

#89 - Reset the House Instead of Burning It Down

Hi there! Happy New Year's Eve, and thanks for tuning in 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 89 - Reset the House Instead of Burning It Down. You've got champagne to pour and kids to trick into thinking it's midnight when it's actually eight o'clock, so we'll keep this quick. And I'm recording this within 24 hours of you hearing, and I can promise you that we're tricking our kids with a fake midnight.

Okay, before we talk about house stuff, I want to give you a quick tap on the shoulder and remind you that you don't have to solve all of life's problems by tomorrow, by January 1st. Or even identify what all of life's problems are. Remember that the start of a new year is such a fun time. Yes, it's a gift and feels fresh and all that good stuff. But keep it fun and fresh and good. We color it with guilt and shoulds and self-improvement and all the things that make us sad, and I don't want that for any of us. So keep your hustle in check. It's okay to be motivated to set goals and clean up the Christmas decorations and bust through all the things, but it's also okay to just let the first day of the year come and go without fanfare beyond smiling at a new year. Chances are, you're not working today or tomorrow and you might get a chance to be with your people, so remember that it's okay to do that. Just be a person. And if you're feeling itchy about goals or wanting a new way to see fresh starts, next week's episode is for you. Last January, I shared an episode called The Lazy Genius Sets Goals, and there's also a post I wrote about how to set goals like a normal person. If you need some concrete goal talk on the literal first day of the year, check out both of those resources in the show notes. And next week, we're going to dive into how to make changes as a person without getting caught up in the vortex of checkboxes and failure. I'm really excited about that episode, so I hope you tune in next week. And if you're wanting some kind of reflection to start off the year, rather than thinking about what you can and should do in 2019, think about what you loved and maybe didn't love about 2018. Emily P. Freeman has a great episode about that on The Next Right Thing Podcast called Make the Most Important List. She encourages a practice of noticing what activities and choices have been life-giving and those that were life-draining. It really is such a beautiful practice this time of year and helps inform your decisions for next year. Slash tomorrow. Crazy. So check the shownotes if you want to listen to that, too.

So what does all of this scurrying and resting and looking forwards and back mean on the home front? Like, in our literal homes? After the holidays are over and we start taking down all the decorations, it's crazy how often we're struck with a desire for all new things, either because we hate our old things or because it's just too much work to figure out where all the old things should go. Starting from scratch is the pipe dream, but unless you get on one of those surprise home decorating shows where they chat you up in a Home Depot and then give you a new room in a day, starting from scratch isn't in the cards. So today, let's go through three simple steps to resetting your house after the holidays instead of burning it down.

Step One: Slow down your mind. We can feel a little tornado-ish with our stuff, throwing everything in boxes and yelling at kids to play in a different room because Mommy needs to get this place together. While I understand the speed with which you want to attack peace and calm

in your home, it's also maybe a nice idea to slow down a little, mostly your mind. When our thoughts start spinning, they catch everything. It's like our brains are a cyclone, and every thought gets swept up in the madness and we move too quickly inside and out. It starts out with this place is a mess and then thoughts start going about how your stuff is crap or maybe your stuff was great but now is crap because kids have ruined it. Then you get winded carrying a box to the garage and start thinking about how you really need to get in better shape so as you take down all the ornaments, you're mentally Googling workout plans and how to put together smoothie bags. Then you walk back in the house after stacking boxes in the garage, and somehow your kids have emptied out every basket and bucket of toys in the living room looking for a singular Hot Wheel car and now the place looks like a giant junk drawer and you start to erupt like an emotional volcano. Your spinning mind made your body move faster, made your emotions get caught up in it, and might have ended with an apology from you to your kids for losing your ish in front of them. Understandably but still.

The speed of our minds can cause problems, so as you enter into resetting your house, slow down your mind. One, it'll help slow down your desperate body, but more than that, slowing down helps us see better. It helps us feel more grateful, more generous in how we see what we own, and more okay when the whirlwind reset gets sidetracked by kids or dinner or just being plain tired. So I know it might feel a little annoying, but slow down your mind. Breathe, play pretty music, pay attention to when your thoughts start to spin, and most likely you'll notice because your body will follow. Your steps will get harder, your packing of ornaments will be more aggressive. Just pay attention to the speed of your mind and what thoughts are spinning around. That's step one.

Step two is remove everything that's Christmas, not winter, and put it away. Your first task isn't to reset your side tables and book shelves and get the house back in order. It's just to put away the Christmas stuff. Now, you can do this whenever you want. If you follow the Advent calendar, the twelve days of Christmas start on Christmas day, so you might be going well into this first week of January before you start winding down actual Christmas. Whenever it happens though, make the priority putting away holiday stuff. Leave out the winter stuff, and don't start creating mantle vignettes just yet. Clear the decks first, and feel free to clear them slowly if it helps. This might take an hour or two one afternoon, or depending on how elaborate your holiday decorations, it might spread out over a couple of days as life happens around you. Just remember that's easier to clear out everything you know you no longer need before you do anything with what's staying.

And step three: clear off your main surfaces, and rebuild them one by one. Your furniture is probably in the same general place once the Christmas tree is gone, so the overwhelm comes from decorating tables and shelves and from finding homes for all the new gifts you got. Or maybe your January eyes are starting see how much you have and don't need. If that's the case, I have a short ebook called *The Swap* that's available all January to help with your decluttering needs. I'll put a link in the show notes if you want to check it out. Either way, you're wanting a pretty home which includes decorated spaces and stuff that's put away. The key is to rebuild your spaces one by one. One coffee table at a time. One kids bookcase at a time. Because if you say to yourself, "I've got to get this house in order TODAY" and then - spoiler alert - won't even come close, you'll get supremely frustrated. Ask me how I know. This is why a slow mind is step one; it helps slow down your body when necessary. So think about it like tiny goals. Each surface or shelf is a tiny goal. You do them one at a time. Again, it could be a huge help to actually clear off all of your surfaces and live with them that way until their turn comes

up. The Nester calls this quieting the space. She recommends taking out everything from a room other than main furniture every now and then to let the space speak its mind and tell you what it wants to be. She wrote a whole book about decorating in the right order called *Cozy Minimalist Home* and it's amazing and I'll link to it in the show notes. But clearing off just your tables and surfaces of all decorative things can help you when it's time to reset. You make one pretty surface at a time. And the nice thing about leaving it blank for awhile is that you can live with it and see what it needs. Like, if there's a desk that's blank and you constantly go there looking for a pen, you know you need a little jar of pens on that desk. Your life and stuff will kind of tell you what it wants if you give it a chance to speak.

So clear off your main surfaces and rebuild them one by one. This way, when - not if - when you get distracted or stopped by kids or schedules or whatever, you won't be leaving an entire unfinished house. You have one small project, one small spot that you're working on, and it'll be easy to finish in a normal amount of time. So do the dresser in your living room. Then move to the table in your living room. Then the bookshelf in your living room. Go room by room and surface by surface. One step at a time, not an entire house reset at a time. And again, a slow mind will help you with this. Slow your expectations. You don't have to lower them. You don't have to give up on what matters to you. Set your expectations but slow their timeline. And the slower you go, the more likely you'll like what you end up with. When you just chuck stuff back on tables and shelves to get it over and done with, you'll probably be unhappy with how it looks and functions and will have to start over again anyway. Go slow. Clear off what you don't need so you can easily see what's left to use. And rebuild cleared surfaces one at a time. This might all happen in a day! Depending on your life and your stuff and your house, it could be a short process, but you can still apply a slow mindset to a short process.

So tomorrow starts a new year. You don't have to solve everything by tomorrow. You don't have to have a perfectly appointed house, a new pretty planner, clear goals, and a ton of plans about how this year is going to be. Those things are good and will probably come, but they don't all have to come tomorrow. Patience is a good thing. You're not falling behind, because you get to set the pace. And next week when we talk about goals, I'll have something for you - some questions you can ask yourself to look back and look forward in a thoughtful way. I'm excited to get together then. Remember that this week there's no Instagram live. We're all still getting back into the hang of going back to work and school, so we'll take a break this week. I'll be back live next week though, so be sure to follow me @thelazygenius. And if you're interested in getting some direction on decluttering to start the year, if you're looking for a clear path through your stuff, my ebook *The Swap* is available all month for purchase. I'll put a link in the show notes and you can check it out to see if it's a good fit.

It's been a gift spending 2018 with you, and I can't wait for what will happen in 2019. Thanks from the bottom of my heart for supporting *The Lazy Genius Podcast* this year. It means the world, and I'm so grateful for you. Happy New Year, friends, and I'll see you next week!