

# #45 The Lazy Genius Sets Goals

Hi, friends! 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! It's so good to be back with you after a week away, and I hope that you all had such a lovely lovely holiday. You guys. We've hit a fresh start unicorn. It's January 1st AND it's a Monday. Motivation can't get much higher than this. And yet we all still might be afraid of January 2nd and 12th and 30th and how horribly we'll fail at all the things we want to do before we even get out of this month, right? So today we're going to talk about how to set goals like a normal person. How can we move into this new year with intention without feeling like a robot who's destined to fail? I can't wait to show you how. In the playbook today, we're going to talk about goals - what they are, more importantly what they're not, and how they can be a part of our lives without running our souls into the ground. You ready? Let 2018 begin!

So what's a goal? The dictionary says it's the object of a person's ambition or effort. Another definition is an aim or desired result. Makes sense. And yet there is so much weight in that simple definition, right? It's the object of our ambition. Do you guys sometimes feel like ambition is an icky word? I do. So goals require ambition, and ambition is a strong desire to do something that requires hard work. I don't know about y'all, but I don't have a strong desire for much of anything except a nap. It takes a lot of mental energy to figure out what I want enough to really work for it. We're usually just so tired with life and hyper focused on the needs of people around us that our own goals and dreams seem unimportant. Ambition feels foreign and selfish.

Thinking of goals as an aim or a desired result makes a little more sense, but what are we aiming for? What result will actually make us feel fulfilled? I think we set ourselves up with too much of an ideal, one that realistically will be hard to accomplish without a lot of ambition and effort we just don't have. I have an aim of being a size 4. I'm 36 years old, I've had three kids, my knees are bad and prevent me from doing most exercises, I don't super like exercise, and I'm currently dancing between a size 8 and 10. Y'all, my desired ideal of being a size 4 is dumb. And why is that even important? How would my life be different if I was a size 4 compared to a size 8? I'd wear size 4 pants. That's about it. My friends wouldn't like me more. My husband wouldn't love me more. My value wouldn't go up as my size went down. I don't truly care about being athletic or running a marathon or looking like Gwyneth Paltrow. I mean, I wouldn't say no to looking like Gwyneth Paltrow if it just happened, but I'm not willing to work for it. And yet I carry around that size 4 ideal as something I should always be working on. It affects my daily life. Everything I eat, every exercise I don't do, every pair of pants that doesn't have a 4 on it reminds me that I'm failing. But y'all, failing at what? I've set myself up to fail at something that doesn't even matter! It's crazy, and I think we all do it in tons of areas.

If goals trip us up because they're laced with ambition we don't have and ideals that don't even make sense, what do we do? Are we just supposed to live each day without reaching for something, without progressing toward something? Of course not. Let's just be intentional about how we go about it.

I wrote a pretty detailed post called [How to Set Goals Like a Normal Person](https://thelazygeniuscollective.com/lazy/goals); I'll link to it in the show notes at [thelazygeniuscollective.com/lazy/goals](https://thelazygeniuscollective.com/lazy/goals). In that, I offer a new definition of a goal. Everyone sees goals as a destination, as something to check off. If you don't know when you're

done, it's not a goal. Well, that hasn't worked for me yet, so we might as well try a new way, right? What do we have to lose? My definition of a goal has transformed how I see my life and what I choose to do. Maybe the same will happen to you. Let's see a goal not as a destination but as a purposeful direction. We're on a path. Sometimes we run a long distance at once. Sometimes we stand still for awhile. No matter how fast you move or how much you even care about it on any given day, you're still on a path that matters, a path that's headed in a purposeful direction.

In that post, I go into detail about the entire process of figuring out your path and setting yourself up for success, but I'll quickly go over the first part here. How do you figure out your path? How do you decide your purposeful direction? You can do this at any point, but Monday January 1st seems like such a great day, right? There are three questions to ask yourself.

First, who do you want to be? Second, why does being this person matter to you? And third, how are you more like this person than you were a year ago? Let's look at these specifically.

Who do you want to be? So often we create goals around what we want to do, and that's a problem. *Doing* taps into that wonky ambition thing we're uncomfortable with and puts pressure on tasks rather than on intention. So don't ask yourself what you want to do. Ask yourself who you want to be. Be specific. Do you want to be a runner, an author, a photographer, a cook, a business owner, a mom who connects with her family around the table every night, a reader, a traveler... who do you want to be? Imagine that person, and pay attention to what happens in your soul when you do. You might already know the exact word, the exact person you want to be. I want to be a bakery owner. Truly. That's been my secret dream for years, and in the last couple of years, I've decided to bring it out of the shadows. If I want to be a bakery owner in five/ten years, what does that mean for my life today? It's much easier to be motivated to bake bread with dinner when I know each loaf makes me a better a baker and therefore a better bakery owner down the road. Baking bread isn't laden with guilt of "I should make more food from scratch!" or "my kids won't feel loved if I don't make their food!" All of that is garbage. But being on the path of Bakery Owner, moving in a purposeful direction towards that makes each decision matter more deeply and feel worth doing.

So who do you want to be? Second question, why does being this person matter to you? Again, my ideal is to be Gwyneth Paltrow, to spend hundreds of dollars on a garlic press and tell people how to make their hair look like it was made by fairies. But why? Why does being that person matter? It takes all of two seconds to know that it doesn't. Being Gwyneth Paltrow has no real significance in my life. Now being a bakery owner? That matters. I like to be a visionary and be my own boss. Baking makes me feel like myself more than just about anything else. Sharing food with people, making them feel welcomed and safe motivates me beyond words. I love this city. I was born here, and I've never lived anywhere else. The thought of contributing to its life with a bakery that meets the needs of my neighbors and friends thrills me. It is so easy to know why being a bakery owner matters to me, and knowing that significance makes every decision stemming from that worthy of my time and effort, even the hard stuff. So why does being a runner, a reader, a seamstress, a person overflowing with hospitality, why does being that person matter to you? You'll almost certainly recognize if that reason is enough to claim that as your path.

Question three: how are you more like this person than you were a year ago? This is a great heat check on the validity of this dream or goal. We tend to move toward what makes us come

alive, even if that thing isn't a tangible goal. If you want to be a runner, maybe you tried your first 5k last year. If you want to be a reader, maybe you said no to a few items of clothing in order to spend money on books you usually don't allow yourself to buy. What changes, no matter how small, have you subconsciously made to move you in the direction of the person you want to be? If there have been no moves, if you're exactly in the same place you were a year ago, it doesn't necessarily mean you should find another path, but it's definitely worth paying attention to. It could be that you're so scared of following your dreams and making them tangible goals that you've just completely ignored them. That's real. But probably more likely, you've been aiming for something in word only. If deeds haven't followed even the tiniest bit, you could definitely be dreaming someone else's dream.

So those three questions - who do you want to be, why does being this person matter, and how are you more like this person than you were a year ago - will help you find your path. They'll help you discover what direction makes you come alive enough to spend some of your very precious energy on staying there, on moving forward sometimes, on claiming a path, no matter how slowly you move, as your own.

Obviously the process doesn't stop there; there's more to setting goals like a normal person and watching them actually become practical and tangible choices in your daily life. Check out the show notes to finish reading that entire post - [thelazygeniuscollective.com/lazy/goals](http://thelazygeniuscollective.com/lazy/goals). And at the bottom of that post is a great little freebie to help you get started on tracking something that matters. I'm begging you; please don't track something that is someone else's ideal for you. You deserve more than that, my friend.

Okay, let's finish up with the lazy genius tip of the week which really is the lazy genius tip of the year. You guys? Say it with me. No more notebooks. No more journals. No more buying another planner hoping it's the magical one you've been looking for. I have purchased three legit planners in the last two months hoping for magic, and while one is doing to do the job fine, it's gonna have to because I've promised that 2018 is the year I don't buy a single bound volume of blank, lined, gridded, dotted, or dated paper. No more. Because guess what? Every time we buy a new one, we start over. We treat it the way we treat our goals. Well, this one failed, so let's try another one have super high expectations! And then the more notebooks and journals and planners we have, the more we forget all the things. I did write a massive post about bullet journaling which I'll link to the in the show notes, but I'm taking a break from bullet journaling this year. It's like how people wait until they have a lot of money to get a financial planner, but really you need one when you're pretty poor so that you're using your money the best possible way? That's how it is with my work in 2018. I have so much coming down the pike, you guys - I'm so stoked to tell you about it - but I have a minuscule amount of time to do it. I'm running this ship on about ten hours a week. Not easy. So this year, I need structure done for me. I need someone who's drawn the calendar lines, who's asking me pertinent questions to remind me of what I need to do so that I can just do the work rather than structuring it myself in my bullet journal. So tiny hiatus on bullet journaling in 2018, but regardless, no new planning/journaling/noting books of any kind. Let's use what we have. Let's remember that a journal isn't going to magically transform our lives. It doesn't exist, so stop all the false starts that come with every cute planner you buy at Target. I'm not one for new years resolutions, but this one I'm on board with. You with me?

You guys, thanks so much for listening. I'm so excited about this next year with you. There are such fun things coming, and I can't wait to start telling you about them! And do me a favor as we

start the year. Can you think about someone you know how might enjoy this podcast and tell them about it? It's such a gift to see more and more people living lazy genius lives and dropping the pressure of trying at the wrong things. let's invite more people into that this year! So take just a minute and maybe text a friend or family member your favorite episode and share the lazy genius love. That would such a gift to me and to lots of others, too! Okay, friends, I'll be back next week to talk more goal-setting specifics, and until then be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't. Bye, guys!