

#239 - Five Lessons Learned From Soup (No, Really!)

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 239 - five lessons learned from soup (no, really!). It's winter, and most people have big soup energy this time of year. I have such energy. I love a good soup. I wish my kids liked soup more than they do, but they don't hate it as a concept. We're working on it. But today I want to share five lessons learned from soup. These lessons are soup-specific in that the actual application of these lessons involves making and/or eating soup, but I'm using Lazy Genius principles to share these lessons. So this is an episode that shows how versatile and helpful the 13 Lazy Genius principles are, and today we're just applying a few of them to soup.

Before we jump in, in case you don't know, I wrote a book that came out in August of 2020 called *The Lazy Genius Way*, and that book outlines the 13 principles and gives tons of examples of how to apply them. We did a survey a few weeks ago, and one of the questions was how many of you have read *The Lazy Genius Way*, and it was like 75% of you have. Which is amazing. That book is so helpful and is not a regurgitation of these podcast episodes. It is the foundation for them. The book is the legend or the guide of how to Lazy Genius anything, so if you are in the 25% who have not read the book, I highly encourage you to check it out!

Okay, so let's jump into five lessons learned from soup.

Number one, have house rules for your soup. Set House Rules is a Lazy Genius principle, and the idea here is to have built-in rules or guardrails or decisions that support what matters most to you. My guess is that for most of us, one of the things that matters most about soup is the experience of soup. Soup is, no matter how woo-woo you are or are not, soup makes us feel things. Holding a cozy bowl of soup on a cool day is an experience in itself. It's simple and maybe isn't going to cause you to write a song about or anything, but the experience of soup is usually something people really value about soup, even if you've never said those words before. So I would encourage you to have house rules for your soup.

You serve soup in pretty bowls, maybe even notice that you don't have deep cozy bowls that make sense for soup and so your experience isn't quite what you want it to be. It could be you don't have what you need. So a house rule could be soup gets served in pretty bowls. Another, and this is true in our house, soup is always served with bread. Always. I have Sister Schubert yeast rolls in the freezer at all times, sometimes I'll make rolls from scratch or make a loaf of no-knead crusty bread or buy a baguette from the store... the point is we always have bread when we have soup. It's part of the cozy experience, and it helps my kids who are picky have something they will for sure like because they all like bread. Maybe you turn on the fake fireplace show on Netflix when you eat soup or light a real fire to add to the experience. There are lots of ways you can enhance what matters about the experience of soup by setting a house rule to support that. So that's number one: set house rules for your soup.

Number two, soup is the best food to batch. Batching is another Lazy Genius principle, and you're already familiar with this. Batching is doing something all at once rather than spreading it out over time. Soup is a great batched meal because you can make a giant pot and have two dinners' worth or a dinner and a week of lunches or a meal to have now and a meal to freeze for later. Soup is a batching dream. I think that's so true that it's sad to make soup that is only for one meal. It's so easy to double that why not do it. So soup is the best food to batch.

Number three, when it comes to soup, let people in. You guessed it; let people in is another Lazy Genius principle. And this takes a couple of forms. The first one is letting people into the process of enjoying soup. It's an easy meal to share, it feels very communal, and it's easy to stretch for big crowds. So if you know that soup is on the menu, consider inviting neighbors for dinner or packing up a batch for a family with young kids. Even if the kids don't eat the soup, the grownup or grownups in charge of those kids would likely enjoy a few days of lunches already made. So if you're making soup, think about how you might let people into that. You don't have to every time. Sometimes we just make soup for ourselves and we don't have to go beyond that. That's okay. I'm not trying to soup-guilt you. But it's a great meal to consider how you might let people in.

We'll be right back...

Another way you can let people into your soup life is to limit your soup experts. Limit where you get soup recipes. I would like to point you in the direction of one Bri McKoy. Bri McKoy is a real-life friend of mine and my favorite Internet kitchen partner. I like to teach you how to do things in and around your kitchen. That's what my next book, *The Lazy Genius Kitchen*, is all about. More on that later. But Bri is the person to really teach you how to cook. Bri is a brilliant cooking teacher, she knows flavor, she uses salt like I do - no bland food, please - and she is an utter delight to experience. She has some fantastic recipes on her blog of delicious soups that I have in fact cooked myself. Her chicken pot pie soup is so good. Her lemony chicken soup is simple and a delight. I've yet to make her pumpkin chili because my kids are barely dipping their toes in the chili waters, but people rave about Bri's pumpkin chili. Basically, a way you can let people into your soup life is to have a small collection or maybe even a single person to trust when it comes to soup recipes. Don't go all over the internet. Whose food do you consistently enjoy making? Do they have soup recipes? Make their soups. That person for me is Bri. You can choose your own person or two, but that is a way to simplify this season of making soup.

Which leads me to number four: start small. This is one of the more foundational Lazy Genius principles because of how hard it is for us to do this. But starting small is often the only way we can move in the direction of things that really matter to us. Instead of building it big and buying an Instant Pot and a soup cookbook and making a soup schedule and getting a different Dutch oven that you think feels prettier and more legit than what you currently own, start small. Pick a soup recipe and make it. Like for real. Just make soup one night. Don't overcomplicate. Don't mechanize or systemize it right away. Just make soup. Start small. Start small with one soup recipe you love and make it again. Start with one new soup recipe from a recipe creator that you love and make it. Don't get soup paralysis because you're building it too big or you think you

need to find a dozen soup recipes to get you through the season. Start small. Pick one. Make it. Do that again.

And number five, you must go in the right order. Most soups can, and dare I say should, follow one specific order. I think that the most flavorful, balanced soups are ones that involve sauteing your vegetables first, at least the aromatics. Things like onion, celery, carrot, bell pepper, garlic, ginger, that kind of thing. If you make soup and just dump a diced onion into a pot of liquid, that onion is not going to have the opportunity to reach its full potential. It's not going to taste as good as it could if it were sauteed with butter and salt. It's also not going to have as pleasant of a texture when it's more or less boiled as opposed to sauteed. I very much believe in soups being developed layer by layer, not just dump in stir.

That includes any meat as well. You can certainly add raw meat to a pot of soup and cook the meat in the simmering liquid. And sometimes that might actually serve the soup better. It might be better plan, but nine times out of ten, you will get a better soup by browning any meat beforehand. So the lesson is that soup benefits from going in the right order. Go in the right order is a Lazy Genius principle, and it applies to everything from cleaning the bathroom to having a conversation with your teenager about their attitude to making soup. For the soup one, I have an entire podcast episode dedicated to how to make soup, but I also have a really fantastic - hold, please, it's book plug time - I have a really fantastic preorder bonus for anyone who would like to (or who already has) preordered my second book *The Lazy Genius Kitchen*. I mentioned it earlier. It comes out in March of 2022 which I realize is a long way away, but to give you some fun from that book while you wait for it to arrive, we have a bonus that's available just in the month of December, and it's all about soup. You'll get beautifully designed downloads of how to make soup, in other words the steps of how to go in the right order. You will also get three soup recipes written out like real recipes and not like my Instagram highlights where I sort of tell you how to make stuff. It's more official. So there's a recipe for my tomato soup, for chicken soup, and for a sausage tortellini soup. Plus there will be a link to a video that shows you how to make soup. All of that will be emailed to you after you preorder *The Lazy Genius Kitchen* and then go to thelazygeniuskitchen.com and tell us where you ordered from. Once you do that, we'll email you all the Lazy Genius soup goodies. If, by the way, you have already preordered *The Lazy Genius Kitchen* and you got the November preorder bonuses, the December soup bonuses should already have been delivered to you, so that's waiting for you in your inbox.

Okay, book plug over. The point? Soup teaches us that going in the right order matters, and if you like soup, I feel very confident in saying that your soup game will be elevated big time by following this order, no matter the recipe you're using.

And those are the five lessons learned from soup. I'd really like for you to make soup this week. Just one time. Name what matters to you about the experience, sit in a cozy chair with the bowl resting in a cloth napkin or a tea towel to protect your hands from the heat but to give you a soup experience that really reaches down to what you love about the coziness of soup and of this season in particular. Name what matters about soup. That's a thing. I promise that's a thing.

It might feel weird, but it's the elevation and intention of regular ordinary things that makes those things memorable and part of a life we treasure living. That got real Hallmark real fast, but it's the truth. Soup is just one of those things, especially when you apply a handful of Lazy Genius principles to it.

Okay, before we go, let's celebrate the Lazy Genius of the Week! This week it is Melissa Wall. So this Lazy Genius of the Week is a little different than usual ones with tips and stuff. But Melissa tagged me in a post on Instagram - I'm @thelazygenius - and the post was a video of this adorable holiday shopping event. Lots of wooden trees and pretty Christmas decor and all kinds of things. It was so lovely. In her caption, she says that going to this particular Christmas event is one of the ways she lives in the holiday season, kind of like an opening ceremony. Christmas isn't Christmas without this thing, right? Well, she shared that she couldn't go to the event she loves so much because she had surgery but that her parents FaceTimed her from the event and brought her along with them. And y'all it kind of made me cry. It was the sweetest thing to see how her parents knew how important going to this little Christmas shop was. They knew it mattered to her, and so they took her along even though she couldn't physically go. I just loved the post so much in that same elevation and intention of the simple things that I just mentioned. We get a deeper, wider, more wholehearted life when we focus on the things that matter to us, when we start small with them, when we engage in rhythms and routines and intentions in a small gradual way, and when we let people into those things that matter, sometimes they show up in really beautiful ways, like taking us to a Christmas shop on FaceTime. It's just so dear. So Melissa thank you for tagging in that post, I hope you are recovering well from your surgery, and congratulations on being the Lazy Genius of the Week.

Okay, that's it for today, friends! There will be links in the show notes for all the things, including where to go after you preorder The Lazy Genius Kitchen so you can get your Lazy Genius Soup Guide as a bonus, we'll link to some of Bri's soup recipes because she is my recipe queen, and we'll also link to the older episode of How to Make Soup so that you can listen to a very detailed description of the right order of making soup if you are so inclined. I'm so grateful you're here, 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!