

#223 - The Lazy Genius Gets Out the Door

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 223 - the lazy genius gets out the door! I asked y'all on Instagram to share your challenges on leaving your house. What makes it hard to get out the door? I have never had more responses to a question box on Instagram in my actual life. It was amazing.

Before we jump into that, I want to tell you really quickly something you might already know, but if you're only a podcast listener and not on Instagram, you might not. And it's very exciting. I have written another book! It's called The Lazy Genius Kitchen, it releases on March 22 of 2022, and it is the prettiest, most helpful kitchen guidebook ever. Tomorrow, I'm officially posting the cover on Instagram and will share some fun details with the mailing list if you'd like to sign up for either of those, but mostly what I would love for you to do is go to thelazygeniuskitchen.com, and there you will find a simple page where you can enter your email address. Giving us your email address is to make sure you get all of the book news like fun bonuses for buying the book early (and there are a lot of great ones over a long period of time), a really fun opportunity to get a ton of behind-the-scenes content as well as get your name printed in the book WHAT, free chapters and resources, videos, all the things. There are so many helpful, entertaining components to the release of The Lazy Genius Kitchen, and I don't want you to miss out on any of them. I promise I will not spam you. This is not a sales pitch email funnel where you'll hear from me for the next nine months. I promise. I don't make anything that I don't think will be super helpful to you, and by giving us your email address, it just makes sure that the people who want the super helpful, incredibly fun book related things get those things. So go to thelazygeniuskitchen.com, enter your email, and you'll be in the know of all things Lazy Genius Kitchen.

Okay! Let's get out the door.

The good news from all of those comments on Instagram was that there are only a few real challenges that pretty much all of you share. That means that a lot of people are in the same boat as you, and we can figure out some solutions or at least have a little solidarity.

There are five main categories of challenges I saw in your comments and have experienced in my own life, and we will cover two of those today. The other three will be expanded over the next three weeks because they're that relevant. Also if I did all five today, this episode would be at least an hour. Not ideal. But to give you an idea of where we're going today and the rest of the month, here are the five most common categories: expectations, timing, stuff, uncontrollables, and shoes. There were so many responses about shoes.

So today we're going to talk specifically about expectations and timing when you need to get out the door. Next week, we're going to go into those uncontrollable things but not just when you're leaving the house. Next week will be all about how to pivot when things don't go according to plan. The week after that, we're literally doing an episode about shoes. That's how many

comments there were about shoes, but not just kids losing their shoes. We'll talk about storing them, rotating them, saving shoes for kids who haven't grown into them yet, when you get rid of shoes... everything shoe-related. And then finally, the first Monday in September, we'll tackle the stuff aspect of getting out the door but also gathering up your stuff for all kinds of scenarios. In that one, we're going to talk about the power of bags. So lots of practical things coming.

One thing I want to offer as we get started is to try and name what your specific biggest roadblock is for getting out the door. As with many of life's problems, we struggle with one particular aspect of a problem but feel like we're generally in the weeds over the whole thing. So if you can identify the one area that's the most challenging for you, you can apply a Lazy Genius principle or two to that particular area and see the entire problem of getting out the door a little more clearly. It might even get easier by just dealing with this one particular thing! Small things make a big difference.

Okay, let's tackle expectations and timing.

First: expectations. And we'll throw the word emotions in here, too, because often when expectations aren't met, emotions get a little amped up, for us and the people we live with.

These are a few of the expectations you carry: you wish that you didn't have to repeat yourself a million times to your people so they'll get ready. You understandably want or maybe even expect on a certain level that they will listen the first time. And when they don't? You get frustrated. That's real.

A lot of you were also frustrated by the husband you live with who doesn't help get everyone out the door, just himself. He gets his own stuff, but you're getting your own stuff and everything else for everyone else. If that's you, you have an expectation - a very reasonable one - that you are not the only one who carries, as someone called it, the rush anxiety. No one else has a sense of urgency but you, and you are frustrated that you're having to emotionally and literally carry the load of getting out the door for your entire family. Because you expect help. You expect your kids and husband if you have either of those to help you. You do not want to do it all on your own nor should you.

You also might expect that people can brush their own teeth, find their own shoes, put away their own breakfast dishes, or do the things they have to do every single day without you having to remind them or do it yourself. Someone wrote in the question box, "Why am I the only one who can find things?!" Perhaps that's an expectation your family has of you if you live with other people, that you will be the one to find the things. Many of you are the life managers of your family and likely do it pretty well. Someone even said that it's just easier to do everything herself because it's too hard and takes too long to explain all the things to the people who are trying to do it. So there is an expectation, perhaps both ways, that you will take care of it. Or that you have to take care of it.

So if those are some likely expectations, that people will listen the first time, that everyone will be helpful and take initiative, and that you are not the only one who can carry it all, when those expectations aren't met, emotions will spring up. You get frustrated and start yelling more. Maybe it starts out as that sing-songy yelling so you don't sound like a terrible person, but you're on the brink of letting everybody have it. Or you cross the brink and let everybody have it. We've all done it. Maybe even today. But I also know you don't want to yell. You don't want leaving the house to always end in hurt feelings and shouting matches. A lot of you mentioned how the pressure of leaving leads you to being louder, and when your kids feel that pressure, their fighting escalates. There are a lot of emotional consequences to navigate.

And while this particular piece doesn't have any real scientific proof, it really seems like the more stressed you get, the slower everyone else is. It's an inverse. It's got to be science, right? It's the weirdest correlation, but the faster you need people to move, the slower they go. Similarly, the slower you need time to move, the faster it goes. It's weird. And then you yell again. And then they fight more or get their feelings hurt or get distracted by all the stimulus and forget the very things you were yelling at them to remember. It's a very familiar cycle to many of us.

So how can we Lazy Genius this part? How can we Lazy Genius these expectations and the rising emotions that come from them? One way is to lower your expectations, especially depending on the season of life you're in. That's a Lazy Genius principle in case you're new here: live in the season. Maybe your season of life involves toddlers, and toddlers do not listen the first time. They just don't. They don't remember to put their shoes in the same place. They don't know that moving everything you're packing by the door to a different room is supremely unhelpful. They don't know what time is. Living with and getting out the door with toddlers, for example, is a specific season, and maybe it's good to start matching your expectations with the season.

The same could be true for teenagers. Many teenagers are zombies in the mornings. They are in their own worlds and aren't always hearing what you say the first time. Expecting them to listen the first time when they're half asleep anyway to go to a place like school where they might not really want to go is a high expectation. I'm not saying we can't have high expectations for people or situations, but consider the season you're in before you do. Otherwise, those expectations aren't met, you get upset at them, they feel like all they do is mess up, and you're disconnected from them. Which none of us want. So just consider lowering your expectations to match the season of life you're in.

Now let's quickly talk about husbands and expectations. I've said it before but I will come for your lazy, picky, unhelpful husbands. I will come hard. Now are we also sometimes lazy and picky and unhelpful? Of course. Humans are humans, and that's okay. The husbands I come for are the ones with expectations that are not congruent with a balanced, equal division of labor. If your husband is super picky about dinners you make but he doesn't help make any of those dinners or plan them or shop for them, he doesn't get to complain. If it matters enough to him to have the variety or specifics he's wanting, he can be part of the solution. That's not to say you

don't value what matters to him or just dismiss his needs or requests completely. That's not at all what I'm saying. A marriage or partnership is a partnership. Equal partners. If he's lowkey requiring certain things of you without participating equally in it or even acknowledging that it's hard for you to accommodate you and thanking you for that, I will come for him. That's just not okay.

So in this scenario of getting out the door and having a husband who doesn't center his morning around the family but instead around himself, let's talk quickly about how to address that. And the only reason I'm bringing this issue of husbands up specifically is because of how many of you wrote "my husband doesn't help." So this is why. Okay, so first, talk to him and remember what matters most. What matters most is that you both are connected to each other and remember that you're a team. Because none of us like to be criticized or told we're not supporting someone we love, you can always start by telling him where you do feel supported and where y'all do feel like a team. Something like "I love being partners with you. I love how we're a team in this area. It works so well because we work well together. I'd really like to figure out how we can have that same kind of teamwork in the mornings when everyone is trying to leave." And then just pause. Give him a chance to say something or ask a question or whatever. You don't have to monologue everything right from the start. It's a conversation. But say directly, "I would really feel supported if you would do this." Maybe it's that he bumps his shower 20 minutes earlier so that he can be in the kitchen helping direct the herd sooner. Be specific.

This happened with me and Kaz actually. I was carrying the brunt of the morning rhythm and was starting to resent him for not helping me. But I also had never asked. He would usually come into the kitchen at 7:30 or so which is right about when he would leave for work. I was harried and short because I had been the only one helping the kids, and I was emotionally escalating which was not creating a connective environment. So I asked Kaz if he would be in the kitchen by 7:15am to help me. And of course he said yes. Because he didn't know I needed the help. When you are a capable, competent adult who runs the show well and especially if you're a capable, competent adult who doesn't often ask for help and even lowkey criticizes other people when they try and help by saying how you usually do it, those people don't often think you need or even want their help. When you really really do. So tell your husband you do. Be specific.

And remember too that not every single morning has to look the same. There are certain mornings when I need to take a shower and wash my hair which is a whole situation, so on the nights before I need longer to get ready myself, I'll be specific and say, "Hey, babe, I need you to be in the kitchen by 7am tomorrow so I can wash my hair. Will that work for you?" And then we go about our business. So have a conversation and say what you need.

Okay, number two for today - timing. This is a big one. There are a few specific things that contributed to your struggles with timing. First was breakfast. Someone takes forever to eat, breakfast takes too long to make, people eat at different times, no one cleans up their dishes and you don't want to leave the house with a dirty kitchen. So breakfast stuff.

A lot of you mentioned procrastination. You just wait until the last minute to get ready or gather your stuff or remind someone to get their shoes. We'll get to the shoes in a minute.

A third very popular time challenge is the "one more quick thing" syndrome. I'm talking dozens and dozens, maybe hundreds of people saying that they're late because they try to do one more thing before leaving. Start a load of laundry, clean up the kitchen, maybe curl your hair even though you literally need to leave right now, change your clothes, pay a bill... one more quick thing. Which rarely works out well to be quick or just one more. They snowball and take longer than you think.

And finally there's just the idea of things taking longer than you think they will. You plan for five minutes, and it takes 15. We do that though. It's a brain thing. We underestimate time a lot. And if you've left your house before at 7:53am and gotten somewhere by 8am, even though that particular day you hit every single green light and got there in the most efficient way possible, you assume that every day you could leave at 7:53 and be fine when really the best time for you to leave is 7:45. It's a whole thing. We make decisions based on the most optimistic scenario and pay the price later.

Okay, so what are some specific principles we can apply to the challenge of timing? First, let's talk about breakfast. I have a couple of resources on breakfast that I'll put in the show notes if you're interested. But one specific principle to try here is Batch It. If you're a cooked breakfast person or family, do the tiniest bit of batching on the weekend before the week begins. That can be batch planning - guys, this week we're cereal and toast! It can be batch cooking where you make breakfast muffins or burritos or hardboiled eggs or whatever to have for that week. It can also be batch prep and cleanup where someone, not necessarily you, puts everyone's breakfast together one morning a week. Like your third grader gets Tuesday and pulls out all the plates, the toaster, the butter, whatever else, so that everyone can make their breakfast quickly and easily. You could make a list of breakfast items for that kid to pull out and check off or something. And then that same kid is in charge of batch cleaning up breakfast dishes. Just grab everything off the counter or table at once and put it in the sink or dishwasher. Put it in a zone so that it's visually cleared.

Another principle applied to breakfast, particularly slow breakfast eaters, is to go in the right order. We think that the order of getting ready is breakfast and then brush teeth, right? You eat and then you brush it away. But if you have a slow eater who isn't dressed and hasn't brushed his teeth and it's almost time to go, let's go in the right order. Does it really matter that brushing teeth comes after breakfast? Maybe not. And a lot of the crazy you feel is waiting for this one kid. So instead of that running the show, have that kid get dressed and brush his teeth before he eats breakfast. It likely doesn't really matter that he brushes his teeth first. Then if he's still eating when it's time to go, he can bring breakfast with him and everyone doesn't have to wait for him to get ready. Go in the right order.

Another aspect of timing is procrastination. First, be kind to yourself here. That's the first principle. Some people are just wired to procrastinate. There are ways to mitigate that a little,

but don't beat yourself up because you're someone who often runs late. You're okay. Practically, a great principle to apply here is to build the right routine. Remember that a Lazy Genius routine isn't so much about the steps but about where you're hoping those steps take you. If you're someone who often procrastinates, putting together a ten-step morning routine is actually working against you. Don't do that. The right routine for a procrastinator is to remind yourself of what matters, maybe in the form of your alarms. Maybe your morning alarm is a song that you love that gets you excited to get out of bed. You can buy ringtones in the Apple store for \$1.29 max, and I'm telling you it's the best money you'll ever spend. My sister, Hannah, mentioned this on our secret Patreon podcast as one of the best things to make a person happy. Buy a great ringtone. I bought a song from the Great British Bakeoff, and it's been the best dollar twenty nine of my whole life. So buy Beautiful Day by U2 or something that reminds you about what matters most and helps you get out of bed.

You can also set other alarms and name them. Maybe there's a "hey you need to be in the shower now this is important go" that goes off five minutes before you enter a five alarm procrastination zone. Use those signals that your phone has built in to remind you that you want to not be rushed. You want to start moving at a reasonable time so that you're not stressed out.

That's the exchange really. You're choosing to see procrastination as something that gets in the way of what matters - getting out the door without as much stress. It's probably worth it when you think about it that way. But if you procrastinate and lie in bed or get one more cup of coffee, ask yourself, "Is this worth being frantic for in twenty minutes?" The answer might be yes, but be honest about those expectations.

For those who try "one more quick thing" maybe you set a House Rule for yourself. Maybe you have a time on the clock that's your one more quick thing limit. If it gets past 7:30am, you're not allowed to do one more quick thing. Or prioritize the quick things that make a difference and Decide Once to only do that quick thing if you have time. Maybe it's cleaning up breakfast and having a clean slate for when you get home. That quick thing is likely worth finding space for. The others maybe not. So decide once what your one quick thing is and/or create a house rule that helps you see when you have time and when you don't. And like the procrastination piece, is that one more quick thing worth the frenzy of being late? ONLY you can answer that, but be sure to ask the question so you'll actually know.

And finally, the idea of things taking longer than you plan, I want you to collect some data. Write down on a little piece of paper or a dry erase board the time you have in your head to leave by. Or say it into a voice app. But brain dump your reverse engineered plan. "I think we need to leave by 7:45am. I'm going to tell the kids to get ready at 7:15am. I'm going to...." you get the idea. Say what you're going to do, and then try and do it. Then write down or say at the end of all that what time you actually left and how stressed out everyone was. Leaving the house is inherently a little bit stressful, even if you're doing everything the way you want to. It's a high energy situation, so there will be some heightening anyway. But was the stress manageable? Did you yell? Did kids fight? Name how much time things actually took and how stressful it was doing the thing in that timeframe. Look at that, and say "okay, five minutes is never enough time

to give a last call yell to the family. We need 15.” Or whatever it is. But pay attention. Don’t assume anything about time. You’re a smart person. If you think, this is going to take us three minutes, you set a stopwatch on your phone, and it took seven, now you know it takes seven. And then plan for ten. We just make assumptions and then keep living with those assumptions even though they don’t work because we don’t have information to put in its place. If you struggle with reverse engineering your time, get some data.

So those are the two big categories that keep us from getting out the door in a way that works for us: expectations and timing. The next three weeks will adjacently cover the more specific topics of your stuff and shoes and frankly kids having to poop right as you want to leave. That came up a lot in that Instagram question box. There are those uncontrollable things that turn your plan on its head, and we need strategies for those too. But for today, I hope this helped you think through those broader challenges.

Before we go, let’s celebrate the Lazy Genius of the Week! On Instagram, she’s @anotherdaywithmrsk and her name is Maribeth. Maribeth shared how she’s using the Magic Question - what can I do now to make life easier later - to make dinner easier by setting the table when she unloads the dishwasher in the morning. I love this because it could be you don’t use your table during the day because you’re working or you don’t have kids or they’re just not around. So you touch the dishes in the morning and immediately put them where you’ll need them next, aka the table for dinnertime. That’s such a great way to use the Magic Question, so thanks for sharing Maribeth!

Okay that’s it for today! Don’t forget to head thelazygeniuskitchen.com to get all the kitchen content and news, and thank you for being such beautiful supporters of this space. One of the ways you do that is by listening to this podcast, so thank you so much for doing that, too. 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!