



## **224: Naming What Matters in Friendship, Life, and the Kitchen with Kendra Adachi**

I'm Emily P. Freeman and welcome to the Next Right Thing. You're listening to episode 224. This is a podcast about making decisions, but also about making life. If you struggle with decision fatigue or chronic hesitation, or if you just need a few minutes away from the constant stream of information and is sometimes delightful, but also distracting hum of entertainment, you're in the right place for discerning your next right thing. My guest today has spent the last several years helping thousands of people name what matters so they can be a genius about those things and lazy about all the rest. Kendra Adachi, also known as the lazy genius, is the author of the New York Times bestseller *the Lazy Genius Way*. And she's now brought her expertise into the kitchen with her brand new book, *the Lazy Genius Kitchen*, where she's helping us to discern what we need, use what we have and enjoy it never like before.

Today, she'll share with us her five step framework for transforming every part of our kitchen. Spoiler alert, this applies to more than just our kitchen, but actually to our whole lives. It starts with what we know is important, but often find hard to do, naming what matters. Listen in.

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Emily:

All right. So for anyone who doesn't know us, Kendra, hello and welcome first of all. I feel we would be doing a disservice to the humans listening to us, if we did not open and say, "We are friends." We are real life friends because here's the thing-

Kendra:

We are real life friends.

Emily:

... if you are listening, you don't know that things might get awkward really quickly. Be like she's way too comfortable with the lazy genius. So for those who don't know, I want to be a good host. And I want to say, Kendra and I met in 2007. We have been fast friends ever since. I met Kendra, before she had a single child. Tell them about the first time I came to your house for dinner.

Kendra:

I'm just realizing I'm doing the math because math takes me a while. So we've been friends 15 years.

Emily:

Kendra, what's?

Kendra:

That feels really intense and exciting.

Emily:

That's like bonafide adults say, "Well, we've been friends for over a decade. And that is-

Kendra:

I think that's why it's like boom in mind a little bit. Because it feels we have been friends for that long, but also who says that? Who says like, "Yeah. We've been friends for 15 years and you didn't go to college with that person?" You haven't known them for... We knew each other as grown humans.

Emily:

It's so wild. Older people say that Kendra. That's the answer.

Kendra:

So yeah. We met, you came to my house with your youngest, with Luke in a car carrier.

Emily:

He was in a car seat, the whole asleep.

Kendra:

Asleep. Adorable.

Emily:

He's now almost 16 years old driving cars around on real roads.

Kendra:

He still has those beautiful big eyes though.

Emily:

He does.

Kendra:

He still had those same eyes with his baby. No, I came... Bless it. You guys the person I was when Emily and I became friends is not the person I am now. I was just like, I had lists for unimportant things. I put so much pressure on myself. I know, I still to this day don't know what you saw in me 15 years ago, because I was not a good time like at all.

Emily:

Listen, if any of us are the same as we were 15 years ago-

Kendra:

Well, this is fair. Thank you for that.

Emily:

... then there is something going on that needs a little bit of help and engagement.

Kendra:

You're absolutely right.

Emily:

Because I'm also not the same person. Praise be unto the Lord. So have grown up together and I'm so grateful for it. And the other thing you might need to know listener is not only have we been friends for a really long time, we also still are friends. But also that was... I need to say that.

Kendra:  
Those 15 years but thank you for coming.

Emily:  
Yeah. And we live houses away. A couple of blocks away, on the same side of the busy street. Like how sometimes busy streets cut through neighborhoods. We're on the same... We don't even have to cross a busy road to get to one another-

Kendra:  
It's a delight.

Emily:  
... which is such a delight. So that is a little bit of background on our friendship. There's a lot left unsaid there. I will take some of your secrets to my grave but we-

Kendra:  
Thank you so much.

Emily:  
.. we can move on from that.

Kendra:  
Right, we can.

Emily:  
But just to say, so Kendra knew me before I wrote my first book. So you have walked with me Kendra through this life of writing books. And now here you are my dear. Here you are on the cusp actually the very week that your second book releases into the world. Just for a moment, if you could just pull the curtain back into author Kendra's brain, how's it going?

Kendra:  
Well, the last time I talked to you about my brain, I cried. So I don't know. No, it's actually going really well. And like you said, thank goodness I'm not the same person I was 15 years ago or even five years ago because I think that in the perfect storm of... What's the post pandemic phrase that everyone's using and endemic, is that the word that people are saying?

Emily:  
Oh, I don't know the fancy words yet.

Kendra:  
I think it's endemic because it's ending. I feel like that's what it's supposed to mean. I don't know. But I'm still trying to learn how to be a person with this weird margin shifting that I've just been in, that we've all been in for the last couple of years. I don't love writing books. I think we might have said that maybe on Mike before in some capacity, but you love the actual act of writing a book. I love giving it to people. I mean like, "Hey. It's done now let's celebrate." So I'm in the part of the process that I actually really love. I think that what often happens with most of our lives is that's not the only thing that's happening.

Kendra:  
There are lots of other things that happen in our lives and we're holding a lot of different tensions at once. And sometimes that compromises our energy in ways that we wish it didn't, but we still keep going. We still do the next right thing. So I'm very much in that mode right now. I'm very much, "Okay. I don't

know what's happening except for right now." And then I'll do the next thing and then I'll do the next thing. And that is very anti how my brain normally works. I'm very much, "All right. What is every decision, everything, every plan for the next six months in bulleted and ability list."

Kendra:

That is not how life works, friends. It's just not. And I've been learning that kind of the hard way in this, but it's also really delightful to start small in this process. So I'm having fun because I have the tools and the mindset to not be overwhelmed by what I don't have control over.

Emily:

Well. And you're definitely being invited to really live out the thing that you teach, which is lazy genius, seeing a book launch and naming what matters to you. So I think you've done that really well, Kendra, especially since those of you who know and have followed Kendra for a while that her book was supposed to release six weeks ago. But the books got lost in the bottom of the sea because there were storm and boat reasons. And now here she is running a marathon six weeks longer than she expected. So what matters is that this book is released at the end. That is what matters.

Emily:

Well, and I think it's important to go back briefly to book one, which was just the Lazy Genius Way where you shared 13 principles about how to lazy genius anything based on what matters to you and lazy being lazy about the things that don't matter, genius about the things that do matter. And people have grabbed on Kendra. How has that been for you? Were you surprised that this has taken off and people understand this concept real well?

Kendra:

Yeah. I think I'm relieved more than I am surprised because I think I saw the need, but we needed words for the need and I'm not the only person who talks about this kind of thing. That is a ridiculous statement. I think that you talk about this a lot. When we have language for things, it just helps. When things are named well, it helps. Guys Emily named it. So you're welcome. She he's the one who named it, the Lazy Genius, which is actually I think what makes it so appealing so quickly and so relatable so quickly because you're like, "Wait, what is that? I both those words. I don't know how they go together. Can you help me?"

Kendra:

So I actually feel a great sense of relief because I have experienced so much freedom over the last few years of naming these things and then kind of putting them into the world of how to, name what matters to you and live your life based on those things and not on the list of what everybody else says should matter because we can't do everything. We know that. We all know that. That is a tired thing to say at this point, you can't do everything but we don't have tools to know how to move past that.

Kendra:

So being able to offer tools for people, no matter what their season of life is, what their family situation is, what their job is, any of that. To have tools that are practical and personal for every single person, it has been so delightful to watch people experience that same freedom of, "Oh, I don't have to do that. That's amazing." It's just such a gift to see that happen slow over these last few years and catch fire with people. It's just such an honor to see that happen. I love it.

Emily:

Well, and you said it well, which is, yes, this is "obvious" and we all know these things. But I feel the tools in the language are the bridge between what we know in our head and then how we practice our life. So the gift of the Lazy Genius Way, it's finally, "Oh, here's the language for how this is going to play out

from what I know in my head.” It’s like, how do you be healthy? Well, you eat right and you exercise. Okay, great. But then we’re all still looking for plans and we’re looking for solutions. We’re looking for, how do I do that in my life with the way my life go and what works for me? And you do the same thing for lots of areas of life. So the Lazy Genius Way, 13 Principles, but now, we have the lazy genius kitchen. So this is one of my favorite lines about the book you say, “This is not a cookbook, but a lifeline.” Tell us what you mean by that.

Kendra:

This is the book that I have been wanting to have not write, but have for my entire adult life and no one wrote it. And I was like, “Well, dang it. I guess that means I have to,” because I have wanted help in my kitchen. And I love side note. I love me in the kitchen. I’m a good cook. I love to gather people. This is something that I really deeply enjoy. And you can enjoy your kitchen to a point and still be overwhelmed by it because there are just so many areas of your kitchen. There are so many jobs and tasks that it has to fulfill for you and anybody that you live with every day. It’s just a lot. So I wanted a book that was a guidebook, almost a fun textbook for all the things that we need to know about the kitchen.

Kendra:

Not necessarily like how to cut an onion. I go to Bree McCoy for that. She’s the one who teaches you how to cook. And then I want to bring in all of the other things, because there are more things that are necessary to enjoy your time in the kitchen. To have what you need in there. To use what you actually have there. To have freedom and permission to live in there and exist and for things to work. For it to be clean, if you need it to be cleaned. You had systems where you want to have systems. We need help with all of those other things. But that book doesn’t exist.

Kendra:

Cookbooks exist, recipes exist, and they’re deeply, deeply important. But I wanted something that helps you understand how to choose a recipe from the cookbooks you have. How to know this cookbook does not serve me in this season of life. Let me put it away or pass it along to someone where it does help. We need help with all the other things in our kitchen. And that’s what this book is.

Emily:

You help us know how to think about our time in the kitchen. How to think about the space. How to think about ourselves in the space. How to decide what matters to us in the space. So I would love to you share basically kind of five movements, if you will and you did. Not only will you, but you did. Five movements about how to move through our kitchen. How to think about our kitchen. How to do this thing that you’re saying. So I would love it if you could walk through those five and then I want to camp out on the one that I think at least next right thing, listeners get stuck on. Sounds [crosstalk 00:13:02]? Let’s do it.

Kendra:

Yeah. Absolutely. I love that you call the movements. I’ve been saying steps that’s such a better... No, it’s not better. It works. But that feels such a good Emily P. Freeman word or the five steps where it’s like, “No, it’s movements or not.” That’s so good. I love that. You guys, this is why I have her name on everything I make. So I’m sorry, I didn’t consult you for this. It would’ve been better.

Kendra:

So the five steps or movements are, the first one is to prioritize, you name what matters about whatever the problem is that you’re dealing with. Number two is you essentialize. You get rid of what’s in the way. So often we have this problem that we are trying to solve, but we don’t see that there is something blocking us from embracing what matters from actually supporting that thing. There’s something in the way, whether it’s a mindset or mugs. It could be something very tangible. That’s literally in the way.

Emily:

Too many bugs.

Kendra:

Yes. Too many bugs. So step two is to essentialize. Step three is to organize. Then you put everything in its place. If you organize before you essentialize, you will be frustrated constantly because you're just organizing stuff you don't need. So that's why organizing is number three. Number four is to personalize. I want able to feel like themselves in the kitchen. So often we have this idea of what someone who enjoys being in the kitchen is supposed to look like. How that person is supposed to move. There is not one way. There just isn't one way. So I want to give people language and words and help to name how they feel, what they need and how they can personalize whatever this problem solution is for them.

Kendra:

And then the fifth step is to systemize. Is to keep something in a flow. That is the idea of a.. Like we'll organize a closet. Hopefully you're not organizing things you don't need, but you organize a cabinet or a drawer or something. But if you don't have a system to keep it that way, if you don't have something to keep it in a flow where you are moving through it, day in and day out, and it continues to support what matters. You're just going to go from buoy to buoy of organize the cabinet again, organize the cabinet again. You just organize it until it falls apart and you do it again. We want to try to keep things in a flow as much as possible to support that life. So that is number five. So prioritize, essentialize, organize, personalize, systemize.

Emily:

Okay. Before we camp out on the one I want to camp on, I want to talk about myself because who am I, if I don't bring it back to me? Because what I realize as I'm hearing you talk, and even as I think about these very logical steps is that maybe this is true for all of us, that we tend to gravitate toward one first. And it's probably not the prioritized one.

Kendra:

Right. And that is actually a Lazy Genius Principle from Lazy Genius Way is to go in the right order. So often we go in the wrong order and then we get stuck and we think something's wrong with us when really you just did number two before you did number one.

Emily:

Yeah. Doing all the right things in all the wrong order. So I want to personalize everything. I'm like like, "Let me make this reveal who I am in my kitchen." And meanwhile, I'm like, "Why is this not working?" It's because I'm trying to personalize something I haven't prioritized or organized or centralized. And then I'm like, "Why does this not feel me?" Well, it's because I'm keeping stuff. One reason is because I'm probably keeping stuff I don't use need and don't represent the way I move through my kitchen anyway. So that's a light bulb moment.

Emily:

But here on the next right thing, I talk a lot about sort of the three movements of decision making. One is clear, the space. Clear it out. Clear the clutter. Ways that we do that is through reflection, looking back at decisions we've made in the past. And then also naming the unnamed things. What's beneath the service here, which really happening and then do the next right thing. So maybe your next right thing is who prioritize your kitchen.

Emily:

But I want to say in that the prioritizing, I mean, we're just going to stop right there, step one. That's what the hello. Welcome to today's episode. We are going to talk about step one because this question, who decides what matters and you say, rightly you do not Kendra, but you, the listener. We decide what matters to us, but I'm going to tell you right now, everyone listening to this or most people, not everyone, but a lot

of us listening are like, “That is great. I love it. That is also good news. Yes. But also bad news because how do you decide what matters?”

Kendra:

Yeah. Tell us how. That’s why we have Emily you guys. Emily helps us figure this out.

Emily:

Yeah. Have 220 episodes. Oh gosh.

Kendra:

I get that question probably more than any other question.

Emily:

Yeah, me too. I get it too.

Kendra:

Yes. How do I decide what matters? And I feel we could talk about that literally for right, 250 episodes. We’ll just keep going-

Emily:

And we have.

Kendra:

.. and we have, yes. I think that one thing I’ve noticed and we will definitely have different things that we have noticed about that question. But one that I noticed from my listener especially is that they make it too big. You’re making it too big. You’re trying to be like, what matters about my life? There’s this big sweeping desire and an understandable one. I have that desire too. We really do want to have a life that feels rooted and purposeful and interwoven, all of the different pieces, talk to each other and it’s a whole life. It’s complex but it’s whole, it’s speaking one language.

Kendra:

So when I say name what matters, people are like, “Well, I don’t even know where to begin.” And that’s why the most important in lazy genius language, the most important principle to begin with there is to start small. You can’t name what matters about your whole life until you start to name what matters in these very, very small places from in your day to day. So it feels a little silly. For example, I just came home from an event and we were just doing Q&A and kind of talking or whatever.

Kendra:

And one of the women said, because there were two guys there. Because you and I... Well, you have probably more dudes than I do, but it’s always really wild when there’s a dude in the room. I’m like, “He’s a dude. Welcome.” It’s because it’s so strange. But one of the women in the room, she said something like, “This feels really silly, but the lazy Susan in my cabinet is driving me crazy. Because every time I spin it, everything falls off the water bottles down. I can’t find what I need and whatever.” So we in real time applied these five steps to that situation. Is like, “Okay. So what matters about this? It sounds you want to use it, but you don’t want to be frustrated by it.”

Kendra:

So everything needs to be still. Okay. What’s in the way? Oh, I have things that are very tall, like water bottles that are easily falling down. We need to maybe move those somewhere else or contain them in something. So they don’t fall... And I could feel in the room this like, “Is this really what we’re talking about? Are we really trying to lazy genius, lazy Susan right now?” And at the same time, so many people had ideas for this woman like, “Oh, you could try this. You could do this. You could do this.” She’d sent

me a DM the next day and was like, “I love my kitchen. What is happening? I fixed the lazy Susan. I just put the water bottles in a container and now everything feels better.”

Kendra:

And it’s when we start small with these tiny challenge and problems and pain points, what it does is it works the muscle of embracing what does matter to us and we don’t feel guilty about it. We don’t feel weird for being like, “This is something that really matters to me. And I’m going to spend the time on this.” If we start so big with what matters with my life, you all, that’s why we go to therapy. That’s why we have spiritual directors. We have all of these people to help us with these big questions because that’s a lifelong process. That is a lifelong process that shifts like we just said, the things that matter to me 15 years ago, I don’t know if any of them still matter. I really don’t know if they do.

Kendra:

So the same is true in our kitchen. It’s often more practical and more tangible because there are just a lot more opportunities to solve these really small practical problems. And we think it’s silly. We think it’s inconsequential, but it is the most deeply consequential thing. Because as you start small and you apply these five steps and you trust yourself with what the next right thing is and whatever this tiny kitchen problem is, you begin to understand what it means to move through the world with that kind of process, with that kind of lens and you become more comfortable with it. You experience the freedom in the water bottles didn’t fall down. What’s another thing that I get lazy genius. And you’re also living out the value of small steps.

Kendra:

You’re living out the value of doing the next right thing where that doesn’t feel like a cop out or annoying. People get so annoyed when I’m like, “Start small.” They’re like, “That [inaudible 00:22:06]...” Because it doesn’t feel big enough and that’s the whole thing that you and I both want to kindly just turn people. Yeah. You’re right. It isn’t big enough, but big doesn’t work. So let’s come over here and start small. Let’s do the next right thing because that’s where life happens. That’s where it happens and more maybe in kitchen, in our regular lives and anywhere else, because we’re there all the time. We’re eating all the time. We’re gathering all the time. We’re making coffee with our people. We’re having people over for meals or we’re wishing we did, but our kitchen doesn’t look the way we want it to look. Or we don’t know how to cook the things that we think we’re supposed to cook.

Kendra:

When in reality, if what matters to you that you just have people in your home, “Okay. Well what’s in the way of that? Well, my expectations are in the way of that. Okay. Let’s get rid of those. Let’s put something else in its place. Let’s organize new thoughts about how you can have people in your life.” And you want to feel yourself. You want to personalize that process. If that means that you’re not in the kitchen cooking, you’re not at the stove because you feel stressed out and not yourself off that way, guess what you’re going to do. You’re going to order pizza when you have people over. And that is just as valuable in a gathering as making a five course meal. We just need permission to be ourselves in those small ways in the kitchen.

Emily:

Not only are you giving great advice about how to name and then live out what matters, but also if this is your first introduction to Kendra, know that Kendra’s voice is such a kind companion for us. Because what you do for us is not only do you encourage us start small, but you also help us know that no step is too small. That this idea of, but that’s silly. Why couldn’t I think of that? Guess what? We can’t read our own label. Not one of us can. Not even you can. And I would imagine that there’re-

Kendra:

That’s why I have you. You guys, that’s why I have Emily. I’m like, I don’t know what to think about this

will, please let me figure it out.

Emily:

Help Kendra lazy genius. Her own kitchen just kidding. I've never done that. But that's the thing. Is it's so hard? I'm constantly calling my sister. I'm constantly boxing you because I'm like, "I can't make this decision." Yes. I have a podcast about discernment and decision making and it's like, "Can I... I just can't," but we can't see the back of our own heads basically. I have a whole episode about that you can't see the back of your own head. It's not called that it's called something clever. But when you get down to it, that's really what it's about.

Emily:

So you said you go to Bree McCoy about how to chop onion. We go to you for how to think about systems and how to name what matters. And I go to my sister when I need permission for stuff in my house and something that she said that is definitely along these lines to me. It was during pandemic times, mid pandemic not after pandemic, but whatever, all these words are, I don't know them. We're going to know them, but she was talking about how... We were all at home. All the kids were home, schooling at home. Everything was home. And we brought in from our... We have a sofa and a bonus room that's like rickety, rickety sofa, the worst looking thing ever. But it's the most comfortable sofa that we own.

Emily:

And we brought it in to our living room. Our main space that you can see when you walk in the house. And that's where we sat. And it was so comfortable. And I found myself deeply uncomfortable with this decision I made because it's so U-G-L-Y, U-ugly. But when I talked with my sister, she was like, "Absolutely you do that because," and she was helping me name what matters right now during that time, which was that my family is comfortable in our living room, because guess what? We're spending a ton of time there right now.

Emily:

And how it looks doesn't matter. Maybe it actually doesn't matter when people are coming over either, but it definitely didn't matter to us. And that was such a freeing. Now that sofa's moved back to its hiding place. But for that year... I mean, I think we left it there a year. It was kind of a tiny lifesaver and it sounds "dumb" because it's small. But that small thing actually made a difference every single day of our life that year.

Kendra:

Yeah because that was the season you were in. And I actually talk about that in the Lazy Genius Kitchen, that there are a couple of places that you can begin when you're like, "Okay. How do I prioritize here? How do I name what matters?" One of them is where are you frustrated? What are your pain points? Especially in the kitchen, because those are a lot easier to name and it's easier to find small ones often in the kitchen. But the other one is please remember the season you're in. Please remember the season you're in because we expect, especially in the kitchen while I used to cook this way, but now I have two children under three. Friend, you can't cook that way anymore.

Kendra:

It doesn't mean that you're not competent. It doesn't mean that it doesn't matter. But right now, if you are really tired and you're taking care of tiny humans all the time, that priority, the priority of ease perhaps is probably going to be more important in this season of life than creativity in the kitchen most of the time. So it's really important. I love that example. I love that story because that was a season where you're like, "No. We need just a big old comfy couch in the space even if it's not what I would choose on most days. But it's what I'm choosing for these days because we're allowed to change our mind."

Emily:

We are. And it sounds crazy, but it really is part of growing up into ourselves because knowing and naming and living within our seasons is oftentimes a tiny rebellion against the ways our moms did it or our grandmothers or our mother-in-laws or not to bash our elders. But I think we try to live up to things that they do now but we forget that they're in a different season. And it can be difficult if some of those voices are ones that might be speaking negatively to us, or we assume that they have expectations of us even that they don't have.

Emily:

But even if they do, I think this is such a lovely way of being a grown up. Is being on our own team and recognizing what, this matters to me now. And it might not have mattered to me last year. It might not matter next year. And it might not matter to anyone else outside of the people who live in this house and that's okay.

Kendra:

Yeah. Absolutely. Not only is it okay, I think it's something we want to... I was going to say strive. And then I was going to say aim and I don't like either of those words, it's normal. It's life. I think that we make these choices and we feel we're settling somehow, because exactly what you just said, it's like not the way other people do it. And I think I want us to embrace the fact that we're not going to do things the way each other does it. That's good. That's what makes the world spin. That's what makes connection really deep and meaningful is that we're all bringing ourselves to the table literally and figuratively with these decisions that we're making.

Kendra:

And I love that we're both trying to normalize that so much. No, don't apologize for this decision. We want you to make it, but I also don't want you to make it apologetically. I want you to make it confidently. And as confidently as at least as you can, and also know that if it doesn't work out, if it turns out to be a decision that you're like, "Oh, maybe that wasn't quite right." That you're not going to beat yourself up for it either. That you're just going to iterate and make the next one and you're going to do the next right thing. It's just such an important concept that I want us to all be proud to embrace every day. Yeah.

Emily:

So if y'all want to see the way the principles, the movements in this book are played out, you must absolutely must as soon as you're done listening to this episode, you must watch the Lazy Genius Kitchen show. Is that what it's called, Lazy Genius Kitchen show?

Kendra:

That seems what it should be called. I've just been calling it the Lazy Genius Kitchen Video Series but it is a show. You're right, it's a show.

Emily:

It's a TV show.

Kendra:

It is. It's just not on TV.

Emily:

On YouTube.

Kendra:

It's a TV show. Yes.

Emily:

But what I love about it and here's what I love about it is you take real people, so far. Well, tell them where to go to watch it.

Kendra:

Yeah. So everything about the book and about the show is at [thelazygeniuskitchen.com](http://thelazygeniuskitchen.com). And we have had four episodes release. I'm pretty sure that today is an episode with Emmy Downs who we both love, where lazy genius her freezer. And it's so delightful. You've seen that one.

Emily:

You've seen it and I laughed out loud multiple times through it because here's what I love about the show. That is a show. And I'm going to lobby hard for it to be a real show. I don't know if you even want that.

Kendra:

I don't either.

Emily:

I want this on my TV. Thank you very much. And I want weekly episodes till lie die.

Kendra:

There you go.

Emily:

But here's why I love it is because the very thing we just talked about how you said you did it, the at the event and the woman was like, the lazy Susan is the worst and what am I supposed to do? And then you kind of fixed it together as a group. And like you said in the room, there was this sense of like, "Is this what we're talking about? Really, this is what..." But to her, it made a huge difference.

Emily:

And this is what I love. You take some people that maybe we follow online or people we've read their books or whatever. And you go to their freezer. You go to their junk drawer. You go to the, and you fix their things that we might be watching and being like, really? Come on people. But guess what? We all have those same problems. Maybe in different areas, but it's so refreshing to see an entire 22 minute episode about a thing that like, "Oh, you mean this matters? You mean I can care about this? And then doing it will actually make a difference." And these people who I follow and respect online have the same problems. First of all, it's highly entertaining and often funny, but it's also kind of freeing and permission giving, which is one thing I love about it.

Kendra:

Yeah. Thank you. That's exactly what I wanted is I wanted something that was really fun, but also felt really accessible. It's real people and real kitchens with real problems because big before and afters, we're going to reorganize the whole thing. We're going to just demo the kitchen and rebuild a new one. That doesn't even those things don't work, if you don't go through those five movements, if you don't prioritize first. If you don't essentialize, you're just going to have a prettier kitchen that still is going to give you trouble. So I really wanted to have something that yeah, offered that.

Emily:

Okay. Sorry. I lost you. I heard we're going to reorganize the kitchen and rebuild a new one...

Kendra:

Got it. But that's not real life. Like doing these big things where we're like, "We're going to renovate and we're going to..." That's not a real problem that most of us have. I'm doing it. I wanted to have a show that focused on those really relatable things that we could all turn off the show and go, "I could do that. If

that's a problem, I could go do that right now."

Emily:

Yeah. And definitely that's when you've got something good on your hands is when someone watches a thing, listens to a thing, reads a thing and they immediately want to get up from their seat and go take action. And that's how I feel watching this show. And I just gave you the answer really, but I'd love to hear in your words. And then we have a fun segment. We're going to end on called Kendra and Emily answer questions that we asked from Instagram. Yes, we're doing it. We're doing it. But I want to ask you just as we wrap up our conversation about this book is someone reads your book. They close the book. What do you hope for this reader?

Kendra:

I hope that a reader walks into their kitchen and looks at it and doesn't even do a single thing and goes, "I could be comfortable in here. This could work." And then the one small place that you're going to begin to do that work. This is not a set and forget it. This is not, let's fix it all at once. This is a long... To borrow the phrase from our beloved Shannon Martin. This is long haul work, even in your own kitchen. And I want someone to feel empowered that they now have the tools to do the long haul work of, and not even really work all the time, but just the enjoyment of being in the kitchen and the seasons that they need it.

Emily:

Well, and to add onto that, I am one of those people who did recently, you renovate my entire kitchen down to the studs.

Kendra:

So pretty.

Emily:

And guess what? I still need this book because it didn't solve all my problems. It's beautiful. But I still have the same questions and discomfort that I've always had. So that's why I'm so excited about this book. Okay. So segueing into a segment that I have now unofficially named Q&A with Kendra and Emily of things we ask people on Instagram. But we can quick this. We can do this quickly. What's the word?

Kendra:

Let's do it.

Emily:

We can lightning round.

Kendra:

Lightning round. Got it.

Emily:

Yes. Okay. Ready? I'm going to start with a hard one. Someone asked, do you ever wish you didn't have an online life?

Kendra:

Every day.

Emily:

And I'm like, "What will she say to this-

Kendra:

Every day.

Emily:  
... just first.”

Kendra:  
Yeah. But not in a begrudging like, “Hey. [inaudible 00:35:14] work.” What matters more is the work. But yes, absolutely. It’s hard when your life is content, because literal, anything could be content at any moment. So there’s lots of decision making in the moment of, “Do I have the energy for this? Is this valuable?” Yeah. Every day I wish I didn’t, but that’s not the most important wish. The more important wish is the work.

Emily:  
And you’ve named what matters there.

Kendra:  
Absolutely. Yeah.

Emily:  
What is your, and this will be different for everyone, but just for you and I can answer this too, if I have an answer. What’s your favorite emergency meal to have on hand?

Kendra:  
The favorite is hot dogs because they’re easy, but they’re not my favorite to eat, like at all. You know what it is? I think it is, Costco Cheese Tortellini, Costco meatballs, and a big jar of Rao’s sauce. All of which I get at Costco, because two of them I just called Costco. How many times can I say Costco? Those three things. All it is boil the water. And I have an electric kettle for my tea and my French press. So I will start half a pot of water boiling on the stove and then I’ll fill the kettle because it boils a lot faster. So I can even get the water boiling quickly and just microwave the meatballs, cook the thing, dump the sauce in. The kids it like but it also doesn’t feel hotdogs. It was a little bit more a meal than just spaghetti or whatever. So it’s probably that it’s probably Tortellini, meatballs and a jar sauce.

Emily:  
That sounds delicious.

Kendra:  
It’s really good.

Emily:  
I feel for me if I need to now have some type of rice beans, cilantro every week or else I haven’t lived. So if I don’t have rice and black beans and lime and cilantro and salsa on hand, then we need to fix that ASAP. So that’s probably my favorite. If that’s going to be had, I’m in a happy place.

Kendra:  
Yeah. Totally.

Emily:  
And that can be in my house or if I go out. Sometimes speaking of Shannon Martin. We can make an episode about Shannon. When I’m with Shannon we will some times eat Mexican day after day.

Kendra:  
Yeah. Totally.

Emily:

She never tires of it. And she's also not picky. We'll go to the authentic place. We'll go to Sal Rita's. It does not matter. It matters none. This is what I love about her and of so many things.

Kendra:

So many things.

Emily:

So many things. Speaking of friendship someone asked, how do we genuinely sustain our friendship?

Kendra:

Oh man. I think off the cuff.

Emily:

Off the cuff.

Kendra:

Off the cuff. I think that we are really good at trusting the other person's heart. Yeah.

Emily:

I agree with that.

Kendra:

Yeah. Because we will go sometimes a lot longer than either of us want before we have a real conversation, but we don't take that personally. There is just such a trust in like, "I know you love me. I know you care about me. I know that we haven't talked in seven days." I look back when I texted you today or yesterday like, "Let's record or whatever." And I look back the last time that we had texted was 12 days earlier. We have boxed since then and I was like 12 days. How on earth is this possible? But also to go neither... We have jobs and families and all the things that make it well, everybody does that. You can't have the same rhythms of friendship that you do when you're in a different stage of life maybe. And so I think that there's just this really lovely, permission that we give each other. We just trust each other's hearts. We know that we're going to connect when we connect and we're going to be so excited when we do. And there's just a lot of freedom in that.

Emily:

Yeah. That's exactly what I would've said, which feels like... That feels good news that we just... So my daughter, Stella babysits for Kendra's kids. So there have been seasons where Stella is telling me things about you guys that I don't know because she's over there more than I am, which is by the way, can we talk for just a second? How weird it is that my kid babysit your kid. It's so weird.

Kendra:

Your kid brought my kid a birthday present yesterday and it was the sweetest thing. She was like, "Can I bring Annie over or something?" It's just precious. My kid love Stella so much.

Emily:

That's so cute. Yeah. They love Stella. Stella loves your children, but I think it's this concept of... This sounds a weird way to say it, like keeping short accounts or not keeping accounts at all.

Kendra:

Not keeping accounts at all.

Emily:

We just don't really keep accounts. And I mean, now does that mean that we haven't heard each other's feeling? Absolutely. Of course, we have.

Kendra:

Sure.

Emily:

But the thing is we talk about it. You are one of the safest people to be mad at because I can just tell and you... I mean, more than almost anyone that I can think of, you just are so willing to receive and move quickly through it. I hope that I can do that for you to a percentage of a degree that you've done that for me, because you were just the most generous, most tell me the words and let's move, we're doing this together because no matter what, we're going to be friends forever, the end.

Kendra:

Yeah. The end.

Emily:

I think knowing that, we both believe that makes it so that there's not going to be anything that's going to get in the way of this because we've already pre-decided that we're doing this.

Kendra:

We pre-decided, yes.

Emily:

We decided once yes. A lazy genius principle friends. You're going to be friends.

Kendra:

I've said this to you. I've said this to other friends before especially when because we all have friendships where you do have your first fight and it feels really scary.

Emily:

Yeah. It's your first scary because you don't know the other person.

Kendra:

So I always say we just added three years to our friendship. Every time you do that, you add more into the bank, you add more time. And that's why I love to work through times where I hurt someone or someone hurts me because it's like, all this is doing is solidifying this choice that we made, that we're going to be friends for a long time. So we're going to be friends for even longer because we're going to keep practicing this and it's going to get easier every single time. And we're going to trust each other even more and like, yeah. It's great. Thank you. That's very, very kind of you to say.

Emily:

Well, it's very true. Not that I'm mad at you. You're so easy to be mad at Kendra. Let me just tell you this. It sounded a weird thing to say, but you know what I mean. You're not going to hold that against me.

Kendra:

No. Not at all.

Emily:

Okay. I have a couple more. And then we're going to be done and I'm going to ask you what's your next great thing. What is something that you love about living in North Carolina?

Kendra:

Everything. I love everything. I don't even have an answer for that. I have an event. Actually, when this comes out, I think it is today when in Greensboro where we both live and I made a guide to Greensboro for people who are coming and every... I was just fell more in love with the town. As I put things on this list, I was like, "I just love this place that I was born here." I think it's that it's home. I really love that Greensboro is home and has been my whole life. And I really love that what is home on paper is also home in my heart. Because some people are born somewhere and then you move and you're like, "Well, that's my home but then this is my home." And I just really love that I have a home. I love it here.

Emily:

Beautiful. I can't add to it, but I am going to ask you one final question and that is Kendra Adachi what is your next right thing?

Kendra:

I am going to kill the bug that just fell from the ceiling in the moment that you asked that question. I can't tell what kind of bug it is. He is crawling in my tray. He's trapped in. That is literally my next right thing. So I have to go kill this bug.

Emily:

Don't make it too hard you all. Don't make it complicated. You just do that next right thing. Kendra, it is as always a delight to spend time with you. Thank you so much for joining me today.

Kendra:

Thank you for having me. Love you very much.

Emily:

Love you too.

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Thanks for listening to episode 224 of the Next Right Thing. I hope this simple practice of naming what matters can be just one more rung on the trellis upon which your rhythm of life can continue to grow. Because while it's true, this is a podcast about making decisions, whether that's in our home, our kitchens or our lives, the bigger truth is those daily decisions are making our lives.

You can find Kendra on Instagram at [thelazygenius](https://www.instagram.com/thelazygenius) or online at [thelazygeniuskitchen.com](http://thelazygeniuskitchen.com) where you can also learn all about her brand new book out this week, and watch the Lazy Genius Kitchen show where she helps guests like Sharon McMahon, Maddie James, Erin Moon, and Emmy Downs tackle their real and regular kitchen problems with the principles from the Lazy Genius Kitchen book.

Thanks for hanging with us as we attempted to keep our best friends speak at bay and talk normal human professional people. I think we accomplish that at least most of the time. Well, in closing a few final words about naming what matters. These are from Kendra and she's talking about the kitchen, but as we've already discovered, naming what matters is important in lots of areas of life. Here's what she says.

You can name what you think matters most. Live with it and if you realize that something else matters more, you can pivot. The world is not ending if you change your mind, in fact, expect to change your mind. It happens all the time because life is not white noise. It's dynamic and full of change. You have kids or then they move out or you don't have them at all. Get a new job or quit the one you have. You move homes, cities and states. You learn a new skill, buy a new pot or get a new Trader Joe's down the street. Life changes and every time it does your priorities likely will too. Please be kind to yourself as they do. What could matter? What does matter? What matters most. Thanks for listening. And I'll see you next

*The Next Right Thing with Emily P. Freeman*