

293 - An Easily Forgotten Holiday Reminder

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 293 - an easily forgotten holiday reminder. We are entering the week before Christmas, and I hope you've enjoyed the episodes leading up to now to help you feel like you're ready to enjoy this week.

I don't want to take up too much of your enjoyment time with a podcast episode, but I do want to say a few words about something I think we so easily forget around this time of year. I want to talk about how we think about time. All of us process time differently, and all of us are positioned to see time through one of three lenses: the past, the present, and the future. Shocker. If you're an Enneagram person, you'll be familiar with this, but you don't have to know or even care about the Enneagram for this to matter.

We all see time from one of those stances, and those stances can impact us negatively around this time of year. If you are a person who thinks about the past often, who finds yourself at a party or on a street or on your couch surrounded by Christmas presents and thinking back to a better party or time driving down this street or on a better couch surrounded by better presents, it will be easy for you to miss what is good right now. If you like the Enneagram, past people are Fours, Fives, and Nines.

If you are a person who sees time through the lens of the future, you'll think about what could happen at a Christmas party or on Christmas morning gathering with your family that you have a difficult relationship with and because you are analyzing all of those future scenarios and see how they could be negative, you just don't go to the party. Or you could be someone who loves the possibility of the future and is just excited for the next thing, and therefore it will be easy for you to miss what is good right now. Again, if you like the Enneagram, future people are Threes, Sevens, and Eights.

And you might think that the present-oriented of us have it in the bag. We're so good at seeing things right now. But honestly, so many of us who are focused on the present are looking at the present in a managerial way. We're managing how to make right now better, we're managing the expectations of the people who are in front of us right now, or we're managing all the potential scenarios that could mess up right now. There's still a franticness to present-oriented people because it's all about management. Those are Ones, Twos, and Sixes.

All that to say, I want to leave you with a phrase that I hope you carry with you this week. Good is here right now. Good is here right now. That is relevant for every single one of us, no matter how we experience time.

When I say good is here right now, it gives us a kind lens to see where we are. It helps us embrace the season we're in, even for a moment. It helps us be kind to ourselves as we might be struggling with twinges of regret or disappointment or overwhelm. Good is here right now.

So let's think about that phrase as we examine a couple of potential holiday scenarios this week where that phrasing could be helpful and grounding for you.

You might be in a really hard holiday season. Singularly hard. If this is your first Christmas after losing someone because of death or divorce or a broken relationship or moving to a new place and being away from family and your best friend who you always did holiday stuff with, you will likely struggle with this next week or so. And rightfully so. It's so hard when we miss something that's gone. And depending on the loss and how we're supported in it and how long we've been processing it, it could feel like this holiday is too overwhelming to handle. We might even think it will always feel like this. I don't want to tell you that the future will be better or that you'll get past it or whatever else. You don't need to dismiss how you see time and whatever experience you're in right now. You don't need to ignore the grieved past or the grieved future because of this loss or run away from the tears that just happen while you're wrapping presents. Don't run away from those or dismiss them as unimportant. Perhaps alongside those feelings, you can also hold the phrase "good is here right now." It might be a lot of good, and it might be the tiniest pinprick. But good is here right now. Grounding yourself in that alongside your struggle is a gift you can give yourself so you're not swallowed up by whatever you're experiencing. Good is here right now. If you can look for the tiny bit of good and breathe into it right where you are, it will help you process the past, future, and management of the present more kindly.

We'll be right back...

Another place this statement - good is here right now - could help is if you're in a new scenario that's usually good but during the holidays is showing its gross underbelly. For example, if you have a new job that you genuinely like but also you don't get any time off because both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day or on the weekend this year, that can be a tough place to be. You can miss your old job. You can suddenly resent this current one. You can wish for a new one in the future. It's okay to be sad and disappointed and even angry about not getting more time off this year or whatever the case may be with your new situation that is changing your holiday season from what it once was, especially when people like me are talking about the two weeks of the holidays like we all have these long stretches of time and you don't. All of that frustration and sadness is normal. And alongside it, what would it mean to hold the phrase "good is here right now"? Because there is. Good is everywhere, even in the worst circumstances. There are still humans who look you in the eye and smile and see you. There are still songs and jokes and poems and memories and sandwiches and things that can bring pleasure and offer a sweet moment of goodness right now. Even you personally paying attention to this question rather than letting your own disappointment drown you is a good thing right now. And even if you're drowning, being kind to yourself in that is also a good thing. Good is everywhere. It really is. And intentionally saying "good is here right now" is a way to anchor you in whatever else is going on.

Another place this could help you is in something way more benign and seemingly unimportant. Maybe you're home with little kids, and the weeks around Christmas are sort of different than

your regular day but not by a lot. And you're just tired. You miss Christmas mornings where you could just sleep and watch movies and not have to get anyone a snack. It's easy to miss those seasons, to look ahead for when this one will change, or try and manage the one you're in within an inch of its life. Instead, what would happen if as you're getting the cup of Goldfish or you're changing another diaper or you're spending 92% of your winter holiday doing the same things you always do, what if you held the phrase "good is here right now"? Because you know there is. It's why tiny kids are cute. They have built-in goodness. The chubby legs of a baby by themselves are a fantastic dose of goodness. Good is here right now. Hold it, speak it, and look for it. It doesn't take away the diapers and the grilled cheeses and the constant calls of Mommy or Daddy or whatever you're called by the kid you care for, but it does cast a lovely light on those ordinary things.

It's like those light catchers we have on our windows. Sherry Petersik from Young House Love influenced me to get some months ago as she has done with many things in my house - seriously, she's some kind of wizard - but we have those light reflector rainbow stick-on things on a couple of windows at home, and every day, they cast this beautiful surprise on our ordinary rooms that hold our ordinary lives. That's what this phrase does. Saying that good is here right now is a way to add a little sparkle and surprise to wherever we are. It's the little cascade of a rainbow on the arm of the sofa. And if you have read Ingrid Fetell Lee's book Joyful, you know that light and color and surprise - all three of those things - scientifically change our brain composition and help us experience joy. Not happiness but deep soul-grounding joy. So if something as simple as a little lit up rainbow on the kitchen floor can do that, imagine what good thing in your flesh-and-bones life can offer.

Good is here right now. Yes, you can long for something from the past. Yes, you can grieve for a lost future or long for a different one than your present is offering you right now. None of those things should be ignored or dismissed or devalued. Your experience is your experience. Your feelings are your feelings. And also if you find yourself negatively affected by those experiences or feelings in a way you wish was different, maybe this phrase, especially during this week that's equal parts chill and restful and also very high-stakes in the expectation department, will help ground you and make you feel like yourself. Good is here right now.

If you want to hear more words about orientation to time, I'll offer a couple of podcast episodes you can add to your queue. One is from The Next Right Thing with Emily P. Freeman. She interviews Suzanne Stabile a couple of weeks ago, and Suzanne is the best voice about this stuff without question. She is my Enneagram and also just being-a-person guru. That episode is great because it helps you see how your orientation to time, Suzanne's expertise, aligns with making decisions, Emily's expertise. It's great. There's also an episode on Suzanne's personal podcast called The Enneagram Journey, and it's episode 50 and titled Orientation to Time. It's a great overview of how to think about this. In fact, if you plan to listen to both episodes, start with Suzanne's and then listen to Emily's. That's a good order for you.

Alright, before we go, let's celebrate our Lazy Genius of the Week! This week it's Suzy Ghosh. Suzy sent me this DM just a few weeks ago, and I had to share this week because of how

fantastically genius it is for the week after Christmas or whenever you're taking down your decorations. Suzy wrote this: "Hi Kendra and LG Team! I wanted to pass along something I started last year that is a game-changer for me. Last year when I packed up my Christmas decorations, I included the things I needed for them this year. I hang a lot of little wreaths and other things with clear command hooks. So last year, I packed the hooks with replacement strips in ziplocs with each wreath. I had totally forgotten I had done that, and I was so excited when I opened my bins this year! I didn't have to search my house for new strips or wonder where I stored all the hooks. I also labeled one box "open first." It had the things I needed first before I even got my Christmas tree - my advent wreath candles, the advent calendar, etc. I'm not sure why it took me so long to pack well, but I'm so happy I finally figured it out." Suzy, this is such a great idea! It's two ideas really! So y'all listen up. This first idea of packing up the tiny supplies you need for your holiday stuff that are not only used during the holiday? This is Lazy Genius principle #3 The Magic Question at work. What can you do now to make decorating next year easier later? Ask yourself that question next week or the week after or whenever you're packing up your Christmas stuff and see if you can delight your future self the way Suzy did. Also this second idea of the "open first" box is a dream and is the perfect example of the Lazy Genius principle of going in the right order. When you're getting your home ready for Christmas, there are likely things that do go first because of the calendar or just because of how you decorate. Having that "open first" box helps you go in the right order with your decorating and not get overwhelmed because you forgot something important that was more time sensitive or because you're just staring at bins wondering where to begin. So so good. Thanks for sharing this with us, Suzy, 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.