

AoH Homemaker Portrait_Kim Coburn - 2:1:22, 4.20 PM

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SPEAKERS

Kim Coburn, Allison

A Allison 00:05

Hello homemakers. Welcome to the Art of Home Podcast where we are exploring how homemakers cultivate a place to belong. I'm your host Allison Weeks. I'm a wife. I'm a mom to four grown up kids. And this is my 30th year of homemaking. If you're new to the podcast, welcome. We're so glad you found the Art of Home. To our regular listeners, welcome back, and thanks for faithfully tuning in to hear these amazing stories of home. We kicked off our first season of 2022 with a new type of episode. We did a deep dive on organization. And we will be revisiting that topic with Joi Welch in our next episode that goes live in two weeks. Today, we have our first homemaker portrait of 2022. We will be talking with Kim Coburn about her experience of cultivating a home over the past 47 years. That's a lot of memories and reflections, friends. You are sure to find some valuable insight in this episode. We have a lot of ground to cover with Kim, so I'm keeping this intro short. Be sure to stick around till the end for some updates about new content that's coming your way in 2022. So whether you are running errands or washing dishes, we know you will enjoy Kim's story of home. Well, I am here with my friend, Kim Coburn. And Kim before we go back to the beginning of your story in homemaking, why don't you just tell us a little bit about who you are today?

K Kim Coburn 01:33

Well, I am married to my high school sweetheart, Phil. And we've been married 47 years. And we have four grown up kids that are married to wonderful spouses that we love. And we have six adorable grandchildren. The oldest is 11. And the youngest is three. And we moved to Texas in 1997. So we've loved being in Texas, came from California. So that's kind of my general background right now. Phil's retired. He's been retired for since 2010. So the first grandbaby arrived just a few months later. So then we kind of jumped into the grandparent stage, which has been delightful. And five of them five of the six live close by so we see them often. And one the littlest one is in Washington state that we see once in a while not it's been about two years

since we've got to see the little guy out there with my son and daughter in law. So we're hoping to make a trip out to there when things kind of settle down with what's going on with COVID and all that.

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Allison 02:52

I didn't know that you guys came from California. Yeah, yeah. So did you both grow up there?

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Kim Coburn 02:57

We grew up in Southern California, Los Angeles area. Wow. And met at church. Okay, a little church there. And we're married in that little church. And then we we moved to the San Francisco Bay area about a year after we were married. Okay, so then when we moved from California, we were in like the San Francisco Bay Area and moved to Texas.

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Allison 03:24

Well, so let's go back to the very beginning. Would you say that your homemaking journey began when you met and married your husband?

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Kim Coburn 03:32

Yes. Because I was still living at home with my parents and my younger sister. So I had experience because my mom was very organized. And in fact, I thought you could interview her too, because she lives nearby. Oh, yeah. And she's taught us how to, you know, maintain things and do chores and things like that. So we already had kind of an idea how, what I didn't have was my mom making my list every Saturday morning, like this is their chores for the day. And you got to do this, this and this. And I was kind of in charge of my own schedule. And I didn't have to work. Phil had a good job. So I was able to be a homemaker. Which I was happy to do that was a little more normal than it might be now I think for young wives to say it's okay just to kind of focus on being a homemaker. Sure. And I didn't feel pressure from society. I was going to college. I had done one year college so I was, you know, working on some classes second year. And doing my little home making little, little tiny like a guest house that we rented. So I remember thinking oh, Okay, well, what do I do, you know, just feel go to work. And then I'd have to figure out, you know, my mom would help me do things. But it was different than having her kind of like a manager. Yeah, to kind of say, Okay, well, we're gonna get this salt because she's very organized. And I'm more of a random, intuitive, relaxed kind of flow person. So, so I would have had to kind of find my own style, I guess. Yeah, that what worked for me and and so we moved. The special blessing was that my sister in law, Phil's older sister and her family lived, where we ended up. And she took me under her wing, and kind of taught me. Like she was a stage ahead, she had three children that were were young, so I could spend time with her. And then she'd show me how she would get dinner going and get laundry started and kind of multitask or do creative activities. Like we got into framing pictures and doing just like little fun. Projects are canning applesauce. And so those kind of things were were before we had children, I had that time that I'd be over. I probably be over there twice a week, at least. His I was like, a little bit lonely.

A

Allison 06:28

Yeah. Well, that's really fantastic that you had her there. Yes, it was. Yeah.

K

Kim Coburn 06:33

Cuz I was kind of homesick, cause I'd never lived away from home. I didn't go away to college at a distance. So I was little homesick. But she was really wonderful. And we're still like, best friends.

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Allison 06:46

I love that. It sounds like your your steep learning curve might have been--you said your mother was very organized, but you were more a little bit more free flowing this kind of go with the flow person. Was that a steep learning curve for you to try to get the things done that needed to get done in a way that fit your personality? Or was there something else besides that?

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Kim Coburn 07:11

What was hard was seeing the big picture, maybe you know, because now I was responsible for grocery shopping, cooking and timing of those things. You know laundry, and housekeeping and little yard work. Because we had like a little yard. And then we were busy with family activities, it was kind of like everybody would be doing things together. So I had a fairly busy schedule. And then I was trying to do a little studying with I didn't take a full load of classes, I maybe took two classes or something. So yeah, sometimes knowing how to use your time, wisely, you know, like where where to focus your attention, rather than getting sidetracked on something that might take a lot of time or be interesting, but didn't really contribute to what needed to get done that week. So that I had to sort out because I was a good student, you know, you learn how to be a successful student. But then with other things on top, that was probably the hard thing. Sure. And then my husband would like to do stuff on the weekend. So I didn't have the weekend basic, whatever he wanted to do was kind of like, that's what we would be doing a project or a thing with the family. So I would try to figure out how to get whatever I had to do done when he was at work. And make make good use of time that way. But it was it was a happy time. You know, we had our family around us that we had a cute little, little one bedroom, one bath, old little cottage that we rented and that was a happy. Yeah, so it wasn't like I was harassed or desperate. I think the harder time for me was about the time my third child. Okay, then that kind of threw me into like a whole nother category. Work. Right. And responsibility. Yeah. And my husband at that point, we lived away from work. So he had a fairly long commute, so he might be gone 12 hours a day, leave at six and get home at six. So that and then I did it my sister in law, I didn't have grandma's nearby. And so basically, I had to take care of kind of everything myself with the children. By the time the fourth baby came. I had figured that out, you know and so and there was more age difference. So the hardest, the hardest year of my life was probably from just feeling like I had to juggle so many responsibilities was when my third son was born until he was about a year. And then I finally felt like I had a grip on it. And my daughter was born when we move closer to work. And so Phil

could come home for lunch night, he didn't have a long commute any more. And I had just that just that change alone was huge. In helping helping me have a kind of a little more even keel every week.

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Allison 10:44

It is really difficult when when you have a husband with a long commute. We did that for a long time. My husband was, gosh, an hour one way, you know. And I had a bunch of little kids at home, and you really feel the weight of the responsibility of not just running the whole day, you know, from pretty much when everybody gets up to when everybody goes to bed. And that's all on you. But if anything goes wrong, if there's an emergency, if somebody you know, smashed somebody else's finger in the door, and now you have to take them to the clinic and get stitches, and it's not like he can just zip home and be there to help you. So it is it is a lot to carry. Yeah.

K

Kim Coburn 11:22

Yeah. I think during that time, what helped me my sister in law was like going back to college and finishing her degree, because her kids were in high school then when my kids were little. So if it was an emergency, then I could I didn't have cell phones though, right? So I remember running out of gas one time. Oh, no. And I had I think I was pregnant with the fourth baby. And I had the third baby, you know, in a diaper or something. And because I was gonna just drop someone at preschool and come home. Gosh, and my big station wagon. I don't know if the fuel gauge wasn't working good, you know, are some because we never could buy a new car for many, many years. So they always were some kind of state of a few little repairs needed. Right? And I, so I had to walk with the little toddler to the grocery store to make a phone call to call my sister in law to come help me because Phil was an hour away. But I definitely did that once. So that that I learned. We always top off the gas tank. But she was available for those kinds of things, which I appreciated. But then I learned to go to Bible studies that had childcare. And I had two of them I went to and my time there was just real, real valuable because we would share prayer requests in a group and they would be ladies from in their 60s like I am now and young moms. And they would all share prayer requests and different things. I think, oh, they have a difficult load themselves. You know, it would help me give perspective. That what I was dealing with was not not too bad. And that and then they could encourage me and helped me with kind of just having that time to have adult conversation exactly with the other Christian ladies was just like up filling my cup, keeping me encouraged.

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Allison 13:42

So you alluded earlier to that third baby, just really kind of throwing you for a major loop. Would you say that was probably the toughest challenge? Or were there any other major challenges that you had to deal with as a homemaker?

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Kim Coburn 13:57

Well, that was probably what I think I felt maybe the most overwhelmed, because the second baby was not quite to you know, maybe two and two weeks when Greg was born. And so that

baby was not quite to you know, maybe two and two weeks when Greg was born. And so that was busy because I had a two story house. So I have the baby upstairs. I'm trying to nurse the baby and get him down for a nap. And then downstairs, I hear little crashes and things. You know, like

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Allison 14:32

There's two little boys down there doing who knows what.

K

Kim Coburn 14:35

They decide they need a little snack and, you know, a box of Cheerios gets dumped on the floor. They weren't you know, real mischievous, but they just were little, you know, and, and so trying to feel like I had to be in different places at the same time. So by the time Greg was a year I remember thinking, Okay, I got it. Three kids, I can get can do this, you know, but it took about a year before I felt confident in it. And then when, and I had help. Phil got me a housekeeper to come in, I think, maybe twice a month, and do all the vacuuming and stuff like that. So I had some some help. And that that was great. But yeah, just the responsibility for for little, little people is, you know, it's a sweet time, but it's also just exhausting. So I think my biggest problem to overcome was fatigue, just being tired all the time. So having to if you put a baby down for a nap, then the older kids had to go in their room and either nap or play quietly. My older son was very obedient and, and helpful, the little, the little two year old would be very curious and get into stuff. So I had, he was to me outside of his door, put him in his room with his toys and Tom, okay, and put a lock on the outside so he couldn't get out and go running down the street so I could rescue or what worked with him is I'd have him nap with me. And tell have, have him play with just like little little flashcards or little stuffed animals on my bed and have the lights out and say, well, Mommy's gonna just close your eyes for a minute. Can you just play real quietly because he was real, sweet, affectionate little child, and he wanted to be close to you liked being having having time to play and, and I'm just gonna close my eyes for a minute. So if I could get him to put his little head down, then he'd sleep. But as long as there's a party or something going on, he wouldn't turn it off, you know? Because he was quite a little extrovert. It still is. And so then once I got him to sleep, then I could rest a little longer and get up and, and maybe have him sleep another hour, I could get a few little things done with the baby. The third baby is wonderful Napper. Happy Baby. Like good enough, mom. Thanks. I've got it from here. Throw me in the crib. I'm good. No problem. Go check on Michael. You know, so. That's great. It was just yeah, just kind of a funny little, little session of life there.

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Allison 17:35

Yeah. Yeah. So I'm sure it was pretty different, though. After three boys in a row to then bring a little girl home.

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Kim Coburn 17:41

Yeah, I was real. Real happy to have a little girl finally. And then the youngest child was almost three and a half. So that was the bigger, a much easier age different, right? So they could I could talk to all the boys and tell them okay, well, I'm going to go put the baby down for a nap,

I need you to do this. And so it was just a lot more peaceful time for me. And then I was more comfortable with the baby to the first one, you know, you're, you don't know what to do with them. And what's you know, everything. So after you have the subsequent ones you're not as overwhelmed with what what do I do with this newborn? But the little toddler is there, how to how to manage all those interactions. So it was fun to have a little girl and then she's very close with all her brothers. And they all they all got along really quite well. They're still, you know, friends as adults, which is so that's good, gratifying mom to see him. Because that there a lot of bickering growing up, you think Oh, my goodness. And it's just because they're bored and have just started some for entertainment. But they really do love each other. So

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Allison 19:03

yeah, that's good. Well, let's talk about hospitality a little bit. How do you feel like you and your family helped one another, to feel welcome together in your home? what are maybe some special things that you would do to help everybody feel like they belong here?

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Kim Coburn 19:21

I think my focus as a homemaker was, was almost always just that everybody would have their needs met at home. And they they could have their pets. We had dogs and cats and lizards and frogs and fish and parakeets. And so all that and friends, their little friends could come over. And so my house was never going to be like too special or too precious to have all this kid activity going on. And so when They would get home from school, I'd usually have a snack for them. And when they were all in school, I would usually lay down and rest before they got home. Even if I wasn't really tired, at like, between two and three, I'd say I'm just really have to rest because I won't be going to bed till 11 Yeah, and I need to recharge now. So I don't get too tired. So I would kind of manage my, my time and energy. Because my day would kind of a second half the day would start when you got home from school. Yeah. Because there's homework and football practice and pep squad and different things that you know, they need rights to and so so they pretty well had my full attention available. And I enjoyed hearing about third day, you know, sometimes the kids would talk more like immediately after school, walk in the door, have a snack, and then we'll How was your day? Or tell me from the beginning what happened when you got to school and, and so then I would hear more how that went than if I waited. And I was too busy with there's never You're never done. There's always another chore that sort of is waiting nagging you. But if you could just set that aside and just listen to them. And then also at bedtime. And even with my boys, when they were teenagers, are you gonna come check on me mom? Yeah, you know, they can like that

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Allison 21:36

they do. And that's usually when they're ready to talk. And it's like you said it's 10 o'clock at night? Yeah, it's a good thing. You had that nap? Yeah. So

K

Kim Coburn 21:43

cuz you know, you're going to be kind of on, on duty for quite a while. So they like to talk at bedtime and kind of talk about their day or what they would be doing tomorrow we're kind of if

bedtime and kind of talk about their day or what they would be doing tomorrow, we're kind of... we need to prepare for something or, you know, kind of be on kind of synchronize for the next morning

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Allison 22:03

What about showing hospitality to people who are not in your immediate family?

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Kim Coburn 22:07

Well, I think we had that was all the out of state family come coming to visit, as well as kids friends. The oldest son Mark had a band, so they would practice at my house. And then my other kids all had their friends. So if you have four kids, you better have room for eight. Yeah, that's all, you know, at least showing up. And my daughter would come home from like middle school and we make a batch of cookies. She'd go upstairs to change into play clothes or something or put something away and come down and half the cookies would already be gone. Is the brothers and their friends. Oh, oh, yes. You know, so she said, Well, I'm says stash a few. Yeah. Oh, yeah, you have to or they all run into the kitchen. For sure. So the those were kind of casual, sort of hospitality, things. And then we'd sometimes say have my lady friends from church over. Phil had pretty well used all his social energy at work, being a manager in meetings and people, people, people in phone calls. So he was real happy to just deal with a family when he got home. It wasn't like he wanted to go golfing or fishing with friends. He basically wanted all his non work time with family.

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Allison 23:48

Okay, we're going to talk a little bit about the seasons of homemaking. So how would you say that your role as a homemaker has changed over time from those first couple of years and your little cottage just through the baby years in the teenage years, and all of that?

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Kim Coburn 24:03

I think I was, even though I was pretty young, when we got married, I was not quite 19 I was pretty responsible, I firstborn. And so I, you know, willing to be responsible for things. And but I didn't know, like how to put dinner together. Or so when I moved to the Bay Area was with my sister in law, who was about 10 years older and ahead stage of life. I would watch how she would do it. She said, Oh, we need to get dinner started. So she would give me a little job to do. And I could observe how she would like look in the pantry. So we're gonna pull this out. We're going to add that, get this out, put it all together. Because she kind of enjoyed cooking where my mom was more like well, I have to feed everybody. So it wasn't something she enjoyed. So she would do something real simple, but she didn't. Cooking wasn't her her thing she liked to take us on outings to museums or the church on adventures, and she liked to sew and we would sew all the clothes we were pretty much. But so learning to cook, I learned probably from my sister in law. Yeah, my mother in law too. And my sister loves a little more creative cook. How you could say, well, what can we make for dinner, and she could just look at her fridge in our pantry. And she'd have all this inspiration. So I can do that now. But that took a while to get there where you could just say, oh, yeah, you just pull this in this in this work. So learning

from learning by example. And that kind of thing where you have a little more confidence built up. Right? Right. So So I still do a fair amount of cooking, but I don't have to feed for hungry teenagers. So the cooking is real simple. Now that we're retired, because Phil, he doesn't need fancy meals. So we'll do you know, sandwiches for dinner and salads and soup and simple stuff. So I don't I don't do a lot of that like the short order cook for you feel like you're running a diner when Yeah, hungry teenagers that right? You feed them dinner and 20 minutes later, they're standing the fridge in Apple, because there's they're just the metabolism. Yeah. So there's an awful lot of food prep going, oh, yeah, those years so that that is slacked off and enlightened up. And then Phil helps me with, like doing the dishes. So he'll almost always load the dishwasher for me. And we'll grocery shop together or do curbside and haul that all in together where before the kids would help me haul it in. I go to Costco once a week and check out Mr. Oh, you haven't a party? No, this is one way this groceries for four teenagers, right? This full cart. So I think that has probably lightened up you know, from these young and not knowing how to cook anything really big trying to figure it out. And then being busy with a lot of food prep and now kind of relax.

A Allison 27:33

Well, how about right now in the season that you're in right now, what does homemaking look like?

K Kim Coburn 27:41

Well,

A Allison 27:43

aside from the less food and your husband is now helping you maybe you want to talk a little bit about this transition that this lovely place we're sitting in right now.

K Kim Coburn 27:52

Yes. So our project for the past year was to get the vacation house up and running that that's been a family project and actually all the families kind of been involved. My mom has come over and helped. We went shopping for little accessories and she got with me and my daughter in law crystal and

A Allison 28:13

yeah, that's great. And you got to set up a whole new home for other people to enjoy. It's

K Kim Coburn 28:19

it was fun to have a blank slate Yeah, yeah. Because we did flooring and paint and all the

furnishings and a lot of creativity with Facebook marketplace my daughter law's amazing on and then just kind of putting it all together so it's a special peaceful relaxing kind of environment. Okay, is what we were hoping to create.

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Allison 28:44

I think you've accomplished it that I love the light in this place. It's very much open in the the main area is all open with the living in the kitchen in the dining. Yeah, that cute seating area over there. But the light in here is fantastic. I don't know what your orientation is to north south east west, but

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Kim Coburn 29:01

this is the North wall. yeah, it is real nice light.

A

Allison 29:07

It's just bright and airy and you have little open shelving over here in the kitchen. It looks really lovely. And you said you're listed on VRBO? Yes. Well, we'll make sure we put some links to that in case anybody wants come vacation in the Texas Hill Country. Yeah,

K

Kim Coburn 29:22

and we're close to Canyon Lake but then you're also close to New Braunfels, Schlitterbahn and good restaurants and, and tubing, lots of tubing around here. So it's, it's not you know, your typical vacation location, right.

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Allison 29:37

It's very centrally located. You can be in downtown San Antonio on the riverwalk in about an hour or less from here you can be in Fredericksburg in about an hour or less going in the opposite direction. So you can be in Austin, really? A little over an hour from here. It's a very good location, I think.

K

Kim Coburn 29:56

Yeah. And then when you are done with your activities for the day come back and have it be quiet so quiet and you can watch the deer and the birds and little squirrels and, and it's dog friendly kid friendly. We people can bring their dogs and we have dog crates if they need to leave them. Yeah, and whatever, you know, we're trying to anticipate whatever might be helpful to have. So we just want it to be a peaceful place rather than a we could have put the same money in like a condo, you know, then it would be a little different kind of would be a whole different deal. So when people are here, we'd like them to be able to have the firepit or barbecue and the grill. Yeah, outside or you can

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Allison 30:47

really you can totally retreat out here.

K

Kim Coburn 30:49

Yeah. And just have it or have you know, maybe they could have little family wedding. You know, it's just for small, small little family birthday party or you know, that

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Allison 31:02

A lot of possibilities. Well, congratulations. It's beautiful home and you guys did a great job.

K

Kim Coburn 31:06

Thank you. Yeah.

A

Allison 31:08

We will get back to Kim story in just a few minutes. Right now it's time for historical homemaker hints. This is the part of the podcast where we highlight some of the helpful and not so helpful hints doled out to homemakers throughout history. Today's hints come from the art of homemaking in city and country in mansion and cottage by Margaret Sangster published in 1898. Margaret has some helpful suggestions for the new homeowner with regard to sanitation and decoration. In moving into a new house or into a house which is new to you. The first thing to do is thoroughly clean it. Every woman knows the value of a broom and the scrubbing brush of soap and water of lime, calcimine and fresh paper and paint. If there is the least suspicion in any room of the presence of vermin, it is best to have the old paper torn down all cracks and apertures partied up carefully and painted. And then to have fresh paper on the walls. I was curious about the lime and calcimine. I wanted to know what those were. So according to the interwebs, calcimine and lime or types of whitewash used on both interior and exterior walls. limewash provided a protective decorative coating for stone brick and wood walls. It's fire retardant, antiseptic, antifungal, odorless, and does not cause allergies. limewash also allows the wall to breathe, so you're less likely to have a mold problem caused by moisture trapped inside the wall, and it creates a chalky, subtle texture that only gets better as it ages. Should you decide to try this you certainly want to do your homework and practice safety as lime is irritating to the skin and to the eyes. But there are some modern limewash paints available that are suitable for stone wood, masonry and stucco. And manufacturers recommend that you prime the drywall with an acrylic primer in order to give that limewash something to bond to. I'm pretty excited to hear about this new old way of painting walls and I can't wait to try some modern limewash in my home. Once you've got your walls all spic and span it's time to start moving in and Miss Sangster offer some advice to the lady of the house to let her man lendahand Do not fail to let John use his strong arms and stronger back than yours and helping with the hardest of the work. When people are first married, it is very essential that they should

begin right. The wife often is inclined in those Halcyon Days to spare her husband from doing many things, and the husband Bless his heart. While he wishes to save her will often from sheer carelessness. Let her go on thinking she prefers to do things which he ought to take upon himself. In the start take for granted that the husband means to lend a helping hand whenever he can. This is really great advice. I do I personally enjoy learning how to be handy around the house and I can figure out a way to move a piece of furniture if I really want to by myself. But I realized now that my self sufficient attitude while sometimes helpful, does have its drawbacks. First of all, by just doing it myself, I have sometimes robbed my husband have an opportunity to feel useful and needed around the house. He loves to fix things and do things for me just so long as I'm not nagging him to get around to my honey do list. Tackling household projects alone has also been downright dangerous at times. I am ashamed to say that I have moved pieces of furniture up and down the stairs by myself. I have hung drapery teetered on the edge of the sofa, and I pulled out a built in plywood dresser and our first little mobile home to make room for crib when I was five months pregnant, so do yourself, your marriage and your back a favor. Ask your husband for help. Well, that's it for today's historical homemaker hints. As always, please remember, this segment is for entertainment purposes only. And I leave it to you the listener to determine the safety and soundness of this advice. Now back to Kim's story. Well, let's talk a little bit about tasks of homemaking. So we're this is just for fun, rapid fire q&a time about the task of homemaking. So give me one task of homemaking that you love.

K

Kim Coburn 35:38

Well, what I love the most is the parenting and grandparenting, honestly. So playing games, the little kids when they come over, or doing letting them play in the backyard, so I have a lot of toys at my house, and bunk beds. And so they have little sleepovers at my house and stuff like that. So I'd say my, my, what I've enjoyed the most over the years is the relationships with the children and the grandchildren.

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Allison 36:12

Okay. What about one that you hate?

K

Kim Coburn 36:16

I don't like doing floors. And sometimes I've had housekeeping help. And so that's a big help to have someone do floors. I agree. Because there's never a good time to do a floor. No, no, I whenever I would mop my floor, then somebody would let in the dog with muddy paws. Or I'd drop something myself drop an egg on the floor. So it's like, well, when's a good time to do it? And then I would tend to put that off. So sometimes Phil will do them for me. But what I have is tile at home, and this is tile here too. So it's like whatever happens dogs, kids, playdough, pizza falls on tile, you just wipe it off. It's not anything that I have to protect or be fussy with. So basically fixing the house so that it accommodates the kids and the pets and the the traffic.

A

Allison 37:22

Yeah, because that's a value. That's, that's important to you, those relationships. Yeah, letting them be in your home. Yeah

them be in your home. Yeah.

K

Kim Coburn 37:29

So they know they can come over and relax. Yeah, it's good. And, and just have fun. And it's not like they have to jump up and grab their children because I have wonderful little porcelain collectible on my coffee day. There's nothing on the coffee table, but maybe toys right? It's all it's all available for the kids can play with. Cool.

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Allison 37:51

Well, what about a task that you grew to love?

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Kim Coburn 37:54

Um, well, I think I grew to enjoy laundry. Inevitably, yeah. Because it just sort of needs to get done. And so my, my daughter, when she was in middle school, start doing her own laundry, the boys would bring it home from college and say, Mom, I know you love doing laundry mom, so I brought it home for you. You know, so. So just, I like the orderliness of seeing something accomplished, I guess that some jobs that you're doing, it's, if my husband would come home, he'd have clean clothes in his closet, then he would say, Oh, it's so nice to have clean clothes, I find what I need. And so that, as opposed to if I was alphabetizing, my spices, he would never notice that. But it might take the same amount of time. So you know, things you get, you have to personalize it for your family and what they they need or appreciate or, and kind of focus on those things. I think,

A

Allison 39:05

yeah, that's a really good way to look at it. Look at the laundry. It's orderly and it when it does get done, it's done. And it's all folded in there it is and you'll have to do it again in a couple of days, but that's okay.

K

Kim Coburn 39:18

Yeah, yeah. Yeah. That's and and part of the the helpful hint I would have for a younger mom with with kids, is just limit the wardrobe. So the because younger kids and even middle school kids, they're changing their clothes, like often and clean clothes are in the hamper. So if you only have a fairly small wardrobe, everything that goes together available, other things could be in bins out of season or something out of their reach. Then they can only make one load of laundry worth of commotion before they run out and have to deal with it. And so having a limited wardrobe, yeah. helps quite a bit rather. And then if they're old enough to want a fancy wardrobe that they have to do their own laundry, okay. It's like, Well, I'm not doing that anymore. Yeah. If you need all this other stuff, you're going to be in charge of your laundry. But a toddler doesn't care

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Allison 40:24

at No. Yeah. That's a good tip. What about a homemaking fail?

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Kim Coburn 40:28

Okay, I thought about that. And this again is with parenting. This is the the funny one that my son will let me forget. This is the third son Greg again. I left him one time at Walmart. Oh, no. And which was about 15 minutes from the house. And I had my sister and her girls visiting. And I had a big band with a lot of seating. Yeah, like a custom van. And so we had gone to Walmart to get something and Greg would peel off and go play video games. They'd have like little display and electronics, right for Nintendo or something. And so he because he didn't like shop, but he'd say, well, I'll just I'll just go do video games. And I thought I had gathered all the little chicks in the nest and got them all in the van. And counting noses, you know, and, and thinking about what we're doing next, right with the company, got home and had left him at Walmart. The phone rings this before cell phones. He was probably about 14. He went and said Oh my I'm looking for my mom. I think I need to call. So they didn't call and and Hi, mom. I'm at Walmart. No, you're kidding. I thought he was joking. And so I hang up on him. So just come on downstairs and stop fooling around. You know, we're going to have a lunch soon or something. Because again, I don't know mom, I'm really at Walmart. You guys all left me here. Nobody's here. Oh, my goodness. So I you know, I ran back as quick as possible and picked him up. So now he never let me forget that I left him at Walmart.

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Allison 42:15

At least he was 14. And you know, yeah, it wasn't like he was three and

K

Kim Coburn 42:21

the little ones I was able to realize I had to have a have a hand on one person. Yeah. That's funny.

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Allison 42:30

Well what about a memorable homemaking achievement?

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Kim Coburn 42:33

My biggest achievement I look back on was in 2006. And we had three weddings. Oh, two boys and the girl. Wow, I had my son Greg in May my son Michael in August. And my daughter in September, my goodness, they all decided to get married within a very short period of time. I was helping plan because the sons need help with a fair amount you had your son get married. So even though the bride's a little trickier for the mom, there're still quite a bit of things that they need help figuring out so I did end of May middle of August into middle of September

wedding. And so it was fun. You know, it was it was a special time and trying to figure out all those details and, and stuff. And that was kind of a highlight year. Yeah, it was it was a lot of fun.

A

Allison 43:36

That's a lot all in one year. So good job. What about your top three homemaking tips.

K

Kim Coburn 43:43

I think what I would advise a young a young wife is to once or twice a year just evaluate where the family's at. What what are the needs? What were Where are you having little log jams of things happening? You know where if you need to readjust your schedule, and just focus on those things and personalize it for your family. So for your particular husband, what is he like to have done if he wants dinner that he can smell as he's walking in the door? Then maybe your top priority is just get that dinner figured out? Do that early in the day before you're tired. And make sure you have all your ingredients and if not maybe adapt, you know, do something else. You don't have to run the store. And what what are the children need different from what they want, right? Maybe they don't need to be in so many activities and each child you add to the family. It's like a mobiel that the balance if it's just you and your husband's just your relationship to him and his with you have two things to tend to add the child name of the triangle of that child's relationship to mom, mom's relationship to the child. And, and so then when you add each child geometrically all the complexity Yeah, of relationship, and trying to have some level of harmony gets complicated. Sure. So, and I'm very happy I had four children. It wasn't, wasn't always easy, but I'm very thankful for each one of them. And I wouldn't change any of that. But you know, just trying to kind of see where they were maybe at the beginning of a school year, like what, what maybe I would need to do with my schedule to be available or things we could take care of. And kind of plan ahead. And then the other little helpful hint that I had learned early on, from a little book I had read of a mom had, like, 10 children, I think she did what she called backwards planning. And I found that helpful, because she said, Okay, when your husband gets home at six o'clock at night, what would you like the situation to be? Do you want dinner? Ready? Do you want your iced tea made in the fridge? So it's chilled? And you know, do you want the kids toys just picked up so he doesn't have to walk over toys and step on Legos and stuff? Or move bikes to get in the driveway? So by backwards planning, you kind of like what your goal for the end of the day was? So it was pointless for me with little children to clean my house in the morning? Yeah. Because Phil wouldn't be home for hours and hours toys back out. Yeah. So it would be like, Okay, what I really needed to do was figure out what am I having for dinner that night, and we didn't have crock pots from beginning. We the Instant Pot is amazing. I like that. Yes. So I'd recommend grabbing Instant Pot if you don't have one. Because then you don't have to plan six hours ahead. Your roast will be done. But you're probably going to be tired at dinnertime, and the kids will get grouchy and then you know, if you're pregnant, you need to eat more often. And I remember being pregnant, I think probably the fourth baby and I'd have dinner ready, feel get home and I'd say, okay, dinner's right here. This is everything they're going to need. Put the little one in the highchair I have to go take a nap. I'm too tired to eat. I just have to rest a little Get off my feet, and then go lay down, then I'd eat something later. So just knowing that's going to happen, rather than being surprised that you aren't Superwoman. And you don't have unlimited strength and energy and patience to build margin into your weekly schedule. Yeah. So there's ease because you will get sick just

before Christmas. Yeah. And you had planned to wrap all those gifts, the last minute, and now it's like, oh, I don't want to wrap gifts. I don't feel good. Or anything that if you're going to have any kind of little family party, do your grocery shopping a day or two ahead. Because if you have to go grocery shopping, come home and unload it, and then prepare it. You're setting yourself up for just so much fatigue. Yes, and, and thinking, Oh, I should be able to handle that isn't really fair to yourself. So kind of finding out what your energy level is. And then respecting that. So that you can get through your day with you know, taking care of yourself, as well as feeling like you're taking care of the family. And I think the Pinterest, Facebook, that can be fun. But I think that must set expectations so high for people to think oh, I should be doing all of these things. Yeah. Rather than just using it as relaxation or just a little fun. Oh, that's kind of a fun idea. Maybe I'll try that sometime. But just keeping a realistic expectations what you personally can do what your family really wants. And so if your husband really just wants dinner and clean underwear in his drawer, yeah, you don't need to be killing yourself doing a bunch of other things. Maybe you do need to get that nap in. Yeah. Now I can nap and feel better. Some people napping they're groggy and that doesn't help them. So you know that's a personal thing too. but maybe they need to get to bed a little earlier. And then the last tip would be, figure out what time of day that you're kind of off duty. Like, it's like, whatever didn't get done, you're never really going to be done. I still have decluttering to do as a grandma, because you don't collect toys and, and things like that. So it's, I still haven't run out of things to do. But there's a point in the day where I say, well, that's enough for today, I'm gonna be off duty now. Yeah. And say, that's enough. And it's okay. And just have peace with that. So that you can enjoy where you're at. Otherwise, it can be where you feel like you're always on this treadmill, and someone's keeps training faster and faster, and you can get everything done you think you should be doing. And, and it seems to me that when the Lord Jesus was doing his ministry, he only had three years of ministry, he was walking. So I was listening to someone said, that's maybe three miles an hour, you know that you're walking from one village to the next. He, he had to deal with people in interruptions and deal with poop, but he couldn't see everybody. But that wasn't necessary, right for his ministry to be successful. So I think if we pace ourselves a little more gently, yeah, the Lord doesn't expect us to be frazzled and, and harassed and always running or over over committed with too many activities. Yeah.

A

Allison 51:47

And that can really be a trap, where you can end up being very bitter. Because then you feel like everybody else is relaxing in the living room, and I am still washing dishes, or I am still doing this, or I am still doing that. And you will have those seasons where you are going to be cleaning up the kitchen at 10 o'clock at night, but it shouldn't be a regular occurrence. Right. And that means I love that you pointed out that you probably need to assess what am I spending my time on during the day? And am I am I using the time to meet the most important needs and the things that really matter to my family? My particular family? Or am I chasing after other things that it might just be I need to put that on the shelf? And it's not for this season? Right? I can do it in another season. So yeah, that's a really good word.

K

Kim Coburn 52:35

It it helps to also have that attitude, maybe with your cooking and meal planning. Sure. So if you love cooking, and that's your creative outlet, then that's, that's fine. But a lot of people don't like to cook. But you pretty well need to figure out how to how to do some of it. Sure.

Right. Just some simple meals. You can you can get by with maybe 10 menu. Yeah, and that's it. Just rotate it unlimited variety. So you just get used to what is the family like what's easy to make? What can they start learning to help me make? Yeah, and rotate that and keep it real simple. And when I was talking to a young mom, a couple years ago, I told her maybe you're in a Amana season where every morning they went and got the manna collected when they were wandering in the wilderness and and they're few different ways to prepare it but that was that was the meal plan, you know, and so there again, we can maybe get a little too sidetracked date Well, I should be doing all this variety and I well if you enjoy it, that's great. Or maybe once a week you want to try that or but not to set yourself up like oh, I have to meal plan 30 different menus for the whole month. Well not young kids often like the same thing. So you need a little variety for yourself. But you know just like who whose expectations are you're trying to meet Yeah. That that I think is helpful. Or if you're in a season where you used to cook gourmet meals but now you have three children. You don't have that extra time right to do it. So you need to do you know order pizza and get takeout and have more convenience foods or I recommend using paper plates when you have for your everyday dishes when you have little kids we did that for a long time and don't worry about recycling the paper plates you know you can do it later. I can use regular plates in my husband night because we had breakfast lunch or dinner so I six plates they fit in the dishwasher. Right? But with a family of six times three that's 18 dishes they don't get in the dishwasher. You know it's a lot of dishes. So just having little shortcuts. To make it simple, yeah, I think that's just being practical and, and making it if there's a way to make it a little easier on yourself, right. But you still are covering the basis.

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Allison 55:13

Yeah, yeah. Well, those are some really great tips. Thank you. So let's close out our time talking about the art of home. How would you say that homemaking is an art?

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Kim Coburn 55:26

Well, I think it lets you express your personal values. And it gives you a lot of opportunity to keep learning new things. And you can definitely learn to trust the Lord more. Because like I mentioned earlier, sometimes I would just pray. Lord, I need you to help me figure out something like what what should I do because often when the kids were little Phil worked all the way into San Francisco. And I expect him to be walking in the door at maybe six o'clock 630. And he'd call, "I'm having a meeting, I won't. I'm not leaving yet." So I knew it was an hour. And it'd be like, I was holding on

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Allison 56:12

uhhh, I know....thinking

K

Kim Coburn 56:14

thinking you're going to be coming in because he was real good with the kids and would be kind of take charge and get everyone doing something and I could just have a little little break. So that that kind of thing. You you learn, okay, well, I'm just gonna trust the Lord, to give me

that extra grace and energy that I'm at the end of my human energy, love, patience, kindness and creativity. And sometimes the Lord would tell me something in like a little little thought would come to me put everyone in the big bathtub and have a bubble bath, and feed them on a blanket and put on a cartoon. And yeah, because you can't hold dinner for little children. If daddies can be like, You better just go ahead and feed kids. Yeah, instead of trying to hold to hold them off. Because sometimes they would be in debt when he got home. Sure. And be in bed when he left in the morning. And he worked real hard, it provided well for us. So that enabled me to be home with the children. And I appreciate that so much. And my boys are real good providers and hard workers. And my son in law is also he sees a wonderful son in law to have. And so yeah, all my daughter in laws and my daughter are able to be homemakers. That's a real high priority to me, I I think that's important that women support each other, encourage each other if they have to work. That's their choice, that's fine. And not be competitive, you know, if we, if we are encouraging to one another, we're stronger. Yeah. And we're better off?

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Allison 58:03

How do you think that we can find beauty in the midst of the mundane work of of keeping a home?

K

Kim Coburn 58:10

Well, I think you have to focus on the big picture. So in it's hard when when you're in the trenches with the little ones, because everyday kind of drags. And yet, you know, speaking as a grammar now, the years went by fast and looking back on it. And so having that big picture, that you're really facilitating the growth and development of these children, or your husband's success at work and, and helping him be successful, because he knows things are taken care of at home. Yeah. So he can he can have his mind free to be creative and focus on what he has to do with work. And so you have to kind of just, you know, zoom out a little bit and see what it's going to be like in a few years. And, you know, there's in Proverbs 31 It talks about the woman's you know, a godly wife, and the different things she does, but that's like through her whole life. Yes. Not one day all at once. Right? Yeah. So and then then Her children rise up and call her blessings, you know, and her husband appreciates her. And so eventually you see that you know when they're little they're not necessarily in summer sweet and sensitive and will tell you thank you. So it sometimes feels like a thankless job when you're doing it. But I remember my oldest son told me when his about 10th grade. He said, Well, thank you for the nice dinner mom. I really enjoyed it. And it was kind of cute like because he's a sensitive person. And the other kids kind of look like oh I guess we should tell them one thing. You know, but now that they're married and have kids, they, they do appreciate, you know, what, what we tried to do when they were little not that we did it perfectly. And we didn't have to apologize to them for, you know, being overly harsh with them sometimes unnecessarily and you know, ask for forgiveness and, and and then they're sweet to forgive you, you know. But usually that's because you got yourself on the ragged edge, and you didn't have the margins and you were over committed. And so then that's where, you know, I've learned like, you have to pull back and give yourself some buffer. And so that big picture, you're creating a safe environment for these little humans to grow, and be responsible, happy people and be able to take care of their families. So it's very valuable. Yeah, highly valuable. But sometimes you don't see it, you don't get a paycheck, you don't get a little evaluation form. And so if you're, you're looking for short

term feedback there. Again, you need to have this community of women who can come alongside and say you're doing a great job. Yeah. And it is hard. And I know it's not easy. Which is why my goal is a grandma for the past 11 years, because I didn't have my kids grandma's nearby. As wonderful as they were when we would go to LA. I had a lot of times that oh, just wish someone come take them off for an hour. Maybe just clean a toilet without being interrupted. Nothing fancy you. And so I like to do that for the grandkids. Yeah, see where I can help out here in there with different little things. And then the kids are happy to come over and then mom and dad get a little breather. And I think then they don't they don't get quite so exhausted with just that constant demand. Yeah. So that's been prior focus since Phil retired is just been involved with the grandkids is as needs arise. And yeah,

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Allison 1:02:20

that's a great, that's a great legacy to pass on. And I know your I know your kids appreciate that very much. So. Well, I think that's a good place to end. So thank you so much for sharing your story.

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Kim Coburn 1:02:33

It's been a pleasure. Enjoy having the time with you. And it's been fun reminiscing over this time.

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Allison 1:02:42

Thank you so much for listening to this homemaker portrait of Kim Coburn. We are always delighted to bring you these decades-long stories of home and we are very excited that we will soon be able to present you with some different perspectives on the art of home. We will continue to speak to seasoned homemakers like Kim but we are also talking with newbies, that's less than five years experience, and the ones in the middle who we are calling the in the trenches homemakers. We believe that highlighting every stage of homemaking will help women of all ages and stages support and encourage one another in the way that Paul exhorts us to and Titus. These episodes are already in the works, so look for them soon. If you've stuck around this far, you are a committed listener. Thank you. If you have found some value from this episode, would you consider giving the show some love in one or more of the following ways. Number one, share the episode with a homemaker you know who could use some encouragement that is the single most important thing you could do to help us grow and reach more homemakers all over the world. Number two, leave us a rating and review. It's super easy. You can even do it right from the show notes here. Just scroll down to the show notes that says love the podcast and follow the simple prompts for your platform of choice. And this works on all devices not just iPhones. Number three, you can leave us a tip in our virtual tip jar, Buy Me a Coffee. Links to give are in the show notes below. It's very simple and you can give in increments of \$5, \$10 or \$15, also known as one, two or three coffees. Your financial support helps offset the cost of producing the art of home and paves the way for us to create more great content that will encourage and inspire homemakers all over the world. So thank you so much for partnering with us financially. Resources mentioned in this episode, including links to Kim's VRBO listing, are in the show notes and on our website. If you want to peek into Kim's

rental home, hop over to the artofhomepodcast.com/blog. That's all for this episode. We will be back in two weeks with deep dive organization part two. Until then, keep practicing your art of making a home.