

Living a Simple Life with a Back Porch View

Dear Listener:

Thank you for stopping by for a visit at Living a Simple Life with a Back Porch View podcast! To make it easy, you will find a transcript of each episode. I hope you enjoy the visit!

Episode 59 - Keep It Real: Be Yourself

Many years ago, my friend Linda called me and asked me for some help. I had just arrived home from work, so I quickly threw on a pair of jeans, a sweatshirt, and my tennis shoes. When I arrived, she did a double take, and then shook her head.

“Julie”, she said, “you are the only person I know who can get away with wearing pearls with a sweatshirt and jeans.” I had changed out of the dress and heels, but apparently was in too big of a hurry to remove the necklace and earrings.

After I had helped her, we decided to go out for a bit, and no, I didn’t go home to change - I left my pearls on and didn’t really care what anyone thought.

As I was growing up, my Dad used to say I didn’t just dance to a different drummer, I played with a whole different orchestra. Being an individual at heart was difficult as a young child. Peer pressure was a tough barrier.

But as I grew older, I drifted away from what was expected of me, and became the person I was meant to be. Rather than have a college degree with an ‘ology’ on the end - like archeology, paleontology, geology, or business-ology - I have a life degree in homemaking, farming, and living a Simple Life. And this life suits me much better than any ology could.

Not that being an ‘ologist’ is a bad thing. It isn’t. In fact, if it is what you love, it is a perfect thing. But we aren’t all cut out to be one. Instead, some of us are better at numbers, organization, management, or some type of creative endeavor.

However, if you are an archeologist, you may not want me on your team. My curiosity doesn’t always allow me to brush away the dust. Instead, I would rather get a front-end loader to see what all is under the ground.

Many of us suffer from worrying more about what others think about us than becoming the person we were truly meant to be. We don't want to appear as being too weird, outdated, or silly. But in life, some of the things that are the most fun are all three of those things.

The term 'keeping it real' is a way of saying something is authentic. By staying real, you come across as being honest, trustworthy, and ethical. It is being true to your beliefs, values, and creates a desired level of integrity.

Society has a way of trying to dictate who we should be, what jobs we should have, foods we should be eating, and what clothes we need to be wearing. It does this through intense advertising. The funny thing is, sometimes, those ads contradict each other. One ad is all about eating healthy, and the one right behind it is commercial for a candy bar.

When I think about society's so-called acceptable standards, I can't help but think of a factory that produces robots. I see all these metal beings passing by on a conveyor belt, and every single one of them looks and acts exactly the same. If they don't, they are pulled and sent back to the recycling bin to make another one that fits the appropriate standards. Pardon my language, but YUCK!

There is no color. There is no personality. There is no fun, uniqueness, or room for excitement. Instead, everything ends up being boring.

I have news for you. No matter what you eat or wear, what job you have, or what you look like, you are a divinely made, awesome person. It is people like you with your individuality that makes this world a fun place to be.

But occasionally, we wonder who we really are. We have been paying more attention to what society says we should be than exploring our own uniqueness. But that becomes hard work, as the standards change almost daily. So how do we get out of the rut?

You start by taking time for my favorite activity – Afternoon Tea. This time, I won't make you take a notebook. But I am asking you to make this one Afternoon Tea a special occasion. Break out the good China teacup for your coffee, or the crystal for your lemonade. Place a linen napkin underneath a China plate and fill it with just as decadent a snack as you can think of. And if you have one, place it all on a silver serving tray. Why am I asking you to do this? Because you need to set the stage.

You need to see yourself as a unique, wonderful, and deserving person, and an Afternoon Tea such as this can help you feel like the special person you are. It will help you as you think through your talents, strong points, and abilities. It will help you focus on what you truly like, and what you don't. It may even encourage you to actually become who you were designed to be, instead of someone else.

Now that your tea is all set up, it's time to relax and just ponder. Think about your talents. Think about your abilities, strengths, and weakness. Consider what makes you passionate, and what you like the least. Think about your personal style. There is only one rule here: you cannot think about what someone else has said you need to do, love, hate, pursue, or change. This isn't about them and their viewpoint. It is all about you and yours.

It took him some time, but one day my dad called me. He had seen an ad for a writing seminar held at a local college. Knowing I loved to write, he offered an olive branch and offered to pay for me to go. It took him some time to see who I really was, and not who he thought I should be.

Others in your life may need some time to adjust to the changes you are making. Some will support you and offer encouragement. A few may think it's just too much. But either way, the only person that truly needs to be happy with the changes is you. You can't live your life by someone else's design.

My dad passed away long before we bought this farm. In truth, living on a farm was never one of my goals. But now that I am here, I love it. And I believe that he would have been just as excited about it as I have been. There is just something freeing about being able to keep it real, and being the person you are designed to be.

If you aren't who you are meant to be, start today. It may just be the best gift you could ever give yourself.

If you want to learn more about the topic at hand just visit my website at www.thefarmwife.com.

If you have questions or just want to stop in for a visit, you can do that through email at thevirtualporch@gmail.com. And be sure to subscribe – you don't want to miss a single conversation. I'll be sitting on the porch every Monday morning waiting for your visit!

Thanks again for stopping in. I will see you next week on Living a Simple Life with a Back Porch View. And while you are waiting on the next episode, grab that glass of refreshment, pull up a rocker, and sit back for a while. It's time to

Relax & Enjoy!

Julie