

## 316 - How to Not Bummer Your Summer

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 316 - how to not bummer your summer. All credit to Sarah A. McQuain, a Lazy Genius who follows me on Instagram and who, in an Instagram Live when I asked for title ideas for this episode, immediately dropped the mic with How to Not Bummer Your Summer, and then the live was over. Thank you, Sarah, for this amazing title. Also props to Megan McDonald, the author of the Judy Moody series who has a book called Judy Moody and the Not Bummer Summer. Nobody wants a bummer summer. Judy Moody doesn't, and neither do we. But because of our wonky expectations about this supposedly magical season, we bummer our own summers, maybe even more than we realize.

So in today's episode, let's figure out how to not bummer our summer.

If we were to boil it down, I think the main thing that will bummer your summer is a pattern of adverse reactions to unmet expectations. Let me say that again. A pattern of adverse reactions to unmet expectations. Because there will be unmet expectations. Without question. Yours, a partner's, your kids *for sure* if you have them. We all have unmet expectations, and there will be times where you don't deal with them super well. There will be times when your kids or spouse or coworker or whoever is relevant to the situation will not deal with them super well. That's not the issue. A singular adverse reaction to unmet expectations does not a bummer summer make. It's the pattern. It's our mindset around what is happening, how we handle it, and how we choose to let it impact future days. So if it's the pattern, let's upset the pattern.

I think the way to not bummer your summer is to consider three areas of unmet expectations and recognize that the consistent choices you make here - not singular, not just one reaction - but the consistent choices you make here are the key. Those three areas are attitudes, plans, and memories. Let's start with attitudes.

Everyone has different summer experiences obviously, but there are things that only happen in the summer. There are certain feelings from those experiences that only happen in the summer. So no matter what your summer will look like, your attitude will matter, and maybe more importantly, the attitude of other people will matter *to you*. If you have kids or a partner and you are dealing with the strange schedule of kids out of school or working from home with them around or a shifting in the division of household labor because of summer schedules, you will crave everyone to be amenable. When it comes to things people don't really want to do, you will want attitudes of flexibility, of compliance, of helpfulness. When it comes to things you have planned for fun and for a lovely experience, you will want attitudes of enthusiasm and gratitude. You want the reaction of others to be a certain thing, no matter what is happening. And when that reaction is not what you want or not what is easiest, you likely will get upset. There will be some bummer in your summer.

Another area where you'll have unmet expectations is in the plans you make. You might have already started spending time thinking about how you will make this summer happen. Your challenge might be filling days with tiny kids or working from home with big kids at home who need you to drive them places or managing how to live with less income because the entrepreneur you work for doesn't work as much in the summer and doesn't need as many hours from you. We all have different plans we're making about a wide range of things. And we can bring bumner into our summer with our reaction to the execution of those plans. And again, the consistent adverse reaction to those plans.

Now most of the bumner can be avoided or misdirected based on your reaction. Learning to pivot is better than learning to plan. However, if you have a bad plan, you're more likely to deal with a poor execution of that plan. So I have gathered together 15 episodes - 15! - that are really excellent guides to some aspect of your summer plans. I think everybody would find one episode in these that should get a re-listen to help you make a plan that has a smaller chance of not working. If I sound confident, it's because I am. These episodes get a lot of downloads even after a year or two of release for a reason, so I'm bringing them to mind for you now so you can listen to whatever you need.

The first category of episodes is for higher level, broadly strategic thinking. Two of them are super recent. Episode 313 was just three weeks ago, and it is 10 Questions for the Start of Summer. If you didn't answer some of those, I really encourage you to do it! The answers will help direct you in some of your planning. Another recent episode is episode 310 - How to Pivot Around Any Obstacle. Remembering the actual steps of how to do this - breathe, access softness, remember what matters, and the rest - will be an incredible tool for you in a season of pivoting. Holy moly, summer for us at least has so much pivoting. And a final broader episode you might want to consider in a season that is generally marked as quite fun is episode 306 - What We Need to Have More Fun. Maybe as you plan things, you can relax a little into what fun is for you, your kids, your friends, whoever, and have better tools to make those fun things happen.

The second category of episodes you might get a lot of help from involves working. Your jobs, your responsibilities, and how to balance that with the other parts of your life. It's the age-old question, right? Some episodes that might help as you plan your work this summer are episode 297 - 5 Steps for More Ease at Work. I really loved the reaction to this episode. It surprised me, simply because of the number of people who reached out, genuinely thankful for things they had never thought of before. That's my favorite, when there are lightbulb moments all over the place, and while the lightbulbs in this episode aren't megawatt, I think megawatt isn't our vibe anyway. We love flickers of doable, practical things to make life and work a little bit easier. Another work related episode is episode 257 - The Lazy Genius Guide to Work Life Balance. It is what it sounds like but legitimately helpful instead of pie-in-the-sky. And finally, I love any chance to bring out this episode from what feels like just a couple of months ago and in reality was exactly a year and a half ago. Wild. But that's episode 238 - How to Get Stuff Done When You Don't Feel Like It. There is a lot of that, and I think in certain summer situations, that feeling is even stronger! You're playing outside and the kids aren't fighting, and you for sure don't want to go

inside and make dinner. No way. Or it's a beautiful day, and your entire family is leaving to go play at the park or the splash pad or go to the museum and you have to stay home working. Or you stayed up late with friends around a summer bonfire or getting drinks and are having to still get up in the morning to go to work and just don't wanna. It's that "just don't wanna" energy that shows up a little more often in the summer I think. For anything where you just don't want to get your stuff done, the episode *How to Get Stuff Done When You Don't Feel Like It* is actually one of the best episodes we have.

### **We'll be right back...**

A third category of episodes to help with your planning is around food. I have three episodes here, too. The first is episode 279 - *How to Fix Dinner When You're Never Home*. Now this episode was not made or released in the summer because this is a challenge all year round. But if you are in that predicament where you're never really home but still have to eat, listen to this episode. Another that could help is episode 271 - *How to Fix Summer Dinners*. For a decent percentage of you, particularly those with kids, summer dinners are just a different animal, and they need a different approach. If that's you, try this episode. And finally, episode 215 - *Hospitality on the Fly*. To me, summer is the season the most ripe for this kind of thing, for asking friends who are at the park with you if they want to come over for dinner or you ask the neighbor to join you on the porch for lemonade or your kids bring friends home and you're quickly figuring out how to feed them all. And even just the emotional, relational barriers to get over, too. A lot of you are just not comfortable with on the fly hospitality. You barely feel comfortable inviting anyone over when you have all the time to prepare! Just randomly? When there might be laundry on the couch? That's nuts! This episode speaks to that, too.

A fourth category of episodes - I mean, you guys, there are so many helpful, relevant episodes to your summer planning! - is the category of daily obstacles. For example, maybe now is a good time to listen to episode 216 - *Navigating Siblings Who Fight*. I mean, who knows. I'm not in your house. Maybe you don't need this, maybe you do! No worries either way over here! Another that I highly recommend is episode 212 - *A Guide to Summer House Rules*. I mentioned House Rules in 10 Questions for the Start of Summer, and if you want a deeper dive into what House Rules could do for your own summer planning, there's an entire episode just for that. And finally, summer planning can sometimes feel like one big sweep. You plan the entire summer or think about Decide Onces and House Rules and rhythms and routines and meal plans and all of it from the last day of school to the first day of school. But, y'all, that's usually not very practical. The way you start out is likely not how you're going to end, and that's okay. It might be good to break it down into small chunks. But there's a decent chance for a lot of you, a weekly plan is actually too granular. If you have little kids at home, planning things day to day or week to week might feel too in the weeds and repetitive and it makes you pull your hair out. Try the bonus episode *How to Lazy Genius the Start of a New Month*. This isn't about planning every minute or marking every event or making every decision. No no no. It's simply about your intention based on the season you're in and doing some things now to help make the next few weeks a little easier. So try that one out if it feels like it would be helpful.

And finally the fifth category of helpful episodes for summer planning are episodes about doing stuff. Episode 266 is How to Lazy Genius a Summer at the Pool, Episode 248 is The Lazy Genius Guide to Easier Travel, and Episode 265 is How to Come Home from Vacation. Those all might be particularly relevant to you depending on what you have going on this summer.

Also if you're getting married or moving or throwing a shower of some kind, all three of which seem to happen in the summer a lot more than in other seasons, Episode 205 is How to Lazy Genius a Wedding, Episode 201 is The Lazy Genius Guide to Moving, and Episode 130 is How to Host Anything. So there you go.

So attitudes can be a thing, and plans, whether poor plans or poorly executed plans, can also be a thing. The third thing that can be a thing is in regards to memory making. Magic. Beloved traditions. Now hear me. There is nothing wrong with making memories. There is nothing wrong with wanting to make experiences magical for people, your kids especially. There is nothing wrong with hoping something will be so beautiful and fun that it will make a mark and become a tradition. I value all three of these things.

*And* this is the kind of thing that will bring so much bumme into your summer. If you let your desire for intangible memory creation become the engine, you will burn out so fast. You will get so mad. There will be so much bumme in your summer. You cannot manufacture memories or magic or traditions. You just can't. There are too many variables, namely people. Now can you create environments where something like that might happen, sure! Can you repeat something you did last summer that everyone loved and hope it sticks this year, too? Absolutely! The actions to create memories and magic and traditions aren't the problem; your attitude toward them is the problem.

Basically, when you present your family unit with an experience that you hope will bring them magic and sparkles and what have you, you need to hold the same attitudes you expect of your people: flexibility, enthusiasm, gratitude. You're not the ringleader of a show you're running and everyone else needs to fall in line. That's not how you make magic. You've got to let those expectations go.

Which brings us back to the first two areas: attitudes and plans. Remember, you will have bumme in your summer because of a pattern of adverse reactions to unmet expectations in those areas, in the areas of attitudes (yours and other people's), if and how your plans are made and executed, and how tightly you hold on to magic and memory making. So if we're trying to avoid that pattern, what can we do to disrupt it?

I was talking to a friend of mine a couple of weeks ago on Mother's Day, and I asked her what she was going to do that afternoon. She said, "Well, I'll probably make the kids go on a hike with me. They'll probably hate it, but I love it and that's what I want: to spend time with my kids doing something I like." And while that is so characteristic of this friend, it is not characteristic of me. I am so deeply impacted by the negative attitudes of my kids. Like to a marrow level. Whining and entitlement and discontentment breaks me into a million pieces and then the fire from my

belly forms those pieces together again into a weapon, and I am not a fun person to be around. Bad attitudes are really really hard for me. So my point in this comparison between me and my friend is that we're all different in how much we're affected by other people's attitudes, and that's okay. But I think it's good to notice if they really impact you in a negative way. You'll have to work harder, like I do, to not have a pattern of pissyness towards my kids and their whining even though they get to go have fun at the pool and see their friends and eat popsicles literally every day. I am making you read for 30 minutes and you're *whining?!?!? Do you know how many books I own and love and you will love them too?!?!?* That's what happens. The single display of a negative attitude from one of my kids sends me into a spiral if I don't stop and honestly implement the steps from the episode, How to Pivot Around Any Obstacle. I have to breathe and access softness so much. It's honestly so annoying sometimes. But that's how I interrupt my personal cycle of bringing bumme into my summer. The plans and magic don't really bother me. But I can blow attitudes out from today into eternity and just know that the whole season is going to suck because of how one kid is behaving literally right now. So if that's you, spend your time in this category to interrupt that pattern of adverse reactions.

### **We'll be right back...**

The planning part might be more your undoing and needs more of your attention. You might be someone who doesn't plan at all and therefore feel like you can't get a foothold in anything. You might be completely different in that you have planned your days in a very detailed way, and if one thing gets off track, so does the entire day and also so do you. So if that piece of it resonates the most, if you think your pattern of adverse reactions to unmet expectations is in the area of planning, either plans not made or plans not met, this is where you focus on breaking that. You remember that plans are intentions, not pass/fail. You remember that planning is simply choosing something for later, and if it doesn't happen, you didn't mess up. You remember that you can pivot. Again, everybody needs to go listen to How to Pivot Around Any Obstacle again. You remember that how you react to the lack of a successful plan is way better for your soul and your humanity and your relationships and even for your capacity to make future plans than a successful plan ever could be. Remember the purpose of a plan, and be consistently kind to yourself and to people involved in your plans when they keep getting in your way.

And finally, if you are putting a lot of pressure on this summer for whatever reason, I invite you to name that. It might be the first summer being married or your last summer with one of your kids or another ordinary, repeatable summer that you don't want to be, take a deep breath and remember what really matters. Don't force things to be a certain way.

My city has hosted the national folk festival the last couple of years, and last year at the end of the summer, we went and had the best time. We met some friends there on purpose but then ran into other friends there on accident, and we all just hung out and listened to music. It wasn't too hot, so everyone had one less thing to complain about. The music was fun, the kids were running around and playing with each other, we were right next to the food trucks that weirdly all had short lines. It was just a really great night. We had a blast. And I have already imagined going back this next year and trying to recreate that night. And y'all? That is not the way. That's

not the thing to do. All we did then was show up. Sometimes you show up, and things are magical. Sometimes you show up, and things are ordinary. And that's okay. You can't force magic, and when you try to, you get frustrated that it isn't happening or that the little that *is* happening isn't noticed by the people you're with. Just go. Just be. Walk through the door of whatever the simple experience is, and just be there. Remember one of our favorite statements: good is here right now. Just enjoy the good that's here right now, and don't try and force it into a future memory. Break that pattern of expecting that everything will be magical and then having an adverse reaction when it's not.

So the way to not bumme your summer is to remember that the way *to* bumme your summer is by having a pattern of adverse reactions to unmet expectations. Those expectations usually exist in one of three areas: attitudes, plans, and memory making. Relax as you learn to pivot in those disappointments. Expect that not every plan will work. Expect that your kids will complain. Expect that you will ask a kid about that thing your family did a couple of years ago that is so memorable to you, and they will have zero recollection. But also expect that sometimes attitudes will be great. Sometimes plans will work. Sometimes memories will be made. But live where you are. Be where you are. Enjoy this summer without poking and prodding it into something of your own creation. Don't bumme your own summer, y'all! Don't bumme your own summer! I hope this helps you to not.

Alright, before we go, let's celebrate the Lazy Genius of the Week! This week it's Kelly Grayson! Kelly sent me this message on Instagram which any of you can do with your idea if you'd like! Kelly writes "My family attends church on Sunday evening, which makes my whole family turn into ravenous beasts by the time we get home. Instead of stressing out over what to make, we have decided once that we now have Cereal Sundays, and on the last Sunday, we get Culvers. It's literally been the best way to end our weekends and even helps set the tone for the upcoming week when we aren't running around frazzled on our Sunday night!" Love this practical idea, Kelly. So many of you do things like this, use the Meal Matrix where a certain meal is on a certain day, but I always love bringing out examples of them to show how such a simple decision can make a huge difference, even beyond just dinner. Thanks for sharing, Kelly, and congratulations on being the Lazy Genius of the Week!

Alright, that's it for today! Thank you 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!