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SPEAKERS

Lana L, Allison



Allison 00:02

Hello homemakers and welcome to The Art of home podcast where we are exploring how homemakers cultivate a place to belong. I'm your host Allison weeks. I'm a wife. I'm a mom and I have been practicing the art of home for 30 years. We are nearing the end of season six of the art of home and it has been a season of firsts. We had our first newbie homemaker portrait, and today I'm talking with our first in the trenches homemaker. While the newbie is one who has five or less years experience in homemaking. The in the trenches homemaker is more than 10 years in, likely surrounded by little people, juggling school schedules, dance classes, science projects, and much more. She is in the thick of what many consider the most demanding season of homemaking. And we're going to dive into all of that good stuff with today's guest. But first, I have a favor to ask of you if you have been enjoying the art of home. And you have found these interviews and our deep dive episodes inspiring and encouraging. Would you take a minute and leave us a review. I am so thankful for each and every review our listeners leave. The reason why reviews are so important is that it helps other homemakers like you decide if this show is a good fit for them. You can leave a general review about what you love about the show or you can even leave a review saying what you loved about a specific episode. It all counts. And it all helps. If you can pause the show right now and go leave a review. Then come back and enjoy this great conversation with my friend Lorna. What I love about this interview is how honest Alana is about her struggle to love her role as a homemaker. If you have ever thought every other woman seems to have this homemaking thing down pat except me what is wrong with me? You are not alone. I think we have all felt that way at one time or another and Alana is learning to accept that homemaking is just something she has to work a bit harder at than others and that's okay. It does not make her any less valuable in her family's eyes or in God's eyes. So whether you're hanging the laundry on the line or throwing out a fishing line, I know you will enjoy Lorna's story of home. I'm here with my friend Alana. And we're going to talk about her homemaking journey as an in the trenches. Mama, you're my first one in the trenches. So why don't you just tell us just a little bit about yourself? Just introduce yourself to the audience.



Lana L 02:38

Okay, well, my name is Lana. I am a mom of three daughters. I have three girls. They are four

Okay, well, my name is Lana. I am a mom of three daughters. I have three girls. They are four, six, and eight. So all about two years apart. And I grew up actually with two sisters too. So in a family of three girls, and now I have three girls, three daughters. I've been married for 11 years. And my name is Lana. And I'm actually first generation American. My family is from Croatia. And then I married somebody from Greece. And so my husband's Greek, like first generation and I'm creation. Anyway, so married 11 years, three girls, and I work part time as a family and newborn photographer. And just started that business about two years ago, but have been a homemaker for nine years before that. So

A

Allison 03:31

awesome. I did not know that you were Croatian. Yes. That's very interesting. I bet your family get togethers are. Yeah, very interesting. Yes.

L

Lana L 03:43

And it's a blessing that I married. Someone with a big fat Greek family. understood my crazy family

A

Allison 03:48

and I did you guys really identify with that big fat that went to that movie? Yes. Yeah. I love that movie. Yeah.

L

Lana L 03:54

And that's just how we are. We're all close. And both sides. That's awesome. It's a blessing.

A

Allison 03:59

Okay, cool. Well, thank you for sharing. So let's go back to the beginning. Yes. So when you first became a homemaker, well, when did you first become a homemaker? Would you consider it when you got married? Or did you live on your own before you got married a little bit?

L

Lana L 04:12

I did live on my own a little bit first. And I I'd say not till we had our first child. Did I really view it as homemaking? Okay, so I'd say we were married for about two years.

A

Allison 04:31

Did you have any skills as a homemaker when you came into it?

L Lana L 04:35

Yeah, I don't. I would say that I did not have many skills. I grew up like as an athlete, and I played college tennis and so I didn't babysit a lot. I was just always doing sports. And so that was always a weakness for me as far as even in college, I was just Messier struggled with organization. and just my personality type I think and so coming into marriage, I don't remember it negatively affecting or it being an issue really. But until we had kids, and then I really felt the weight of I'm like, this is way harder for me. I think the average mom.

A Allison 05:16

Yeah. So you grew up in a family of girls, right? Yes. And I mean, would you expect it to help at all? Where were you in the first

L Lana L 05:24

order? I'm the oldest, okay. Yeah. Okay. And I did. I did help, you know, with my sisters, but not, and they made us do chores and stuff. And so I had responsibilities. But I don't

A Allison 05:39

know, we just just didn't quite translate over to doing it. My sisters were. Yeah,

L Lana L 05:44

yeah. And I didn't help my mom as much as my other sisters. did. You know, and so so what

A Allison 05:53

was the hardest thing for you to learn? What What was the biggest the steepest learning curve for you?

L Lana L 05:59

steepest learning curve was feeding a child three times a day in their laundry, adjust all the things every day. And managing it and on top of my own and my husband's and yeah, just in general, homemaking has always been a struggle in a weakness. And yeah, so I don't know if there's one biggest but all of them depending on the season or year, I guess, yeah, different ones,

A Allison 06:30

whether there's a new baby coming out or whatever. So, I mean, have you found some strategies or things that are helping you to maybe manage a little bit better over the years? Because you said, You've been doing this now for?

L Lana L 06:41

Yes, yeah. But strategies, I would say is just learning it as a discipline and just realizing it's okay, if I'm never going to enjoy it. Or it may be as easy as I see it as either for my sisters or friends. But still, that it's this is what God gave me to do. And this is my job. And I can either do it and grow in bitterness, or, you know, yeah, and just constantly fight against it, or just admit, this is a weakness of mine. It is harder for me, so I either need more help, or I need to say no to things, you know, that I'd rather go do instead. And, you know, I'm more social, and I'd much rather like have more girls nights. And, and so yeah, just I think I've grown in, I don't know, realizing it needs to be a discipline.

A Allison 07:33

Yeah. That's really insightful.

L Lana L 07:35

I mean, it's good. But I struggle in it. And so well, because

A Allison 07:39

it's discipline. I think we all struggle with discipline in our lives. Yeah. You know, yeah, practicing things in a disciplined way is not the strong suit of the human race.

L Lana L 07:50

And I but it's a roller coaster. And I've never, you know, there's months or seasons where it's smoother, or I'm like, it's not as hard for me and then, or the Lord gives a resource or a book or, you know, where I'm like encouraged or mode, I've implemented something. And then there's harder months or a hard season if my husband's working at time. But even just like with your podcast, and the art of homemaker, you know, this was like, I was like, it isn't, this was a reminder to me, yeah, you know, and I am a more creative, like, social, like, dreamer, you know, and just, yeah. And I'm like, No, I can also view this as I can make this an artful, you know, a place for my kids. You know, and, you know, even use this so that. So he's gracious like that to just help me when I need the reminders.

A Allison 08:39

Well, let's talk about expectations. Oh, man in in home life. What are some things that surprised you about homemaking? either good or bad things you weren't expecting?

L Lana L 08:51

That surprised me? I mean, the discipline part that already mentioned.

A Allison 08:55

Were you surprised that it was challenging for you? But

L Lana L 08:59

yes, that's a great way to remind me. I think I struggled for a long time the first, honestly still do on and off, that it's so challenging. So that's the biggest surprise overall, that I'm like, I thought this would be easier, or it would get, you know, that did come more naturally to me. Or I was like, What's wrong with me? Yeah, that it's not getting easier or that it wasn't from the beginning, like something I loved and I never really babysat a lot growing up, and I just, I loved people, but I don't know, I just wasn't. I didn't have experience with kids. Right? I don't know. So yes, that is so true. And a good point.

A Allison 09:42

Yeah. What about some expectations that you might have had coming in? Whether it's relate relational or just your everyday experience what it was going to be like, what's something that you had to let go of letting go

L Lana L 09:54

of I would say, the enjoying it part. Yeah. I had to let go of, I don't know. And being like, fast, and just the whole day in general, how much of a day of being a mother and household things, but even in mothering my kids and the actual parenting disciplining the training, you know, like interacting with my children. I had to let go of how much of it is work and not enjoyable, right? Sometimes, you know, and just my expectation, I think, was that, like, it's just blissful. Or Ill if you're doing it this way, or the right way or, and, and the Lord kind of showed me like, no, actually, I'm supposed to be giving you joy, or you can get joy through me and have peace and you know, but not necessarily in your circumstances. Or as often as you thought or hope or want. Right, still even to today. So yeah, I guess letting go of it being Oh, yay, this is Yeah, well, dreamer, you're all

A Allison 11:05

source. Your all sufficient source of joy or something. Yeah. You know, because that's just not realistic. You can be a source of joy. Yeah. But think that it's going to meet that need for you all the time.

L Lana L 11:16
Right? Or even just, yes.

A Allison 11:20
Okay, so we're going to talk a little bit about parenting. Yes. All right. How did bring in children into the picture, challenge, or enrich your homemaking? Now, we've already kind of touched on this, but maybe you want to expand on that a little bit?

L Lana L 11:35
Yeah, expand? Yeah, I have a lot to say about that. Oh, man, it depends on the season, too. It's my first daughter, we were living in Colorado and away from family and away from help and my husband didn't feel comfortable with leaving her with a babysitter. So we never had a date night or I never, you know, got away and then she didn't take a bottle. So we had a good like, nine to 12 like months where I was even just nursing, so I couldn't even leave him with the baby for very long. So man, the first born though, it was a more blissful time, and I maybe the Lordy races some of the challenges with your first

A Allison 12:17
I think so because otherwise we wouldn't have any more

L Lana L 12:18
I know. But it depends on the, on the babies to their temperaments. And she wasn't a good sleeper, but it was just her and I wasn't having to work. And I was able to stay with her. And so it was wonderful. The Sleep was the toughest part for me. But then our second born had colic and was screaming a lot and would only sleep for two hours at a time. And so that ended up being really hard, like after three or four months, because I also had a two year old daughter, you know, and so with both of them, that was a really hard season for me. That kind of stayed kind of affected me since then, till now still, you know, like on and off of just my threshold even with low like levels of noise and they're screaming even at now is four and six year olds. I'm like, triggered more from from those colicky years. Yeah. But yeah, repeat the gist of the question. changed it? How

A Allison 13:26
did it challenge and challenge and enrich your your role in the home? You know, what were an obviously, yeah, it's challenging when you have a colicky baby who only sleeps two hours at a time.



L

Lana L 13:38

Yes. With my first it was really enriching though, because it like strengthened my marriage. It just, it was a beautiful sweet time of just like, I remember thinking, I want everyone to have kids and, and I was even probably among the later of my group of friends from college who had them. But there was still some friends that I was like, this is just like, you know, it was so enriching in it, and it was beautiful. And so I left that with my firstborn, but then had real challenges with the second and third. The third was also colicky and nursing problems. And so I just got more challenging.

A

Allison 14:15

And then you have to, you know, you have a third baby, and you've got two little ones, right, also taking care of it. Yes. So you've got three girls. How are you encouraging them? In your practice of the art of home? How are you encouraging them to be a part of making this house a home,

L

Lana L 14:32

right? So my oldest is eight. Middle is six. And that is what we're navigating right now. Because I'm realizing I cannot keep up with everything you know, and that's always hard. And the minimal books I would read are podcasts of just parenting things and with implementing teaching your girls and kids how to help. They're not like oh, at four they can be doing this. They should See this, you know, and yeah, it's different for each child. And so we're trying to have them help and do laundry, and we're just not doing well with consistency. And my oldest has my personality and my just, you know, lack of focus or just. And so it's a challenge. And that's what we're in right now trying to like, say this is your role, and not give allowance for some basic chores, but there can be allowance or blessing for added things that they do. But yeah, so I'll get back to you on that. So I'm working on that.

A

Allison 15:38

Are you getting a lot of resistance from them? Or are they? Because Absolutely. Some kids are like, all? Like, can I help you do this? Can I help you do that? You know, you have those kids? They're sort of unicorns. But

L

Lana L 15:50

yeah, yes. Yes.

A

Allison 15:53

Resistance is typically, yes. Pretty normal.



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Lana L 15:56

And with with my oldest being not that way, and having my same struggles, that then that's even more challenging, because you don't have an older modeling for the other day. Oh, that's true. Yeah. You know, and so and

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Allison 16:09

well, and it's, I mean, my experience was it's just, it's a continual repeating and repeating and repeating. Yeah, till it sticks. Yeah. And it might not stick until they go to college. I know, all my kids were, they went off to college, and then they came home, and they said, Mom, my roommates are total slob, you know, and I wonder, when they would leave, when they would have left, I would have been like, You're a total slob, you know, interesting, but they they had the skills because we taught them yes. How to Clean how to do your laundry, all that kind of thing. And when the rubber meets the road, and they had to do it for themselves, they they could write. So anyway, I'm just encouraging you.

L

Lana L 16:49

Yes. That is encouraged. They will tell you that they will come Yeah, but and to stay consistent and diligent. Exactly. Because I some I'll be tempted to be like, Oh, it's still weakness. I haven't perfected it. So I can't expect them. But now I can say this is mommy's weakness, you can help me and we can work at it together. Yeah, no,

A

Allison 17:11

I love that. It shows a lot of vulnerability to your kids, and lets them see that you're human and you make mistakes. And yeah, and you can learn together, I think that's a really great way to look at it and to approach it. Okay? What are some practical steps that you take to help you set and keep your priorities straight?

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Lana L 17:30

priorities in regards to any and everything in this stage of my life, or specifically homemaking,

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Allison 17:35

keeping it any and everything? So, you know, just because we know, as followers of Christ that we got to put Jesus first, honestly, we know that because if that's not in place, then none of the other stuff is going to work. But it can be really hard, particularly in the stage that you're in. Yeah, to make time for that and make sure that that gets done. Yeah. So prioritizing your relationship with God, your relationship with your husband? Yeah. And then all of the things.

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Lana L 18:01

Yes, I'd say we're struggling with prioritizing our marriage. And that's hard just in the little years. I think the things that I'm grateful that we prioritize these last two years, especially we're getting to church and staying around people in person. And for me, I really tried to prioritize getting together with other women or moms. And I wish sometimes I wish I had more time or the Lord takes that away, but it is, it does fill me up and it helps me immensely. Just in person, especially with all this, you know, it was hard for those couple years, or some people felt differently about that. But it really and I had surgeries and so I was like bedridden for three months and then was away from people. And I really felt that and I saw the blessing of just getting around other moms in person and you just share and you remember that everyone's struggling in a different way. Yes, some the same as you but some not, you know, and just getting around believers and friends. Even not in your exact same stage, but just in real life, you know, and fellowshiping and just sharing honestly and openly with each other is like what I've been trying to prioritize. I'm thankful that we did and my husband and I did a reengage, like marriage class at church. We prioritize there and just, yeah, there's always room to grow and like my getting in the word I usually, especially with in the last several years with little kids. It helps me to either be involved in a study Bible study, things that will help me stay in the word or even if it's just listening to like, you know, sermons, and then just talking about it with friends and you know, or if you can't even go all the time just to still sign up for the accountability, prioritizing things like that just when we're isolated It's like, the enemy just will slaughter us, or at least me and my home by myself. And I'm just like, this is all I'm doing every day. And you just forget the eternal perspective of it all of the why and the, you know, why am I serving them? Because they are not changing. And they're mean, and they're louder. But just, you know, we are getting a church hearing sermons of just, yeah, the Lord uses that, I think and so that, that's what I think of when you're asking me about prioritizing. Yeah. But that kind of takes the effort to like, make, get ready for church, get out the door, you know, or call up that friend or, like, not feel bad that you didn't text that friend for six months, right? And then be like, whatever, I just, I'll just stay. It's too hard, but it is hard, but the Lord's still, you know, and I'm saying that as a more extroverted person who loves that, so I know that's harder for different people. But surely, even for introverts, it's like the Lord intended for us to be together. Yeah, we need community. We do. And just with motherhood, I mean, the enemy is after. Yeah. Our marriages and mothers because it's just Yeah. So. Okay. I don't know. Did that answer even that question literally? Yes. Prioritizing Andrey know what I answer Great

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Allison 21:21

answer. Great answer. I want to talk a little bit about your creative outlet.

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Lana L 21:25

Yes. And how

A

Allison 21:26

get excited how that has helped you. Just kind of remember who you are. And yes, have a little have a little something that you can do on the side. That's just you.



L

Lana L 21:36

Yes. Well, so I, I do photography. And like I mentioned since I had two colicky babies, and not even as babies, we had like, tantrum issues when they were three and four to where I was like, what is wrong, like it was bad and really hard. And so photographing families and newborns in in just the art of a camera, and I've always loved it, my dad, like love photography, and so and even just with iPhone pictures, you know, but starting this as a business for other people, has been almost redeeming to those newborn years for me. And at first it was, it was hard, because I'd be like, other babies don't cry, and I would all I had to like wrestle and be like, Lord, why didn't you let me enjoy the newborn years? Like, I still get sad about it. And but he's, I've worked through that I almost face that. And like, that was the story you gave me. And that's okay. You know, and it's beautiful. Now to give that to other people. And I just saw, I just value photographs, even in my family and of my girls and just seeing them behind the lens. You know, they don't scream on the picture. I can't hear you like, Oh, they're so beautiful and sweet. Like, it just gives me new eyes. But man, yeah, just learning about light. And especially during COVID I took a lot of education, just courses so I can grow in my craft. And I loved it, because they'd go to bed and at but my brain, you know, I was challenging myself. And. And so I've loved that. And it's just helped to have a balance. Yeah. Especially since I don't love as much you know, the homemaking and cooking, which a lot of people do find and you're really strong, that's a strength of yours. And some moms would just get fulfilled, or that's their creative outlet, but, but I will say, I do also think that there is, especially with social media, and maybe my age or even mom's younger, like the next 10 years younger. There's almost even like a pressure that you should have a side thing you have to go sell something or what are you doing? Are you being a mom isn't enough? Yeah. And I just now started this honestly. Because I had to with my husband started his went out on his own right before COVID. And financially, we like really needed something. And so it was partially for fun for me. And then I you know, that's why I started the business. But there's also this temptation to so I just want to throw that out. Yeah, to that you can for sure have a creative outlet of just learning a new something or whatever it is, but that don't feel like

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Allison 24:15

it doesn't have to be a side hustle.

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Lana L 24:18

It doesn't have to be a side hustle or like something that you actually succeed, quote, unquote, to be good at, you know, and yeah, and I'm sure anybody is tempted to be like, Oh, I make something right. You know, because we don't like our work as a mother. It's not this applauded. Like, you can even really measure it. And you're like, What am I doing for five years? You know? Yes, No, exactly. So it's tempting. And I was tempted to do and I was just like, I needed that I wanted to work part time, so I can't do this. Which of course, the Lord calls working moms and it's beautiful and totally fine. But I'm saying if it's as an escape, which is what I wanted for the first five or six years and I was looking for something, just to escape, you know, instead of like being called to work. Yeah. So yeah, just throw that out there not to do something. You know? I don't know. No, that's

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Allison 25:08

AMISON 25:00

a great, that's a really great perspective that you have. I appreciate you sharing that. Can you share with us? The ladies who are listening? Maybe what are your top couple of tips for taking photographs of their own families?

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Lana L 25:21

Oh, absolutely. Okay. Oh, this is fine. Okay. So this is kind of a basic one. But it very helpful to wipe the back of your camera lens. Oh, on your phone. Sometimes they can get greasy or oily or smudge. Yeah. And if you get either a lens wipe, or even just a cloth or a little alcohol, like clean your actual the circles on the back of your phone. Yeah, and you're gonna have crisper sharper images. And then let's see other things for actually composing the image. Check like the back of the kiddos like look at the whole frame. And make sure there's not like, you know, a huge orange object behind that that's distracting, like, just kind of look for something that's cleaner so that they can be the focus. That's something simple, I guess, with iPhones. Let's see what other tips? I don't know. Yeah, I kind of put you on the spot. No, it's okay. But this is good. I'm actually I actually actually was considering sharing stuff like that on my business page. Oh, to help moms because I love I love that I've built relationships with you know, families, I photograph and they just follow me anyway. And I'm like, I'm a mom too. And, but that's a good idea to just to actually implement that and have like iPhone tips or just everyday tips for

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Allison 26:40

Well, what about the moms, and this is probably a lot of moms. And I'm wondering if you run into this a lot when you do your family sessions, or whatever. They don't want to be in the picture.

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Lana L 26:50

Oh, yes, yes. I mean, none of us do. Like I have a four year old and there there's always baby weight or there's COVID way or there's oh my god like my eyelids are just sat yeah, there's just wrinkles. I mean, my under eye purple is just like, I'm not 21 anymore. And it's not fun but then man images especially that I like to capture of moms with their kids. We're not trying to be Heidi Klum here you know, there's first of all the kids don't matter like they don't mind what we look like they just love that our arms around them but I really tried to flatter the mom and help her with dressing and just usually moms are always and I have that often they're like I want mainly just with the kids I'll get in one yeah photograph and I'm like No I'll how you'll be in it most of the time and just trust me and then they love them afterwards and in everybody even me I'm nervous to be in front of a camera but I get and I have friends take pictures of me and I get pictures too because then when you see them you like you really cherish them and you realize the 1015 20 pounds the wrinkles like you don't even see that when you look back you feel the joy that was in that moment or honestly it takes you back to like that whole last year you're like man I remember that season and that's why we we take pictures you know so even if you don't spend on professional photography like use your iPhone, make your husband you know take pictures of you in in you're not alone and thinking oh I wish I was this but don't wait to get in the frame with your with your kiddos. Good.

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Allison 28:29

We will get back to Alana's story in just a few minutes. Right now it's time for historical homemaker. Hence, this is the part of the podcast where we highlight some of the helpful and not so helpful hints doled out to homemakers throughout history. Today's hence come from the American frugal housewife by Lydia Murray Child published in 1829. Wondering what to do with a bumper crop of cucumbers this summer. Mrs. Child doesn't have any recipes for you. But she does give an ominous preparation warning. It is thought to be a preventive to the unhealthy influence of cucumbers to cut the slices very thin and drop each one into cold water as you cut it. A few minutes in the water takes out a large portion of the slimy matters so fit to eat. They should be eaten with high seasoning. I'm not sure where Mrs. Child got her information about the health dangers of cucumbers. But according to the internet, these cool and crunchy veggies were enjoyed for centuries all over Europe. Thanks of course to the Romans spreading their love for cucumbers along with their conquest of lands. Sometime in the 18th century. However, cucumbers were given the reputation of being poisonous to humans and only fit for livestock earning them the now obsolete name cow Cucumbers in England and parts of America. Thankfully that false idea for a time went out of fashion and people once again enjoyed cucumbers in all its many delicious preparations. Some of the more unusual preparations I read about in researching this hint are stewed and flavored with gravy, fried, stuffed, sauteed creamed or served with a rich butter sauce. I'm not sure if I like the idea of creamed or soft cucumbers who my favorite way to eat them is sliced raw and sprinkled with generous amounts of salt and pepper and a little vinegar. Ever the resourceful housewife Lydia's book is filled with homemade first aid and medicinal recipes. She often finds her cures in the garden or in this case, the weed patch, plantain and how sleek boiled and cream and strained before it is put away to cool makes a very cooling soothing ointment. plantain leaves laid upon a wound are cooling and healing. Now first, let me clarify that the plant names used here are likely not what you think they are. At least they weren't what I thought they were. Lydia is not talking about plantain fruit, which is related to the banana, but rather plantain weed plantain major, also known as the broadleaf plantain, and the house leak is not a vegetable in the onion family. It's a plant which is actually very common in my part of Texas and we call it hen and chicks. It's a succulent, and like its sister succulent aloe vera has wound and burn healing juice inside its fleshy leaves. The plantain weed is native to Europe and certain parts of Asia. It's a perennial plant with greenish flowers and large oval shaped leaves. The leaves in the seeds are edible, and they've been used medicinally for centuries due to the anti-inflammatory and wound healing properties. Just a quick Google search turned up results claiming plantain as a remedy for everything from bee stings. To hemorrhoids. If you're curious, you can search the interwebs and find recipes for plantain infused oils, teas, SAVs. And everything in between. Just remember this historical homemaker segment is for informational and entertainment purposes only. And we leave it to you the listener to determine the safety and soundness of this advice. Now back to Lana's story. Okay, we touched a little bit on this, but I want to specifically ask this question to your generation and into the newbies. I'm going to be talking too soon. Social media. Yeah, because it's been a part of your life probably for a very long time. As opposed to me, I didn't even have a computer until I was, I don't know 30. How do you maintain a healthy relationship with social media? Because you need it for your business? Right? So what do you what are some boundaries that you've set?

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Lana L 32:55

I, I really struggled with this. And I think it's an ongoing battle. It's an ongoing thing that needs to be evaluated personally, that I, man, I have so many things I could say that I did wish I did

different. You know, me struggling with homemaking in general and just with behaviors of my kids like tantrums, it's often a temptation for me to want to escape, or to even not face and work through like either what happened that day or what I need to grow in or something I have to deal with, with the kids. So either escaping, like, while my kids are around, or even at night, like not being not being wise, with my time, even when the kids are at school or in the evening. It can just be such a time sucker. But me being so social, you know, and I love it for the connecting part. And of course for the images and photography part of it. But man, for moms that still have babies that they're nursing, and I told my sister This, my little niece is five months old, but I was like I regret scrolling on my phone. While nursing. As much as I did, I wish that I would have just talked to my daughters more, and sang to them and just looked at them because there's research that shows like how much that helps their brain develop. And it really is that whole first year, and I did the best I could and you know, I that's when I texted friends or I can you know, and I wasn't always just wasting but like you would never regret putting your phone away for nursing, you know, or I just wish I did that more. But anyways, for now, I would say using those time limit things like you can spend 45 minutes on it or whatever. And honestly ask your husband and say, I don't know, and that's a thing we've had in our marriage that he's just like, I feel like you're on your phone or I wish you'd put it away at this time and you know, either put it in a drawer or so my kids are all in school now. And we used to do hybrid and they homeschool for a couple years on and off. But now I try when they're home to not have it out, you know from five till they go to bed. But then again, you still have your husband after they go to bed. And he's sitting there, you know, and I just need a minute. But really, that time could be fruitful if I pursue or engaged talking to him. Or if I just sit in the silence to I think the noise and the busyness and it's just constant entertainment, which is fine, and it's relaxing, to an extent, but I'm all over the place with this answer. But you know what I mean, hell, like it's great. You're doing I just, I have not it's constantly an area where God's like, I don't know. Yeah, I can do better in and I want to, but then I'm, you know, you just right, do the best you can.

A

Allison 35:54

I think being aware is half the battle. Yeah, that's good. Well, let's talk about some challenges and some temptations that we face as women in the home. Yeah. Okay, which of these temptations Do you struggle with the most? Okay, and what is God teaching you through it? Okay, here's your here's your choices, a comparison to other women I'll makers. Be, I'm just a homemaker. I'm not getting paid. This is not a real job, or see Superwoman, trying to do all the things.

L

Lana L 36:24

Yes. Man, A and B, for sure are the most for me. And I'd say both. See, I'm not as perfectionist or like performance type driven personality. So that's the only reason. You know, my struggle is actually like, I can't do all this. You know, but that comparison to others. So absolutely. I think everybody struggles with comparison in different ways. Mine is like, you know, I should be accomplishing more or being able to upkeep this to this degree, you know, standard, I should be cooking this much. And that was a lot harder. My first five years of having kiddos, now I can joke about it. And I'm also a little more like, this is harder for me, or it takes me longer, and that's okay. And I can make fun of myself. But then still, you know, yeah, do my best to do some instant pot meals and not like, give up completely. So I'd say yeah, that comparison for sure. And that's those are times when I would have to like get off of social media. However, it's not all social media, right? Because I have sisters who have strengths. And or my some of my

closest friends, it's interesting how the Lord draws me to friends that are completely opposite or have strengths that I have big weaknesses in and so I could be envious of my best friend, if I let you know, if I let myself go there instead of just Oh, that's cool. Like, be inspired by her, you know, and I gotta go to my sister's house. And I'm like, I can do this. I love it is relaxing, when there's not laundry everywhere, unless what's in for this interview, and it's like, I didn't even put away anyway. Because my sisters were like, don't try to change in a week for this. They laughed at me when I'm like, I'm doing this. And they're like, what's their league? I'm like, I don't what do I even say they're like, just don't change in a week. Just tell them straight?

A

Allison 38:21

No. Yeah. Yeah. So honesty is always better. Yes. What about any special challenges that you faced in your journey? As a keeper of the home? Maybe you could touch on a couple of those and how God has worked through those to grow you.

L

Lana L 38:42

Oh, man. Well, really quick, just before I answer those, what you had just mentioned, made me think of, you know how people say, well, meaning it goes by so fast. And it really does. But I'm at that I'm in this like, weird right in between, where my oldest is nine and I am seeing like, oh, we have the best convert like yourself fine. Oh, my goodness, you're cute. Like, we're gonna go have fun, you know, do things we enjoy together so soon. But then I also have a four year old over here who like went and buckle this morning and had to wear this ridiculous outfit, you know, and just, I learned to pick my battles. And it's so true. But to hold that lightly when we hear that and I used to put so much pressure on myself of like, I have to do my best or I have to soak it all up. Yeah. And I would help me a lot was like, I don't have to enjoy every minute of it. And it's okay that I don't enjoy it, but it's still helpful to have it in the bathroom. It really does go by fast. It really does and so that it doesn't last forever. And I hated hearing that when I was in those like that year especially of being depressed or just super anxious and I was like I am misery I cannot get You know, I was just like drowning? Yes. And my mother in law would say things like, these are just days and they will pass you know, and, and it just helped me to either listen to sermons or things of just like this is it's temporary but do the best you can. And so that's now when I'm at these ages with my kids, I try to like hold those hard days looser, but still, like realize how quickly it it does pass. Yeah. And leave it all out on the on the tennis court, I guess. But yeah, you know, just that all out, like do the best I can like giving my best effort was anyways. Yeah, so challenges. Oh, my goodness, so many challenges for me, there were a lot of physical challenges, and that playing in with the tantrums and just the noise that I went through with their colic and then their tantrums as toddlers. I actually had a double mastectomy surgery as preventative a year and a half ago. And so I'm totally open to anybody any age that might have to go through that surgery or ask questions. How I found out that I needed to have it done is because of my family history. So my my dad, his mom and grandma both had cancer early. So if you have multiple people in your family that have had cancer, and especially younger, I really recommend getting genetic testing. It's just a simple blood test. And they tell you like yes, you're very, very likely I was like, it's like 95% likelihood to develop breast cancer. Wow. Because that means one of your genes is mutated doesn't work that would fight against cancer. So you're like, so for breast cancer, and I have a risk with ovarian, but I'll do that in a couple years. So anyways, that surgery was hard. I was like, in bed for three something months, but it was during COVID. But so the kids were home so with their training,

you know, they were just like all over the place, like Snickers for breakfast. Not really, but just I mean, my sweet husband was amazing, but just the, the physical pain, and that was also even with the colicky years of just like my but I'm so sleep deprived mentally. I'm like, Oh, they're just pain. And then when there's noise with it. Yeah.

A

Allison 42:23

And you're yet when you had the surgery, how old? Were was your youngest?

L

Lana L 42:28

She was three and a half. Okay. Yeah. And so they just still were just Yeah. And like, then five and you know, and they're fighting with each other. And you're just like,

A

Allison 42:38

and COVID is happening. So everybody's Yes. And yes. Yeah.

L

Lana L 42:42

What was the second part of that question?

A

Allison 42:44

Well, just how challenges Yeah. How has God grown you through the the challenges that you're experienced? Oh, oh,

L

Lana L 42:51

my gosh. So I just I love to talk about this. I would love to I just can't wait till I can just go have coffee with more people. And just, I don't know, I enjoy these kind of conversations. But I don't have the time right now. But you will one day I will but I pray the Lord helps me remember because through challenges, a blanket statement, I would say is I've learned to surrender to, to him being the author of my story, which essentially looks like him allowing whatever he wants to happen, right? Giving me a child that has this difficulty or, you know, having me home with all three kids with my Achilles heel being homemaking anyway. And there's way too much laundry and I'm just misery, you know, and just surrendering to like, these are the ages that he ordained for my kids to be during COVID and this is when he knew I'd have to have this surgery or my husband would work for two weeks straight and we wouldn't we'd be ships in the night for like three years on a you know, yeah, instead of like controlling it and being like I have to fix I need to do that i This is my fault hating myself going back and forth between either controlling, trying to fix it all and make it to where it's not so painful. And I don't know so just surrendering to like, Okay, God, I can rest in you, but you're good, even if you allow, allow hard things. Like you're not only good, when you give me what I want, or what I think is best and so

through all the challenges, he's just I don't know, and he's, he's been so gracious to give me other friends walking through exponentially even harder things like losing a spouse, miscarriages just like traumatic, honestly, you know, it was a lot and seeing them walk through and how he sustained them. was a gift to me of just like seeing somebody else. Persevere and put another foot in front, you know, and it helped me and my, and it's all the same. It's all harder that comparing suffering is not redemptive at all. But but that was a sweet gift in helping me learn to surrender to and still, like, trust Him and not grow better, you know, during it like seeing some anyway. So

A

Allison 45:20

no, that comes back to that community aspect. Yeah. Yeah. That that brings a whole nother dimension that we we can't have without community, right, giving us perspective on our suffering. Right. Let's talk about hospitality. Okay. Okay. So, what is a practical way that you like to show hospitality?

L

Lana L 45:39

I love having people over. I just, I love being around people. And I just, I love opening up my home. Just to have the I don't know, I love being around people. So I think it does come naturally for some people. But a positive to not being like a type A is that I'm fine having people over like you right now. With everything not being perfect or actually even a mess, you know, and just having people over for a playdate. Or we were we hosted a small group. And now we're down to just once a month meeting but just still having people over even if you don't get to prepare the house like you want or set the food out exactly like to some standard just gather just to gather you know, and have people in on your mess. Yeah, but I'm always so filled up after you're just like, we're not we're not alone or just it's an it's enjoyable to have fun with other people and laugh and take a break from life. But you know, the mundane of everyday just,

A

Allison 46:49

yeah, so yeah, that's really good. I want to ask you some rapid fire questions. These are just kind of for fun. So you can tell the story if you want or you can just give me like one word answer.

L

Lana L 47:00

Oh, okay.

A

Allison 47:02

I'll try this on the topic of tasks like homemaking stuff, okay. What is your biggest homemaking fail?

L Lana L 47:11

Okay, so far? Fail? Okay. Fail like I don't know. We don't have time for the list. Allison

A Allison 47:17

biggest Okay, pick like again, verbal big one. No, there

L Lana L 47:20

are there's multiple big ones of the same thing there is marker and Sharpie in so many areas of my house in the bathroom right above the toilet. She just took a and it was both my second and third board and we tried to I mean, but to discipline them to not do it. I don't know how they felt anyways, we have still markings all over our walls and Sharpie and crayon and Okay, let's do one bracelet fails.

A Allison 47:46

Yeah. You do have to just sometimes. Okay, how about a when do you have a memorable homemaking when? Oh,

L Lana L 47:54

man, not like one big one. But the wins are just like, anytime when we sit down for dinner, and like it's a lingering longer dinner, and we get to talk with the kiddos, because they're just now getting older. And there was a stage when they were younger, where we you know, we really tried to implement that and start training that. But any kind of win just from me being such a, you know, conversationalist or whatever, enjoying that I really wanted to implement that with the kiddos. And so that's always a win for me. And it's hard. Oh, man, the enemy always attacks. Oh, yeah, you know, and I'm like, I didn't write anything down. Yeah. So those are things that I view as wins. But man, I should have,

A Allison 48:36

that's a good I love a lingering I love a lingering dinner. I love that. If we eat, but now it's just my husband and I but when when all the even when it's just he and I if we take the time to sit at the table, and we and we linger in conversation, but when the table is full, and my kids are home for a holiday or whatever, and we just sit and we talk and we laugh and it's been an hour, you know, since we finished eating but we're so cynical of that so much,

L Lana L 49:01

I mean, or even wins of like, getting them to bed five or 10 minutes early. So you can linger either reading or and that's when the conversations with my toddlers and my four nine year

either reading or and that's when the conversations with my toddlers and my noun nine year old, she'll just ask the questions, you know, and so having that lingering time, but viewing that as a win of like, oh, we actually got in bed before eight and my goal was instead of like a cute, you know, kind of celebrating that as a win has helped me just in the slash 10

A

Allison 49:27

perspective. Just celebrate those little those little victories. Yes.

L

Lana L 49:31

So I don't have like any big ones, but there's probably lots of little ones like that that I'm learning to. Thankful for friends and a counselor that has told me to like yes, that's a even if it's a five minute of intentional time on the floor. And you had a great time playing Guess who you know with her or you did this little thing that yesterday, you know, you regretted doing wrong or that you wish you could do different and then today you just did five minutes of do doing it differently. That's a win that counts. Yes. Instead of just everything needs to be changed and better All right, you know, yeah, counting the little wins. You know, what am I sister, my youngest sister came after my surgery. That's how that started actually also, and then she would say count the wins when I was recovering just walking, I couldn't get a cup out from because my mastectomy surgery used my stomach tissue. So I couldn't even like my whole front was there was pain and I couldn't. I was like, how am I gonna watch the kid take care of the kids? I can't do this. And I had some painful discouraging days and she'd be like, count the wins. Look, you got to do this. And then I took it from the surgery and to know parenting stuff and my friend also with Yeah, who's walked through trauma she's like, what it was we celebrate today. And we're like, we just it's the smallest thing but glory to God because what he did that you know, and, and he wants us to celebrate it, that's fine. Enjoy it.

A

Allison 50:54

A homemaking product or resource that you are loving right now something that you turn to that inspires or encourages you or like just as a resource

L

Lana L 51:06

resource, so not a product but like a resource like a podcast or anyone,

A

Allison 51:11

either one any all any all product or resource

L

Lana L 51:14

product, I really enjoy the force of nature's spray force of nature spray. It's like a very clean, it uses this electronic thing to make it very sanitizing and you can just spray but it's okay safe

uses this electronic thing to make it very sanitizing and you can just spray but it's okay. Safe and clean for kiddos for so it's very it's a very green less, you know harmful and abrasive less toxic. Okay, cleaning thing spray for some force of nature. However, on the contrary to that clean, I do love some candles. So I tried to do soy, you know, whatever. But I do I love just smells and flowers and just making you know, yeah, enjoy, like aroma. And so I don't know resources.

A

Allison 51:59

Well, what was the book? Oh, that you were just telling me? Because we were going to put that in the show notes. Yes.

L

Lana L 52:03

Okay. And so that and, and honestly, I haven't listened to it. And that was a year and a half or two ago. And I need to go back to it. But it was really encouraging. It was a podcast and a book about a mom who calls herself like a recovering slob or recovered. I don't know if she's ever said she's arrived. But it's called a slob comes clean. And I really enjoyed her podcasts. Because it talks about just it was practical tips. Yeah. And it's just like, you don't want to do that load right there. Because you think it's going to take you whatever amount of time but she goes time yourself. It will take you seven minutes. So she has these practical like time yourself one time and it gets you know, out of your head. Whatever lie you're telling yourself that makes it way harder, right? And I'm like, Oh my gosh, this she gets me, you know, just weird tendencies that I have that make it a lot harder to do normal tasks. So she that was a good book and podcast, I need to revisit it. Okay, that was really practical.

A

Allison 53:02

A slob comes clean. Okay, well make sure that we link that in the show notes. Alright, we're going to end well, not quite yet. But we're going to talk a little bit about the heart, the art of home, we're going to talk about something else. But how do you see homemaking as an art? You said earlier on in the conversation that that kind of challenged your thinking a little bit. So what would you you're an artist with your camera? So maybe how can you relate that to?

L

Lana L 53:26

Yes, just having that perspective helps that your work is that God is going to use that work because we can create a space for the kids Sally Clarkson used to be one of my favorite to read and just listen to have just the little details in how you make your home welcoming for your kiddos or a corner that's clean, or that's cozy, or you know, making them tear nice dessert, that's all part of it being an art because it creates a space for you to either have a conversation with them or them to just rest and have quiet and you know, and so I need that reminder all the time, too, just for the motivation of like how it can be and then it's fun to, you know, to either create, like, a visually appealing space just for it to be a place of rest and reprieve and yeah, a gift to my kids and my husband. Yeah. And so yeah, that's what I think of. That's the art. Good answer. Yeah.

A

Allison 54:32

What about gratitude? Why is gratitude important in the home? And how have you seen gratitude improve your experience?

L

Lana L 54:40

Oh, man, gratitude, so helpful in countering comparison and envy. If you know I'm at all distracted outside of the home, either with how I wish I could decorate it or buy this new piece of whatever that I think would help the space you know, like having gratitude for it. At least we have a couch that's functional and is the crown wipes off ease, you know, just changing, changing my outlook and thanking the Lord for that. And you know, and my friend had her home destroyed by the ice storm a year ago. And just seeing that through her eyes to like, people on social media, you know, paid for a couch for her and they're just like, we got a couch. How gratitude can change, you know, just your shift your perspective, I think helps helps me counter and we and it helps me be thankful. I don't know.

A

Allison 55:38

Yeah, no, that's a really good. That's a really good insight. Thanks. Okay. I want to talk about the community of homemakers of women and supporting one another. How can older women, help your generation of homemakers thrive in their practice of the art of home? Like what do you need help with? What do you wish that they knew about your experience? So that they can maybe speak into that?

L

Lana L 56:04

Yeah, the first thought that popped into my head is bringing a meal and there's a baby. Yeah, because like, I remember every but I mean, it's just such a blessing. So if you're at all an empty nester or just have like, an extra hour, you know, honestly, just even picking up something not home. It's just just showing up. I'd say start there if somebody's a little more shy to approach, but

A

Allison 56:29

I mean, you have your family is local. Correct. So you have your mom and your sister. So that makes a big difference? Yes. And maybe you could think of it in the way of how they how they ministered to you how they speak into your life and help you. But if you didn't have that, like what would you be looking for? In an older woman

L

Lana L 56:50

from her tangibly helping are both verbally encouraging? Yeah. I think opening up to just any woman all in an older stage approaching somebody that's in a younger of just like asking how

sne's doing or where are you at or what something that's a challenge for you right now, because it's different for everybody, I think, you know, cuz I, I feel like, again, I'm like, kind of the one off, that's not really a perfectionist, but just struggles with the basic, you know, so but it helps me to have the perspective of like, you do your best as unto the Lord, even if you don't get thank yous. Just the whole biblical picture of womanhood of like, why are you self sacrificing? Why is that how God designed it? What's the beauty in that? And how does he use that like encouragement to persevere?

A

Allison 57:47

Is it hard for you to approach older women to ask for help? Or, you know, maybe to ask someone to mentor you? Or, you know, whatever? Is that a challenge?

L

Lana L 57:57

That is a challenge. See, and my challenge is not? Because I'm shy to which I think a majority would be I think it's more of like, a time thing, or just, um, so I don't know, I don't know why. But I haven't. And I do have my family and sisters here just for more support. And I go to, you know, when I might when I do need that. And so I don't know, that's why I think older women coming and asking, how are you doing would maybe open up and be like, Oh, she does she had she has a minute or she'd want to really get coffee, like I don't have to initiate by? And so that that's what I think.

A

Allison 58:36

I think that's a good answer. Because I guess what I'm getting at is we have listeners that are all over the spectrum as far as age and stage that they're in. Yeah. And I hear a lot from the older women. Yes, I hear. Well, it seems like they don't want my input or my help, or, you know, like, they feel like they have nothing to offer. Or and then I hear from the younger women, they don't seem to want to help. So there's this disconnect. Absolutely. And that's what I'm trying to address. Okay. So

L

Lana L 59:03

let me let me if I'm honest, if you really want to know, I really want to know, what I think is that there's there's self conscious women on both ends. Yeah, they don't think that their older women might not think that they have enough to offer the right thing. They might be intimidated because the youngers are showing the facade or you know, might be not sure right away. So I think just offering or just asking her what is there anything challenging? Or how are you or if you ever need, but just making a step in that way? would be helpful. Yeah. And then help maybe break walls down but then also younger women need to that's also like, I was so grateful at our church. There's so many women and older stages. And so that's why I did Bible studies during different seasons when I was able to sew but likewise, the younger do have to go and seek out somebody and even if it wasn't somebody super older, like Artemis, And toward like, every week, even just somebody that was five years older than me, even with not in their age and their season of motherhood, like somebody that had older kiddos, I would kind of

pursue, you know, or I'd be like, you want to hang out or you wanna have coffee, or I'd straight up just, I've had coffee with one person one time, maybe. And I just, like, asked some really blunt questions, and I'm embarrassed, but it's like, the Lord used it, you know, so kind of being bold in that way, or just as believers, you know, on both sides, like to not be ashamed or overthink it, but just be like, This is God will use this and let me not think about myself. A younger mom being like, I'm supposed to have this all day, or this should be, you know, Pinterest worthy. And then the older mom being like, I messed up so much. That's my favorite thing to hear. I'm literally like, Why, yeah. And why do you think that or what did you mess up about? And, you know, yeah, absolutely. It's so fruitful. And God will God does things with it. When we just like, Okay, I'll just ask, you know, to do it.

A

Allison 1:01:00

Really good. Okay, what would you tell? What advice are you would you give the younger the younger woman who's listening?

L

Lana L 1:01:08

Younger? What stage specifically?

A

Allison 1:01:10

I mean, younger than you, you know, maybe somebody who's had just had her first baby or she's, you know, newly married or Yes, whatever.

L

Lana L 1:01:17

My advice would be, if you're not actively learning and wanting to follow the biblical model or way God designed for us as women to be mothers than the enemy and the world's will totally push you down a stream. If you're just complacent. Like my challenge would be to be careful the voices you listen to the things you read, the people you talk to, and, and just to be honest with yourself about, like what you listen to the most, is it somebody that's constantly negative about motherhood? Which there's a line of like being honest and yeah, venting and being real but then also not staying there and what what can I do about that? What is God one teach me through that what I want something I can own? Either I do have this an anger problem, or I have bitterness towards my you know, and so I fell into that when I was earlier as a mom of just listening to more like, what made me feel better about myself or just I just need this to be over. And what ended up helping me more was podcasts like resin motherhood, that are like what how God designed this? Yes, it's going to be hard. But like, if you're not actively, God, what do you what do you want me to be doing in this season? If you're not staying in the word are around people who know the Bible better than you are have walked it and lived it and then you see it and you're just like, you need this like, just to help to stay on track, right? That analogy of we're in a creek or a river or whatever, if you're not actively paddling, it will just take you down. You know, if you're only listening to social media, or you know, whatever is popular, and I don't know, yeah, just get so dangerous so fast. I mean, I had that was what a lot of my struggles word that this whole wrestling on my flesh and just wanting ease and enjoy, you know, and

anyways, so that's what I would say to younger as is like, stay in a church. Obviously, one that's doctrinally sound. Yeah. And ask those questions of people ahead of you. And yeah, take those steps and then the Lord will meet you to like, help you because I feel like I can't do all this I was sometimes overwhelmed to it just like I desire this. I'm really still struggling, you know, and he just he provides and you'll look back and you just it's daily little obedient steps I think. I don't know it was that all over the place? Didn't even answer the question. Yes. Don't even forgotten. I told you I would go really answered. It

A

Allison 1:03:59

was beautiful answer. And I think that's a good place to stop. So

L

Lana L 1:04:03

me a thank you. If you ever need a mom to like, just follow me on social media. I have a motherhood account. Okay. I'm trying not to be you know, I'm not as active on but

A

Allison 1:04:15

we will definitely yeah, we'll link all of your links. Yeah. For your business and your all your stuff will be in the show notes.

L

Lana L 1:04:21

Cool. Cool. Well, thank you so much, Alison.

A

Allison 1:04:23

We hope you've enjoyed this in the trenches, homemaker, portrait of Lana. If you struggle with loving every minute of homemaking, I hope you have been freed from that notion. We are not going to love every minute. homemaking is valuable and necessary, but it is often thankless and exhausting, and it will never complete you. No role or person can do that. We can only find true and lasting satisfaction in Jesus. No matter if we are having a good or a bad homemaking day when we trust Jesus to define us, we are fulfilled. If you want to see some of the amazing work that Lorna is doing behind the camera with newborns and families and moms and kids, just hop on over to her Instagram page [lana.ai](#), [lvanka dot photography](#), we're gonna link that down in the show notes to make sure you get the spelling, right. And if you happen to be in or around the San Antonio area, or you're going to be coming for a visit, you could maybe book a session with her, just DM her over there on Instagram and you can get the details. But even if you're not going to be coming to this area, I definitely recommend that you follow her because she has some great ideas for posing, you could probably get some really wonderful inspiration just for taking your own photos of your kids with those handy tips that she gave us. But then also if you were going to be doing a family session with a photographer, maybe you would want to show them for some inspiration of what you're looking for. She's truly gifted behind the camera, so make sure you go check that out. Thank you so much for listening today. I hope this

weekly dose of homemaking inspiration has encouraged you. If you have not already, don't forget to hop over to the shows page on your listening app of choice and leave us a rating and a review. Remember, your review can be general about the show or you could talk about a specific episode that was really meaningful to you. Make sure you're following us over on Instagram or Facebook. That's where we interact with our audience. Also, Are you subscribed to our weekly newsletter yet delivered to your inbox every Friday is this little extra dose of homemaking encouragement, you'll get the inside track on what's coming on the show and some fun bonus content such as recipes, resources, and stories that I only share in the newsletter. Just click the link in the show notes or go to the [art of home podcast.com/subscribe](https://artofhomepodcast.com/subscribe). That's all for this episode. We will be back next Wednesday with another homemaker portrait. Until then keep practicing your art of making a home