

AoH DD Organization Part 1_Final

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SPEAKERS

Allison, Joi Welch

A Allison 00:03

Hello, Homemakers. Welcome to a new year and new season of 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 kids and I've been practicing the art of home for nearly 30 years. Well, it's January, and after the fullness of the Christmas season, many of us are thinking about paring down our schedules, our diets and our stuff. While I relish every bit of my over-the-top holiday homemaking, I tend to crave clear spaces, discipline and organization when it's over. How about you? We are so excited about today's episode! We're going to do a deep dive on organization with my good friend Joi Welch. You may remember Joi from our very first season of The Art of Home. She shared her homemaking journey with us including her current practice of keeping house in a 600 square foot cottage. Joi has lots of knowledge and experience to share about organization, particularly regarding managing our stuff so that it doesn't distract us from our calling. While Joi is a minimalist, I am not. We both agree though, that our homes and our stuff are there to serve us and our families, not the other way around. This episode will focus on the heart behind establishing organization and order in our homes. We're going to address actual projects and rooms of the house later on in this series. But today, we want to dive into the "why" of organization. Before we ever pick up a box to declutter or buy baskets to corral our items. We want to define what organization is what it is not. And we want to determine our motivation for setting up the systems that is going to make all the difference in whether or not the system will work for you and your family. When you know your why you are much more likely to successfully set up and maintain a system of order and organization in your home. So without further ado, let's dive into Part One of the art of organizing the home. Alright, I'm here with my friend Joi Welch. And we're going to discuss organization. We're going to do a couple of different episodes on this topic. But today, we want to kind of stick our toe in the water and just sort of see the purpose behind the organizing and the work that we need to do in our hearts before we even pick up a box to start sorting through things in our home. So Joi, why don't you just tell us a little bit about your passion for organizing, how you got interested in that and how it's a part of your life today.

J Joi Welch 02:49

Okay Allison, thank you so much for having me. This is probably one of my favorite topics to

Okay, Allison, thank you so much for having me. This is probably one of my favorite topics to talk about. I have been researching, reading things, listening to podcasts for the last few years, but actually really deep diving into this probably for over 30 years. And a my very favorite book that got me interested. And I have shared this with so many but Anne Ortlund, she's a pastor's wife, her husband is Ray Ortlund, has written a book, I think back in the 80s. And her name always comes to mind when I think about who started me thinking about organization. And her book is called the Disciplines of the Beautiful Woman. It...

A

Allison 03:35

It I have it right over there.

J

Joi Welch 03:37

Oh, yay! Good. Good! Well, it has still- I don't even have the book anymore- but I can remember some of the key things that she talked about. And one of them was "eliminate to concentrate". And my sister and I both got into that topic. And we started, you know, sharing that with all of our young married, we had just both recently been married. And just that was kind of a key thing is, in our life we didn't want possessions to rule what we, um, how we operated and what we did. We just didn't want that to become our whole lif, just things that we accumulate. So when her topic came out, and her quote was "eliminate to concentrate," boy, I was right on top of that. So I love the thought of that. Just getting rid of stuff. I think I was naturally like that. I remember, even as a young child, I would like to go through my things. And if I thought my next door neighbor would like this toy better than I played, you know, I would not play with it. And she would get that toy and I would give it to her and I thought you know what, that was a blessing to her. So it's kind of been in my heart all these years. And it's not to say that I haven't accumulated a lot over the years because I totally have, especially with the different size houses that we've had over my married life. We've been married almost we're going on 39 years next February. So that's a long time, a long time to gather stuff and get rid of stuff. So there's been a lot of things that I have just gained some insight from, I think. I went been through Josh Becker's "Uncluttered" course about three times. And once you join his course you can be a lifelong member. So I could probably use a refresher every once in a while or ever for a few years. But what he does is take room by room and you go as a group together to do that. And we'll kind of talk about that a little bit later. But I got interested in that. My sister and niece and I started the Back to Simple Home YouTube channel. And we talk about, um, actually, I kind of took it over talking about all of the downsizing that my husband and I have done over the last few years. And right now we live in a little 600 foot cottage. So we are surviving for sure. But in just enjoying the lack of just physical possessions that are around us that kind of distract us from what we feel like God has called us to do. I also have a Simply Joiful Instagram account where I share cottage tips, how to use small spaces efficiently, how to store things, and how to make things beautiful, but yet not have to be so cluttered looking, especially when you're living in a space that's under 600 square feet. Yeah, yeah. Anyway, so those are kind of the things that I have been interested in over the years. And that's kind of what I've started sharing with others and helping others be able to declutter their houses.

A

Allison 06:50

Yeah, because you go into to friends' homes and actually help them work through particular

spaces.

J Joi Welch 06:55

Yes. Yes, I've done it several kitchens, lots of kitchens, a few closets, wardrobe closets, because I feel like that's where we can kind of get bogged down too sure. But I feel like the kitchen is the main main one that a lot of people just have too much stuff in there, and a lot of stuff they don't really even use, right. So that's kind of my background. Okay. And that's why I enjoy talking about it and sharing with others.

A Allison 07:24

Awesome. Okay, so before we get into the process, let's define organization, let's talk about what it is and what it is not. Okay. So first of all, it is not a special gift, or talent reserved for the lucky few.

J Joi Welch 07:39

No, but it's a skill that can be learned. Yes. It is not perfectionism, yes. But it's a process. Okay, you have a process that you have to go through step by step,

A Allison 07:51

right. And it is not buying products. What do we mean by that?

J Joi Welch 07:56

Well, those tools can be helpful, but that comes a lot later.

A Allison 08:00

Okay. Now, Webster defines organize as to form into a coherent unity, or functioning whole. And also Webster gives these synonyms for organized, arrange, classify order, and systemize. What do you think about that definition?

J Joi Welch 08:17

I think that sounds great. I like the part that says, coherent unity or functioning, holy, I like that. Yeah,

A Allison 08:25

I love it's got the the word functioning in there, because that's what we're about. We want our homes to function well. But we want them to be coherent and unified and whole. Yes. So that's what we're that's what we're aiming for here. All right, now, let's define the difference between getting organized versus staying organized, because those two things are not the same.

J Joi Welch 08:47

Right? It involves the getting part organized part involves evaluation, planning and execution. It's setting up the system. And so when you're setting up a system, you go through all of these processes. And that's basically what we're going to be talking about today.

A Allison 09:04

Exactly. We're moving from a place of chaos to a place of order. Yes. So now the the step that we do after that is the staying organized part,

J Joi Welch 09:13

right. And that involves discipline training, behaviors, and modifying the system that you've already set up,

A Allison 09:21

right as needs arise or as your seasons change. Exactly. Right. But it really is a process of maintaining Yes, what you set up in that getting organized part. So let's we've talked about what it is let's talk a little bit about why why do we want to get and stay organized. How does this help us in our practice of the art of home?

J Joi Welch 09:41

We'll I think we look at is as a goal for our homes is to live comfortably. And in them we want to make life easy for ourselves just our daily life. So it's not a distraction in the main purpose of our life and that we're going to talk about that in just a little bit and To do that our homes must have order, which means our possessions need to be culled down and decide what we need to keep. And all those things that we do keep need to have a place to live

A Allison 10:12

We want to go from operating out of a place of just managing the chaos, to operating out of a place of enjoying the order. Like you said, we don't want our possessions to distract us from what our purpose is ,what our calling is, right? If we're just spending all of our time, you know, putting out fires and trying to find things or overbuying, because we forgot we had that thing or you know, whatever it is, or even just maintaining more possessions than we actually need. That's a distraction from what it is that we're really supposed to be doing.

J

Joi Welch 10:43

And I think it starts with our inner work in our hearts that we're going to basically be talking about today,

A

Allison 10:49

right? And that's the how so the how do we get organized, we want to do some inner work first. That's our heart work, that's going to then help direct our outer work. And that's the work we're going to be doing in the actual environment that we want to get organized. And we have a handy little acronym to help you remember this all. And it's called L-I-V-E, we all want to live. How do we want to live? But we're going to look at each one of those letters. L stands for life purpose and values. I stands for interests, V for vision for our home, an E stands for evaluating. So Joi, we're going to dive into each one of those letters. And the first one is L which stands for life purpose. So can you elaborate on that for us?

J

Joi Welch 11:32

Well, life purpose starts with what has God called us to do. And that takes a lot of prayer and seeking him to see what he wants us to accomplish over our lifetime. There can be a lot of different things over the different seasons of life, that's what you ask have to ask also is, what season of life are you in? Are you at the point of you're raising children, homeschooling, maybe just you're doing something as a young couple, maybe you don't have any children right now. And it's a great time of you bonding with your mate. The Lord changes your purpose during all of those times, according to what what time you're walking. It also has to do with your values, you know, what are your core values? What What values do you bring to your family?

A

Allison 12:25

Right? Well, values are individual to different people. I have a good definition here of, of your core values. It's from a values assessment, it's a tool that I used, my counselor helped me with this tool. She introduced it to me and recommended that I do it regularly, like every year, every couple of years to determine what are the things that are most important to me. So values are your heart's deepest desires for how you want to behave as a human being. Values are not about what you want to get or achieve. They're about how you want to behave or act on an ongoing basis. And there are literally hundreds of different ones. But this assessment tool that I have, which I'm going to link it in the show notes, it has a list of the most common ones. Now it's a pretty extensive list. There's about 60 here. But I really recommend that you try to do this one or something similar to it. Here's some of the things that you would find on here acceptance, cooperation, courage, forgiveness, gratitude, humility, safety, self development, persistence, patience, these are just a few examples of some of the inner values, some of the things that would be most important to a particular person. And you go through and you rate each one, they give you a little rating system, and then you count up the points and you find your like top five or six. And then that is a good indication of the things that are really important to you. So for me, and it was actually pretty accurate, for me, it was things like trust,

beauty, courage, forgiveness, honesty, spirituality, those were my top ones, when the last time I did this. And so that helps me to understand what I value most. And it informs a lot of the decisions that I make. And it helps also it works in conjunction with what is what is it that the Lord is calling me to do?

J Joi Welch 14:10

I'm really like that, that's, that's great, because I feel like the number one thing, when you and I feel like the number one fault behind really organization is finding your life purpose in the season and knowing what your values are,

A Allison 14:25

Right. Because those two things are going to help inform how you how you use the space that you've been given and and how you know, which then affects what do you bring into that space? And then how do you manage the things that are in that space? Right? They can also apply of course to you know, organizing your time and your thoughts and your words, but we're not going to get into all that. That's a whole other subject. We're talking about your actual environment of your home in this series.

J Joi Welch 14:51

I know during a season of our life when our children were young, we my husband and I both felt called to homeschooling and we had had three children. And then a fourth one came along. But that was one of our biggest values was to have family time be together. We read a lot here in the afternoon. But we needed a place to do that we had a big table where we all sat around there. At one point, we did have a school room. I'm in one of our houses, so so your home has to reflect what season of life that you're in right now is just my husband and I, and we work on a ranch and we have retreats out there. So I don't need a lot of space, we do have a little guest house or when our kids come home. But we have just a limited amount of this little tiny cottage with a limited amount of possessions. And it's under 600 square feet. But you know what, we are in a different stage of life right now. And so that's our life purpose right now is helping with these retreats being out of our home. And even though we feel like we're showing hospitality, it's not inside of our home. Right. Right. So I think everybody has has to look at what season of life are you in? You know, are you black? We said are you in the just the newly married couples stage? You know, are you raising a big family? Or are you in the empty nester stage?

A Allison 16:19

Right, and let that let that inform you with what, how you're going to move forward with this process. Yes. Okay. So the next step is looking at your interests.

J Joi Welch 16:30

Yes. Okay. I think this is very key because I I've heard so many people that have a zillion interest. And that's kind of me too. I have in the past of cross stitch of, you know, a lot loved

interest. And that's kind of me too. I have in the past or cross stitch or, you know, a lot loved cooking. So I feel like you have to find out what your interests are. Do you like collecting a lot of books? Do you like having a lot of people over in showing hospitality? So you need a place to do that? Do you like crafting? Allison has a great crafting and sewing room upstairs that I've gotten to visit and she just has all of her creative...what do you call it? Your your big outlet?

A

Allison 17:11

Yeah, I mean, all my all my crafty things and artsy things are all in one space. Yes, yeah.

J

Joi Welch 17:16

But if you enjoy doing that, you have to have a place to do that. So you have to take that into consideration. If you have a big room that is an art studio and you haven't painted for five years, then you may want to say, okay, how can I reuse the room? Yeah, look at those kind of things. But I think you have to take your interest to heart when you are looking at your home and deciding how to use the space to the best of its to be most beneficial.

A

Allison 17:46

Yeah, and not just for yourself, but also for the people who live in the home with you. Exactly. So we were we were talking earlier about how if say you're going to help organize your child's, you're going to organize your child's room, whatever the age of your child, I mean, when they're very small, that's different. But once they get to where they have their own interests, and it is their space, you want to help them express express themselves and make a home for themselves in their space. But keeping in mind, what is your child interested in, because if your child is really into building model airplanes, well, you're going to want to think about that as you organize the space. If they're really into, you know, reading or writing or I don't know, maybe they're a musician, and they're going to need space to put their instrument in there so that they can practice and close the door. So you don't have to listen to all the noise. But those are things to think about, it applies to everyone in the home, as you're going through this process. Okay, so what about V? Your vision for your home? What is that?

J

Joi Welch 18:45

This kind of deals with the aesthetics of your home, and also the atmosphere that you want to set? And I say aesthetics, you want to look at your home and you know, what do you enjoy? What kind of decor? Do you like do you like a coastal looking, or traditional living? There's so many different options out there right now. Um, there's the Scandinavian minimalist, there's the oh, they're just so many Boho, the Bohemian look. Yeah, yeah, really big. There's just so many options. And what do you want to create in your home? You know, what do you enjoy? You know, I'm kind of the Scandinavian minimalist with a touch of coastal in there because you'd think I live on a beach at my little farmhouse. But that's just what I enjoy right now. So that's what you have to decide okay, what appeals to you and I say atmosphere, you want to

decide okay, do I want to create like a cozy feeling with maybe dark wood panels or wood walls or do I want this light, airy, feeling, cheerful look, you know. That is the second look after you look at the aesthetics. You look at what kind of atmosphere do I want to create?

A

Allison 20:00

And just just for the record, for our listeners who might be feeling underrepresented, if they are not a minimalist, I am not a minimalist. And so we have a balanced, a balanced perspective here, I'm looking at how to organize a space of... I like my things, I use my things, but I do enjoy having things. And so Joi's on the opposite end, where she's downsized quite a bit and is more minimalist. Just wanted to say that we're gonna cover both, yes. Alright, so we are still looking at the how of getting organized, and we're using our acronym to LIVE. We've talked about our life purpose and values. We've talked about I, our interests, and we've talked about our vision for our home. So we're going to spend the majority of our time on this last letter E, which is for evaluate. We're going to make some decisions about what's in our home and about our space that are going to help set us up for success when we when we actually do the organizing. So why don't you talk a little bit about that?

J

Joi Welch 20:59

Well, when we evaluate our homes, we need to look back at our L, our I, and our V O. What is our life purpose? What interests do we have? And what kind of vision do we have for our homes? So we everything we do we want to ask those three questions. You know, those three, look at those three letters in our acronym, okay, and the E is evaluate. The two parts in evaluating are purging, and planning. So before we even start organizing, we have to decide what we want to keep. And there's lots of methods that we can go into as far as looking at what we want to keep. A lot of people have different ways of doing that. I actually have certain methods I enjoy doing, but I know some others like to look at items by categories. Some people like to do things like packing parties and put everything in a box and then pull it out when you need an item. I always start in a room and go clockwise. So I walk in the door. And I don't get into any drawers and I don't get into any cabinets or closets or anything like that initially. So I walk into a room and I start clockwise and I look at everything that's on the wall, that's sitting on a piece of furniture, and the furniture. So I decide, "Okay, do I want to keep this and and it has to fit in with my life purpose?" "Am I still interested in this kind of item? And does this fit in with the vision that I want for my home?" So you walk in and... I'm just looking at Allison's home right now. So she has three beautiful pictures of birds right now that I'm looking at. And I'm sure she's gonna want to keep them because they're beautiful, antique prints

A

Allison 22:57

of yeah, they belong, they belong to my great grandmother so, I'm going to keep those.

J

Joi Welch 23:00

Yes, definitely. Yes. Because that's part of your values, you know, you want to keep stuff that reminds you of family. So you move right past that knowing that you're going to keep that and then you look at what's next on your wall and just keep going around the room. And then we

then you look at what's next on your wall and just keep going around the room. And then we want to look at what do you do with those items? There's four things that I like to call either piles or boxes you know, put them in boxes. What do I want to keep? What do I want to trash? What do I want to give away? And what do I need to repair? So those four items okay, if we go to maybe something that I'm just looking around her room right now, she has a beautiful wreath on the wall you know and just say that that probably had half of the berries off of it. Okay, well, she would need to maybe go either replace it trash it or get it repaired? Yeah, maybe she could do some things like that. So I think you'd look at those things and decide okay, do I want to keep this yes, it fits in with my L in my life purpose. And it goes along with a vision that I want to create in my home. So you look at that and then you keep moving around the room till you've hit every single object that's on the wall. And then you then you look at the furniture and you look at things that are just sitting on on a dresser or a bookcase or you know a little table. You'd look at every item, touch every item, and say, "Yes this fits in with my the purpose and I still love this item, I still feel like it fits in with my life purpose." So do that and if you want to keep it, just leave it where it is. If you want to give it away, put it in a box to give away because you know sometimes you might enjoy it item for a season, but then you know somebody else that might enjoy it for a longer period of time. I gave my all my China away to my daughter, oldest daughter, because she didn't have any dishes when she moved off, off on her own. And I was, it was all sitting in boxes, I hardly used it. And I just thought, you know, I could really bless her with that. Now, sometimes she can't really give your kids all the stuff you have. But you know, if they want it, why not bless them right now, with those kind of items. Right? Right, we have a giveaway pile, we have a trash pile...and that trash pile is one that you need to act on immediately. Don't let it linger in your home, because sometimes it always makes it's way back. Yeah. So you want to get rid of that, you know, trash it, get get it out to the garage, get it in the you know, trash can, or if you have to haul it off, whatever you need to do...do that pretty immediately. And then your repair pile. That mainly has to do with maybe your clothing closet but a lot of times you might see like a broken vase, you know that you may have been meaning to repair, either repair it right then if you can, or write it on a list that yes, next Saturday, I am going to get the glue out and repair this vase. And that in the tailoring of you know, if you want to tailor any of your clothes, say you've changed sizes, and you need to hopefully take things in. I'm not sure that ever works around me, I'm always taking things out. But anyway, if you want to take things in, you might want to wait till you have everything gathered up and take it all at one time. I feel like you hear a lot about discarding things, giving things away, and then keeping things, but you never hear about where is the fix it pile?

A

Allison 27:05

I want to make a point about what you were just saying about the tailoring, because I was thinking about how well, gosh, you know, some people are like, I'm not, I'm not gonna... I can't afford a tailor or whatever you need, to send my things away to be fixed. But I do want to say that if you are handy with a needle and thread and you can do it yourself, perhaps you do have a mending pile. And you have a day, you know, maybe once a month or one a couple times a month that you will put it on your calendar to tend to those things, whether it's something needs a button or something needs a new hem or whatever it is. But I would also encourage people that tailoring can actually be really affordable. You know, if that is not your thing, or maybe you do know how to do it, but you don't have time. And if you've invested in in a quality piece of clothing that just the only reason you're not using it is because it needs mending. It's well worth, you know, the investment to make a little pile of things that need to be taken care of and take them to somebody local, most local, dry cleaning shops can put you in touch with

someone who can do that kind of mending or tailoring for you. And then it's done. You know, you paid a little bit of money to have it done. But then it's done. And now you can use and enjoy that item.

J Joi Welch 28:16

Right. Right. I used to do cross stitching. I know Allison does that. I had this stocking done, and I will tell you my daughter's 25, and I started it way back when she was a baby. And it will say it's still not finished. But I sent it to on... there's a little lady at my mom's church and she's hemmed dresses for me, she's taken in stuff for me very reasonably priced. And she does an excellent job. So she took the stocking, it was just the front I had most of it done. But I have a little bit lacking. I thought you know what I'm not, I don't know that I'll ever get to this. So I handed her the material. I handed her all the the binding everything. She got it back to me just recently and I thought, oh my goodness, why didn't I do this 20 years ago, and I would have had a stocking and not a bought stocking for my daughter because all the rest of us have these homemade stockings. So anyway, 25 years later, she's going to have a stocking this Christmas.

A Allison 29:26

That's awesome. And it's really just about understanding the value of time over money. Yes, you know, what is your time worth? And I mean, we are talking about organization here, but that's an important factor to consider. When you're thinking about things that need to be addressed or dealt with or or mended or what all of these things we're talking about. It may be more valuable for you to hire that out. Right. Mm hmm. Portions of this process may be a bit it may be better for you to hire portions of it out.

J Joi Welch 29:57

So for categories there's a key part- a giveaway pile, a trash pile and a repair pile. So those are the things that you want to look at when you're thinking about purging your items. And after you've done all the surface, you can kind of go back in that room and kind of say, Oh, wow, things look so much better now. Now, you haven't even touched the drawers or cabinets, which is the next step. So we go into that later. You know, if you only have a few minutes, that's something that you can do just pull out a drawer and go through that drawer. But that comes later. But if you get the surface looking good, it gives you motivation to do the hard part in that's inside closets, inside cabinets, drawers.

A Allison 30:47

Okay. Okay, so we've done all of our surface area, we've made our piles and we've done our purging. Now it's time to move on to planning.

J Joi Welch 30:59

Yes, and there are some things that we need to consider as we're looking at planning. We always want to think about okay, how much time do we need to actually accomplish the project

always want to think about okay, how much time do we need to actually accomplish the project and sometimes we may want to start with a an easier room. And I always think, go room by room, don't try to do the whole house in a day or a week. You look at your time schedule, okay, do I want to it's, you know, it's January, do I have time to do a big project like my kitchen? Which I feel like the kitchen is the prime place that needs to be organized. Because if you have a big family, you're always cooking meals, if you if things are all scattered, you don't know where your you know, cookie sheets are or your pots and pans or if they're always dirty, or you know, whatever, or your pantry is a big mess, then you need to reorganize. That might be a priority that I need to do in these winter months when we're all inside and I have a little bit more time.

A

Allison 32:05

Alright, so I want to talk for just a minute, to the woman who's listening and feels like this is unattainable. I am just so busy putting out fires all day long and chasing babies around and whatever it is that feels like you just can't get on top of things and you don't have time to get organized. Let's talk to that person and talk about why this is important and why we need to need to make the time and how they can make that time.

J

Joi Welch 32:30

Okay. Yes, I think we've all been through those kinds of seasons I'm in you know, thankfully, have I've had my kids all grown and you know, I do have a little bit more time even though I've you get involved in other things. When you do have the time. So really every season is a busy season. Yeah. Or it can be busy. So I feel like what we've, the principles that we've talked about really seeking the Lord first. I mean, just, I think maybe let's look at that for the very first day, if it takes you a year to figure out what your life purpose is, and your inner values are. You know what, that's okay. You know, when we were visiting, I felt like you made a really good point, Allison about the home and serving

A

Allison 33:19

..right.. our homes are there to serve us, not the other way around. And so again, and as homemakers particularly, we see our calling and our occupation as is one of service, and we want to be serving our family. We want to be serving God. But it can really easily get to the place where we're serving our stuff and our home. And those are the things that are dictating how we spend all of our time and and it can be overwhelming. But there is a way to get out from underneath it. And that's what we want to address here. Yes. So we want our homes to serve us and our families not the other way around. We don't want to be in service to our stuff and to our belongings. And the way that we can sort of tackle these huge projects that seem like they're just overwhelming because maybe for you it's it's your garage, or your basement or your attic, or your entire kitchen needs an overhaul in an organization. We don't have to get it all done at once. In fact, we shouldn't try to. I think that's one of the points that you kept making throughout our conversation today is to take your time, right and give yourself plenty of space and breathing room and margin to go through each step of this process. Because each step is important.

J Joi Welch 34:38

For the really busy mom, you may not want to tackle the hardest project first. Yes, if you go to let's say your bathroom and say okay, I have it pretty well cleaned out. I just need to clean through some makeup that I don't use. And I think I could have that done very minimally, with a minimal use of time. If you just did that one easy project, it gives you some inspiration to Okay, I think I can do a little bit bigger project next time, right? So you can walk in that bathroom and say, Oh, it smells so good. My cosmetics are organized. Everything's clean. I just I feel like this is a place of peace right now. So you start small, and then work up to those big garages or those big pantry projects. And, and you can go and just sit in that bathroom and think, Wow, this is nice. So you know, because you've accomplished something, right? And amidst all the chaos and the other things that are happening, maybe in your home, you have a place that you said, Okay, I did get that one thing accomplished.

A Allison 35:52

And that will build momentum. Because then you'll be like, Okay, I can check that little space off. There's peace in this little area. Now let's, let's expand the peace throughout the house. But do it, do it in reasonable bite sized chunks. Don't feel like it all has to be done in a month. Which is hard, because we watch these shows on TV, where they come in, and the entire house has been reorganized in 30 minutes. And that's just not real life.

J Joi Welch 36:15

Oh well, they rebuilt a house in just a few days. Yeah, that's a little bit of an exaggeration, I think so

A Allison 36:21

it may give us some unrealistic expectations.

J Joi Welch 36:24

Exactly. Our next thing after we look at our time is okay, what is our budget? You know, what, what are the things that we need to purchase, maybe to make organizing a little bit easier. So after we've looked at our time, and our budget, then we want to look at the space that we have to use,

A Allison 36:45

right? And there's several things we need to think about when we're looking at our space, we want to think about, you know, practical things like flow, and how does one room flow to the other? And how do people move through those rooms in our family? And what kind of rhythms do we have, that require a certain use of that space, we need to consider a lot of things. And then we need to think really, practically, say you're looking at organizing your pantry. What

like, how much actual square footage are you working with? And what's the depth of your shelves? Because you're going to have to take all these measurements, and you're going to have to do that because you can't go and order baskets that are the wrong size, and then expect them to fit in the space that you have. So So we're talking about the practical side of actually taking measurements and thinking about the area that you have to work with. But we're also talking about how how you use your space and the flow of your particular layout of your apartment or your home. Those are things all things to consider when you're thinking about how you're going to do an organizational project. Okay, so in the planning process, we have to have these considerations of time and budget and space. And then we need to think about what what tools do we have at our disposal? What kind of tools do we have available to us? And then what kind of tools might we need to go and gather up?

J Joi Welch 38:01

There are just so many helps that can be useful to us. There's apps you can put on your phone or on your computer. There's books, oh, a whole bunch of books on how to organize. And sometimes you can get overwhelmed, we'll list a few in the shownotes that might be beneficial that that have helped both Allison and I on that. There's podcasts there's several, you know, the minimalist mom how to organize there's I mean, there's just so many

A Allison 38:30

Yeah, just do a search of podcast on organization and you'll just get hundreds of results.

J Joi Welch 38:35

Yes, yes. But don't get overwhelmed by all of that pick out a few that you feel like would be beneficial for you and then stick with those. Um, I used one that was an Uncluttered course at one point and it was very good. It took you room by room. You just did it with a whole big group. You were all on Facebook together. And you showed what you had accomplished. And it was a real motivating factor for me.

A Allison 39:01

So that's a really interesting point. So you said it was called uncluttered, uncluttered, you did it with a group of people. So that's another point to bring up is that maybe you need to bring in reinforcements and do this with a friend. Yes, be great, maybe tag team and you go into her home and help her work through a particular area. And then she comes into your home and you work through an area in your home, which will help hold you accountable and give you just some motivation. I think that would be a really fun thing to do with a friend Yes.

J Joi Welch 39:30

Then you can go shopping together you know for all the you know materials and tools that you're going to need maybe you know go to someplace to get baskets and containers and in these kinds of things and just make it a fun time

those kinds of things and just make it a fun time

A

Allison 39:42

and the friend who comes in will have a different set of eyes than you, because she doesn't live in your space all the time. So she may see an area of your home, this is why people I hire professional organizer, and if you have the budget to do that, then by all means, but most of us don't. and so bringing in someone who doesn't live in your home home, they can look at a space and they can, they can see things that you can't, and they can see opportunity for an area that you're like, I never even thought of moving that there, or using that closet for this. I just think it'd be really valuable.

J

Joi Welch 40:13

Great idea. But I was in this course. And you actually can just do it as many times as you want to, because once you join, you can be a lifetime member, but it was so good, because I could see pictures of everybody else's kitchens, and it gave me some great ideas, you know, what can I do to, you know, help this space by my oven, you know, or, you know, just various other options. So, anyway, it was just, it was very motivating to know that other people were doing the same thing that you were doing at the same time, they were doing it, so. So that's an option. Um, there's also, you know, just things like, just pencil and paper to write down, you know, tools and make your measurements, you know, for things or maybe you want to sketch out a room plan, and I have done this several times, sketch out, you know, on the graph paper, your, the size of your room, the dimension of your room, and how I want to just arrange the furniture differently, or how can I make this space a little bit more useful,

A

Allison 41:13

that's a super helpful thing to do. Because a lot of times, we're not great with spatial recognition. I think that's, that is a special gift that some people have, they can just look at a spaceship and visualize that couch is going to fit right there. But most of us can't do that. So if you take the time to either graph it out pencil and paper, piece of graph paper, or there are lots of apps and programs that you can do this, on the computer or on your phone. It just helps you because you think that, you know, chest of drawer, whatever is going to fit in that space. And you might actually you, if you do the work on the paper, before you move things around in the room, it's so much easier. Because you might get it in that space and the space swallows it up because it's too small for this space, or this, it doesn't fit like you thought it would. So doing it on paper is I think an excellent way to to help save yourself a lot of time and frustration.

J

Joi Welch 42:09

And you know, always carry those measurements around you in your purse, because I have this little tape measure that I picked up from somewhere that has been so valuable. Every time I am looking for something, I've got the dimensions that I need. And if I happen to be out in oh my goodness, this is exactly what I need to measure it to see if it works.

A

Allison 42:30

That is such a good tip. And you can do that on your phone too. Yeah, if you don't want to, you know, if you don't, if you're not a paper planner, kind of just put it in your notes app on your phone, you know, have maybe have a note, if you're working on your I don't know your bedroom, maybe you're reorganizing some things in there. And just put a little note app and say, Okay, here's the dimensions of this wall on this wall, and you're keeping this bed. This is how big the bed is. And maybe you're looking for a rug and you could like make start making a list of the things you're looking for.

J

Joi Welch 42:58

Right? Right, I we had just built a little guest cottage on our property. And I only had room for a tiny, tiny table. And I went into a store a few months ago. And I looked at this and I had the measurements that I needed because I thought this is going to be hard to find. Yeah. And it had two stools that fit up underneath there. So I could pull the you know, have the two stools down and it can actually see a couple of people at this little table. It was a perfect size. So but if I wouldn't had those measurements in my I think if they were on my phone, I thought I would have never known if I if it would have fit or not. Yeah, you always do those kinds of things. Take those things along with you. And especially keep that tape measure in your purse. Yeah, yeah, for sure. That helps tremendously. And then something else that I did create when we were building our little cottage was a mood board. I knew what I wanted it to look like I had to show it to my builder. And I said okay, I want it to look like why board and batten like a farmhouse on the outside. This is what I want on the inside. But I had clipped all these pictures from magazines and just from other things that I had. And I printed off some from Pinterest and had it all on this big foam board. So I knew the look that I wanted. And I needed my builder to look at it too so that he could have the you know, have that same idea. So and then when I was cleaning out all my stuff to put in the house, I knew Okay, does this fit the aesthetics that I want it to look like.

A

Allison 44:33

Yeah, so doing a mood board would sort of be part of that, hen you're doing the V the step, the vision for your house. Maybe that's when you start to develop that and think about even if you're I mean you're even if you're doing your pantry or your linen closet. Yes. This is part of practicing the art of home, even those hidden spaces we want to make them functional, yes, but also beautiful. Yeah, you know your laundry Room, it should be a pleasant place to be if you can possibly make it that way. So having this sort of idea of what is your aesthetic, and there's so many resources, of course, you could do Pinterest boards, if you don't want to get fancy with a mood board, but there's a wonderful resource it's ...a lot of you probably know about...it's called Canva. And it's just a great publishing online publishing software. And you can do all kinds of things. I love Canva. But they do have a free version, and you can make a mood board on Canva. So you could just have a digital version of it. Put things like, what are your favorite colors and you know, kind of your color scheme for your home and say you're doing your pantry, you could pin onto your mood board, some ideas of what type of baskets you want, that you're going to be looking for, you know, when you get to the fun step of buying the pretty stuff to do the organizing, you know, that's later. That's one of the last things you do, but you could start putting those ideas down in a mood board.

J

Joi Welch 45:54

Right, right. Yeah. And I like that idea, too. One of the bloggers that I follow pretty regularly, he has a YouTube channel. He is an excellent decorator, and his pantry looks like a work of art. I mean, he literally has art hanging in his pantry, and he's taken the door off his pantry just because it's so beautiful. That yeah, for sure what to see. Hide it. Yeah, but it's all painted the green that's really pretty. Now it has all the baskets, you don't see one bit of food in that pantry, but it is it is really gorgeous. But so you can get so many ideas from just different people. You know, like we said, apps and books and pictures and Pinterest and,

A

Allison 46:37

and you can become overwhelmed with all those ideas. And I think that's why we are taking the time to talk about doing those first steps do that heart work first. So that you're very clear on what your purpose is, what your values are, what what kind of vision you have for the atmosphere and the aesthetics of your home. So that when you're dreaming, and you're building these Pinterest or mood boards, you don't get overwhelmed. You know, I'm, I'm one of those people like option paralysis, I just want to do all the things and I want to have all the styles and all the designs, you know, I don't want to pick one. Yeah, because they're also pretty. But I think by really, really honing in on those first three areas, then it can help you in in this fun pretty stage of picking all the pretty things, it can help you hone in on what is going to work best for you, right and what you're really going to love. Well, okay, so we've made it all the way through our acronym with the LI VE. And that last step, after all of that is finally, finally you get to do the project, you get to do the organizing the organizational project, and then you get to maintain it, which is the staying organized part. And we're going to talk more about those two things in some future episodes. But for today, we have a little homework for you. So your homework right now is to do that inner work.

J

Joi Welch 47:59

Ask yourself in seek the Lord, what is the life purpose that you give yourself to at this season of your life? It may be homeschooling, it may be ministering to outside of your home to a different type of some kind of ministry. You know, find out what the Lord has for you. And then seek in ask him, How can I go about doing that. And I think that's where it all starts, you know, we can start by just pulling stuff out trash and stuff. But if we don't know our real life purpose, the Lord may have us entertain lots of people, and we need lots of things for that. Or the Lord may have you say, and you know what all of these possessions are getting in the way of my life purpose. So what can I just keep that will make life easy for me and in, give me a sense of peace in my home. So seeking the Lord is where our hearts need to start. And then see about what season of life that you're in. If you're homeschooling, you need all the books and you need all the materials that you're going to need and you need a space to actually do that, um do that calling in,. Then after you found out your life purpose, look at your interests, you know, they can change definitely over the years, adjust your possessions to what your interests are right now. And then look at the vision, you know, the vision for your home, you know, aesthetically and atmosphere. You know, look at those things do all the inner work. That's what we are

asking you to do over the next few weeks. And it's January and it's time to, a great time to do this. Yep. So that's homework. It's life purpose. It's your interest and it's your vision for your environment.

A

Allison 49:59

Okay, well Thank you so much for joining us for this great discussion on organization and the heart behind it. Okay, homemakers, you have your assignment. I know if you're like me, you're chomping at the bit to just purge like crazy and force the clear space right now. Let's resist that urge. Slow down and take the time to do the heart work first. Seek the Lord's guidance. Talk with your family members, and figure out your "why". In this season, what are your life purposes and values? What are yours and your family's interest? And what is your vision for your home? That's your style, your aesthetic and what kind of environment you're trying to create. I know we gave you a lot of information today and it may have felt like drinking from a firehose. Don't worry, we're going to revisit these concepts again and apply them to actual spaces in the home. In the meantime, we have a free resource to help you work through the LIVE acronym exercise, just click the link in the show notes or go to the artofhomepodcast.com/live. That's L-I-V-E. I hope you have enjoyed this deep dive into the heart behind order and organization in the home. This is a new type of episode for us that we're adding to the show for 2022. We'll be doing deep dives into skills and practices related to the art of home, and we will still be bringing you those amazing stories of home in all new Homemaker Portraits. It's going to be a great year. Thank you so much for listening. If you find value in this podcast, you can help us reach more homemakers. Follow or subscribe to the show on your listening app and share it with a homemaker you know who could use some encouragement. Thanks so much. Until next time, keep practicing your art of making a home