

# AoH S3\_E2\_Homemaker Portrait\_Hollie Carnahan

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

home, homemaker, husband, day, homeschooling, girls, remember, art, child, recipe, vinegar, hand, challenges, clean, night, tasks, add, mom, baby, friends

## SPEAKERS

Allison, Hollie

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Allison 00:00

Have you faced unexpected circumstances in your homemaking journey? In today's episode we will hear from a homemaker who found herself unexpectedly challenged and delighted in her practice of the art of home. 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, a mom of four grown kids and I've been a homemaker for over 29 years. If you are a regular listener, welcome back. If you've just found us, we are so glad you're here. The Art of Home exists to provide encouragement and inspiration for women to practice the occupation of homemaking as an art with confidence and skill, joy and creativity. It's our desire to elevate the work of the home in the eyes of the homemaker and of the culture. We believe that homemaking practiced as an art exchanges drudgery for dignity, and brings beauty and great value to the ordinary tasks of life. In today's homemaker portrait, we're talking with my friend Hollie Carnahan about her homemaking journey. Hollie has been keeping a home since she was married in 1995. She and her husband have raised two daughters and now Holly runs a small business out of her home. While she had lots of dreams and ideas about what homemaking was going to look like. Hollie's story of home brought some unexpected challenges and some unexpected gifts. She did not expect to struggle quite so much with her first baby. Nor did she expect the challenges of moving from her home state to a very different environment. And she was pleasantly surprised with the unexpected blessing of homeschooling. Like every story of home Hollie's is filled with ups and downs with triumphs and failures. She's been stretched by the unexpected and has learned how to embrace the ever changing landscape of homemaking with joy. So whether you're changing the sheets or cleaning out the hamster cage, we hope you enjoy Hollie's story of home. I'm with my friend Hollie today and Hollie, before we go back to the beginning of your homemaker story, why don't you tell us a little bit about who you are today.

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Hollie 02:05

Okay, well, I'm a wife and a mom. And I have two beautiful daughters and a son in law. And as far as career I have been a cosmetologist, a dental hygienist, a homeschool mom, a calligrapher and hand letterer, and then also sugar cookie artist.

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Allison 02:27

So let's go back to the beginning. When did you first become a homemaker?

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Hollie 02:32

In 1995, when my husband and I got married, that's when I first became a homemaker.

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Allison 02:38

How about skills? When you moved in with your husband? You guys are newlyweds. Did you have a skill set that you brought with you? Or did you have to learn on the job?

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Hollie 02:49

I think I kind of learned on the job. I think I was really interested in like reading books and trying to learn how to be you know, more organized in the home. So I definitely, I did have a learning curve. As far as being a homemaker.

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Allison 03:09

What was your learning curve?

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Hollie 03:12

I would say, balance. Balanced because in the first few years of our marriage, I worked full time while my husband was in med school. And so you know, working full time and then just keep and it was an apartment. It was small, but you know, just working full time keeping the apartment clean and the groceries you know, and dinner and all that. I mean, it was I did have a learning curve. I got it down after a while. But I do remember.

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Allison 03:40

Do you remember it being a challenge? Yeah, yeah Was this really your first time you had your own home space? Or had you have a space in college that was just yours?

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Hollie 03:50

This was my first time I went from my parents home to the wedding day. With my husband. Yeah. So I never never lived on my own. I lived at home when I went to college. And so yeah, I went, I've never lived alone. That was a big, that was a big adjustment. .

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Allison 04:09

So who did you learn from? or What did you use as a resource, while you're in the midst of you know, being a mom, or being a wife for the first time and needing to understand how to do that? Well, or even when you became a mom, who did you learn from?

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Hollie 04:23

I definitely remember learning a lot from other women about being a wife and being a homemaker. And I think it definitely helped me and I'm so thankful for those women who spoke those, you know, those truths and those encouraging words into my life when whenever I was a young wife, yeah,

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Allison 04:44

yeah, that really makes a big difference. So let's talk about balance for a little bit. Did you ever work outside the home? I know you just said you were working full time when you were first married. So did you continue to work? What was your experience in that and what kind of challenges that that present to your home making

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Hollie 05:00

Yes, for the first four years of our marriage, I did work outside the home, I was a dental hygienist and I worked full time when my husband was husband was in med school, and then the beginning of his residency. And then when I had my first baby, the plan was always that I would be able to stay home with the baby. And so I definitely did that when I had my first child, I stayed home. And then there was a time after that when she was a little bit older. And I had a friend who offered to watch my, my daughter, because she had a baby the same age. And she was like, you know, I would love to watch her if you ever want to work, because as a dental hygienist, you can temp, it's really easy to do temp jobs for dentist. And so I started working like one day a week. I remember for a short while. And it actually did bring some challenges, because my husband had a very rigorous schedule, he had to be at the hospital really, really early. And he was usually there really late. And so like taking the baby dropping the baby off driving back, you know, to the dental office, and it was just, I just remember it being a challenge. And then whenever Mackenzie would be sick, she would have a cold. And you know, when they're when they're little like that they get a lot of colds. And so there were times that I had to call in and say I'm sorry, my child has 102 fever. So I mean it for me, there were challenges trying to work just part time. I know I'm I hear stories of many women that do it very, very well. In our situation, it just wasn't ideal. And so my husband had a very demanding job. So I didn't work after my second baby. And then I stayed home. And then I actually started homeschooling them. So I homeschooled for 13 years. My youngest just graduated from high school. Well, a year and a half ago, because she just started her sophomore year in college. And so yeah, pretty much been at home with the kids, for the most part.

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Allison 07:32

So you homeschooled your girls all the way through?

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Hollie 07:34

Well, my oldest went to public kindergarten. And then at our church that we were going to they had a Christian school. So for her first grade year, she went to Christian school at our church, then we had to move to Philadelphia for my husband to do a fellowship. And so she did go to public school in the Philadelphia area for her second grade year. And I just, it didn't, it didn't go super well, I remember, we had just, it's kind of hard to explain it was it was just a different culture for us to be there. And I remember just feeling the call to do something different. And so we looked into Christian Schools. And we also looked into it for our youngest Taylor because she would be going into kindergarten. And so we are number interviewing at some Christian Schools there in the Philadelphia area. So it was going to be tuition times two, and we just weren't going to be able to pull it off. And so we prayed about it for like two

weeks, my husband and I prayed about it, because we were just thinking, well, maybe we should go ahead and do public school here again in Philly. And then it was, I was doing my devotional morning reading the Bible. And it was like the Lord said, well, it's not just public school or private school as your only options. You can homeschool them. And I remember that first morning just thinking, oh, oh, my goodness, I could and I had friends in the past that had homeschooled but I was always the one like, Oh, I could never do that. I'm just not cut out for that. That's great for you. But it's not for me. And but this morning was different that that morning was different. And I just my heart was just full. And I was like, Yes, Lord. I'll do it. If that's what you want me to do. I'll do it. And I remember walking down the hall to my husband's office. He was at home that morning working. And I was a little bit nervous about what you know what he would say. And when I said, I think I want to homeschool the kids and he said I think that's great. And so, um, wow, I had friends that had done it. So I was able to reach out to some people just to talk about like curriculum and things like that. So cool.

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Allison 09:59

Well You began homeschooling, you are not living in your native land. You said you're in Philly. And I'm sure that was a huge adjustment. And I think we're going to talk about that later. But how did adding homeschooling to the equation of homemaking create challenges for you if you can remember?

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Hollie 10:16

As far as challenges at this moment, I cannot remember a lot of negative challenges with that I'm sure I will, as I talk, but I want to talk about the positives. I just remember, when we started homeschooling in Philadelphia, it was like, I got my kids back. And when I say that, because Mackenzie would come home from school every day. And usually, within 10 minutes of being home, she was crying about something, she was tired. She was she had to do homework. And in second grade, I remember two to three hours of homework each night. I remember trying to work with her on this new math. Gosh, you know, whenever you're the parent, and you're looking at your kids homework, and they're in second grade, and you're thinking, I don't even know how to help you like what's wrong with this, you know, but I mean, we made it through I just know, it was a difficult, it was a difficult year. And, you know, she was gone all day. And I felt like at the end of the day, I truly got like her leftovers. I got tired, irritable, and then all of the social issues of the playground of the whole day, and just all this stuff. And when we started homeschooling, I just remember the days that we would spend together and the field trips that we took, we would go to this colonial plantation, the girls got to see sheep shearing, and dyeing wool and candlemaking. Because that is that area is so rich in our you know, our heritage and our country. And we went and saw the Liberty Bell, and there was just so much to do is it was a great first year of homeschooling. And they do look back on it and say that was such a fun year. And we mostly would get all of our school done by like 12 o'clock, maybe one. And so we would just get our stuff done in the mornings. And then I just remember also, we got into this really good habit tradition of in the afternoon, we would walk down the road from our house was a little it wasn't a gas station was a convenience store, but it was called wall wall. And they made homemade pretzels, and not the kind that you see here. Like the Andes, these were circle that like eight, they were shaped like an eight oh my goodness, and they were the best choosiest most wonderful pretzels, the best salt. And so these were really popular in the Philadelphia area. And so we would walk down, and one of us would usually get a pretzel or two of us. And then I learned about iced coffee back then at wall wall. And that's when I started drinking iced coffee in the afternoon. I remember that. But um, yeah, it was a cute store. And they had, you know, milkshakes and fun things. So there were many days during the afternoon during the week that we would just go for a walk down the road and then come back. A lot of people walked up and down that area, it was a really nice area for walking. So I have a lot of really good memories of that first year of homeschooling, I think maybe one of the challenges that we faced was making sure that they had social connections. And so I reached out. I can't remember exactly now how I found out about it. But there was a Christian school that offered homeschoolers the opportunity to come to their art classes. So I signed both of my girls up and they went every week into an art classes

at this school. And then I met a couple other moms that were there to take their kids. And so they were another mom had two daughters around the same age. And so we pretty much made instant friends that way, so that's cool. Yeah. All right. So

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Allison 14:17

How about scheduling and balancing all the things that need to get done? It can be a huge obstacle in homemaking. And then you add homeschooling into the mix of that. So how about you? How did you how did you get it all done? Or not?

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Hollie 14:36

Well, I definitely had schedules written out for the girls. They would have their whole day planned out with their subjects. I always like for them to do like math in the morning and you know, little things like that. So we had our schedule written out, especially for the academics. And then we also had chores you know, through the day Um, I will say this, I learned pretty quickly. I know there's different styles that moms lean toward. And I tried something called Moff. It's like managers of the home is what it was called. And they wanted you to schedule your day down. I'm not kidding you to like the five minute intervals. And I tried that, and I could not stand it. And so I it caused me more anxiety. Yeah. Because I was like, I was failing all the time. I'm like, girls were supposed to be, you know, yeah. And so I learned pretty quickly that I prefer order of events. So I'm the way that I would like to the way I planned our day, and mostly the way we would we would roll was, you know, let's do these things in order. And then, you know, we would get through the day. And because things are too tight and too rigid. It causes me anxiety, I just can't like I don't like to function that way.

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Allison 16:02

And that applied as well to the tasks of the home. You know, you obviously you said you had your girls doing chores. So you recruited them as helpers, yes. And trained them. And then just getting it all done. Did you have particular days, some people like to establish a rhythm where they have, you know, Mondays we do this and Tuesdays, we do this as far as getting the homemaking tasks done? Was that something you typically did or you were looser?

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Hollie 16:26

You know, I don't specifically remember certain days that we did certain things, I seem like Monday's were a day that, that I was focused on. asking them to get their laundry together and trying to start the week off, like, clean as clean as can be. Yeah, I do. Remember, I started my girls fairly young with their own laundry. I was in a group at that time that I gleaned a lot of wisdom from other moms, who were homemakers, and homeschoolers. And one of the moms shared with us that one of the best things that you can do as a mom is to work yourself out of a job. And she would say you do not want to do everything for your child until they turn 18 because you're doing a disservice to them. And so she even talked about, you know, when they're young, even get it get a stepping stool to get up on the stepping stool and help them put their laundry in and the the soap. And I remember being a little shocked at first and all that I was like, you know that it does make sense. So my girls were actually fairly young, whenever they started doing their laundry. I mean, I would say maybe like, they were probably like, seven, and nine, nine or 10. And, and I guess I say that because I would say if you want clean clothes, you need to wash them. So as far as like a certain day, once that was successful, and they knew how to do it, and they knew that was their that was their job. Right? I was able to do kind of like hands off with that. Yeah, you know, it wasn't always perfect. And I'm pretty sure there were times that I, I don't have anything to wear. And I'm like, well, you probably need to do some laundry.

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Allison 18:21

That's good. Yeah. We often enter homemaking with certain expectations about what it's going to look like how it's all gonna go, how it's gonna feel. What about you? Did you have expectations and did your day to day reality match those expectations?

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Hollie 18:38

I would say that I did have expectations. And no, they did not go the way that that I thought that they would. mainly for me, I, I always remembered looking so forward to having a family and having my first baby. And we were definitely planning and the setup was that, you know, I would work full time. And then once I had my first child that I would stay home. And so when I had my first baby, that was a very steep learning curve for me. And I didn't expect it I didn't is sort of like surprised me that that it would just be difficult for me. I thought everything would just come naturally. But my first my first baby. She had trouble nursing. She had trouble latching on, and she was colicky. So seemed like in the afternoon all the way to bedtime. She was you know, irritable and fasting. And so I would literally walk around the living room and nurse her as I kind of like rocked her up and down and my husband was a resident at this time. So he had very long hours. He was gone very early in the morning came home late at night. And then there were many times that we actually wouldn't see him for a couple of days because if he was on call, he'd be at the hospital or night. So what this led to, and also my first baby didn't sleep through the night until she was like two years old, two and a half years old. So she was up multiple times every night. So the I was tired, I was sleepy, I was sleep deprived. And I just remember, I just remember being a little surprised. I was I was thinking, Okay, I thought it was gonna be a little come a little more naturally. So that was that was quite a learning curve for me. Just it wasn't like I thought it was going to be so. And then, you know, I was friends with a several other women. We had a playgroup in our neighborhood. And that was actually good, because there were several women and everyone was different. And I mean, I would see women that just it was just seemed like, so easy going, and everything was just fine. And for a minute, I'd be like, wait a minute, what's what's wrong? You know? Yeah, but as I got to know more when women in the group, and I'm like, okay, there's other people that are going through this, too, that are just having this little bit of more of an adjustment?

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Allison 21:05

Yeah. So probably more often than not the one who just seems to just be able to do it in their sleep is is the exception. Yes. rather than the rule? I think it was, especially with that first baby. Yeah. So were you tempted towards comparison at all? in those early years?

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Hollie 21:21

I think so. I think when I would have friends and their babies slept through the night, oh, yeah. Cuz you know, that's a season of your life. It's a big deal when we get so far removed when you know when our kids are adults. But when you go back to those years, when you have babies, when you hear about your friend's child that goes to sleep at eight o'clock at night and sleeps till 7am, the next morning, and you think what am I doing wrong? Surely this is something I'm doing, you know. And so, yes, I definitely think that I compared and struggled and wanted to like, figure out, you know, what was going on? And what was I doing wrong? I will tell you this. The waking up multiple times at night, and then when she was like, two, two years old, and some months or something, um, she was getting to her, she was crawling out of her toddler bed. And then when I would go into her room, she was on the floor crying, you know? And so we took her to the pediatrician, just to kind of talk to them and say, Can you help us at all, like,



she's still waking up multiple times. And so I remember the pediatrician telling my husband and me, he said, it sounds like to me, she is definitely getting her fix from you, Mom, because you're going in there, you know, every night, and she's getting what she's wanting. And so I'm recommending that y'all switch this, and let's have dad go in at night. Let's just see what happens when that goes in. Yeah. And so we purposefully planned for this, you know that he would be getting up with her. And it took about two weeks of daddy going in there. And then she started sleeping through the night. Wow. Yeah, took about two weeks. And then things got so much better. And then finally, I was at the point to where I'd say, okay, honey, I think I can have another baby. Because I always wanted more than one. Yeah, but I was thinking you're overwhelmed. Oh, yeah, I'm not sleeping. Exactly. And, yeah, it's difficult.

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Allison 23:34

Well, that's good. That's a really good testimony to seeking out just, you know, get a different opinion on the situation and ask and be educated and try something different. And it's good that we continually remind ourselves that everybody's experience is going to be different. Everybody's child is going to be different. Yes, home situation is different. There's so many variations, or so many, there's so many variables that contribute to your unique situation that you have to consider so and then I know, we were going to talk about special challenges. I know for you, you had some challenges also with the birth of your first child with postpartum

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Hollie 24:12

Yes, I did. Another thing that I didn't expect was, you know, after I had my first child, I certainly didn't expect to, well to not sleep for many months in a row, and then also to go through postpartum depression. So that was a big struggle for me and to have to, you know, reach out and my husband said, You know, I want you to see someone and I did and, and so, when my oldest was nine months old, I was diagnosed with postpartum depression. And so I got treated for that and it helped me so much and I am thankful for that because this was still in those two years of not sleeping through the night. And so it's tough. And so I would encourage any young mom that is feeling the depression that you feel. Talk to someone, talk to your doctor about it, because there is help for it. It's a real thing. Yeah. And, and there's help.

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Allison 25:22

Yeah. Good. That's a good word. Thank you for sharing that. Let's talk a little bit about hospitality. We want to cultivate a place where people feel like they belong. They're welcome. They're at home, in our, in our home. We show hospitality to, obviously to other people that don't live here, but even to one another within our, within our family, how did you create a sense of welcome and belonging for your family members?

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Hollie 25:52

Well, I think about this, and I think hospitality in creating a sense of welcome and belonging to both my family and others has gone through different seasons over the years. From like, Friday night, family nights, like on Friday nights, we had this tradition with our girls, that we would order pizza and watch a movie together. And so thought went into that, like, what, what are we going to watch this Friday night, and, and so that was something that the girls were very accustomed to. And when they were young, they enjoyed it. And then always have an open door to our girls, friends, like neighbor friends, and just saying they can Yes, they can come over. Yes, absolutely. And so we always invited, you know, their friends to come over. I don't think there was ever The only time that if someone came if the girls hadn't finished their schoolwork or something, like when they're done with their schoolwork or something like that, you know, right. And then as they got older, like with boyfriends, and things like that, we we always wanted them to bring

their boyfriends over. Yeah, come on over. And. And then also with like, our church community, we for years, we've been involved in different home groups and life groups. And so we've hosted many, many groups in our home for life group, and things like that, just opening our home for gatherings like that. So different seasons, different examples, and, and then they change over time how we do that. And also, something I like to do, especially, I think, over the last year and a half, but really, I think I've been doing it for years, but I love to drop things off on my neighbor's porches. So I'll just surprise people and put a little bag of cookies on porches on my neighbor's. And I just think it's thoughtful. And I just like to do that. So I think that's another example of hospitality, even though they're not in your home. You're bringing hospitality to them.

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Allison 28:06

Yes, I would love for you to drop a bag of cookies off of my door because they are beautiful cookies. And we will have links to all your business information in the show notes so people can take a look at that. And maybe order some cookies from you. Yeah, they taste just as good as they look. I will tell you that I've had them. We will get back to Hollie's story in just a few minutes. Now it's time for historical homemaker hints. Yep, that's 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 American frugal housewife in 1833 homemakers guide by Mrs. Child. While I'm a huge fan of honey and beeswax I do not keep bees. However, if I ever chance to get my hands on some large pieces of honey comb, I might have to try this hint. The neatest way to separate wax from honeycomb is to tie the comb up in a linen or woolen bag, place it in a kettle of cold water and hang it over the fire. As the water heats, the wax melts and rises to the surface. While all the impurities remain in the bag. It is well to put a few pebbles in the bag to keep it from floating. Honey may be separated from the comb by placing it in the hot sun or before the fire with two or three colanders or sieves, each finer than the other under it. On second thought maybe I'll just leave it to the professionals and buy some really great local honey and beeswax candles. Mrs. Child has ideas on saving money at the pharmacy. Just let your pantry be your medicine cabinet. A poultice of wheat bran or rye Bran and vinegar very soon takes down the inflammation occasioned by a sprain. Brown paper wet is healing to a bruise dipped in molasses It is said to take down inflammation. Okay, I'm not sure about The wheat bran and molasses which I think would be a really sticky first aid. I do know that vinegar particularly apple cider vinegar has long been used for medicinal purposes. When I was a child and we got our annual beech sunburn, my grandmother would make us take a vinegar bath to ease the pain. So to my childish nose, I imagined the entire bathtub was full of vinegar. Now I know it was probably a cup or two diluted in the bath water, but it stunk it was just atrocious smelling. It did help with the pain however, and you really don't go around smelling like vinegar for very long afterward because it evaporates off your skin. I don't know what it is in the vinegar that helps the burn but it really did help. And finally, do you have an abundance of garden tomatoes? Mrs Child has a ketchup recipe for you. The best sort of ketchup is made from tomatoes. Well what else would it be made from? The vegetables should be squeezed up in the hand salt put to them and set by for 24 hours after being passed through receive cloves all spice pepper mace garlic and whole mustard seed should be added. It should be boiled down 1/3 and bottled after it is cool. No liquid is necessary as the tomatoes are very juicy. a good deal of salt and spices necessary to keep the ketchup well. It is delicious with roast meat and a cup full adds much to the richness of soup and chowder. The garlic should be taken out before it is bottled. I've never made my own ketchup. But I have made tomato jam and it was delightful. It's similar to catch up and that it has those same warm spices but the texture is more like a chutney. I'll link the recipe in the show notes below. Whichever you decide to make with your tomatoes. Please remember to follow safe canning practices if you plan to store them long term. Ball canning is an excellent resource with tested safe recipes. It is possible to safely canned food at home and not boys in your family. Keep everything squeaky clean and follow that recipe. 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 up to you the listener to determine the safety and soundness of this advice. Now back to Hollie's story. Let's talk a little bit about the seasons of homemaking. How has your role as a homemaker changed over time?



Hollie 33:10





Hollie 32:19

I would say the most evident change for me is I don't cook as much. Sure so you know, the girls are gone. And when they were younger, you know, I just feel like I cooked all the time. And I do enjoy cooking. And then it becomes there's times where you know, it's just a necessity, it's a chore, you know, you have to get it done. But it's evident that I do not cook as much now that the girls are gone. My husband Actually, he he does different eating styles, sometimes he actually sometimes does intermittent fasting. And so it's just, it's not as much of a necessity for me to cook. Right. And so we've actually taken advantage of some of the kits, the meal kits that you order. Sure, they'll bring in the fresh, you know, produce and the fresh poultry and all that and so I've tried different things and, and I really like those because it just kind of takes the the planning out of it. And so my husband I both work from home now and I'm really busy with work on a daily basis, like all throughout the day. And when the girls were younger, it was like, you know, I my job was to make sure they were doing what they were supposed to be doing. And then also While they're doing that I could be cooking and prepping and all that sure. But my my job or my my role right now. It's very different. I'm working during the day. So in my husband is glad that I'm able to do that that I do something I enjoy. And so he supports me Yeah, in the decision or the lack of cooking as much he's okay with it. So yeah, and I and I, I do things differently with shopping. I have taken full advantage of hcb delivery service. It is just wonderful. And I really like to hit the delivery before dinner for rotisserie chicken that's great. So yeah, I just don't cook as much and I am fine with that.



Allison 34:33

I I just wish they'd had even just the curbside. I mean they don't actually deliver out where I live because they think I live at the lake but I don't but anyway, just to have the order ahead and pick up when I had had little kids when I had four kids, seven and I didn't take taken all these kids at the grocery store. I can well I can remember when cash what was pea pod or some of the really early grocery delivery services. That we're an online kind of thing that was it was only in, you know, major metropolitan areas like New York City and maybe Philadelphia and or LA or places like that. And I just would constantly be searching. Is it anywhere near me? Right? Is it coming? You know, please. So that's been such a blessing even in the last years. I still also take advantage of Yes. It would have been nice to have, though. When I was young. Yeah. What was your most difficult transition from one season to another? We kind of we talked about that baby, that first baby, Would you say that's the most difficult?



Hollie 35:35

Yes, I, part of me thinks about the empty nest the beginning of that it was bittersweet. And when my last daughter left, Oh, I missed her so much. And so there was tears, and I would go sit on her bed and, and but I'll say it after a few weeks of getting used to her being gone. And then my husband I like it was almost like date night every night. And so we made it through that transition pretty well. So in comparison, I still have to go back and say, my, my most difficult season or transition was having my first baby.



Allison 36:17

And that moved to Philadelphia?



Hollie 36:20

That was difficult. Whenever we had to move to Philly, for my husband to do his fellowship. Of course, I supported him and I knew it would be good for his career. And, but when we left Texas, I left my church, I left my parents, I left all of my friends, everything I knew. I had never left Texas before. So and it's a different environment. Oh, yeah. East

Coast, in the Philly area. And we were just a really tight knit family there. It was like the four of us. Yeah, we did end up finding a good church. And I was so thankful for that. But yeah, that was it was very difficult for me. And I didn't expect to take it so hard. Like I was trying to treat it as it's an adventure. Right, you know, we'll go but evidently, my makeup, my body, my brain has a difficult time with transitions. And so I went through a dark time whenever we moved to Philly. But fortunately, we got to come back to Texas Two years later. So I am thankful that that we came back.

A

Allison 37:41

Are you still challenging yourself to grow and maybe in some new areas of homemaking that you hadn't before had time to do before or anything like that?

H

Hollie 37:51

Well, we are empty nesters. And we both work from home. And so this is a different time for for me than it ever has been before to be to be working full time from my home and having my own business. But I think there's kind of two aspects to this whole making this question. It just makes me feel like there's like an emotional side and a physical side to all of this. And it seems like now at this point in my life. The emotional side of homemaking, for example, being there for my girls, when they call me Yeah, I'm listening to them, you know, when they want to talk. Because, you know, that's, that's really up to them when they want to talk. So like, if I call and I want to talk, they may be busy or they're not in the mood, but I I'm just trying to make it a goal and to to carve out time because they are still a priority for me. And so I'm being being a phone call away from them and listening to them. And my prayer life for them looks different. I think now that they're gone, then whenever I've always prayed for my children, but I have become very purposeful in praying for my adult kids. Because they both have gone through a lot of struggles. Yeah. And as a parent it's like you hurt with them. My heart gets so heavy for them when they're when they're struggling or you know, they're going through something difficult. And I'm just gonna go ahead and put a plug in here for Susan Macias. I have a couple of her books. Yes, Unceasing is amazing. That book has been so wonderful. For me. I'm just trying to not worry about your kids and just put that energy into praying for them and She gives such good practical advice scriptures to pray over them. And and then I have another one that she has. It's praying for your daughters. Yes. So I have that one too. And that one was so valuable to me last year when my youngest went to her first year of college. And I remember after she left, I read that every single day, I prayed and prayed for that child. And it wasn't until later, later in the semester, maybe in the beginning of the second semester, that my daughter shared with me, like, just how much she was struggling during that first month of being away from home. And, and I remember just praying over her specific prayers. And she really got, she finally got plugged into a good church. She, she is growing. And I mean, like, she grew a lot that semester. And, but I look back at that, and I didn't even realize just how powerful prayer is. Sometimes you really have to just be patient, and keep praying. And then it's such a beautiful blessing. Whenever we do see fruits of that it's, it's all glory to God. He's so good to us. And that and then that he lets us in on that is pretty amazing to me. But yes, as far as like homemaking, now, I guess with my my girls, it's more emotional, it's more being supportive in that way.

A

Allison 41:44

They're in that state, or they're learning what they're creating their own homes. Their understanding what it means to go out into the world and start cultivating a place of belonging for for their family for their future family. But yet, they still, they are still looking back at us, as an example as a place to be still tethered to. And while they're establishing their own homes out in the world, and so I think I absolutely agree with you that emotional side of things ramps up really from about middle school to high school through college, might your children need you a lot? It's a lot less

physically demanding. But it's a way more mentally and emotional demanding. Yes, the older that they get. And so there's still work to be done. Yeah, it just looks different. That's right. Yeah, it does. How are you intentionally passing on your knowledge to younger women that are coming behind you?

H

Hollie 42:41

I would say, the way right now in my life that I'm intentionally passing knowledge on, is probably through ladies Bible study at church, just you know, being able to be around other women in our, like, small group time, there's, there's quite a range of ages in there. And it's a blessing when I, whenever I see young moms that are there, and then I can almost see myself, you know, 20 years ago, in them. And, but sometimes they'll be struggling with their value, as if they've especially if they chosen to stay home and be a stay at home mom and a homemaker. And when I'm given the opportunity, and I, I feel like it's an opportunity to share, I enjoy sharing with them and encouraging them. That, you know, being a stay at home mom being a homemaker is extremely valuable. And I would say it's probably the highest calling, it's one of the most rewarding jobs that that you can have here on Earth, in my opinion. And I think it helps shape our society and our world and the people that we live with and around. And so I just want to always encourage young moms, especially when they have moments of doubt. Because the world's going to tell them one thing, and then God will tell them a different thing. And I want to encourage them to, to feel competent in what they're doing because it is valuable. Yeah. And so that would probably be a way that I'm trying to pass that on.

A

Allison 44:35

Good. All right, we're gonna go into a time of rapid fire quick answer on the topic of homemaking tasks, you're ready, one you love.

H

Hollie 44:46

I love decorating our home with God's word. I love to put scripture like all over our house. So that's where kind of like the hand lettering and calligraphy and wooden signs comes along because I just like for his word to be everywhere.

A

Allison 45:00

And it's so beautiful. And we'll have some examples of that on the blog for your episode. It's really fabulous stuff.

H

Hollie 45:06

Thank you.

A

Allison 45:07

Okay, what about one that you hate or dislike?

H

Hollie 45:11

Yeah, well, I do not like grocery shopping. Like I just I don't like to go into the store and spend two hours and so that's

why I love you know, delivery. But I also hate cleaning baseboards.

A

Allison 45:22

Oh gosh, who, who likes cleaning baseboards? I've never met anybody that likes doing that. I guess it can be kind of rewarding. When you know you see that clean baseboard? Yes, I don't like getting down on my hands and knees to do it. One you grew to love.

H

Hollie 45:37

I think something I used to not be interested in or you know, like at all but is upcycling. I love to take furniture like that we had from our previous home that just was not going to look good in our current home. And just completely changed it. Paint it. And so I kind of really grew to love upcycling, if it's got good bones, and it's in it's still a beautiful piece. I love to make it, you know, fit into our home now. And so that really took over and so I pretty much painted everything.

A

Allison 46:15

I yeah, I would say you definitely love to do that. Yeah, and I'm looking around I'm looking at your china hutch, which is it does have fabulous bones. But you said it was really dark and heavy. And you probably had a lot of visual like it took up a lot of visual space being so dark.

H

Hollie 46:30

Yeah. And it was cherry wood. Because you know, this was back in Well, I guess the late late 90s. And then, so when we moved into this, this home, the The floor is a dark hardwood kind of a Java dark and the cherry wood though again. And and our first thought was, well, we just need to buy all new furniture and but I told my husband I was like, let me have a go with this. Let me just see what we can do. Because I'm definitely thrifty. I'm quite a penny pincher. And so if I can do something on my own, if I can do it, if I can figure it out, I'm gonna do it. So yeah, I grew to love that.

A

Allison 47:12

Cool. Well, great result. How about your worst homemaking fail?

H

Hollie 47:18

Well, that's easy to name. It's gardening. I wish that I were better. I really wish that I could grow a garden. But that is just not something that I'm good at. And you know, I'm okay with that. Because it takes time. Yeah. And we all have a specific certain amount of time in our lives. And we really should do what you know, I don't know sets our soul on fire. You know, what, what do we really love to do? And so although I would love for that garden, there, there's a great place for one in my backyard. I really enjoy doing other things with my time. But I have tried. There have been several times that I've tried to have a garden and they failed every time.

A

Allison 48:04

What about a memorable homemaking achievement?

H

Hollie 48:08

Well, I'm going to circle back around to upcycling because for us that was quite an achievement. It saved us a lot of money. And so that was a pretty good accomplishment.

A

Allison 48:19

I agree. Very good. How about your top three homemaking tips.

H

Hollie 48:25

Okay, so my first one would be my favorite granite cleaner. So if you have granite in your home, which a lot of us do, you have to be careful what you use on that granite because they can damage it over time. So I found this recipe and I have been using it for years now and I love it and here's what it is. Okay, it is a quarter cup of rubbing alcohol, two cups of water, about two drops of dawn. I really think it needs to be done dish soap, okay, and then a few drops of essential oil preferably thieves because it's like a natural antibacterial oil. So I just mix that up in a spray bottle and it's just so simple. All you really need to have on hand is the rubbing alcohol, you know and then your thieves and I actually use one on Amazon. It's just I don't even know what health shield i think is the brand it's like \$8 a bottle. Okay, so that's my first cleaning tip very good. And another one is add a little cornstarch to your chocolate chip cookie recipe. So if you add about two teaspoons of cornstarch to a standard size recipe for chocolate chip cookies, they're going to stay fresher longer. And they're going to be they're going to give you a little bit more thickness and not flattened out so much like some chocolate chip recipes do. So just throw in a couple of teaspoons of cornstarch and just see how you like it because

A

Allison 50:00

Wow, really? Okay, so that's for like a standard drop cookie recipe chocolate chip cookie recipe, like maybe the one you would look on the down the back of the bag. Yeah. Okay, that is a great tip.

H

Hollie 50:11

Yeah, add some cornstarch. And you know, chocolate chip cookies are just so divine first day you make them. And the second day, yeah, maybe the third. But you know, when you get to that third or fourth day, they just kind of become like dry, just not as you know, decadent. But if you add that cornstarch, it's going to keep them fresher, longer. And then my third little tip is sorry, it's another baking tip.

A

Allison 50:40

Well, you do have a cookie business.

H

Hollie 50:43

So when when you bake a cake, and you've got like a layered cake, like three round layers, as soon as you bring that cake out of the oven, and it's hot, take put it lay a paper towel down, you could use a linen, like a linen cloth or a kitchen towel. But I just put like a Viva paper towel down and smooth over the top of your cake and press it down. I know it sounds strange. But if you you can use your hand or a fondant fondant smoother. And if you smooth over the top of that cake, it's going to level your tear. It's going to give you a nice clean flat layer for your cake. And it also helps lock in moisture, really cake. So it's going to make your cake when you eat it more moist. And then if you are one that likes a nice straight round cake, and you have to shave off the tops, because that's what you do. Yeah, okay, you have to kind of like shave off the top. But if you do this, there's going to be much less shaving, you may not have to shave it at all. And you just like rub your hand over the top while it's hot out of the oven still in the pan still in the round pan because you got to wait 10 minutes for you pop that right? But if you do it immediately, okay, then it's really going to flatten it out. And it'll be really it's a really good thing.

A

Allison 52:03

Thank you. Sure. Wonderful tip. Okay. All right, we're going to end our time today reflecting a little bit on the art of home. How do you believe that homemaking is an art?

H

Hollie 52:17

Well, the way I look at this is true art to me can't really be duplicated, identically. True art is going to be different, a little bit different, even if the same artist makes two different paintings. Unless they're having it copied or something, if they're doing it with their hand, there's going to be a little difference. And so for me as far as homemaking goes, and it being an art, we need not compare ourselves to other people, I think every home is going to be unique, and it's going to be different. And because it is an art. And so I think it takes pressure off of each other of us to look at it that way. Because it's just the way God made us we're all different. And art true art is a little different. And so that's kind of how I see it as an art form.

A

Allison 53:16

Yeah. And I mean, you know that as an artist, that even if you're doing the same if you're writing out the same verse, if it's a Bible verse or something, you're doing maybe multiple copies of the same thing, it's going to look a little different.

H

Hollie 53:29

Right slight variations. And yeah, you know, in the descending of a why, or, you know, the A sending of a D, I mean, there's just going to be small, little differences. Even if I write the same verse on five different times on five different pieces of paper. Yeah, it's going to be some variation.

A

Allison 53:47

And that's what makes each piece unique and beautiful. That's right, exactly. We know that there can be a lot of drudgery and homemaking, because the tasks that we have to do have to be done over and over and over and over



again. How do you find beauty in the midst of work that can be monotonous and mundane?

H

Hollie 54:07

I think for that is, I think, remembering kind of like a higher goal in that because with the mundane things, if I think of this as like if I'm cooking a meal for my husband or cleaning up or whatever, I think of it as you know, serving I think of it as a higher purpose to it beyond just what that little task is right there. And then another way to you know, just kind of like break the monotony is listen to some music while you're doing it, change it up a little bit or listen to your favorite podcast. So, um, but yeah, just try to do things that can bring a little bit of, of joy. You know, I know scrubbing a toilet is not fun, but if we think of, you know, the higher purpose, whether it's for me that it'd be me thinking about next time my kids come home for the weekend and want to have, you know, a clean home and a place for them to enjoy being. And

A

Allison 55:10

Yeah, yeah, I have to tell you though, I hate scrubbing toilets. And my sister in law has introduced us a while back. She actually I think gave this as a kind of a gag wedding gift to my son and daughter in law when they got married. She gave them something else too. But this was hilarious. Have you seen those toilet wands? I think Clorox makes them and they disposable yet you just you have the the wand is not disposable. It's plastic, and you keep that next to the toilet. But then it just clicks on to this little pad. that's saturated with the cleaning solution. And then you just swirl that around in the toilet, you clean the toilet, and then you and then you take that over top of your garbage can and you click the little button and it just drops that nasty, dirty pad into the garbage. It is the best.

H

Hollie 55:55

So you don't have the disgusting brush sitting in your bathroom all the time.

A

Allison 56:00

That turns like orange on the bottom, you know?

H

Hollie 56:03

Because we have a lot of minerals in our water. And then what else is in that?

A

Allison 56:07

I don't even want to think about it.

H

Hollie 56:09

Yes, I don't either. Thank you for sharing that. I'm gonna have to get those.

A

Allison 56:13

They're fabulous. What word of advice would you give to a young homemaker who's listening?

H

Hollie 56:22

You are valuable. What you're doing is so valuable. I think sometimes. As as young, homemakers young stay at home moms. We might listen to the world and and think that what we're doing is just it's not valuable. It doesn't bring in money, which actually you could go on and talk about how how monetarily valuable it is to stay home, but just to I would want to encourage them in and say, you know, it is valuable, it means so much. It's so rewarding. And you may not see it now, you may not see it for a while. But there will be a day that you will look back and and see that it was valuable. And it makes an impact. It makes a big impact on your small little world. And I believe on the larger scale in the world.

A

Allison 57:19

Yeah, yeah. Well, how can people find you out? on the interwebs?

H

Hollie 57:25

Okay, well, I am on Instagram and Facebook. And my business is called Jordan Taylor's Designs. And I named it after my two daughters. And so it is Jordan Taylor's with an S and then designs with an S. So I'm on Instagram, and I'm on Facebook. So if anyone wanted to order cookies on my Instagram, if you click in the bio, I have a link tree and that will lead you to the custom cookie order form.

A

Allison 57:56

You can fill that out. What do you ship your cookies all over? Or do you only do local orders?

H

Hollie 58:02

In Texas as a cottage food baker, we cannot ship our cookies. So I just do local local pickup. Yeah. Alright.

A

Allison 58:11

So if you're local to the greater San Antonio area, then you can check it out.

H

Hollie 58:16

That's right. I do ship my ornaments. I also make Christmas ornaments every year. So I'm kicking off that season. They're like wood slice ornaments. So custom, you know with names or dates are first year to be married or you know, yeah,

A

Allison 58:33

They're really beautiful. And those they can find those through your link tree on your Instagram?

H

Hollie 58:37

Yes. And then you can also message me on instagram if you want. And then I'll get back to you about custom. Okay, custom ornaments.

A

Allison 58:46

Well, that's fabulous. Thank you so much for being with us on the show today.

H

Hollie 58:51

Thanks for having me.

A

Allison 58:52

I really enjoyed hearing your story.

H

Hollie 58:53

Thank you.

A

Allison 58:55

Thank you so much for joining us today for this homemaker, portrait of Hollie Carnahan, we hope you're leaving here encouraged and inspired to allow room for the unexpected in your story of home to prepare your heart now for the challenges and the changes that will inevitably come as you move through the seasons of homemaking, seeing them as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles to be avoided. If this episode was helpful, would you pass it on to a homemaker you know, who could use some encouragement. And if you're able plan a time to meet face to face with her and encourage one another in your home making journeys, we have a new way for you to leave a review of the art of home and you'll find a link in the show notes below. The folks over at [love the podcast.com](https://www.lovepodcast.com) have created a great way for listeners on any kind of device to leave a review. It's very simple, and it only takes a minute. Your review helps other listeners decide if this show is a good fit for them. So it's super helpful. And we're up to 22 countries now. So thank you for helping us get these stories out to more people. All around the world. You can connect with us on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, all those links are below in the show notes under social and you can email us contact at [theartofhomepodcast.com](mailto:theartofhomepodcast.com) if you want to make sure you don't miss a single episode, join the art of home community. Click the subscribe link in the show notes. It's totally free. We will not spam you with email. We'll just send you a listen link every time a new episode comes out. And we'll also email you to inform you of any new resources that would be available to you on the website. Resources mentioned in today's episode, Holly's top three tips as well as how to get in touch with Hollie for a cookie order or maybe a custom Christmas ornament are all listed below in the show notes and on our website. And don't forget you can get a peek into Hollie's home and see

her fabulous thrifty furniture makeovers over on the website as well. Just head over to the [art of home podcast.com](http://theartofhomepodcast.com) forward slash blog and click on the link to this episode. This is season three, Episode Two, a homemaker portrait of Hollie Carnahan. Until next time, keep practicing your art of making a home.