

#254 - Chores I Do Every Day

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 254 - Chores I Do Every Day. This is kind of like the new recipe episode I did a couple of weeks ago where I shared how I choose new recipes. It's not that you need to choose them in the exact same way I do, but it's more giving you an example and a possible framework for how you might choose. In that episode, I shared the four questions I always ask myself when I get the new recipe itch, and today for this episode, it's a similar vibe except there are not four questions but just one - what matters most. Surprise. But that is crucial for how I decide what chores I'll do every day. I don't have a lot of time, you probably don't either, and even if you do, most of us don't necessarily want to spend all of it doing chores. Some chores you might like, some are therapeutic and calming and give you a sense of accomplishment and purpose, and that's fantastic. But I think it's always good to evaluate what we're doing every day, what we're not doing every day and think we either should or want to do, and then what that means for what we actually do? And all of that starts with what matters most.

I want you to think about what matters most to you about how your home looks and how it feels. You also might want to add the category of how it's cared for or maintained. There might be a daily chore or task that keeps your home in good working order, and that's important to you. But I think the primary pair of things to consider are how your home looks and how your home feels.

Now here's where you might trip up and don't need to. You get to decide what matters about how your home looks and feels. You don't have to conform to a style, to a level of order, to a specific definition of welcome that you think other people do. You can decide what matters about your home without shame or embarrassment. We all get to decide. Once you do decide, you have a better idea of what daily chores contribute to that rather than having an endless list of chores you could do and then you don't really do anything because you're overwhelmed by the options.

So I'm going to share with you the three things that matter to me about how my home looks and feels and the practical ways and specific chores I do to support those things that matter.

So my three things are it matters most that my home feels cozy, calm, and ready for the next thing. I like it to feel cozy because I want a home that you want to be in. I want my family to enjoy coming home, I want to enjoy being home, I want people who visit to feel at home and that it's an enjoyable, comfortable space to be in.

Calm is pretty self-explanatory. My outsides impact my insides. If I'm in a cluttered, messy home of my own - not of anyone else's by the way, because someone else's home has a different purpose in my life than mine does - but for my own home, if it's messy or cluttered, I'm not going to explode, but it does make my thinking and processing a little messy and cluttered. I have a harder time focusing when there's a lot of visual stimulation. That doesn't mean I'm obsessive

about tidiness, but I'm honest about what I need and if it's easy and still human to support that need in my everyday life, then I'll do it.

Ready for the next thing is kind of like The Magic Question - what can I do now to make life easier later? - it's like the magic question is a blanket over my entire life. I like to feel ready. I like my home to not feel behind. I thrive and I think my family does too to a certain extent, we thrive when we're not scrambling or rushing or behind. It's mostly me but a little bit my family too.

So what do those three things mean for me and how I tend to my home every single day?

When I made the list of chores I do every day to prepare for this episode, I was kind of shocked because I live by three main Lazy Genius principles every single day in my home and didn't actually know it: Batch It, Set House Rules, and Put Everything In Its Place.

I'm going to share with you what I do everyday and explain how those things all fall under those three principles.

Let me explain those three principles first: Batch It is doing the same kind of task all at once rather piecemeal as needed. House Rules are rules or guidelines to live by in your home that prevent life from quickly getting out of hand. And Put Everything In Its Place is what it sounds like - have a place for your stuff and put it away. You don't have to be a minimalist. Just put your stuff away.

So those are the three principles. Now a subset of the principle Batch It is the idea of zones. Zones are areas of your home designated for a certain thing, right? That's a not new idea. You likely have zones in your house already, whether intentionally or accidentally. You put certain things in certain places all the time. Now the idea though of zones is that they're a holding place, a catchall for a certain type of thing before that thing goes into its actual final place. So a zone allows you to gather similar things and then tend to them all at once - batch it - as they are put in their place. My list of chores is 75% about zones. I use zones constantly, and I don't know that I even realized it because I've been using them so long and they are so automated and part of my life. And to be honest, people sometimes comment how tidy my house is and how it doesn't seem out of order very often if at all. That is not because I'm a ruthless tidier or have a stick up my butt about a dirty house or because I spend a ton of time keeping it in order. None of those things are true. What is true is that I use zones a lot, and they're amazing. And because they are part of my daily rhythm and have been for a long time, my house usually feels cozy, calm, and ready for the next thing. It makes sense that that would be the case because that's what matters most to me, I've intentionally supported those priorities, and now they're kind of on autopilot, and a huge part of that are the zones.

So let me explain the zones I use every single day.

The first zone we use is the going out the door zone. It's a zone for purses and daily out the door stuff. We have a little side table next to the backdoor with a basket for keys and wallets and

stuff, right next to that are hooks were I hang my purse, and in that same area is our box of masks and another basket with reusable shopping bags. So all of our “I need this when I leave” stuff is in one zone. Everything has a place.

The kids have the same with their backpacks. The zone is literally an area of floor that’s out of the way and that’s where their backpacks go. They used to hang their backpacks on hooks, but their bags get heavier and heavier and I don’t want to break my furniture, so the floor it is. But it’s floor that’s out of the way. So when I say to the kids “put your backpack away,” they just put it on the floor in that spot.

So what that does is we’re not scrambling for keys or bags, we’re not busy looking for things when we’re leaving. Oh and that reminds me! Shoes! All the family’s shoes are also by the back door. I have some of my shoes in a basket, Kaz’s are under the side table I mentioned, and the kids’ shoes are under a bench by the backdoor. I did a whole episode on shoes by the way, so you can listen to that whenever you’d like. We’ll put a link in the show notes, but everything we need to leave the house has a zone, has a place. It’s doesn’t have to be super orderly in that place, but because the same kind of thing is in the same space, it feels more orderly. Stuff is where you need it to be. Are the shoes lined up? Zero percent. Do the kids just kind of chuck the shoes into the general area of the bench? Yes very much. But that doesn’t matter that much because we’re still ready for the next thing. The shoes are still where they need to be.

Another daily thing we all deal with is paper. Mail, school forms, all the things. I have an entire episode about that too that is excellent and kind of a gamechanger, mostly because zones save your life when it comes to paper. I zone our paper every single day, and it takes literally six seconds. I know where everything goes based on its urgency, and paper is where it’s supposed to be. There are no piles all over the house making it feel cluttered. Paper is always zoned.

We also have zones that we use every day for laundry. There’s the obvious - dirty clothes. We have hampers in different bedrooms and bathrooms depending on who derobes where, but ultimately we don’t deal with dirty clothes around the house because everyone is in the general habit of zoning those clothes. Another piece though that’s really helpful that I’ve mentioned before but not for awhile is the little bucket we keep in the kitchen for cloth napkins, dirty dishrags, a stray sock, whatever dirty clothes we encounter in the kitchen area go in that little bucket. It’s a galvanized steel bucket that’s pretty and looks great being left out. That’s where we zone other dirty clothes, and it keeps feeling tidy, even if that bucket is full.

We’ll be right back...

A quick word on tidying. We do that three times a day maybe? I tidy after the kids leave for school because I work at home and it helps me to have the L as we call it which is the kitchen, dining, living area - our main living area that’s in the shape of an L - it helps me mentally to have that tidy when I come in for lunch or something. And that takes just a minute, and I’ll explain some details of that in a second. We also tidy the L as a family before screen time in the afternoons which is when I cook dinner. The kids help tidy the space so that I’m not spending

my free time doing it when they could do it. And the third time is after they're all in bed. Again, there's very little to do, but those two minutes make a big difference.

As far as toys go, remember my kids are older. They're 5, 10, and 12. So the days of a floor covered in hot wheels are less frequent, but there are still toys and junk left out all the time. There are books on every surface, random things they brought home from school, obviously Annie still plays with tiny toys, so we zone that by not restricting their toys to stay in their rooms at all. They bring stuff out all the time, but since most of their stuff has its final resting place in their room, the effort to drag it out into the middle of house and then put it back is a bit harder, so often the kids play in their rooms. And I don't care if their rooms are tidy on a daily basis. We do room tidies on Saturdays, so however it is in the middle of that doesn't matter to me. Or them. But in the L we do have a basket for stray toys. It has no rhyme or reason to what is inside it, and it's just in there. But that's the zone.

So if all our daily things, our paper, our toys, our bags and stuff, if they are all in a rhythm of being zoned, you can see how the house is usually pretty tidy. It's not excessive or obsessive. It's just living by batching because we use zones and putting everything in its place. And we have house rules about tidying and putting your stuff away. It's actually really chill.

Now let's talk about the kitchen.

Y'all know I love talking about the kitchen. I wrote a whole book about it called The Lazy Genius Kitchen. Did you know that? It comes out May 3 which is in just a few weeks, and at the end of this episode, I'll share what's happening tomorrow on Tuesday, March 22 for those of you who have preordered that book! So stay tuned there.

But basically back to the kitchen, it's great to know how to cook. It's great to have recipes. But the thing that gets us crazytown in the kitchen is that we don't have a rhythm. We don't have systems or knowledge or priorities in place about how we organize our space in a way that matters to us, how we plan our meals in a way that matters to us, how we keep our kitchens ready for the next meal in a way that matters to us, and so many other things. That's what The Lazy Genius Kitchen talks about in great detail with illustrations and charts and lists and guides and permission and it's fabulous.

I talk about kitchen zones in great detail in the book, but I'll share with you here a couple of zones we use that do every day and I guess they'd be considered chores, and they make all the difference in the world.

The first and as I'm looking at my list - the only - zone that we use in the kitchen that changes everything is the Dirty Dishes Zone. I actually just opened my copy of The Lazy Genius Kitchen, went to the index because there's an index in this puppy, and looked under Z for zones. There are one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve listings under zones because I talk about them a lot, and I'm going to flip right now to page 122 to talk about the Dirty Dishes Zone. I'm just going to read to you from the book.

“Part of the prep flow logjam (I talk about prep flow logjams earlier in the chapter) is the cleaning up of dirty dishes. Random bowls and cups from the many meals and snacks our people eat are spread out all over the place, and we think we have to clean up the dishes fully for it to count. Not true. The Dirty Dishes Zone is a singular place on your counter specifically and exclusively for dirty dishes until you’re ready to clean them. And the zone doesn’t have to be huge. A one foot square area is awesome, but that zone is only for dirty dishes. Don’t put other stuff there. If you move dirty dishes to the Dirty Dishes Zone and do nothing else, it changes your space and positively impacts your flow. It’s kind of wild. The other surfaces are clear which is very calming. Plus since they’re all in one place, you can more easily wash those dirty dishes or load them in the dishwasher in a single batch all at once whenever you’re ready. It sounds simple, and it is. But it also creates a fantastic rhythm for you and your space.”

That’s an excerpt from the book *The Lazy Genius Kitchen*, and we use the Dirty Dishes Zone, the kids included, every single day. When you finish eating, take your dishes to the zone. I don’t have to load those dishes into the dishwasher before I go to work in order for the kitchen to feel orderly because everything is zoned, everything is in a place it needs to be in until I can deal with it completely. It’s a lazy way to be tidy, and I love it. It’s so simple but so helpful. Just put your dirty dishes in their zone. That’s it. Let them sit there until you’re ready.

We also have a drink spinner which is a zone for water bottles and cups that are in use. That way cups aren’t all over the house. That’s a newer zone in the last couple of years, and it’s fantastic. And when you’re ready to drink, you know where your cup is. Remember, ready for the next thing.

And that’s it. Those are chores I do every day. I just zone stuff. And then at the end of the day, I tend to those zones if they need it. The paper zone doesn’t need daily tending. The dirty dishes zone does, so I do it. I have a house rule that I don’t go to bed with a dirty kitchen. It’s an essential part of my rhythm because of what matters to me.

So think about zones, think about what matters to you, think about what you’re doing every day that you might not need to, especially if it’s taking time away from doing something that would help more.

If you want help with this in your kitchen especially but you can learn tools to help you in your whole house, you should get *The Lazy Genius Kitchen*! Okay, let me give you a couple of details about this book before we go and a party we’re having tomorrow.

The book is hardback, illustrated, full color, and absolutely beautiful. It is not a cookbook, y’all. There are literally two recipes in the whole thing, but there is a ton about how to put flavors together, how to approach certain meal types, and all kinds of things that will help you know what recipes you should choose for your life wherever you get recipes from. But the book teaches a five step process for Lazy Geniusing any area of your kitchen, and I also apply those five steps to multiple areas of your kitchen to give you ideas and tools on how you can create a

kitchen that not only works for you but that you enjoy being in. Basically, I feel like none of us were taught how to be in the kitchen, how to do all the things that relate to food that aren't actual cooking, and this book teaches you those things. I'm obsessed with it. I'm so proud of it. I truly think it's going to change your life in the kitchen and be a reference and a tool you'll use for years and years, no matter your life stage or skillset.

Now, tomorrow, Tuesday March 22, marks the original publication date of The Lazy Genius Kitchen. If you're new here, the books were on a boat that was in a storm, and we have since learned, guys, that about a third of them were ruined, but $\frac{2}{3}$ are okay and dry! It's so exciting! But because we were unsure of the books' status for quite some time, we had to move the publication date from March 22 to May 3 which is where it will stay. Celebration. But we had a whole tour planned around the March 22 date and had to pivot bigtime in how and when we would launch this book. You can hear all about that in episode 249 - how we are lazy geniusing the boat situation. That's the title. But something we're doing which is so fun is a Pub Crawl or Pub-lication crawl where we are having events that crawl from one publication date - March 22, tomorrow - to the other, May 3 in a few weeks. That pub crawl kicks off tomorrow night at 8pm EST, and it is a virtual party that is free for everyone who has preordered The Lazy Genius Kitchen.

We are having some special guests pop in and join, namely some folks who endorsed The Lazy Genius Kitchen, so for sure some familiar and fun faces to you. We will have giveaways at that event, some pretty rad ones. I'm still trying to decide if I'm going to lean in hard and wear a sailor outfit; we'll see. But it's going to be a super fun way to kick off this weird season of launching the previously lost at sea Lazy Genius Kitchen into the world. I think you will absolutely love being there. Plus it's on Crowdcast and not on Zoom, so there are no worries about having your face in front of hundreds of people and accidentally not being muted while you tell your kid to clean up dinner or whatever. It'll be like watching a show, and we are working hard to make it a really good one.

Here's how you can come! Number one! You preorder The Lazy Genius Kitchen in any format - so hardback, kindle or audiobook. Part of me is like hardback please, that's what you want. And I still think that's true. This book is such a reference. You will reach for it over and over again which is how it's designed. But a few weeks ago, I read the audiobook, and I think a lot of you will enjoy having some of the parts read to you because it's me doing it! Now, some of it is so weird to read that instead there's an accompanying PDF that has the necessary charts and lists and stuff connected to your audiobook if you really want to hear me read it. So that's number one! Order the book in any format from any retailer. So Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Target, your local indie bookstore, Audible, wherever you want, and then Number Two and number two is the very important part - THEN you go to thelazygeniuskitchen.com and enter your order information, including your email address. The only way we can know that you preordered the book is if you tell us. The bookstores and retailers don't do that. You have to. And then once we have your email address and order information, you will automatically get things like the ticket and login info to that virtual kickoff to the Pub Crawl tomorrow night! It's also where we'll send a massively amazing preorder bonus in April, aka an actual collection of written-out Lazy Genius

recipes. Because remember the Lazy Genius Kitchen is not a cookbook. But you still might want some recipes! So the April preorder bonus is a PDF of 25 Lazy Genius recipes all in one place, written like actual recipes. So I feel like you're gonna want that, and it's free for everybody who preorders. So why not go ahead and preorder now so you can come to the party tomorrow! And we'll have a replay of that party that will be emailed out this week sometime, so even if you're not free at 8pm EST, you can still watch it. I think you'll want to because some pretty fun people are gonna pop in, but this is your invitation to change your life in your kitchen with The Lazy Genius Kitchen and celebrate with tomorrow's party and a recipe PDF in a couple of weeks by preordering AND LETTING US KNOW YOU DID today. Final important word! The deadline to get access to the live event is tonight Monday, March 21st at midnight eastern. If you give us your preorder information after midnight tonight Monday March 21st, you will still be able to watch the replay, but because of how the Crowdcast streaming links are sent out, we won't be able to get you access right before the event. You have to give us your preorder information at thelazygeniuskitchen.com by tonight, at midnight eastern, Monday March 21st. Make sense? After that, you can only see the replay.

And that's it. That's today's episode and a lot of other information, so thanks for hanging in! I hope you enjoyed it, I hope it encourages you in your own choices of what chores you do every day and which ones you can skip, and I'm so grateful for all of you. 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 tomorrow night at the Pub Crawl and also next week.