

386 - 10 Reasons Why Compassionate Time Management Changes Everything

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 386 - 10 Reasons Why Compassionate Time Management Changes Everything.

I have dubbed myself an expert in compassionate time management, and even though slightly adjacent to giving yourself a nickname, I'm still glad I did it. Compassionate time management is needed, and I believe that I am uniquely qualified to teach, share, and encourage it. I'm a recovering perfectionist, I'm good at systems, I'm a student of personal growth, I'm a therapy patient, and I'm a teacher. All of those things together have made me see the world through this very specific lens of compassion, and tomorrow is the day that the book I wrote to teach compassionate time management releases into the world.

The PLAN: Manage Your Time Like a Lazy Genius is probably on trucks right now heading to your homes and bookstores. It's trauma-informed. It's well researched. It's full of both permission and practical frameworks. It is a book steeped in compassion, and when it comes to the idea of time management, we need as much compassion as we can get.

That's why today, I want to share ten reasons why compassionate time management is a game changer for you. The concepts in *The PLAN*, in this podcast, in all my work are game changers, and here are ten specific reasons why.

Let's jump in.

Reason number one: compassionate time management honors your life today.

In most productivity systems, today is one cog in a giant wheel of forever. Today is a puzzle piece to this picture you're trying to build. When we see our days that way, we leave little room for adjustments, for naming what we need on this particular day, and for being kind to ourselves and our people when things don't go according to plan.

If instead we honor life today as it is on an individual basis, we hold its performance loosely. We don't see it as a performance at all. Today does not have to fit with yesterday and tomorrow in order to count. Today can be what today is. When you honor today, you honor your energy, your body, your circumstances, your family, your reactions to unexpected events that throw you off center. When you honor today, you feel less desperate to finish everything on your list or check off all your habit boxes or make sure that you're exhibiting the sort of discipline that leads to the invisible future you think you're supposed to have. When you honor today, you also honor yourself as it is today.

Reason number two: compassionate time management empowers you to make hard things a little easier.

For so long, we've been taught that eventually we'll figure out our lives. Eventually, we'll solve all of our problems. Eventually, we'll have things figured out enough that our lives are one giant machine, and once we press the big red start button, it all will work in harmony until we reach that invisible future we manufactured last January.

I don't think that it's realistic to expect our lives and ourselves to make hard things go away. You can't manage your way out of obstacles, surprises, sickness, foul moods, flat tires, changing leadership, chronic conditions, and kids that need to poop right as you're walking out the door. It doesn't matter how well you plan your day, prepare for every scenario, or stick to your plan. Life happens.

Compassionate time management empowers you to make hard things a little easier rather than expect you to make them go away. That freedom to make something just a little easier lessens the friction of your life. It makes your decisions, your adjustments, your obstacles have more fluidity and less influence on the machine. Skip the machine. Let compassionate time management empower you to not only make hard things a little easier but to embrace the fact that hard things are normal and you're doing great.

Reason number three: compassionate time management encourages productivity but not at the expense of who you are.

How often have we made a list of things to do and not had what's required to finish, but we push through anyway? We sacrifice our sleep, our mental health, our relationships, all in the name of productivity. My guess is that if you've been listening to this podcast for awhile or have read *The Lazy Genius Way*, some of that compulsion has started to lessen. But still. We have been taught that getting it done is the only way, and if you don't do what you said you'd do, you're breaking a promise to yourself. It's too much pressure.

Who you are matters. Who you are is the life force of your day. Who you are and how you treat yourself teaches the people around you to value who they are and how they should treat themselves. Staying grounded is more important than staying on task, and I will go down fighting that that is true.

Tasks will never go away, but never for a second believe that they are more important than the essence and preservation of who you are.

Reason number four: compassionate time management releases you from mastering anything.

What a relief this one is. Everything is about mastering your time, your body, your actual life. I don't want to master. I want to tend. Compassionate time management gives you the tools to name what matters to you in the season that you're in, to honor who you are today, and to tend

to the things that bring life and goodness. Mastery is not required. Mastery can certainly happen! Everyone can be a genius about whatever matters to them, and we are grateful for masters. But once you release your grip on mastering your entire life, on being able to manufacture and manipulate a life that you think should matter, you will feel much more at ease with who and where you are. You don't have to master anything if you don't want to. Simply be. Tend. Live.

Reason number five: compassionate time management frees you from the pressure of big dreams.

Hear me. You can have big dreams. Big dreams on their own are beautiful, but do not believe the hype that in order for your life to have value, you have to pursue big dreams. Whether you have big dreams or not, whether they come to fruition or not, your life is not more or less valuable. Dreams and their fulfillment are neutral when it comes to your personal identity.

If you work remotely doing data entry for a medical practice, going back and forth between that and taking care of your two young kids, all while managing a home, trying to be available in your relationships, being involved in whatever things you're involved in, and someone on Instagram tells you that if your life feels ordinary that you're not dreaming big enough? That is maybe one of the worst things ever. Your life as it is is extraordinary because it is life.

I was recently reminded of the poem Invitation by Mary Oliver, and it speaks to this so well.

Oh do you have time
to linger
for just a little while
out of your busy

and very important day

for the goldfinches

that have gathered

in a field of thistles

for a musical battle,

to see who can sing

the highest note,

or the lowest,

or the most expressive of mirth,

or the most tender?

Their strong, blunt beaks

drink the air

as they strive

melodiously

not for your sake

and not for mine

and not for the sake of winning

but for sheer delight and gratitude –

believe us, they say,

it is a serious thing

just to be alive

on this fresh morning

in the broken world.

I beg of you,

do not walk by
without pausing
to attend to this
rather ridiculous performance.

It could mean something.

It could mean everything.

It could be what Rilke meant, when he wrote:

You must change your life.

It is a serious thing to just be alive on this fresh morning in the broken world. Big dreams are not a requirement.

Reason number six: compassionate time management prioritizes what matters to you in this season.

So many time management systems and practices have us thinking that what works for us now will work forever, that if something about our approach stops working, it's our fault. We weren't disciplined, intentional, or consistent enough. The approach seems to work for everyone else, so if it doesn't work for us, we're the problem. That is so wrong I can't take it.

The problem with a set it and forget it approach, other than that it's simply not attainable or even necessary for most people, especially women, is that it does not take into account your season of life and what matters to you specifically during that season. We all overlap in our seasons. Many of you listening have gone through seasons of changing jobs, changing homes, changing cities, having a kid, having another kid, leaving church, joining a sports team, being sick, caring for someone else who is. Everyone listening has gone through at least one of those seasons. But guess what we can't forget? If we lined up even three of you who were in the exact same season right now, what matters most to each of you would be different. And because what matters most is different, how you live in that season will also be different.

Compassionate time management holds space for what matters to you in this season. Not only that, naming what matters to you in your season is essential for being compassionate. It helps you notice what you need, what is happening in your life, what needs to be held onto, and how

to loosen around things that don't matter right now. If you operate with a set it and forget it mindset, your seasons will often feel like drowning. But if you embrace the season you're in, name what matters most in that season and prioritize it with your choices and practical time management, you will have the desire and capacity to be compassionate towards yourself.

Reason number seven: compassionate time management values contentment.

Oh, this is a big one. I've said this quote so many times, but in an interview with Kelly Corrigan, she said to me, "Contentment does not drive economic activity." It made me laugh, but it still makes me think. Our culture is built on economic activity, and that's great. It enables us to have resources and means to live our lives. But it's also a culture that is built on consumerism. We buy more and more. We're told by really smart marketers that we need these things to be happy and fulfilled. We're told that we have a deficit to fill, and we're encouraged to acquire certain things to fill it. But the deficit never bottoms out. Contentment is not a pillar of good marketing practices.

Compassionate time management values contentment. It's not telling you to strive for bigger and better. It's not expecting perfection in the form of a planner or process. Contentment allows you to see your current situation with kindness, temperance, and neutrality. You can see what you have as enough for now. You can start with today, see good there, and be content first. We can't always change our circumstances, so rather than tightening our grip on making everything better, start with contentment today. When movement and growth and change and even acquisition and consumption come from that core place, what you bring into your life is more congruent with what already matters to you.

Reason number eight: compassionate time management loosens your body.

Maybe even as you're listening to this episode, you're feeling more relaxed in your shoulders, in your gut, in your face. When we are met with kindness and compassion, even in something as strange as time management, our bodies relax. They loosen. They're not on alert for getting it right, getting it done, and getting to the next thing. We can just be loose in our bodies and feel a little closer to peace than to stress. I love that.

Reason number nine: compassionate time management welcomes all of you.

Other forms of time management often make me feel like I'm being reduced to my most essential pieces and parts. Let's get rid of anything extraneous that gets in the way of my potential. Exhausting. Compassionate time management instead welcomes all of you. It welcomes your varying energy, your moods, your changing preferences, your faith, your neurodivergency, your chronic illness, your confidence one day and your smallness the next. We are not robots. We are human beings, and in order to compassionately manage our time, we need to honor all of ourselves to the table.

Reason number ten: compassionate time management makes your life more fulfilling.

Really and truly. I have been living under the umbrella of compassionate time management for the last ten years or so, and writing *The PLAN* has helped me put words to things that were once intangible. Still helpful but a little ethereal. Now that I have words and a framework that aligns with how I've been living, I'm sharing it with you. But what's great about living this way is that it's really and truly living. Life is so much more fulfilling when you see your time and therefore your life compassionately.

Lest you think I haven't gone through anything hard and maybe I just haven't gone through enough to be really tested yet, I assure you have. I don't think anyone listening requires a list of my personal woes to make this concept real, but rest assured, my circumstances, even the last five years or so, have been desperately trying in multiple areas of my life. And I love my life. I love being alive. I love being myself. I love the way I spend my days. That doesn't mean I'm never stressed or busy or annoyed or frustrated or ready to run away to Maine to open a beachside lobster roll stand. I'm just like you in life feeling full and a lot. But at my core, I am compassionate towards myself and my time. At least that's the goal every day. I want to be who I am, where I am, and when that is the engine of your life, no matter the circumstances of your life, it truly is more fulfilling. Because you're in it. You're you and you're living your life today with wholeness and fullness and kindness, no matter what is happening around you.

So those are the ten reasons why compassionate time management changes everything. It honors your life today, it empowers you to make hard things a little easier, it encourages productivity but not at the expense of who you are, it releases you from mastery, it frees you from the pressure of big dreams, it values contentment, it loosens your body, it welcomes all of you, and it makes life more fulfilling.

If you'd like some ideas on how to actually start to implement time management into your life, I have good news. Tomorrow, October 8th, is the release date for my newest book, *The PLAN: Manage Your Time Like a Lazy Genius*. It is full of compassionate principles, practical, focused strategies, and even a series of pep talks when you just feel the weight of the world. I've never been more excited about releasing something into the world, and that's saying something because I really love pretty much everything I've had the privilege of making. This book has the potential to change everything for you, and I hope you enjoy reading it. Tomorrow is the day, and you can get the book wherever books are sold. How very exciting.

Before we go, let's celebrate the Lazy Genius of the Week! This week it's Rebecca Cousins. Rebecca writes, "I always avoid doing my two daughters' laundry (they are two and four) because I have to spend a lot of time treating stains. I realized that if I kept the stain treater spray in the bathroom where they take off their clothes for bath time and spray it before putting it in the hamper then I can just throw it in the washer and not spend a lot of time searching for stains and scrubbing or waiting for stain treatment to sit." What a great idea! I do try and treat stains right away, but I usually have to go to our laundry closet to get the stain stick and then change clothes in my room. I should just keep a stain stick in my closet since that's where I'll be changing out the shirt anyway! What a great, simple idea to get your stuff done while making it a

little easier but also being kind to yourself. Thanks for sharing, Rebecca, and congratulations on being the Lazy Genius of the Week!

If you'd like to be considered for the Lazy Genius of the Week, email us your idea at hello@thelazygeniuscollective.com.

This episode is hosted by me, Kendra Adachi, and executive produced by Kendra Adachi, Jenna Fischer, and Angela Kinsey. The Lazy Genius Podcast is enthusiastically part of the Office Ladies Network. Special thanks to Leah Jarvis for weekly production.

Thanks, y'all, 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!