

#180 - A Pandemic-Friendly Halloween

Hi, friends! 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 180 - a pandemic-friendly halloween. How do we get one of those?

We're less than two weeks out from Halloween, and of course my kids are already asking what we're going to do. It's uncertain times, y'all, and it's tough to know how to do this Halloween thing. So today in a very likely pretty short episode, let's do a quick check on what matters and some ideas for people staying in on Halloween and people going out.

First, what matters? That's up to you, but when you really think about Halloween, especially if you have kids although I'm truly psyched if you don't have kids and are listening because you just love Halloween this much, if you have kids, the things that likely the most are these four things: candy, costumes, connection, and adventure. The candy is obvious. Getting a lot of it is what we love about Halloween. Costumes. Again, obvious. We all love picking something special to dress up in.

Side note: my favorite costume I ever wore was a few years ago as a grown lady when I dressed up as the Mayor of Munchkin City from The Wizard of Oz. I made a hat and bought the outfit at Goodwill. I hosted a Wizard of Oz party that year which was part of the reason for choosing that particular character, but I wore it to a fall festival and to trick-or-treating outside of the party and will never love another costume better. I had a pillow in my shirt to mimic his enormous belly, and Kaz took a picture of me literally asleep with my head drooped forward on the pillow. Good times. Okay, story over.

So candy and costumes are kind of no-brainers, and we'll talk about some specifics for those in a second. But the last two things that matter are likely connection and adventure. There's connection in seeing neighbors, in trick-or-treating with friends or family, in being part of something collective. Even kids feel that. It's just really special to be out with everyone else connecting in various ways. And adventure. This can include being scared which some people love about Halloween; I personally do not but that's okay. But the going out, the walking the streets, turning corners and wondering what you'll find, seeing friends in costumes and wondering if it's really them. There's a huge element of discovery in that adventure. We're anticipating what we'll get in our candy bucket and what costumes we'll see and what decorations will scare us and who we'll run into on the street or at that festival. There's a lot of adventuring in Halloween.

If you can think of other things that matter, please do. Make your own list as you think about having a pandemic-friendly Halloween.

Okay, so now that we've named the bigger picture of what matters, let's go through those four categories under two bigger umbrellas: staying in or going out, and I'll share some ideas on how to think about Halloween so it's still fun but safe and not stressful.

So first, candy. Let's talk about candy from a staying-in perspective, so maybe if you don't have kids or your family is just staying home. Passing out candy could get dicey, so a couple of thoughts here. One, you wear a mask and gloves to make sure other people and parents of trick-or-treaters feel comfortable. It puts everyone at ease. I'm a big mask person regardless, but all the states are different and people are different. But this is an opportunity to serve your neighbors by masking and gloving up so there aren't any question marks.

Another way you could give out candy is by making a path of candy along your front walk or driveway or steps. You can sit outside far from anyone who comes but tell trick-or-treaters when they come to take a piece or two. It's spread out, yes it's on the ground but it's wrapped and fine, and it adds a little bit of that adventure because it's like a candy path. You could even draw a path with sidewalk chalk so it doesn't look like you just threw candy on the ground for people.

Another idea in the same vein is to hang little bags of candy from your tree outside or put it in little punch cups on a table in your front yard. I like the tree idea better than the table just because that's really fun, but not everyone has trees that you can hang candy from. Or for that matter a yard where you can set up a table. Or a table! In that case, you could set up little bags or cups or something in the trunk of your car and pull it up to the road and wave at kids and neighbors from a safe distance.

A final way to give out candy in a pandemic-friendly way is to have bigger candy. Go full size candy bars or little goodie bags so that little hands aren't all up in your candy bucket or whatever. Plus it's easy to hand something large to another person without touching hands. That one is pretty specific but important to mention if that feels like a good idea.

What about candy if you're going out? Well, if you're going out just trick-or-treating, you're at the mercy of your neighbors and how they give out candy. However, let's move to costumes real quick to touch on this a bit.

For both staying in and going out, if you're going to do a costume, you could totally consider choosing a costume that already has a mask and gloves built in so that it doesn't feel as clinical. Clinical isn't bad, but costumes are way more fun than just wearing a mask and gloves for pandemic reasons. Think about how you and your family can merge the two. But yeah costume however you want. That's not threatened by pandemic living.

Okay, connection and adventure. Those can sometimes be connected, so I'm going to talk about both together. This is where the idea meat lives. Oh my goodness please don't ever let me say the phrase idea meat again.

If you start with connection, with the people, you can give yourself some helpful limits and options. Who do you want to spend Halloween with? Just your nuclear family? The neighbors from the comfort of your front porch? Church friends? School friends? Extended family? This could be a really easy answer or super complicated. For my family, it's the latter. I mean, it's not

dramatic, but we have a lot of connections we could make. We have two sets of grandparents, neighbors on our street that we love, some friends who live close enough to be neighbors but too far to walk there and do anything else, family and family friends who live in other neighborhoods but who we do a lot of life with, and we basically have two hours to do all the things because of tiny children and their bedtimes. So I get that it can feel a little overwhelming when you think about the connection part. But if you're the same or even if you're not, start from a place of connection. What could connection look like for these different groups of people? Is that the grandparents want to see the costumes or that the neighbors really want to give out candy to your kids because your kids are the only kids on the street? Even thinking about what connection looks like categorically like that. What are you connecting over? Costumes, candy, walking together, exchanging pictures, trading candy, comparing candy later, watching a scary movie... try and be specific. You'll likely land on some great ideas when you get specific. It's the big broad "what are we going to do for Halloween?" where we get stuck and overwhelmed.

Also in this whole connection conversation, don't forget to ask others for help and ideas. This is such a great chance to come together with the people in your life to creatively solve this particular problem.

Okay, as you think about those ways to connect, think too about the adventure. Again, Halloween is so much about surprise. How can you and your people experience adventure together or how can you provide a little adventure and surprise to people who might come to your house?

You could do a costume parade before or after prime trick-or-treating hours to connect with friends and have some fun that way. You could even do it on bikes or scooters, not just walking. You could host a little Halloween party at your house where different parts of the yard have games you play to win candy or you just have adults positioned around the yard giving out candy. You can have an ice cream sundae party where everyone puts the candy they collected on top of ice cream. If you're not going anywhere but you have kids, you could set up a scavenger hunt with candy throughout the house. Carve pumpkins. Hide glowsticks in the yard and hunt for them. Have everybody wear glowstick bracelets and turn off all the lights and play some kind of tag or something in the dark. Do a drive-in movie and watch something scary.

This is the time for us to embrace things being different but also name the bigger picture ideas of what we love about Halloween. Name what matters. Candy? Costumes? Connection? Adventure? And then be a genius about that thing. Also name what doesn't matter so much and let yourself be lazy about this year. There's no best pandemic-friendly Halloween idea because we all care about different things, so simply name what matters most to you and then ask your people how you can embrace those things together.

I hope this episode got just a few juices flowing. We'll talk about this more on Instagram this week and crowdsource some ideas and perspectives to make this 2020 Halloween work for everybody that wants it to work.

Okay, that's it for today! Thank you so much 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!