

[00:00:00] <music>

**Annie:** Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm really happy to be here with you today. We've got a great show in store. We are celebrating around here because today is the second birthday of the That Sounds Fun Network. We are really, really proud of those shows. We're honored to get to partner with them and what God has done in the last couple of years. We're really grateful. So happy birthday That Sounds Fun Network. We love you.

**Sponsor:** Before we dive into today's conversation, I want to take a moment and share about one of our incredible partners, [Athletic Greens](#). We're interested in doing anything we can to support our health especially when it's convenient and delicious, right? Athletic Greens is here to help us do that.

In one scoop of Athletic Greens mixed in cold water, you're getting 75 high-quality vitamins, minerals, whole food-sourced superfoods, probiotics, and adaptogens. It supports all of these: your gut health, your nervous system, your immune system, your energy recovery, and focus. AG1 contains less than one gram of sugar, no GMOs, no bad-for-you chemicals, or artificial anything while still tasting good.

It's got a nice green flavor, sort of like a green juice and it's lifestyle friendly. Whether you keto paleo vegan dairy-free, gluten-free, you're investing in an all-in-one nutritional insurance. Athletics Greens has over 7,000 5-star reviews and it's recommended by professional athletes. They tend to know a thing or two about how to help us move forward and peak performance. Am I right?

It's time to reclaim your health and arm your immune system with convenient daily nutrition, especially as we finish up this flu and cold season. It's just one scoop in a cup of cold water every day. That's it. And to make it easy, Athletic Greens is gonna give you a free one year supply of immune-supporting vitamin D and five free travel packs with your first purchase. All you have to do is visit [athleticgreens.com/soundsfun](https://athleticgreens.com/soundsfun). Again that is [athleticgreens.com/soundsfun](https://athleticgreens.com/soundsfun) to take ownership over your health and pick up the ultimate daily nutritional insurance.

**Intro:** Let's keep talking about how we feed our bodies with today's guest. Today on the show is our good friend Kendra Adachi. You know her. She is the lazy genius. She was with us back on Episode 268, helping us kick off the new year talking about her first book *The Lazy Genius Way*. You want to go back and listen to that.

She is a systems expert and permission giver in the best sort of ways. Her new book *The Lazy Genius Kitchen* just came out this week. It's our guidebook to help us learn to love our kitchens or love our kitchens no matter how we feel about cooking.

Kendra has personally come to my actual kitchen to help me overhaul my freezer. And boy did it need it! You can watch the video. We linked it in the show notes below. Y'all, she's brilliant. She's wonderful. You're gonna love her practical and gracious approach and her wisdom and friendship. I just adore her. Here's my conversation with Kendra Adachi.

[00:03:07] <music>

**Annie:** Kendra Adachi, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

**Kendra:** Annie F. Downs, how are you?

**Annie:** You're just my favorite of all the geniuses. The lazy one is my favorite of all of them. I'm just grateful for you. Listen, I'm gonna lay a foundation for us that you know that I just need to say. You are not on the show today because I love my kitchen. You're on the show today because I love you. It is without question the least used rim in my life.

**Kendra:** Which is why I'm so proud of this book because this book is helpful for people like you who are like, "I don't go in the kitchen very much," and then for people who are in there all the time. It's so great.

**Annie:** It's true. It's true. Okay, let's talk about my episode. Is it called the Lazy Genius Show? What do you call it?

**Kendra:** I know. I actually did an interview for our beloved mutual friend Emily P. Freeman for her The Next Right Thing yesterday, and she did this. She asked the same thing. She was like, "What's it called? Is it The Lazy Genius Kitchen show?" And I was like, "You know what? I guess that's what we're gonna call it now."

So yes, Annie, that's what it's called. It's The Lazy Genius Kitchen Show. Because I have run into like, well, I have a video series and I have a book by the same name. So I ended up just being like, Lazy Genius Kitchen book. It's just awkward. So yes, it's Lazy Genius Kitchen Show. It's like Dick VanDyke. It's Lazy Genius Kitchen Show.

**Annie:** Tell me what made you even think of "I need to go into my friend's kitchens and make it better for everyone to see"?

**Kendra:** No, this is an excellent question. So two things. One, this is a book that doesn't exist anywhere else. This type of book doesn't exist, which is a weird thing to say.

But I have been wanting this book to be written for a really long time. I want there to be a resource that helps us figure out everything in the kitchen except the recipes.

Like there are plenty of those. There are so many recipes. There are so many beautiful cookbooks. We even have a bonus episode that comes out tomorrow where you show me your favorite cookbooks in your not very much used kitchen. And I love it so much. And that'll be available on Friday. But I wanted there to be help, guidance, some sort of really nice, friendly text book about how to handle everything else because there's so much more than just cooking chicken. And so-

**Annie:** Which even is terrifying to me. I wish I could casually grill a chicken breast. But your girl slices and dices them because I don't want to poison myself the three times a year I make chicken.

**Kendra:** This is my favorite. You said a lot of things that made me laugh but I really want there to not be... Anything that makes me laugh I immediately want to put on a t-shirt. And I want a t-shirt that says "I want to casually grill a chicken breast." Because it's like that's what we do.

**Annie:** Come on.

**Kendra:** We have this idea in our head of like yeah, just want to like put it... Like people look so chill when they're grilling, they're so at ease when they're cooking chicken and you're like, "I'm gonna kill humans. I can't do this."

**Annie:** The dads on TikTok, they just grill them on their grill and then they just serve them. And I'm like, "No one has put a thermometer in a single one of those." How are the dads on TikTok more chill about grilled chicken than 40-year-old Annie?

**Kendra:** It's true. It's the way it goes. It's the way it goes. So anyway, back to the reasons. Also, we just need to get you a thermometer.

**Annie:** I do. That is what I do now. I do now. I learned 165. Put that puppy in there, 165.

**Kendra:** Well done.

**Annie:** And I got my toaster oven/air fryer, I used our friend Bri McCoy's code, her affiliate link because she told me which one to buy. So I used her affiliate link and got her a couple of dollars.

**Kendra:** I have the same one, and it's a magical little thing.

**Annie:** It's magical.

**Kendra:** It's so great. I know. It's so great.

**Annie:** Okay, continue on with your book.

**Kendra:** Sorry. Okay, so I wanted there to be a book that covered everything else. And I was waiting for someone to write it and no one did. And I was like, "Well, dang it. I guess I have to write it." And I'm so glad I did. Because I feel like it's a book that applies to anybody in any season, any skill set, any life stage, any number of people in your house. It is an incredibly versatile, personal way for you to make your kitchen work the way that you need it to.

It was very hard to do that. I'm gonna say that right now. That was a tall order. I have a lot more gray hairs now than I did before I started writing that book. That's okay.

**Annie:** It's beautiful. One of the things I love about it is the way it's laid out. There's a lot of graphs and a lot of art and a lot of beauty. I mean, did you just have to like beautiful mind one of your walls in your office?

**Kendra:** I did. I had to.

**Annie:** Yeah, you have to. Because there are so many graphs in this book. I had no idea-

**Kendra:** It's a lot of things.

**Annie:** I had no idea the one that is "how do you roast stuff," and it's just like, "This is how you roast it. Here is how you roast stuff."

**Kendra:** Yes. It was a labor of mostly love, some just labor because it was so much. And that's why it took a... I mean, you know this, you are a writer. It's like when we read a book... And I'll get back to the second reason that I shot the videos by the way. I remember your question.

**Annie:** No, no, I'm having a great time.

**Kendra:** When we read a book and it is a delightful experience, it feels effortless to read it. The amount of effort that the author put into making your reading experience an effortless experience is a lot of effort.

**Annie:** Yes!

**Kendra:** And I don't say that like, "You guys feel piteous. It's hard work." I don't mean that. I just mean I want this book to not feel overwhelming because there is a lot in it.

**Annie:** Well, it's just a direct correlation. How much the author put into the ease of reading is our experience of the ease of reading. It's just a direct correlation.

**Kendra:** It's true. I know. It's true. It's true.

**Annie:** So many of our friends I know love... I'm one of them. I love reading cookbooks. It is one of my favorite things. I'll read every word that a cookbook writer writes in their book even if I only make one recipe in a decade. But yours I've read front to back because it is the cookbook I've always wanted to read without the recipe.

**Kendra:** No one has said that yet, and that's the most brilliant thing I've ever heard. It is. I mean, there are some stories or some personal anecdotes in it, but it's mostly like, "Okay, let's break this down. Has anyone told you what a spatula is for that maybe...?" Because I know we all feel silly to ask. But I know not everyone knows. Like, what do you use to toss spaghetti? What do you use to...? We don't know these things because no one has told us, and then we feel really silly asking them. So it is just this...

I say that the book is full of kind of big sister energy. I just want to go, Hey, you know what? I got your back. It's all fine. You're doing great. It's okay that you don't know all these things. You don't even have to know these things. Pick what you need. If this doesn't matter to you, keep going. Go to the next thing."

Anyway, I wanted there to be that book in the world. But then because that book does not exist anywhere else that I have found and it's kind of hard to explain, I knew there needed to be a visual representation of how to apply these five steps that I lay out in the first part of *The Lazy Genius Kitchen* book. I knew that there needed to be a visual. There needed to be proof. There needed to be like, "Hey, this is not as daunting as it might feel when I'm trying to explain this book to you. This is a process that you can apply to literally anything in your kitchen and or life. But the smaller the problem, the better.

So I wanted to go into the homes of people that I love that I knew would be fun, that they'd be fun on camera, all the things to show people, "Hey, this works. Let's do real problems in real kitchens with real people. That it's not dramatic before and afters, which are super fun. Those are super fun, but they are not relatable to most of us. And I wanted there to be a show that felt relatable.

**Annie:** I feel like my freezer was dramatic before and after Kendra. I'm just gonna spoil it for people who haven't watched it yet. I mean, I've told everyone to watch it already

this week. But in a world where people haven't watched it yet, I'm just gonna spoil that I had 15 ice bags in my fridge. And I do not picnic. I'm not a constant picnic prep and yet... What were you thinking when that happened?

**Kendra:** Oh my gosh.

**Annie:** What were you thinking about me?

**Kendra:** Annie, when we kept... because what we did is we took everything out, which in a small space like a freezer, that is kind of what you do. The five steps. Okay, the number one is to prioritize. You have to name what matters about whatever your problem is. And you were frustrated that you couldn't find anything in your freezer. It's like you didn't open it except to put new things in it, but you didn't really take anything out.

**Annie:** Precisely.

**Kendra:** So we needed to make it so that you could see what was in there, you knew what was there, and you were overwhelmed by it every time you opened it.

Well, the next step number two is to essentialize. You need to get rid of what's in the way of that. Usually, when you're talking about a finite space and a tangible space that you're trying to make work, you need to get rid of what you no longer need, of what does not support what matters to you. Because usually what we do is we start with step three which is organize. We start with organizing.

And that doesn't work because you're just putting things... You said this. I was like, "If you organize what you don't need, you're just organizing what you don't need." And you said, "What a terrible waste of time." In the video, it's like, "Oh, that's just such a terrible waste of time." And it is. So all that to say, we were cleaning out your freezer and in the process of cleaning out your freezer, I just-

**Annie:** Which just to be clear to everyone, it's not a deep freezer, it is not a side-by-side fridge freezer. It is a small 1/3 of the top of your fridge freezer. You can't put a kid in there. It is very small. It is a very small freezer and... continue.

**Kendra:** And I kept encountering ice pack after ice pack after ice pack after ice pack. And I was like, "Why do you have so many ice packs?"

**Annie:** Why?

**Kendra:** They filled like a solid third of your freezer real estate. Just giant ice packs.

**Annie:** Without questioning it. Without questioning it.

**Kendra:** And when I was like, "How many of these do you want to keep?" you were like, "Zero. I don't need them. I don't pack coolers. I don't take food places where I need to keep it cold. I don't need any of these." So we literally threw away 15 ice packs. It was unreal.

But then you had... And that's the thing. You think there were a couple of things that you had in your freezer that you kept there because you felt that you didn't want to throw them away because you thought you were supposed to keep them. One of them was the 15 ice packs. The other one of them was your bag of chicken carcass so that you can make your own chicken stock.

**Annie:** For the girl who does not use her kitchen to save a chicken carcass is just beyond irrational.

**Kendra:** It's like we are told... And you said this in the episode. It's like you're supposed to do that. You're supposed to keep your scraps in a bag.

**Annie:** Yes. Every woman knows, especially from the south, you keep those bones. You keep them.

**Kendra:** But if you are not a person who makes your own chicken stock, that does not matter to you, you simply have a bag of chicken bones in your freezer. That's all it is.

**Annie:** To be real, those chicken bones came from a rotisserie chicken I purchased at the Kroger. It's not even like I cooked the chicken.

**Kendra:** So the beauty of the process, guys, is once we removed the 15 ice packs in the bag of chicken bones, we remove them physically but we also removed the expectation that you needed to keep them. Like there needs to be like a side-by-side journey of practicality and permission.

**Annie:** Oh, wow.

**Kendra:** The removal of those ice packs and of that chicken physically left room for the things that mattered in your freezer so you can see what you needed in there. But also removing them from your brain, the expectations and the guilt in your brain was like, Oh no, wait, I could just use my freezer the way I need to. I can keep what I need to because it's about what matters to me." It's not about what everyone else says matters to them and we're trying to like MacGyver it all together. That's why we're stressed out all the time.

**Annie:** And it's been a couple of months since we recorded that and my freezer is exactly the way you left it. I still-

**Kendra:** Is it because we haven't eaten anything?

**Annie:** Partly. Partly. I have added some things, I've taken away a few things. Meat at the bottom, fruits, and vegetables at the top, nuts on the door, that is still the way it exists right this minute. So you taught me in a way that has remained true.

**Kendra:** I'm so glad.

**Annie:** So our friends listening, I send out an email every Friday called the AFD Week in Review. And in that email we tell them who I'm talking to and they can submit questions. There are a lot of questions about what utensils we quote, "need" in our kitchen. And you have a chart. There is a chart for us in *The Lazy Genius Kitchen* called "Do I use this?" Do I use this? Will you just kind of talk us through what do we need in the kitchen? The majority of humans use their kitchen more than I do. What do we need in our kitchen? How do we know what we need? What do we not need?

**Kendra:** So this is a question I get a lot. And I think it's an answer that we're hoping gives us a sense of more control in our kitchen. Because if we're like, "If I have the things that I need, if I have all these tools..." It's kind of like, if I have all this workout equipment, if I have all of these apps, all these money management apps, like if we have these specific tools that we think we're supposed to have, then we will move forward and this thing that we say matters to us. When actually in reality that's going in the wrong order. You have to know what matters first. You have to name what matters first.

For example, I might say to you, "Oh, an instant pot, dude, so important, so important." And you're like, "I don't know. I don't think so. I don't think I need that because making food super, super quickly or setting things early in the day, that's really not how I eat. Also, I'm a single person, or it's just me and one other person and instant pots are really big. And I can't make that much food" or "I don't have a cabinet big enough to keep one" or "I don't want to put it on the counter."

But if I say with my own personal passion, without the caveat of "this is what matters to me," then what you are going to do is you're going to think it should matter to you. And it shouldn't.

**Annie:** Yes. We are not "should" people.



**Kendra:** No, we don't do that. So you have to start with your tools with what matters. And another thing that I think is really important to say is that we see lists all over the place. And every cookbook you own probably has an essential tools list. Like, "The things you should have." If you don't use it, it is not essential. It is only a waste.

**Annie:** Oh, yes. Yes.

**Kendra:** You have to use it in order for it to be essential. Just because someone else uses it doesn't mean you have to. I did an event with Bri McKoy, who we aforementioned Bri McKoy, last week and I actually said in a room, "You don't even need a knife potentially." And she broke apart just a little bit.

**Annie:** If you only eat cereal.

**Kendra:** She did. She was like, "Wait, wait." She started to kind of panic-

**Annie:** Oh, you do her voice very well.

**Kendra:** Thank you. Emily does the best Bri. Emily Freeman does the best Bri outside of Bri.

**Annie:** Yes, certainly.

**Kendra:** Emily and I both do Bri to Bri. It's a lovely thing. So she started to panic a little bit, and I was like, "No most of you, I do think you probably do need a knife. I think that you're going to need, in your cooking, to cut things." Most of us end up needing to cut things.

But if you're in a season of life or you have a skill set and you have the budget to be convenience all the way, I'm going to have someone else prep my vegetables for me. Like I'm gonna buy things already cut. I'm gonna buy frozen onions. I'm gonna... You can do that. You could survive without a knife. If you don't use a knife, you don't need a knife. It's okay. Even the most essential of tools like a knife, you don't have to have because it depends on what matters to you.

[00:18:40] <music>

**Sponsor:** Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about one of our incredible partners, [Ritual](#). The nutrition provided by the typical American food intake, as we are discussing, has got some serious gaps, right? Over 97% of women between the ages of 19 and 50 aren't getting enough vitamin D and 95% are not getting their recommended daily intake of key omega 3s.

Ritual's Essential for Women 18+ multivitamin was formulated based on exhaustive research so it can help fill nutrient gaps in the diets of women ages 18 plus. It's got nutrients to help support brain health, bone health, blood health, and to provide antioxidant support.

But Ritual does not stop there, you guys. They invested gold standard, University-led clinical trials to prove the impact of Essential for Women 18+ multivitamin. The findings tell us that their Essential for Women 18+ increased vitamin D levels by 43% and Omega 3 DHA levels by 41% in 12 weeks. That is impressive.

Ritual is committed to third party testing. They include traceable and vegan-friendly ingredients and they communicate clearly. These are the kinds of trust-building practices that keep us coming back. My Ritual multivitamins are a part of my daily morning routine. I love knowing that their clean ingredients are helping make my body do what it is meant to do and give me all the things that I'm not guaranteed to get it from what I eat. In fact, my package of this month's vitamins arrived today.

Right now Ritual is offering my friends 10% off their first three months. So visit [ritual.com/thatsoundsfun](https://ritual.com/thatsoundsfun) and turn healthy habits into a ritual. That's 10% off at [ritual.com/thatsoundsfun](https://ritual.com/thatsoundsfun).

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And now back to our conversation with Kendra.

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**Annie:** I was just gonna give you my hot take on instant pots and I need you to give me your thoughts back on it.

**Kendra:** I'm ready.

**Annie:** Everyone acts like instant pots are so fast. "Set it for 15 minutes and it's done." Well, you forget there's a 35-minute ramp up and a 35-minute demystify thing at the end." I'm like, "Y'all are getting tricked. Instant Pots are not that helpful. They are not." I mean, I get it. You throw your frozen chicken in there with a thing of salsa and you've got a taco when you're done. But that took an hour. It took an hour. It did not take 15 minutes. So I think everybody's tricking everybody about the Instant Pot and everyone's just going along with it. Everyone's just going along with it.

**Kendra:** You're not wrong.

**Annie:** They hit 15 minutes. So everyone goes along. It's not true, Kendra.

**Kendra:** I know. It's true. You're right. You're absolutely right. Page 166 in *The Lazy Genius Kitchen* does say "how to use your instant pot." Now, if that is something that's interesting to you, you can look at that. But if you look at that and you're like, "I'm with Annie. This is a conspiracy. This is not real. I'm gonna just stick to my pan," that's great.

**Annie:** The greatest conspiracy we're dealing with on Earth right now: Instant Pot. No. Okay, wait, what page is it again?

**Kendra:** 166.

**Annie:** See, I love your tool section. It's like, "Here's how to use this, if you decide you need to use it."

**Kendra:** If you decide to use it. Let me explain really quickly the breakdown of the book. The book is broken down into three parts. Part one is called *The Lazy Genius Kitchen* and it shares the five steps in detail.

Part two is called "Have what you need." And it applies those five steps to multiple areas of your kitchen. You know, I think about it kind of like lecture in lab. Part one

is like, Okay, let's just sort of lay this out this sort of what we're working with. Now, let's get down and dirty with it. Let's sort of figure out how these steps are going to work in all these different areas potentially for you.

And then part three is called "Use what you have." I call it a beefy appendix, you guys. It is just the beefiest of appendices. It is just full of one and two page resources for how to do all kinds of things. And there is a whole thing in part three called how to use your stuff. How to use your stuff.

So I list out "these are the tools for baking." If you're a baker, this is probably what you need. If you're not a baker, skip these things. Tools for grilling. Here's what you probably need and how you use it. If you're not a griller, skip these things.

There's one called tools for moving food around. Like a section called tools for moving food around because there's so many ways you can move food around. And no one teaches us how to do that. Again, I don't want to make anybody feel weird to ask. And so I'm just going to answer the question for you. So you don't have to.

**Annie:** I love it. So your first book, *The Lazy Genius Way*, just kind of walks us through our whole life. Why was the dial down into the kitchen versus the laundry room or your house? Why didn't you go house? Why did you go straight to the kitchen?

**Kendra:** That's a great question. So *The Lazy Genius Way*... She's like, "Thank you. I am a professional interviewer"

**Annie:** My dad loves when people say that.

**Kendra:** That's a great question? Lovely. So *The Lazy Genius Way* is 13 principles. It's kind of like the toolkit. It's like the explanation of your toolkit. That you can use these principles in any way too lazy genius anything in your life, to be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't to you, right? Because it's different for everyone.

Now, the more that I sat with this, and I'm sure that you have run across this in your own writing, when you create something and then you talk about it and you sit with it and it starts to kind of settle in a little bit, different pieces start to talk to each other, they're like creating new fun conversations, that is what started to happen with these 13 principles is they started to land in certain orders. Where like to centralize and put everything in its place, those are two lazy general principles of the 13, those go together really well but you have to essentialist before you put everything in its place.

So I started to kind of see these patterns within the 13 principles. And it was very exciting. It was like they came to life again. Well, that paired with the fact that I absolutely am obsessed with the kitchen. I love being in there. I love gathering people. I love to cook-

**Annie:** Yes, you do love it.

**Kendra:** I do. I love it. But I'm not a person who's like, "Oh, good. It's five o'clock, I'm so excited I get to decide what's for dinner." Like we eat spaghetti easily once a week. We eat hot dogs probably once a week. I'm not creating these elaborate... We eat something green maybe once every 10 days. That's not my season of my life.

**Annie:** You stick in the browns and the reds?

**Kendra:** Brown, red through and through. Deep, deep brown, red. So which I'm totally fine with that. I'm totally fine with that because that is my season. But I still love it and I still enjoy being there. And I started to kind of get sad a little bit when I would see people in my life not experience their kitchen, not enjoy it in any way at any time.

And it wasn't that I was like, "No, you need to be like me." It was like, "No, this is possible." Every person can enjoy their kitchen, if they have the permission and the practical tools together to create a kitchen and have a system to live in it day to day that works for them based on what matters to them.

And that's why step one in all of this is to prioritize. You have to name what matters to you. You can let go of everything else that actually does not matter to you that might be the most important thing for other people. Like if you think about it, that pervasiveness of food and eating, and all of the things that go into that in all of our lives, it's like something that joins us all together. It is so common for all of us.

**Annie:** It has to be done.

**Kendra:** It has to be done. And also I believe it is one of the most human-connected things that we can do. Even when we are eating alone, we're cooking for ourselves and we're eating alone, there is still an opportunity. Now, if you don't take that opportunity, it's okay. You're not a bad person. But there is still an opportunity to be kind to ourselves, and to personalize our experience in the kitchen and to have a moment with delicious food or just quiet or like watching a show that's fun while we're eating this bowl of something that's really tasty to us. There is something incredibly human and important about food and gathering, even if it's just with ourselves.

So those two things together we're all doing it. And I think it's important for everybody and we lose a lot of importance a lot of the time. It just made sense. Like, "Oh no, we need a Lazy Genius Kitchen book.

**Annie:** Yeah. If I could write an endorsement of all of this, I would say one of the things you have helped me do is I love my kitchen, I just don't use it. But I love it. It's exactly what I need. When I bought my house, I knew the things I really wanted were this, this, this, this, this and the kitchen was at the bottom. I know that all houses need them, it is just not my favorite room.

But man, a lot of your lazy genius way things in your podcast episodes and now the book have helped me to really love the kitchen that I have. Even if I don't use it, it is still right for me.

**Kendra:** Yes, absolutely. I think that is like the most... Jamie Golden would say the same thing. She always says like, "I'm not your target demo." I'm like, "Well, I mean, I know it's fine." But also I think that there is a great importance in what you just said. That you can enjoy your kitchen and never use it.

**Annie:** Totally, it's perfect for me.

**Kendra:** Exactly. If that is what matters to you about your kitchen, then you still can create a space that serves that. So enjoying it does not necessarily mean like, "I love being in it and I'm always in an apron and I have dry herbs hanging from my ceiling." We're not trying to make everybody enjoy it in the same way. You even get to decide what that means. You get to decide what it means to enjoy your space. And if that means that it's super utilitarian and it keeps cereal and vodka and ice cream, that's wonderful. Like you should do that. You should do that.

**Annie:** I like that kitchen. That kitchen you speak of sounds... Oh my gosh, I love it. Okay, but you aren't making recipes. Tell me why creating recipes isn't a high priority to you but making our kitchens right for us is.

**Kendra:** Because recipe creation... You are friends with people who are food writers and recipe developers and it is a lot of work. It is a lot of work to do that. And I don't cook with recipes generally. I'm a refer...

**Annie:** Even your perfect chicken?

**Kendra:** Yeah. That's one of the two recipes in the book. There are two recipes in *The Lazy Genius Kitchen*. Just two. Just two. Change-Your-Life chicken Change-Your-Life chicken.

**Annie:** Yes, it says Change-Your-Life chicken.

**Kendra:** Change-Your-Life chicken and then also Thanksgiving turkey. That is my lazy genius Thanksgiving turkey, which is the most delicious turkey. It is the easiest thing on the planet. Anybody who has never cooked a turkey before could cook this turkey and it will turn out perfectly for you. People have been making it for years. And every Thanksgiving I just get like a slew of DMS are like, "This turkey was perfect. Thank you so much for this turkey."

So those are both in there because they're in the beefy appendix. There's a bit about how to host Thanksgiving. Because we need help with that kind of thing. Like how do we systemize hosting Thanksgiving? We need some help.

**Annie:** Yeah.

**Kendra:** Anyway, it's not that I'm like, I never open a cookbook or I don't ever cook from recipes, even though I just said I don't cook from recipes. It's more that I trust my intuition more than I trust the words on the page. So I am not following a recipe like verbatim. I will eyeball ingredients, I will know like, "Oh yeah, that chicken looks good. Or I would rather simmer this meat in this sauce rather than brown it first because that's quicker. And I don't have to dirty up another plate to remove the chicken and then make the sauce and then put it back in. You know what I'm saying?"

**Annie:** Yeah.

**Kendra:** I have kind of learned what works for me and I trust my intuition. It's not that I don't trust the recipe, but I trust my intuition first. So because of that, it's just not a way of cooking that I generally rely on. And I hope that this is very permission-giving to anyone listening who's in the same boat.

My priority right now in the meals that I make, in the shopping that I do. And how I'm planning all of it is I like things to be as easy as possible. I need easy food right now, because my life does not have a lot of margin for complication. So because of that, I don't make new things. I make one new recipe maybe once every, I don't know, three, four weeks. Everything else is just like we have this a lot and we're just gonna keep doing it. That's great. I don't care. That's our season that we're in. It's great.

**Annie:** On how to make Change-Your-Life chicken, sell me on chicken thighs over chicken breast. Why?

**Kendra:** Oh.

**Annie:** I know. This is a hot take you have. Tell me why.

**Kendra:** So do you dislike chicken thighs?

**Annie:** I like white meat in general, so I usually pick chicken breasts.

**Kendra:** Is it because you think it tastes better? Like why do you pick it?

**Annie:** Yeah, I think that's what I think. I think that's what I think.

**Kendra:** Then you should make chicken breasts.

**Annie:** Okay.

**Kendra:** That's my answer.

**Annie:** But you stand for chicken thigh.

**Kendra:** Oh, I do. I do. Big evangelist. Big guy evangelist. Big time. It's because I think they taste better, for one. I prefer dark meat over white meat. I do like white meat. It's fine. But I think the other thing is that they're cheaper. Dark meat are generally cheaper than white meat. And dark meat is what much more forgiving to cook. Chicken breast are like avocados, you have a very small window before it's either like, "Oh, this is gross." It gross either way. You know what I'm saying?

**Annie:** Yes.

**Kendra:** Chicken breasts are that way. And it's hard to make them where they're tender. And I do not like tough meat. Like, I really want it to be tender and anxious and all the things. A lot of people need to use the word anxious as I just said that out loud. I haven't heard that in a long time. So that's why I love them because they are cheaper, to me they taste better, and they're more forgiving. But if you prefer the taste of white meat, that's what you should make because that's-

**Annie:** And I can use the Change-Your-Life chicken recipe with white meat.

**Kendra:** You can. You just have to make sure... The key with Change-Your-Life chicken, guys, it is not Change-Your-Life chicken if the chicken does not have a bone in it and skin on it. Those are requirements.

**Annie:** Requirement.



**Kendra:** Otherwise, you're just making something different. You're just making something different.

**Annie:** Okay, great. Well, I love chicken breast, bone, skin. So I'm very interested. From our questions that people sent in through the AFD Week in Review, multiple people also said, "Hey, I'm single, I live alone and I like cooking but cooking for one sucks."

That's probably a little bit of where I've gotten... Like my mom and grandmothers taught me how to cook. Just like how long do I want to eat that pot of soup is the question. How much anction do I have in my body to eat nine servings of soup? So what's your lazy genius way for people who are only cooking for themselves? Or Bri only cooks for Bri and Jeremy. She only cooks for two people. I only cook for one or two people. What's the lazy genius way to cooking and enjoying it when you aren't necessarily cooking for more than yourself and you don't want to invite eight people over and you don't want to deliver four pots of soup to four other friends?

**Kendra:** I made dinner for myself guys. Who's hungry for a week?

**Annie:** Yeah, that's right. That's it.

**Kendra:** Right. I have a couple of thoughts and I'll just sort of run through them real quick. One is, I think there are certain meals that are hard for one person to cook like soup, unless you have a freezer.

**Annie:** With space.

**Kendra:** With space in it. If you cook for yourself, and you do not have a freezer, you have to change your choices. You just have to change your choices.

**Annie:** Sure.

**Kendra:** Because it's like, "Well, you just freeze the leftovers." "Well, I don't have a freezer." "Well, then just eat the leftovers." "I don't want to eat soup for nine days." Then maybe soup is a food you order. Because we all want to eat soup but soup is the food you order.

Or you can look for when you look for soup recipes if you really like soup... Like for example, Kate Strickler of Naptime Kitchen, I bet a lot of people who follow you love her, she has a recipe for black bean soup that you could... It's like mostly canned things. And you could just use the right ratio of cans. You could make a smaller batch where it's like just a couple of servings of that. And it's great.

So that's one thing is to pay attention that some kinds of meals are not as suitable for someone who is just them. Especially if you do not have a freezer, you don't want to eat that thing forever. And just release that. That's fine.

Another thing that I would say is the grocery store salad bar is like a really, really solid way for you to do one person prep. Let's say you're doing stir fry, you get a piece of chicken and go to the salad bar and just be like, "Oh, here's some mushrooms. Here's some carrots or some broccoli. Cool." And you take it home and you stir fry, and then you're done. You guys, you should see her face. You should see your face.

**Annie:** We do not deserve you. We do not deserve you. Why am I not using the salad bar to meet a lot of my needs?

**Kendra:** Yeah, the salad bar.

**Annie:** I could make a salad, I can make a stir fry. Because one of my friends who wrote in is like, "I hate chopping vegetables." I'm like, "Go to the salad bar."

**Kendra:** Go to the salad bar.

**Annie:** Kendra! Because you know your girl Annie works that Whole Foods salad bar because that is my hand hold and that is down the street for me. You know I can walk there. So I'm a part of that life. 2020 was hard because they closed down salad bars. But we could be using our grocery store salad bar.

**Kendra:** Yeah. Especially because there are definitely containers of prepped food. But even for one person to buy like the small bag of chopped peppers or whatever, it's still a lot of peppers. So you could go walk down your whole foods and you're like, "I'm getting lunch today. I'm getting my soup. I'm getting my container of soup because I want soup and I don't want to make a giant pot of it." You get your soup, you can make a salad and then you get another clamshell and you gather the things that you need for your stir fry that night.

**Annie:** Clamshell.

**Kendra:** Ain't that what they are called? I think that's what they are called.

**Annie:** I think they're clamshell. I mean, I don't know if that's what it's called. But in an instant, I knew what you meant. So that's all that matters. That's all that matters.

**Kendra:** And here's the thing I want to say about the salad bar before we leave that is this. There is something deep in our brains that convenience is like so much more

expensive and you're gonna be in the poor house if you have someone else cut your vegetables, which I realize is like a real thing. How many nasty bags of wilted lettuce have you thrown away? How many rotten things of broccoli have you thrown away? How many moldy carrots have you thrown away? You guys you are throwing away way more money than you would spend that extra pennies of like what it is by weight if you go to the salad bar.

I promise you, I promise you that when you name what matters to you, which is like I don't want to have a lot of food waste. I don't want to spend a lot of money on all these things, probably your alternative, if you're like well I don't want to cook, I don't want to chop things is you're doing takeout, which is way more expensive than getting things from the salad bar anyway.

So I'm giving you permission. It's not as expensive as you think it's probably going to save you money anyway. And it might actually be delightful that you get to cook at home for yourself without nine days of leftovers on occasion.

[00:38:08] <music>

**Sponsor:** Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation one last time to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [ZocDoc](#). Listen, no one knows what you're looking for in a doctor better than you. And no one's better at giving you the tools to find the perfect doctors than ZocDoc. The people who created ZocDoc found the major pain points in health care, all things that weren't working, and they said, "Okay, no more. We're going to fix it." And they made booking a great doctor surprisingly pain-free.

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So go to [zocdoc.com](#) and choose a time slot and whether you want to see the doctor in person or on video. And just like that you're booked with the appointment that works for your schedule. Every month millions of people use ZocDoc, including me. It's my go to whenever I need to find and book a new doctor.

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And now back to our conversation with Kendra.

[00:40:01] <music>

**Annie:** Okay, two of your podcast episodes that have really impacted me that go along with kitchen and eating and food is when you talk about how we lazy genius about our bodies and how we talk about our bodies or don't talk about our bodies. So talk a little bit for a minute if you can about like, what if our kitchen issues or body issues, what if are cooking issues or body issues? How do we let those things meet? Because we can't not eat food. And for some of us food is the problem and we can't not have it.

**Kendra:** Oh, that's such a good question. And I feel woefully, woefully under qualified to answer it because I think it's important to say I'm not a nutritionist, I'm not a psychologist or psychiatrist. I don't have any training in any of these things. I only have anecdotal experience and what I have personally read and learned from other people who are way smarter than me in this. So that giant caveat to say that is such a real thing.

And when we go through the five steps, when you start with what matters, if you have not done kind of your own personal work and like slow untangling, which is kind of I think, a lifelong process in many ways. If you have not done that slow entangling of like, "Hmm, is my body good just as it is? Is my body good? Is it good as it is? Do I need to change it in order for it to be valuable again? Do I have a lot of messages in my brain about what diet culture has said about food for a long time that I need to... I don't know. I don't want to downplay valuable things that are helpful to other people, like eat good fats at every meal, or eat this or you're gonna snack on proteins.

I remember even in your episode, that you have nuts in your freezer because you snack on nuts if you're hungry in between. And that can be an excellent thing if you like nuts.

**Annie:** If you like them, yeah.

**Kendra:** But guess what? But guess what? Guess what? If you have nuts in your freezer or your fridge to snack on, because that is what a lot of nutritionists have told you to do but you don't like nuts and it's not fulfilling, you're just gonna have a freezer full of nuts and guilt because you're not snacking the way that you're supposed to.

**Annie:** That's right.

**Kendra:** So when you talk about what matters, if you are saying that one of your highest priorities is health, I would just invite you to spend some time thinking about what that means. Because I think that healthiness is very convoluted in our heads and in our culture. And we focus more on health than we do on listening to our own bodies.

I have talked about that before where it's like this idea of intuitive eating, for example, where you're listening to what your body needs. People will always respond to me and say that "I don't trust my body. If I let my body say what it wants to do, I'm just gonna eat Oreos all day." And I want to say, well, maybe that's true because your body needs to know for a stretch that you are still good if you do eat Oreos more than people have told you to. But also, your body is good and your body wants to function. And we all need different things to function.

And the more that you practice, and this is the lazy genius principle, start small... You're not going to fix this in one podcast episode or overnight or one fridge overhaul or whatever it is. To start small with just your choices where you're just paying attention to what your body needs.

So there are times, there are times where at night I will go, "Oh, man, I really want some ice cream." And I will listen to my body so I eat ice cream because usually my body's like, "Yeah, that sounds like a great idea. Let's do that." And sometimes, though, because I've turned 40, I turned 40 a few months ago... And I don't know about you, but when I turned 40, my body was like, "Hey, you're so pretty. We're changing everything now. We don't do anything the way we used to do it. You're welcome."

**Annie:** It's like we got off one roller coaster and got on another one and no one told us.

**Kendra:** It was ridiculous. It was so ridiculous.

**Annie:** So weird.

**Kendra:** So I am currently being like, "Hey, girl, how are you doing? You're speaking a new language now. I don't know what we're after."

**Annie:** "I used to know you. What are you?"

**Kendra:** "I used to know you, and I don't anymore." She used to be like, "We love ice cream every day. And sometimes I would eat a lot, sometimes I would eat a little. I would just pay attention to what. Like it's okay."

I personally find conversations and prescriptions and directions around portion control to be kind of triggering for me because someone else telling me how much of something I should eat is not listening to my body. It's listening to them. And I want to listen to my body. I want to trust my body first. But now my body is more often being like, "Hey, dairy is good but if you eat it after three, we kind of have a hard time. So let's not have ice cream today. Let's eat something else."

You know, just trying to start small with paying attention to these small cues, just giving it a bit, just paying attention. Because sometimes I will literally imagine, I'm like, "Okay, well what if I eat this? How am I gonna feel? If I eat this, how do I think I'm gonna feel." And I'm not kidding you guys. I will have these sort of little sparks where my body is like, "Well, that's what we want. That's what we want. Let's do that." If you think about when you're sick, sorry for talking about being sick, but when you think about being sick, and you're like, "Oh, even thinking about eating that makes my body react," our bodies do that every day.

**Annie:** Wow.

**Kendra:** It's just a stronger signal when we're sick. So I think stepping back and just learning to listen and pay attention to your body is really, really helpful. Back to your question about where food is the problem and part of the reason we're unhappy in our kitchens is because we have a lot of these issues around food. I just want to give you the greatest, widest berthing permission to say to yourself like, "You're not going to..." I was going to say you're not going to fix this overnight. You're not going to fix it ever because you're not something to fix. This is simply just something to pay attention to.

And the more you do, and the kinder to yourself you are in that—that is another lazy genius principle to be kind to yourself—the kinder you are in that process of even if you're like, "No, I'm going to have this salad..." Also, there is a thing in the least genius kitchen about how to make salad because you guys are making salads probably in a way that makes them gross. Like if you just put all your big chunks of vegetables in a bowl, and you drizzle your light olive garden bottle dressing over it in a tiny bowl, and then you just sort of like fork toss it, you're just gonna get angry.

**Annie:** You're doing it wrong.

**Kendra:** You're doing it wrong. So there's a whole thing about, like, "Here's how you make a salad." And it's delightful. But back to if you're still just like feeling... I don't want to say in bondage because that feels like really strong language. But if you still feel more connected to your food choices every day, especially the ones that you have had in your head as healthy ones, if you still feel more connected to those than you would like, you can start small.

You can go through these five steps and you can say, "Okay, priority. If I'm prioritizing this, what matters about this? What matters is that I begin the kind, slow journey of trusting my body." Okay, number two, essentialize, what's in the way of that? Hmm, what's in the way of that? Maybe it's these cookbooks that like every single piece of information is about how many calories are in it and what your portion sizes, and all those things like. Maybe we put those away for now. Let's put those away. You can still five-step that. It's just a little more intangible and personal than your freezer. That was a lot of words. Sorry.

**Annie:** No, that's what I wanted. My counselor the other week said to me, "The greatest gift I'm going to ever give you is to tell you, this is always going to be hard." And I was like, "Thank you." Like we just keep acting like one day me and food and my body are going to like, "Finally I broke the code." And instead, she's like, "This is not a code to break. This is kind of one of your things. It's probably never gonna be easy. But you are not going to spend the next seven decades of your life the way you spent the first four."

**Kendra:** Exactly. Exactly.

**Annie:** Man, it has been a gift. Thank you for talking about that. Because one of the things I don't want people to miss out on *The Lazy Genius Kitchen* because they're figuring out how to love and live in their body. It's just such a fun book. Don't miss out on it because of how you feel about food. It's not about food. It's about your drawers, and it's about your cabinets, and your pans, and your pots. So it's wonderful. Kendra, it's wonderful.

**Kendra:** Thank you. Thank you, I think that's a really good thought. So we are told as authors and as writers and communicators in general, and a lot of people have jobs that have similar things to this where it's like, you can't please everybody, right? You can't please everybody. You can't write a thing that's going to make everybody happy. When you write a book, you write it to one specific person, and it will impact a lot more than that one specific person. But the more specific you are, the more resonant your message tends to be.

So me positing here what I'm about to say to say like, "Hey, I actually think I did write a book for everybody," it's a little bit unhinged. But I really think I did.

Because my guess is, you might say, "Well, I'm a this I'm a homesteader, I don't need this. I don't really use my kitchen, I don't need this. I have a hard relationship with food, I don't need this."

If I had the ability to give everyone a money back guarantee, I would do it. That's how confident I am and how personal and versatile and helpful this thing is. Because there's so much tangible stuff in it but there's also so much permission in it. It's like it is the text book on how to be a person in your kitchen. And we all get to decide what that means for us and I want to help.

**Annie:** That's right. It's really fun. It is such a good book, Kendra. Okay, you know the last question we always ask because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

**Kendra:** Napping for like 20 days in a row.

**Annie:** You're so close. I know.

**Kendra:** Annie, I'm so tired. I am so tired.

**Annie:** I know. You have worked so hard on a book. The thing people don't realize is you've worked incredibly hard on a book launch that has been moved. So you've worked hard on a book launch that got moved later. I need you to know how much I understand because we had to reschedule a tour where I worked really hard on a tour and then two weeks before we moved in... So you work twice as long on one thing.

**Kendra:** Here's the analogy that always worked for me because you guys my books were lost at sea. There are thousands of copies at the bottom of the ocean. It is a whole contingency that we did not plan for. It's absolutely ridiculous.

**Annie:** Are there some in the bottom of the ocean? Some of them didn't make it?

**Kendra:** Ten thousand books are at the bottom of the sea.

**Annie:** Okay, okay.

**Kendra:** It's a lot of books.

**Annie:** Oh, wow.



**Kendra:** It's fine. It's all fine. It's all fine. But yeah, we had to move the book launch like a head six, seven weeks or something like that. But we were in this holding pattern for a while of "do we move it at all? Like, I don't know what we do."

The analogy that came to mind when... We share an agent. When Lisa called me and was like, "Hey, I have some news. I have some interesting news to share with you. The boat carrying your books was in a storm and cargo is at the bottom and we don't know if yours is there or not. We don't know if your books are dry."

When we were in that holding pattern, I remember thinking, it's like I had been planning a wedding. It's something that you look forward to, you hope for and you put a lot of energy into it. It's also really stressful because there are a lot of details or a lot of people involved. There are so many wheels spinning, right? There are so many things that you're managing.

And what it felt like is that I was in the room, I was in my dress, I had my girls with me and we were about to go take pictures and then the wedding planner walked in and was like, "Hey, what's up, someone kidnapped your husband and we don't know if he's gonna come back or not. We don't know if they're gonna bring him back. We don't know. But you need to sort of stay in your dress and hang out here until we know what's going on."

**Annie:** Stay in your dress until we know something. That's awful.

**Kendra:** Like, "We're gonna keep the venue open. People are sort of coming. We might have to send them home. I'm not really sure." That's how it felt, where it was like, "Wait? What, we don't have a better plan than this?" It was overwhelming. It was overwhelming. So I'm glad that we're gonna get married, it's gonna be fine. Like we have a day and all the things. But it really was. It was very unsettling.

And speaking of unhinged, it really did feel like it was unhinged me in a really hard way. But it was also beautiful because, because I was able to personally literally use those 13 lazy genius principles to make the process work. You know, be like, "Okay, this doesn't matter anymore, this does. How do we do this? How do we make this work?" And then I got to like, sort of show that in small ways to my community. And it was really like-

**Annie:** You modeled it beautifully. Yeah.

**Kendra:** And it felt a little weird to be like, "Okay, guys, this is how you lazy genius a hard thing. But at the same time, we need people to show us how to do things. And it felt important to model that. So it was really a gift to be able to do that. And I'm so glad

that we are here now, that the book is here, that it's in people's hands finally. It has been, as they say, a journey. Yes, it's been a journey.

**Annie:** Are you a real napper? Are you like a 20-minute naper or two hours naper?

**Kendra:** 17 minutes. 17 minutes, Annie? To the tee.

**Annie:** Oh, I knew. It's in your book. I knew that. I knew that.

**Kendra:** 17 minutes time. Yes, it's in the book. I have a white noise machine on my phone. So I set a timer for 17 minutes. Here's the thing about 17-minute naps. You have to feel tired. You can't just force a 17-minute nap. It's like when your eyes are a little drowsy, you're like, "Well, yeah, I could probably fall asleep right now." Go lay down, set your timer on your phone for 17 minutes, turn on a white noise machine. And there is something really magical about... That's a magical time for me. I drove home from DC last week and I was so tired. I stopped three times and I took three 17-minute naps in shady parking lots.

**Annie:** I always think people are dead when they do that. It is so bad. It's like, "They're napping or dead. I don't know. I don't know. I'm gonna keep driving."

**Kendra:** Yeah, exactly.

**Annie:** God knows everyone. I have to say these things to myself. God knows everyone. He knows that person's details of their life. I don't. So I'm going to keep driving.

**Kendra:** Oh, that's amazing. That's amazing. But yes.

**Annie:** Well, this book, friend, I'm so glad people can get it this week. I'm just ready. I'm ready for all my girls who don't use their kitchen to love it, the women and men who do use their kitchen to love it. I mean, I think it's awesome. Thanks for writing it.

**Kendra:** Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate it so much. I feel like this book is perfectly situated for anyone in a transition. Graduating high school and going to college, graduating college and getting your first apartment, having a new baby, like all of these different life stages that seem to happen around this time of year, our kitchens need to transition with us. And I really feel like the tools in this book can help people do that. So if you're in the market for a gift or gift for somebody who's in that stage, in a stage like that, I highly recommend this.

**Annie:** And also hello Mother's Day. Amazon can get you things very fast.

**Kendra:** Hello Mother's Day.

**Annie:** Thanks for doing this, friend. I love you. I'm grateful.

**Kendra:** Thank you for having me.

[00:54:35] <music>

**Outro:** Oh, you guys, don't you love her? My gracious! She's so smart and so helpful. As we said at the beginning, she's a permission giver. She's giving us permission to have the kitchen that we need. This book is beautiful and fun to read and I've learned a ton you need to grab your copy of *The Lazy Genius Kitchen*. Follow Kendra on social media, tell her thanks so much for being on the show.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that's how you can find me. And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same.

Today what sounds fun to me is our full staff and lots of the That Sounds Fun Network hosts and producers are all going to a Nashville Sounds baseball game tomorrow night. So what sounds fun to me today is making sure my t-shirt is clean and we are ready to go. I'm really excited. So that's what sounds fun to me is celebrating the second birthday of the network.

Y'all have a great weekend. Happy Mother's Day to all of you who are mothering out there. We'll see you back here on Monday to talk a lot about Mother's Day with the lovely Harrison Watson. Yes, Kirsten Watson, Benjamin Watson's wife. You know I love these Georgia Bulldogs. She will be with us on Monday. Y'all are gonna love her. Okay, so y'all have a great weekend. We'll see you on Monday.