

#80 - The Lazy Genius Daily Act of Kindness

Hi there! 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 80 - The Lazy Genius Daily Act of Kindness.

Three weeks ago, we talked about rest. Two weeks ago, we talked about our desire to the purge the house and how we need some space, we need a reset. Last week, we talked about creating a holiday sabbath, one day a week with the only purpose being to rest. It's crazy how much encouragement we need in the area of slowing down and resting, of letting go of producing and striving so we can just be a person. While routines and sabbaths and intention are beautiful and can go a long way, I want to offer a simple encouragement today.

I want us to think about a daily act of kindness toward ourselves. I'm not saying that an act toward ourselves is more important than an act toward someone else. At all. I believe deeply in a life of being a servant and seeing others through eyes of compassion. We don't even have to be the fullest versions of ourselves in order to help others. I know we throw around that airplane metaphor of putting on our own oxygen mask first before putting on a kid's, and I get the parallel in our own lives. But, man, if I waited until I was fully rested and centered and feeling settled in my own soul before helping others, I'd never help another person. One doesn't necessarily have to go before the other; there's an ebb and flow in balancing taking care of ourselves and taking care of others.

So today I want to talk about a daily act of kindness toward ourselves. Halloween is in a little over a week which means Christmas is basically tomorrow. It's coming fast, and we're already preparing ourselves well with opening and closing ceremonies and holiday game plans and sabbaths. That's fantastic. But can we add an element that makes a big difference?

I was listening to one of my favorite songs recently. It's by Andrew Peterson and it's called Be Kind to Yourself. I listen to it when I'm having a panic attack and it helps calm me down. Truly. It's my magic song. It opens with these words: "You've got all that emotion that's heaving like an ocean, and you're drowning in a deep dark well. I can hear it in your voice that if you only had a choice, you'd rather be anyone else."

Have you ever felt that way? That's a stupid question, isn't it? Of course you have. We all have. The number of times I've said, "Man, I wish I wasn't like this." Or "I wish I could handle this like she does." Or "It would be so much easier to be a different person." We're really hard on ourselves internally. This is not news. And no amount of self-care or scheduling or routine or Sabbaths can penetrate to the deepest place without being kind to ourselves, without receiving the truth of who we truly are and realizing that we don't have to work or do or try to have it. It just is. You are valuable because you exist, and treating yourself with kindness rooted in that truth is vital for a life well lived.

Our brains are spinning and trying and not at all sitting down on the inside like we talked about in the rest episode. We do need regular acts of doing things that make us sit down on the

inside, but sometimes we don't treat ourselves with the kindness to see that act is a worthy one. Maybe you think that taking a Sabbath or practicing daily rest or doing what makes you feel like yourself isn't really a worthy act because yourself isn't all that great.

And that's why I want us all to start the practice of a daily act of kindness. There are ten weeks left in 2018. Exactly 70 days. I'm inviting you to do one tiny thing every day for the next 70 days that shows yourself deep kindness.

I've seen challenges around the Internet of finishing the year strong and meeting goals now rather than waiting until January and all the striviey things. I love intention, but I caution you to pay attention to the kind of intention you're setting when it comes to those kinds of challenges. Are you trying to become someone else? Are you viewing who you currently are as a deficient version of who you want to be? If that's the case, those challenges will not meet your needs. They will foster discontentment now or later but absolutely eventually.

This idea I'm offering is different. I want you to think of a daily act of kindness that has nothing to do with a goal, nothing to do with idealizing or optimizing or anything productive. It's not an act intended to move you from one point to another. It's simply an act of kindness, affirming that who you currently are matters deeply and always will. That you matter, not because you deserve something or because you have all this unmet potential or anything that communicates a deficit. You already have what you need in Jesus. Who you are was determined long ago, and you are loved. End of story. It's important for us to receive that truth daily, to treat ourselves with kindness and contentment with no outcome attached.

So what can that daily act of kindness look like? Whatever it is, I would encourage you to choose just one thing and do it every day. Not a different thing every day but a repeated moment of kindness. This is different from building up a morning or evening routine because those things are almost always rooted in producing or setting ourselves up well *to* produce. There's nothing wrong with that. I believe that's important and I do it daily, but it's also important to be relentlessly kind with no agenda and no purpose other than receiving the truth daily of who we are.

Maybe you step outside each morning first thing and take a few deep breaths and say something quietly to yourself. Maybe you say "I am enough because He made me enough."

There's a term - a breath prayer. Maybe you create a breath prayer, something that's spoken in one breath that shows yourself kindness. My favorite breath prayer is one I got from Emily P. Freeman who got it from someone else I can't remember right now that says "Gather me now to be with you as you are with me."

Maybe your daily act of kindness has nothing to do with any kind of prayer or mantra. Maybe it's drinking your coffee in silence next to an open window and allowing yourself to not plan or organize thoughts or anxiously wait for the next thing. You're just still with yourself without judgment. It might be to play your favorite song every night to close out the day or make yourself a favorite tea. It could be something that feels cheesy but also matters where you look at yourself in the mirror and say "I love you" to your reflection. I know that's on the woo woo end of the spectrum that you're used to getting around here, but man, we don't love ourselves well. We're pretty uptight and judgmental towards ourselves most of the time. And even our kindness is quickly qualified by what we can do next to be better. "You are valuable the way you are, and

who knows maybe in six months after you try and stick with this eating plan you'll feel even more valuable." There's not a lot of unconditional love in our relationship with ourselves.

I have to daily choose to let the love of Jesus toward me be the gauge for how to see myself. He loves me no matter what and doesn't shame me into being a different version of myself. I can treat myself with kindness and trust that any deficits in my own soul will be filled by Him.

And if you're not spiritual or into the idea of a higher power, you still deserve kindness from yourself. I know myself better than any other human on this earth and so do you, which is why I think we struggle to be kind to ourselves. We know everything. We know the faults and the baggage and the thought patterns that we would die if anyone knew existed. And that's why daily kindness is key. We will struggle to receive kindness from others if it hits the barrier of our own negative opinion of ourselves. You can certainly love others well if you don't love yourself well, and you probably currently do. One isn't contingent on the other. You can take care of your people without taking care of yourself. You can be kind to others and struggle to be kind to yourself. This isn't a linear practice. But kindness to yourself does matter because you're lovely as you are and are worthy to receive that in all its forms, even from yourself.

So I'd love for you to think about a daily act of kindness toward yourself and begin doing it every day. The holidays are an especially crazy time to judge ourselves against a better version - a more rested version, a version that gives better gifts and cooks better turkeys, a version that doesn't feel like screaming at everyone to go away during the most wonderful time of the year. There's no better version. There's just you where you are now. Be kind to that person today and tomorrow and every day.

I'm excited to talk more about this on Thursday. I'll be live on Instagram around 12:15pm EST, so follow me there @thelazygenius. That's it for today, friends. Until next time, be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't. And be kind to yourself. Bye for now.