

356 - What's Saving My Life Right Now

Hey 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 356 - What's Saving My Life Right Now! This is a beloved quarterly episode where I share the things in my life that are saving it. It could be products that bring joy or efficiency, moments that make me feel like myself, things I'm looking forward to... the list is varied every time. The practice, though, is just as important as the list itself, which is why I encourage you to ask yourself this question on occasion: what's saving your life right now? Barbara Brown Taylor asked this question ages ago, and many of us on the Internet use it often because it's so good. Life can be heavy, distracting, busy, and hard. Taking a moment to name what is bringing us joy, keeping us afloat, and making things easier is a real gift.

So here are the ten things that are saving my life right now.

Number one. Finally being able to tell you that I wrote a book. Aahh!! You guys! I wrote another book! I told folks for the very first time in last week's monthly newsletter, The Latest Lazy Letter, and I posted about it yesterday on Instagram and in the private Lazy Genius Facebook group. And now today I'm telling you!

Y'all, after *The Lazy Genius Way* came out in 2020, I didn't think I'd write another book. That book has the 13 Lazy Genius principles, so what else was there to say? Well, then I realized that those principles could work wonders in the kitchen when specifically applied, so in 2022, I released *The Lazy Genius Kitchen*. It was then that I for sure knew I wouldn't write another book. It's not that I don't like writing books (well, truthfully I don't love the writing part, but that's another conversation for another day), but really it's that I didn't think I had anything else to say in book form. I want to write books that are constant references for you, that can be revisited in different seasons of life and offer tangible help with your problems. After *Kitchen* and *Way*, I didn't think there was anything else to say.

But then I started to work on a time management resource for you guys, and I love talking about time management. I'd like to think I'm an expert on compassionate time management, helping you get your stuff done but also preserving your humanity and joy in the process. As I started working on the content for this future resource, I couldn't decide if it should be an online course or a series of podcast episodes or something else. Basically, no format made sense. What I wanted to say was too comprehensive, too detailed, too much like a book. Then I said to myself, "Oh wait. I guess I do have another book in me."

So I signed a contract with a new publisher last February, I wrote the book last summer, and it releases on October 8 of this year. It's called *The PLAN: Manage Your Time Like a Lazy Genius*, and y'all, I could not be more excited about this book. There is so much to tell you about it and plenty of time to do it, but I have been sitting on this news of even having it for over a year. When I say I have never been more excited about anything I've made, I say it loudly. I have

never been more excited about anything I've made. I think this book is a gamechanger. The PLAN is for people who have been forgotten by the productivity industry, namely women. We have hormones, we run homes and families, we have different needs and cultural expectations than our male counterparts, and yet 93% of time management books are written by men. That's too high, y'all. So this book is for you, and October cannot get here fast enough. If you're an eager beaver, you can absolutely go ahead and order it wherever you like to buy books, but you've obviously got time. The point is that it's absolutely saving my life that I finally get to tell you. It's been a hard secret to keep, so this is super fun.

The second thing that's saving my life: a finished bathroom. You guys, we did it. Our bathroom renovation is finished. I know this is a very specific situation and, frankly, a privileged one, but I am so happy to have our house back. We went through a seven month bathroom remodel that was definitely not supposed to take that long. The reasons matter far less than the fact that we made it through that weirdly hard season. When one room is in chaos, it throws the entire home into chaos. We had some temporary fixes we thought we'd only need for a few weeks, and when weeks turned to months, I started to feel a little cuckoo pants. I did manage my way through that strangely challenging season far better than I would've at any point in my past (therapy is a winner, y'all), but it was still tough. And now that our bathroom is done, holy moly is it the best. Now, does my entire family use the new bathroom? Yes. Yes, they do. I thought it would be a bit of a sanctuary for me and Kaz, but the kids aren't stupid. They know a good thing when they see it, and I can't blame them. We've found a new rhythm in using that bathroom, I'm so happy with the choices we made and the changes we pushed for to make it work for our family, and I love it. I love it so much, in fact, that I now love to shower. This is a weird thing about me that I think I've shared here before which is weird in itself, but we'll go with it. I have always hated showering. It feels like such a waste, such a chore. Now that the bathroom is finished, a bathroom that was built for how we live and use it, plus an incredible shower head that I don't know anything about since I didn't choose it, I love taking a shower now. Who would've thought. So that's number two. Getting through a tough season that was longer than expected and having a finished, beautiful bathroom on the other side.

Number three. Painting. I love having a creative outlet that has no purpose other than my own enjoyment. It's necessary for me to feel like myself. My job is creative, but it doesn't fulfill my creative needs on its own because it's my job. So I love making things just because. I have a few personal categories - music, food, but one of the things that gives me the most enjoyment and therefore saves my life in big ways is painting. I love to paint. I am a mixed bag when it comes to how successful I am. I'm a recovering perfectionist and therefore someone who hasn't historically tried things that I wasn't amazing at. That's not a great vibe and I'm working on it. One of the ways I'm doing that is with painting. Sometimes I paint something I absolutely love, that I'm proud of, and that looks like something real. Other times I paint something and wonder if I broke my hands in the process. But excellence isn't the point. Enjoyment is, and I really enjoy painting. And the more I paint, the more I get comfortable with painting badly. Or even to soften my definition of what badly is. There's no bad art. We're just expressing and trying, and sometimes what is in my head lands to varying degrees of success. But I love it. It makes me calm and happy and is such a great stress reliever. I paint with acrylics mostly even though I

want to paint watercolors more than I do. Frankly, I need to become a little more comfortable with lack of control in general to enjoy painting with watercolors. They just... do they want. They're a whole vibe. But regardless of the love-hate relationship I have with certain mediums, painting is absolutely saving my life.

Number four. Art on my walls. Specifically original art. I told you in the last episode of What's Saving My Life... or no, wait. Maybe it was the episode my favorite discoveries of 2023? Either way, something I have discovered and loved is shopping from Instagram accounts that curate vintage home decor pieces. Basically, people with a great eye go thrifting and go to estate sales and all the places, they find the good stuff, they put it on a pretty flatlay, usually on Fridays, and you can simply comment to say you want to buy a certain piece. Well, that has opened me up to how much I love original art and how much life it adds to my home. I've gotten probably four or five pieces of actual art, not by anyone famous but beautiful and original, and have put them all over my house. I have a large watercolor painting of a Paris cafe hanging in my dining room. I have an oil on canvas painting of a woman's face, all in browns and yellows and oranges and it's magnificent. That's hanging next to a bookshelf, along with a little oil painting of a field and a pen and ink drawing of a flower. I have a piece of string art - literally the picture you see is made of strings strung tightly together - in my den. It's got a Japanese feel which is rad because my husband and therefore my kids are Japanese. It also inspired me to frame one of my own paintings and prop it up among some others. Original art, whether yours or someone else's, is a special thing and adds so much warmth to a home.

Number five. Making simple syrups. Y'all, I am so into simple syrups right now. A couple of months ago, I wanted my morning cup of coffee to have some dimension to it. I usually do oat milk and maple syrup, but I wanted a little something extra. I added the tiniest pinches of cardamom, cinnamon, and black pepper to my coffee, and the angels sang. That day, I made it easier on myself by making a simple syrup I could just pour straight in. When that was gone, I made a black pepper simple syrup because it sounded super intriguing, and with it I made a cocktail that will likely be in my top three drinks of all time. It's called a Dalmatian, and I made a reel about it with the recipe if you're interested. It's basically two parts grapefruit juice to one part black pepper simple syrup and one part vodka. Ridiculous. Utterly ridiculous. I finished up the syrup and the last grapefruit last night, and I was legitimately sad. My next syrup is going to be a straight cardamom syrup because I love cardamom, and I can use that in my coffee and my cocktails. Regardless of how it's used, noticing little sparkly things like a special homemade simple syrup can absolutely save your life.

Number six. My joy-connections journal. At the start of the year, I named that the two things that bring the most contentment are joyful moments and moments of connection. Joy and connection are two of my favorite, most important things. The problem was I would get through a day and not notice any of them. I just kept living and doing my thing. I do still keep a one line a day journal going on three years now, but that is often where I share the general schedule of the day and things that happened. It's also for our whole family, not just for me. The joy-connections

journal is just for me. It's my joy, my connections. I can name whatever I want to name because the point is noticing what is happening in my own life. So I grabbed an empty notebook I already had, and each page is a new date. I write the date on the top, I write the year - 2024, and then I write the letter C followed by whatever the moment of connection and then the letter J followed by whatever brought me joy. Moments of connections are holding hands with Annie while we're walking home from school, having a quick text conversation with a friend that made me laugh, high fiving Ben after he got a grade he was proud of on a project he worked so hard on, connecting with myself when I went for a long walk in the woods. Joyful moments are just moments - a laugh, a hug, a joke at the perfect time, watching Sanditon for an entire morning, having friends over for dinner. The notebook sits right on top of my one line a day journal, both next to my bed, and when I get into bed every night, I immediately write in them. Even if I'm super tired, I have the energy to spend sixty seconds writing something. It's been such a lovely practice.

Number seven. A dependable makeup routine. I am someone who enjoys makeup, but I enjoy simple makeup that makes me feel like an alive version of myself. I don't need my makeup to be the quickest ever, but I'd like for it to work well and be as efficient as possible. I think I've nailed down my routine. It was already close, but I learned a couple of tips I've incorporated from someone I follow on Instagram. Her handle is @emily.m.holland, and she's a bridal hair and makeup artist who shares tutorials and tips on Instagram. Probably on TikTok too, but your girl isn't on TikTok because I know it will keep me from reading my books until the end of time because the algorithm will learn me and entertain me and I will die scrolling that app. Back to Emily. Watching her simple ideas helped put some finishing touches on my daily makeup routine, and I love putting my makeup on every day. I have products I love, I use the same things every day, and I'm so happy.

Now, I will give you a quick rundown of my products, but products work differently on different people. There is only one holy grail product I would recommend to anyone. The rest I think are great, but colors and formulas are personal based on your own skin tone and its texture. Also the way you apply product matters based on how much coverage you want, the shape of your bone structure, the shape of your eyes... makeup is really personal, so I am giving you the biggest disclaimer here. Just because I love these products doesn't mean they will work for you. This feels very important to clarify.

Okay, I do skincare and sunscreen before makeup always. Of course. The first step is the holy grail product, and it is Face Base by Bobbi Brown. This stuff is magical. It keeps your makeup in place all day, it smells great, it's moisturizing but not greasy. Jamie Golden recommended it to me, and apparently she recommended it to Bri McKoy too because the three of us had a moment about how amazing it is. And we all have very different skin. Bobbi Brown's Face Base is winner winner chicken dinner. Then I use Charlotte Tilbury's Flawless Filter Setting Powder. It's like a powdered foundation but just enough coverage to even my skin but not make me look made up. I love it. I add some color and dimension with a couple of swipes of Gucci bronzer. Yes, Gucci. Listen, I did not anticipate being a bougie person, but I have tried so many bronzers. Like over a dozen easily. The color is weird, it's too dark, I don't know. I've always just had

decent luck with bronzers. Then I tried the Gucci one and was like well here we are. I put Gucci on my face now. Thankfully it will last me an actual eternity. Then I use Tarte Amazonian Clay Blush. I have three colors, and it is my favorite blush and eyeshadow. I use it for both. I've raved about this product before. So good for me. I also use RMS Beauty Luminizer which is basically a highlighter that you can barely see. It's so subtle but makes me feel a little more alive. I've learned correct placement of things like highlighter and bronzer and even eye shadow from Emily Holland. She's a great teacher. Then I use the eyeliner from Thrive Causmetics, and I've used it for years. I have four colors maybe? Right now I'm working my way through a brown, but the navy blue is a winner too. I line my eyes underneath my lash line, a tip I learned for older eyes, and it works really well. Then I use a setting spray from Caliray called Surfproof Hydrating Setting Spray. It works so great, it has niacinamide in its which is so good for your skin. I really love it. And then I end with mascara and still use and love Wander Beauty's Mile High Club Mascara. It's not clumpy and doesn't look like mascara to me. It just makes my lashes look longer. And it never flakes. It actually might be a more holy grailish with Face Base too. A great mascara. Then for lips, it varies, but a lot of times I'll just put on a hydrated lip balm and call it good. Lipstick depends on a lot of things, but it's not necessary for my daily face. And my easy, dependable makeup routine to get that daily face saves my life every single morning.

Number eight. Keeping 2-6pm open every day. Well, except Tuesdays. My mom watches my kids on Tuesdays. I have three kids, two boys ages 14 and 12, both in middle school, and then an almost 8 year old daughter in second grade. The middle schoolers especially are always springing things on me. A band practice is happening after school. There's an interest meeting for a sport. So and so wants to work on a project. One of the other carpool moms has an emergency and I need to fill in. Annie wants to play with a friend after school at our house. Basically, I have learned to hold 2-6pm wide open. I make no plans. I have a dinner idea, but even there, I'm prepared to have us eat later if we have to. Plus all of our meals on weeknights are brainless crowdpleasers anyway, so I don't have to think a thing about them. I started keeping the afternoons open with no intended tasks to finish or errands to run because I was resenting my kids for having lives. I was getting huffy at Sam because his band teacher called an emergency rehearsal after school. It's not his fault. Also I want my kids to have friends and be interested in things and do what they can within reason. When I started to mentally and tangibly keep my afternoons open of all responsibilities and obligations, it saved my attitude and my life. I'm flexible, I'm not surprised when something pops up, and I'm genuinely happy to be able to respond when my kids need something. Am I privileged to do that because of the nature of my job? Absolutely. I'm not saying at all that everyone should or even can do this. For me, it's an adjustment I've made to how I think and plan, and it's made a huge difference I'm grateful for.

Number nine. Delegating things I'm not good at to people who are. I have spent the last decade learning to delegate. We've adjusted finances to leave space for hiring help. I've gotten more comfortable asking for help. I've hired an incredible Lazy Genius team that makes the business run so beautifully. As I was making my life and thinking about what's saving my life, it is absolutely delegating and either hiring or asking for help. We worked it out financially to hire a housecleaner that comes every other week, and that alone is one of the best investments I've ever made. We also have continued to develop a rhythm in our house where everyone does

their share of the housework and domestic duties. It's taken awhile, but no longer does the maintenance of our home primarily fall to me. I've also been so grateful for Letoya, Leah, and Leslie who are the three members of my team. They're all just so good at their jobs, and they do what they particularly do so well, freeing me up to do what I do well. I think for a lot of us, it's hard to let go of control of things we've always done. You might remember in last week's bonus episode where we got an update from the Office Ladies about their problems we Lazy Geniused, Jenna Fischer said that she did have to release the fact that she normally did Valentine's Day stuff with her kids but now her husband took care of Valentine's Day with their son because of the split email solution. It works so well for them to do that split and let the tasks fall where they're supposed to, but there's also a little bit of "ugh" when we let something go that we've always done. The way that other people do it seems as though it might not ever be as good as we do it. In our homes, that's often true, especially when we have our kids take over a chore or something. Their standards of excellence are likely not as high as yours is. But there is sometimes a grief when we let something go, when we hire help or ask for help, when we delegate, but I think it's almost always worth it. For the record, I can confidently say that grief has not been part of the delegation process with Team LG. All three of these women are wildly better at their jobs than I was at those same jobs. They have elevated the business and in turn my own work and therefore my actual life. That's always true and a broader statement, but when I was reflecting upon my life this quarter, this one was incredibly obvious.

And finally number ten. Speaking of delegating things to people who are better at it than you are, I delegate much of my emotional processing to Emily P. Freeman. I never do it as well on my own as I do it with her, and that's the truth. Emily is an author and a podcaster, but she's also been my dearest friend for over 15 years and has seen me cry big crocodile tears more than anyone else except for my husband. I can confidently proclaim that she is one of the best humans on planet earth. One thing that has been saving my life is watching how Emily lives hers. I know of no one else who walks through life, no matter what it holds, with the kind of compassion and intentionality that she does. Which is why I'm so glad she has written the book, *How to Walk Into a Room: The Art of Knowing When to Stay and When to Walk Away*. It releases tomorrow, March 12, and I cannot recommend it enough. I know how to Lazy Genius tangible, practical things, and occasionally I can come up with a homerun in the spiritual or philosophical department, but that is not my expertise. It's absolutely Emily's. If you are someone who is currently in a situation where you're just not sure where you fit, if you're wondering if it's time to make a change or if you should actually stick it out a little longer, you are probably flailing a little bit. There aren't resources for people like us, people who are aware enough to see a change we need to consider but not skilled enough to figure it out, at least not without turning into a robot. Emily is the anti-robot, and *How to Walk Into a Room* is a book written exactly for you in that space of wondering and waiting. It's a book of discernment, something that Emily is an expert in, and will make a marked difference in your situation. In the book, Emily asks excellent questions, teaches you simple practices during your time of discernment of whether you should stay or leave, and shares how these questions and practices have shown up in her own life during a difficult time of leaving. It's beautifully written and enormously helpful, especially for those of us who have no better option than to plow through our emotionally fraught seasons with meaningless checklists and adrenal fatigue. If you

need some deeply human practices to help you know whether to stay or go in any kind of room whether vocational, religious, familial, or anything else, I highly recommend *How to Walk Into a Room*. I'll bet it'll be in your own *What's Saving My Life* list in no time.

And that's what's saving my life right now!

Before we go, let's celebrate the Lazy Genius of the Week! This week, it's Oscar Trejo! We have a dude today! Oscar has a great tip that's in the spirit of some recent tips about extra hair brushes and scissors and other small changes that make our lives easier. Oscar writes, "Sharing something I did today to make it easier for me in the future. I sometimes forget to pack a water bottle for the kids. Today I took the water bottles we don't use as much and put them in a box in the trunk. Next time we get to school and realize we don't have one, we can easily grab a spare." Look at that. Simple as can be. You store extra water bottles where you need extra water bottles, and for Oscar it's the trunk! I love the simplicity of this, so thanks for sharing, Oscar, and congratulations on being the Lazy Genius of the Week!

Alright, that's it for today! If you'd like a quick list of these ten things any summaries for other episodes, too, I encourage you to sign up for our biweekly email called Latest Lazy Listens. It goes out every other Friday and has a quick summary of the most recent episodes, including links and extra tips and The Lazy Genius of the Week! It's small but mighty, and you can sign up at thelazygeniuscollective.com/listens. You can also check the show notes for this episode either in your podcast app or on our website. We'll have a link to Emily's new book, *How to Walk Into a Room*, which is out tomorrow along with everything else mentioned.

This episode is hosted by me, Kendra Adachi, and executive produced by Kendra Adachi, Jenna Fischer, and Angela Kinsey. The Lazy Genius Podcast is enthusiastically part of the Office Ladies Network. Special thanks to Leah Jarvis for weekly production.

Thanks, y'all, 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!