

## #150 - A Pep Talk for Being Stuck

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 150. It feels appropriate to have a number like 150 land on an episode and a world like today, but here we are. Today is a pep talk for being stuck.

For those of you listening to this in the faraway future, you dug this out of the ground and are studying ancient civilizations, we are on the front end of a worldwide pandemic. At least it's the front end of where I am in the US. I got an email from a longtime Lazy Genius follower named Natalie who lives in Italy where things are more progressed than they are here, but we're in a time where things change so quickly just from one day to the next. I'm recording this on the Thursday before the Monday it releases, and it's crazy to think how many things could change in the US and the world in four days. So these are weird, scary, surreal times. But honestly, I think this is a pep talk that's valuable in situations outside of this one, but I am grateful for how this global crisis has already affected how we see. So today I want to give you five things to remember when you're stuck at home. Or maybe when you're just stuck.

First, you don't have to make every day amazing. We feel this pressure during the summer, during holidays, even during times we broke a bone and are stuck on the couch. Or when we're self-isolating and social distancing during a global pandemic. We feel this weird pressure to make everything count, to make every day amazing. There's an activity or something to check off or some memory being made. It's a shame that this world of optimization also trickles into times in our lives when optimizing is kind of the least important thing. As a Lazy Genius, we're lazy about things that don't matter. Right now, it's likely that optimization, that making everything count really does not matter. The chances are good that we're all going to be in this type of lifestyle for awhile. We have time. And if you try and make every day amazing, you will lose your mind so quickly. That could have already happened actually. But start again. A new day does have new possibilities, but those possibilities don't have to be color-coded or within some kind of theme. If that helps you and gives you life, do it. But if it doesn't, if you're just trying to organize and categorize these days because you think you're supposed to or because you feel the pressure to make every day amazing, I invite you to stop. You don't have to make every day amazing. It's fine for days to be unamazing and ordinary. And in fact, ordinary days are their own kind of amazing. So take the pressure off.

Second thing, you don't have to be amazing every day. In this current situation, this is uncharted territory. Most of us have never lived something like this, and we're likely to keep living it longer than two weeks. It could be months I don't know. And if you start expecting yourself to handle it well every day, to be the most patient mom ever every day, to understand your feelings every day, you'll likely hit a dark, frustrated place pretty quickly. You don't have to be amazing every day. You don't have to have all the answers. You don't have to make all the plans. You don't have to get through a day without crying for it to feel like you're doing okay. This is weird. This is hard. This is scary even. I want to invite you to be yourself every day. Say what you need, offer what you can, and remember that you're allowed to be fully human and conflicted and confused

and also joyful and hopeful. We forget that we're allowed to contain multitudes. You being you, being honest about where you are, being gracious with who you are is amazing and important. Do that. Don't try and win the award for best Quarantine Mom. Because your rubric for that is likely kind of janky anyway. You think it means having stuff ready to go and being peppy and anticipating every single need around you. That's hard. That sounds really hard. I just want you to know that you can have ordinary days too. You can be an ordinary mom or wife, and that can still be amazing because you are amazing in exactly who you are.

Third thing, look for the helpers. We all love this word from Mister Rogers that in hard, confusing times where we might feel scared and confused, we can look for the helpers. It's a lens that makes a difference. You can look for the helpers when you watch the news, when you venture out to the store to get food, when you sit on your front steps and see neighbors on their front steps, when you open Instagram, when you look around your own home... look for the helpers. Look for ways your people are there for each other and helping each other and affirm those things. We all need a kind word right now, so be generous with yours and affirm the helpers in whatever ways you can.

Fourth, scatter joy. This is a phrase from Ralph Waldo Emerson. I actually have it inscribed on a mug that I drink from most mornings. I love the idea that joy can be scattered, that it can be recklessly thrown out into the room, into the world, and it makes a huge difference for the scatterer and the scattered. I actually just read an email from Seth Godin where he said, "the ocean is made of drops." And I think that concept of drops, which I think of when I hear the word scatter, it's many little things, that image is incredibly powerful during times when we're stuck. Big sweeping moves and plans and gestures feel like the win. Because we can see it maybe? It's somehow more tangible and more meaningful because things make a big impact, but really and especially during times when we're stuck, whether it's emotionally or literally stuck in our homes, the drops, the scatters, the small step... those are what make the biggest difference. So scatter joy in your home. Be generous with things that make you and your people come alive. If you're looking for a good read, I mentioned this book in a recent Latest Lazy Letter, but the book *Joyful* by Ingrid Fetell Lee is beautiful and so amazing. She basically breaks down what joy is into ten different factors. Turns out that bubbles, which we use often these days, are made up of several joyful factors - round shapes, something about airy and light, another concept is about transparency and etherealness kind of. I don't remember the exact wording, but I will say that after reading *Joyful*, I see the physical representations of joy more, and this might be a really solid time to start not only learning about joy and how to actually create it in your space but to actively scatter it wherever you are.

And finally fifth, do what you'll wish you would have done. My friend and our favorite home guru The Nester said this on her Instagram and in her newsletter which I highly recommend. She doesn't send out many emails, but when she does they're so solid. But she said the following: "One question I've asked myself about this unique time in history is, when I look back on this time, what will I wish I would have done? And then I try to do that thing." What a simple, beautiful approach to our time during this strange, kind of scary season of being stuck. My husband keeps saying that we're living history right now. This is a massive thing we're going

through, and I think the truth is that we've barely begun. I have a book coming out in less than five months, and I have no idea if I'll be able to travel to share about it, if we can have a party together because we might not be able to gather in large groups yet. It's so bizarre to think that the world can so quickly change in such drastic ways. This is a time we'll remember. It could very well be a mark in the timeline of before coronavirus and after coronavirus. So rather than spinning our wheels about what things could look like and falling into the fear, I love this approach instead. Do what you'll wish you would have done. I will wish I had documentation of this time, so we pulled out a notebook and are going to write in it as a family. As of this day, this Thursday before the Monday you might be listening, all that's been written is Adachi Family Coronavirus Adventure. And nothing else. Because it feels ordinary to write down we did school together and then we this and then we that and it feels the same as every day. But I will want those ordinary, repetitive words down the road, so I'm going to start writing. I'm going to do what I'll wish I would have done. I'm going to put away that drive to optimize which in regular life tends to keep me on my phone, aware of what's happening everywhere but my home, tempts me to take shortcuts in things so that I can get more done. But this time feels like the best permission to slow down and do what we'll wish we would've done. Bake bread, lay in the grass and look at the clouds for longer than we have before, read together as a family, go on walks, light more candles, take our time. That's the thing that's hit me the most in these first few days of being home with my family. There's no reason to rush. We have so much time in front of us, to the point where it can be overwhelming. How are we going to manage this? How are we going to make it? This is so hard! And it is hard. It is. But one of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves and our people is to slow down and do what we wish we would've done. We can take advantage of this slow time. We can scatter joy in the midst of it. I see artists and singers and all kinds of people sharing the joy with the world from their couch, you know, and it's beautiful. You don't have to do an Instagram concert from your living room like John Legend to scatter joy and notice the gift of what this slowing is doing for us. I'm not trying to silver lining this situation. I don't want any of these words to feel like I'm downplaying the devastation that this virus is causing. Ignoring the reality isn't what we're after. We can engage in the reality and choose to act within it with joy and slowing. I feel like when we look back at this time, those things will matter. In fact, I'm already feeling changes in my body and my soul that I want to keep with me even after this crisis has settled.

We can be the best of humanity even in our own kitchens by releasing the pressure to make every day amazing, by letting ourselves be ourselves instead of also being amazing, by looking for the helpers, looking for the people who scatter joy and joining in, and be doing what we'll wish we would've done when we look back on this time. One day at a time. As Emily P. Freeman says better than anybody else, do the next right thing. We all get to practice this together, and it's a beautiful invitation. It's a scary time but a beautiful invitation. Be well, my friends. Thanks for listening. 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.