn't have to be complicated or exactly right. Just say some words out loud that describe what fall reading is to you. Then that helps you choose what you'll actually read. You're limiting your choice down to books that only fit the qualifications of a fall read. For example, I don't read romance novels in the fall. I don't read romance novels a ton anyway, but they feel very much like summer books for me. If I choose a romance novel, even one that's the top of everyone's list, and I read it in the fall, I'll stall out and lose my reading momentum because that doesn't feel like fall. You'll have so much time to read books in your life, so don't feel the pressure to be able to read everything right now. Choose books from a limited framework of books that feel like fall.

Once you know your framework for fall books, start choosing a handful of titles that feel right based on that framework. You likely have a TBR list already. Pick three titles from that list that you'll read this fall. Or walk to your shelf of unread books and pick out three that fit that fall vibe you just named. If you have neither of those things which I find unlikely, check out some trusted book recommendation voices like Anne Bogel from the podcast *What Should I Read Next*, Jaime from the instagram account *Absorbed in Pages*, or green light books from *The Popcast* with Knox and Jamie. Or go to your local independent bookstore if you have one that's open and

tell them what fall reading feels like to you and ask them to recommend something that fits what you're looking for. That's what they're so good at.

Remember that there's no right or wrong here. There's no complete. There's no perfect. It's just books. And if you don't read everything that feels like fall this fall, you'll likely have another fall to keep going. We think that if we can't do it all then we might as well do nothing. Wouldn't it be nice to read one book this fall that feels really special to you in this season than read nothing because you feel badly that you might only read one? Don't do that. Be kinder to yourself than that.

Next up, this is the kicker. When. Does one find time to read? This is true in all the seasons, but fall definitely has its own vibe. We're on the front end of new routines heading into a busy holiday season for many folks listening, so it's almost like you have to fit in reading wherever you have cracks. Sometimes post-holiday winter and early spring are easier to find time to read because you're not really doing a lot anyway. Fall is different. Fall, for me, often needs a bit more intention in choosing when I read, and because I've named that and know that, I can create a little system using Lazy Genius principles.

So my most impactful principle on when I read is to Decide Once. I'm going to decide one time when I read so that I actually do it and don't have to wonder when I'll actually be able to read. Because we all have times we can read, no matter how busy we are. However, not choosing those times on purpose means you're cramming reading into the cracks or choosing a show or something else instead. Which isn't bad by the way. Books are not better than shows as a rule. You might personally love books more than shows or vice versa, but there is no universal human rule that says one is better than the other. That's something you get to decide for yourself. Just wanted to say that. But back to Decide Once. I have decided when I read and even the kind of book I'll read during that time. So my rhythm is I read in the morning before anyone else wakes up. I do it because I love it and need it, not because getting up early makes me better or is the thing everyone is supposed to do. Very much not true. But I get up at 5:30am every weekday morning and read nonfiction for about an hour. I have two types of nonfiction I read in the morning. One is something more spiritual in nature, and the other is something educational. So for example, right now I'm reading *Grateful* by Diane Butler Bass and *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander. This way I'm balancing books that are good for my soul but also good for my brain to learn, and I still get to read stories. Because the rest of the day, I read fiction. I used to adopt the Bri McKoy method which was to read spiritual nonfiction in the morning, educational nonfiction throughout the day, and fiction at night. Since I don't always get to read as much at night as I'd like depending on what's going on, after morning reading, the rest is fiction. And right now, I'm reading a very fall-feeling book to me: *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs. The book I finished before that was *Mexican Gothic* that I got from Book of the Month which I loved and was so incredibly fallish for me. It had very gothic Rebecca vibes if you're into the book Rebecca. So good. But back to the when. So the broad when for fiction is anything not in the morning, but I've decided once to read when I eat lunch instead of listening to a podcast or watching a show on my phone. I've decided once to read for the half hour between when I put Annie to bed and when the boys are done with their

night screen time and they come into the living room with us. So to make sure I can do that, I try and tidy before I start putting Annie to bed so that when I walk into the living room, it feels welcoming and ready for me. That's using the principle of Ask the Magic Question: what can I do now to make my reading time easier later? I can have the room picked up and my book on the table by the couch. I also read for at least ten minutes before I go to bed once I'm in bed. Anything outside of those times is gravy, and there's often a lot of gravy depending on the day. But even if there's no gravy, that's over two hours of reading a day. Which is a lot of time. We think we don't have time and then feel ashamed when people say "well how much time do you spend on instagram?" and just don't want to read at all. That's not what this is. You do think you don't have time. I do too. We built it big. We think that if we don't have a leisurely two hour afternoon to read in a fully cleaned house with a fridge full of prepped food that it doesn't count. Garbage. Just decide once when you'll read. Pick one time. Go ahead and decide what kind of book you'll read during that time. And then do it. It doesn't matter how short it is. It still counts. Then use other principles like The Magic Question to make that decision easier to stick to later. Use the principle of letting people in by telling the people you might live with that you'd really like this time to be a few minutes of intentional daily reading time, that it's important to you, and let them support that. Be kind to yourself - another principle - when you don't make it to your regular reading time. Don't overcomplicate it.

Okay, now to the fun list part. I'd love to share what I'm reading this fall! Or plan to read. If I don't, no sweat. For real. Plans aren't promises. They're just plans. I will sometimes add a book based on a recommendation from my sister who is my personal book vibes whisperer and always knows what I'll love, whatever is available from Book of the Month which I pay for and is sometimes a sponsor on the show which I also love (they're not a sponsor this week, but I'll put a link to Mexican Gothic from them if you want to add it to your next Book of the Month order) and any other number of factors. If something makes me excited to read, I'll read it. My whole point is to read as much as possible and not lose momentum, so if a book makes me lose momentum or gain it, I'll quit or add. Momentum is the goal, not sticking to the plan exactly or finishing a book that's not working for me right now. It might work for me again, but it's not right now.

Okay, so my fall stack. As a reminder, I have a rule that of the three types of books I'm reading at any given time - spiritual nonfiction, educational-ish nonfiction, and fiction, one must be a BIPOC author. I want to read diversely on purpose, so this is a really easy way to do that by making sure at least one of my three is doing that. Okay, so again right now I'm reading Grateful by Diane Butler Bass, The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander, and Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs. My books that will likely be next up are in the spiritual nonfiction category Shalom Sistas by Osheta Moore and The Furious Longing of God by Brennan Manning. The other nonfiction books are Be the Bridge by Latasha Morrison and A Short History of Nearly Everything by Bill Bryson. The fiction books need to be fantasy or mysterious. That's my fall vibe, so I'm choosing The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms by NK Jemisin, The Space Between Worlds by Michaiah Johnson, and The Shadows by Alex North. Those last two are both Book of the Month picks by the way. I'm also going to reread Jayber Crow if it feels right. I read it just a few months ago at the start of the pandemic, but I already

want to read it again, especially in the fall. We'll see. All of these books I own and are on my shelf ready for me, so there's not a lot of hardship in picking one up when it's time.

Okay, so fall reading needs to be by your own definition. You decide what it means for you and what books feel like fall reading because we all like different things. That might be why you're stuck; you haven't named what matters to you yet. Then you can Decide Once when you read and maybe even what you're reading during certain times. You can apply other Lazy Genius principles like Ask the Magic Question, Let People In, and Start Small. And in light of that one, I hope that you are inspired to make your own fall reading stack even if it's just one book. One book is enough if you'd like to start reading. Don't feel badly because your stack doesn't have eight books. That's not fair or kind to yourself because it doesn't actually matter how many books you read or don't read as long as you're reading based on what matters to you.

Again, I answered a lot of other fall book questions on Instagram, so you can check out the highlight fall reading to see those. And if you're new around here and are intrigued by these Lazy Genius principles I've mentioned, I encourage you to check out *The Lazy Genius Way*. Maybe you can even add it to your fall stack. It's a book of thirteen actionable principles that help you create a life of meaning based on what matters to you and get stuff done in the process. It's equal parts system and soul, and if you enjoyed this episode, I know you'll love the book. Again, there are over 500 Amazon reviews if you want to get a feel for how it's helped other people.

Okay, that's it for today! I can't wait to see your fall reading stacks! I'm so glad to have spent this last little bit with you, and I'm so grateful for your time and attention in the most sincere way. There's a lot you could be listening to right now, so it means the world that you would choose to listen to this. Be well, friends, 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.