

Girls Night #232: How to Stop Comparing your Journey to Others and Figure out What Success Means for you

0:00:05 - Stephanie

Hey friends, welcome to Girls Night. I'm Stephanie May Wilson and I'm so happy that you're here. Each week, I have a girlfriend over and we talk through one of the biggest questions we have about our lives as women. We're talking about friendships and faith and relationships and self-confidence, about our calling in life and how to live every bit of our lives to the full. Life is so much better and easier and absolutely more fun when we navigate it together as girlfriends, and I cannot wait to get started. So, friends, I'm so excited about today's episode. Today, we're talking about how to stop comparing your journey to others and how to figure out what success means for you. We're also talking about how to be intentional with the hours in our day so we can be fully present with the people and the opportunities that mean the most to us, and there's no better person to talk us through this than my new friend, Sazan Hendrix.

Sazan is a globally recognized digital creator. With her husband, Stevie Hendrix, they have spent almost a decade in the online space, connecting with millions of people worldwide. Recently, they wrote a book together called, *A Real Good Life: Discover the Simple Moments that Bring Joy, Connection, and Love*, and in it, they share their story and what they discovered as they were searching for the good life as they refer to it, and so that's what you're going to hear about today. Friends, I loved this conversation. I cannot wait to introduce you to Sazan. Okay, you guys, you are in for a treat today. I'm sitting here with my new friend. We just decided we are soul sisters. At this point, I'm sitting here with my new friend, Sazan Hendrix, and I'm just Sazan. I've been following you for ages, it feels like, and I'm so happy to have you on the show. Welcome to Girls Night.

0:01:43 - Sazan

Hey girls. Stephanie, I'm so happy to be here with you and I feel like this Girls Night is our soul sister night, like we are just. I mean, before we recorded this, we went in and just started talking about all things life. We actually have some things in common, like same literary agency, and just we have a lot in common, I realize. So I'm just very excited that I'm here with all of you guys hanging out today. Thank you so much for having me.

0:02:12 - Stephanie

It's fun because, like seriously, right before we hit record, we were just talking about like you know, when you've walked a path and you can turn around and help someone who's behind you, like it's such a like, that's such a gift. And that's exactly what Girls Night is all about, is like, why would we make it so that we all have to figure everything out individually? Like let's pool our resources, and like divide and conquer here and so we're just talking about that.

0:02:37 - Sazan

Amen, amen amen.

0:02:38 - Stephanie

Girl power Exactly, exactly, okay, well, so tell us about for women who haven't gotten to meet you yet. Tell us who you are, what you do and a fun fact about yourself.

0:02:48 - Sazan

Well, ladies, I am Sazan Hendrix and I am a mother of three and a wife first and foremost, and I love storytelling and so somehow, some way, I landed into the world of content creation before it was even called content creator Ten years ago, when I started sharing little bits and pieces of my daily life and the things that I loved, and at the time, it was started as fashion and beauty, and then it evolved into lifestyle and marriage and, you know, home making, and then today it really is all of a culmination of all of those things, as I'm kind of rediscovering who I am, what I love, now that I'm, you know, six months postpartum with my third child, and I just I love my online fam.

That's what I call them. So thank you, guys for having me here. Hopefully, some of you guys who are listening, if you have been a part of my journey, please can you like let me know if you're listening to this somehow some way, go and find me on my Instagram, dm me or maybe reshare this episode. I would love to just connect with some of you and hear, maybe when you started following along, because I hear all kinds of things and it's always just so fun to see when our paths crossed.

0:04:03 - Stephanie

I love that. I love that. That's so fun. Okay, tell me your fun fact.

0:04:08 - Sazan

Okay, do you guys hear Oliver crying in the background? By the way, I promise I have not neglected him.

He's back. He's in the living room with my husband and my husband is probably like okay, buddy, your mom is trying to do a little interview. So if you hear a little baby boy crying and screaming, that's why he's giving daddy a hard time. He's not by himself. Yep, he's not by himself. My fun fact is y'all don't laugh at me, and I actually talk about this in my book very early on, so it's not, it's public information.

At this point, I actually can't ride a bike. I cannot ride a bike. What is wrong with me? Have you never learned? Never, you never learned, never, never.

I really went through the season of my life where I was obsessed with indoor cycling classes, so I was like the number one, like front row girl kind of cycle, and my husband would literally see me walking out of these classes all sweaty, like feeling myself, and he's like little, do that? He would say little. Do they know in there that you don't even know how to ride a real bike? Okay, miss Queen of the Stationery. So I finally, my goal is to learn this year. I think the reason I've

held it off for as long as I have is because, a I had no desire for a really long time, but B the past five years of my life I have been either pregnant or having the kid and raising the kid, and so anytime I was in that mindset of like, ooh, I want to try something new, maybe I should learn how to ride a bike, I'd get pregnant again. And so I was like, well, I can't learn now, what if I fall off you?

0:05:37 - Stephanie
know what I mean.

0:05:38 - Sazan
Like so I'm committed. Though it's going to happen this year, I'm going to learn how to ride a bike.

0:05:43 - Stephanie
That's my fun fact this is the year of the bicycle. I love that. I mean I don't know the last time I rode a bike. I feel like I would be wobbly. I mean like I know how to do it, but it's not like I've done it lately, so we'd probably do have any tips for me.

0:05:59 - Sazan
Like, it's really not that I think I'm just kind of taking myself out. Yeah, you're free here.

0:06:03 - Stephanie
So far you just got to. I think you just got to keep pedaling. That's what keeps you upright, so you can't, like you can't go slow. The faster you go, I think, the easier it is Okay great, that's a weird thing.

0:06:14 - Sazan
Well, you're going to have to let us know how it goes.

0:06:16 - Stephanie
I love that. Okay, I will. Well, okay, so you told us a little bit about this, but I would love to hear like I'm always so curious about people's stories because I feel like they always have twists and turns and, like you know, I thought I was going to do this and then that's not what happened. But what happened was really cool and just perfect for me. You know, all of the other thing is that I think that we see someone who's successful and we just assume that they like woke up one day and that's how it, and like they woke up one day and it just happened, and that's never true. So I would love to hear tell us, like, what your career has looked like, what your career story is.

0:06:55 - Sazan
Yeah, we know Well, 10 years ago, stephanie, when this started, there wasn't very many. There were definitely bloggers out there, especially European. There was a lot of like style bloggers and things that I had looked at and I thought, wow, how did they get to where they are? There's no way I can compete with that, right. Like it doesn't matter where you start in your journey, there is always going to be comparison creeping over you, discouraging you, and that just kind

of invites fear and doubt and worry. And then ultimately, what happens? We don't go for it. We don't press go on some of these dreams that are just living in our hearts because of, I think, that fear of failure and the fear of the unknown. So, with a path like social media and the whole influencer thing, before it was even named, that was when I started. I didn't, I was looking at the time. I was looking to pursue a career in like broadcast journalism.

That's what I got my degree in setting you did to oh well, I think we kind of brought it to good use our degrees because, look, we're like kind of like you're interviewing and we're talking into microphones.

0:08:03 - Stephanie

Yeah, storytelling, listen, we did it.

0:08:06 - Sazan

Yeah, and so, while, like, we didn't end up doing that thing, it's been a thing that's helped fuel this thing that we're doing now right. So I think for me, I thought it's going to be this one really straight path. Like I'm going to get my degree, then my plan is to go out to Los Angeles from Texas and I'm going to really give it my all. Like they say, especially back then, it was like you had to live, breathe, eat, sleep your dreams in entertainment. If you wanted to succeed as, like, an entertainment reporter. And so I was really dreaming of the red carpet vibe life, the Juliana Ransick, Ryan Seacrest era. That was kind of where my eyes were fixated on. Like this vision that I had for myself was like, oh, I want to fit that. And so I thought, okay, I have what it takes. So the confidence got me to LA, but as soon as I got there, oh my gosh, I was totally that small fish in a really big pond that is Hollywood in Los Angeles. And while I felt like I had made all these connections in Dallas at the time and I had this great network, there was something that was just like a hard smack in the face of with reality when I went to LA. But I just felt like you know what? I'm not going to just go home. I didn't pack up my whole life just to come here. So I said, realistically, my bank account, I can probably only give it maybe six months to a year out here. You know what I mean. Because I was really like living on my sister's couch and I knew that, okay, it's expensive to be out here. Let's be real, you've got to make money in order to stay here. And so I said I'm just going to give it my all Six months undivided. I'm doing this.

And so little doors were opening here and there. But you know, when it's like you get these little opportunities that seem really cool on the outside, like these little gigs I would do, but they ended up being like you'd be pulling these all-nighters and I would do these internships, and I was like really like whoa, burning it out of all, both ends, like. And I just was like, oh my gosh, like this is a lot and I'm not even making any money. I was doing side jobs, trying to make ends meet, like. I just was like what is this life, what is this what everybody does Like? And so, when doors weren't opening the way that I had imagined.

I hit that six month mark and I just started freaking out a little bit and I just got really discouraged and I said what's the point? Why am I here? Why do I feel like God called me here for a reason? But it's not going according to my plan. And that's when, I think, I finally came to the end of

myself, which was one of many times and every day really, I realized the power of incoming to the end of yourself.

Because in that moment when I think, for me, when I came to the end of myself, it was literally like on my hands and my knees, like crying in the bathroom floor, my sister's little apartment in LA, and I had this real moment with myself and I was like I really feel, like I have a lot of like energy in me. I have this vigor and this heart and this passion to tell stories and to do entertainment and style and I love it. But nothing's opening for me. Is it because I'm not good enough? I'm not pretty enough? I don't look the part when I would walk into these auditions Like what is it and why? Can't? I seem to figure it out. And I literally felt this surrendering of lay it down.

And when I laid down this kind of like control that I was trying to possess over my path, that's when I really felt this soft whisper and that we all know is like of the Holy Spirit, and it was literally God's voice telling me, you know, in the sweet way that we know, when God speaks into your spirit, it was like you know, it was basically like you're going to go this route. It felt like he was showing me a different road and I said what I only was looking at? One road and that other road, the only thing I saw on it I was like what other road? The only thing I could see on it was my little, this little blog that I had at the time, and it was just this little hobby thing that I was using to help my career in entertainment. So isn't that funny how it all started, right With a dream that then I felt like I had to lay down, and then God kind of I don't know he reignited that dream in a whole beautiful new way and, honestly, the rest is history, because once I kind of obeyed that calling, I kind of picked myself back up and said all right time to roll up my sleeves and figure this whole thing out, because I don't have the moving parts to.

If you do A, then you go to B and then you go to C, like some career paths have in place those markers. So instead it was like I had to create the A and then I had to make a bunch of mistakes in the middle and then this and that, and then create B and then get to C, and so that was life over 10 years ago in the digital social media world, which then led me to do YouTube videos and I loved editing content. That's what I learned in college, and so today now it's become my little mini I don't know my little mini dreamland empire that I've been able to build alongside my husband, and it's my favorite thing that I get to be myself for a living, and I think that's just been the greatest blessing from above, because I didn't pick this path I really didn't and I landed here and it just has all the doors started opening because it was just like the right thing. You know what I mean.

0:13:21 - Stephanie

I love that so much and we really do have so much in common. I love that. Oh, I love that. I love that. That's so my favorite thing. That you said is that you get to be yourself for a living, and that's I totally feel the same way. If my goals, like if my path, hadn't gotten totally rerouted, I would have been like in, you know, doing news, which I think is just such a is like such an important job, but just wasn't right for me in a whole bunch of different ways and wouldn't. Yeah, it just would have been a really different path for me and this one is so much better. But I am

getting to use the things that I wanted, the skills and interests that I had in the beginning, but in a different way, and I just, oh, I love it.

0:14:09 - Sazan

I love it. Yeah, and I think you know now that I'm 34, I started this journey when I was like gosh well, I was doing a bunch of interns and internships and stuff, thinking it would help the whole entertainment path, and so I started doing those at like 1920. I'd take little opportunities to travel to New York and do some of those like blood, sweat and tears jobs. So it allowed me to learn and then, like, once I got to that stage of like okay, I think I want to do my own thing and start building this little blog. I never in a million years dreamed that it would become anything because I think I didn't know how. I didn't know how to do it, and so sometimes we discouraged ourselves because we don't necessarily know how. But, like, when you know your why, you really figure out your how along the way. And so I think we're living in a generation today where, like, I look at Gen Z, the generation behind me, and I see them as like little sisters, because if I could talk to them and tell them anything from what I learned in my 20s, it was that, you know, today I feel like people are a little bit more shy to take risks because everything is so public and you do see a lot of like people to your left and your right pursuing career paths and them seeing. You see, you know Susan to your left who she posts one thing on social media as this blogger and bam at Sky Rockets. Or you see this person to your right who has this really amazing dream house that you wanted for yourself. It's really easy to compare yourself and get lost in that and then it ultimately deters you from pressing. Go on your own dream. So I just would encourage anyone and everyone who's just listening to this right now and is like okay, well, how do you know whether or not to like pursue something or whether or not to like maybe I need to lay it down. I would just encourage you to go where you feel the most at ease and what feels like where peace follows you.

There's times where there's a difference between hard work. It doesn't mean it's gonna be easy work, but there's a piece that kind of it feels like the winds in your sails, like that piece to me feels like it's a divine piece of the puzzle that is necessary when you have a big dream. The bigger the dream, the bigger the risk and the bigger, I think, the divine intervention that you're gonna need in your sails. So trust that where peace follows, you continue to go. And when you start to feel like, uh-oh, I feel like I'm at a dead end right now with this whole thing.

I invested this much money or I spent a lot of time at this, I'm very much, I would say for me. I'm high functioning. So, like, instead of me stopping and completely taking a step back, I sometimes push harder and I've seen how the Lord has used that to get me to be still and to see that, like true faith is at rest. And if I'm going a million miles per hour, I'm not giving the divine right the opportunity to come in and surprise me and to show me what he can do through me and with me. And so go where you're gonna feel at peace.

And if you're not feeling at peace right now about something that you've started, it doesn't mean to throw it in the waste basket in your heart. I just think it means like you need to take a step back and, instead of focusing on the perfection of your heart, focus on the direction. And it is okay sometimes to slow down. It is okay sometimes to say I'm gonna take the exit right now and

I'm gonna stop and I'm gonna take a break. I mean, we all, I think, need those pit stops in the journey as we are building and as we're growing and we're fueling these God given desires and talents and dreams in our heart.

0:17:40 - Stephanie

Okay, so if this is helpful for anyone else, great, but this is for me.

0:17:49 - Sazan

I'm preaching to myself too, because I still feel like girl, I'm still figuring it out. There is no, I've arrived. Can we just be real? Yeah, there's no, and I mean you'll agree with me, right? It's like you've created this whole world of yours, which is amazing, and I bet some of your listeners are like man, I wish I could have a podcast, like Stephanie and like she really seems to like have it all figured out and she seems to be so poised and makes it look so easy. But if only people knew right, it's like, behind the curtain, it's a lot, it's a lot of work, it's a lot of challenge. Every day and just know that I say that to encourage you, not to defeat you it's to know that, like people like Stephanie and me, we too in the journey, every single day, I feel like I'm like oh God, I failed today or God, I need grace, I need more grace.

0:18:35 - Stephanie

I just thought you know, every single day is like you know, I know, I know, I know, I know you're never going to have that sense of I've arrived at the top of the mountain.

0:18:42 - Sazan

You know what I mean, yeah.

0:18:45 - Stephanie

I love. I love what you said about the wind in your sails. I want to like dive into the idea of peace a little bit further, because I find and you know, we've been talking about this on the show lately with like a new kind of corner of my corner of the internet that we've opened up. It's this shop that I've been dreaming of forever, and it's officially called the Girls Night Gift Shop, and it's like matching shirts for you and your friends and best friend gifts, because I always find those to be really hard to find, and so. But it's been this dream that I've had for like I don't like my whole life really, and then something that I've been working on for the last like 18 months or so, but when I really started to press go on it, I just was so in my head and got so nervous and like and I find that to be true with basically everything that matters that I do the second I put it out there I feel like this is trash. I am trash.

0:19:46 - Sazan

Everything is trash. I like I must hide.

0:19:49 - Stephanie

the vulnerability hangover is like immediate for me and so I would just love to hear your thoughts on, like, how to know when, like this thing you're doing is just scary and you just got to

keep going versus that me. Or like, how do you know when it's just you need to keep going because this thing is very versus, there's no peace here.

0:20:12 - Sazan

You know what I'm going to start by saying. You know personally, for me now, what you might see on the outside is like, oh, wow, when nobody ever knew who I was right, which is, I feel, like a lot of people, most people when they go to my Instagram, right, you see 1.2 million followers and she's got a book and she's got, you know, she's done these collaborations with these brands and all of these things like you immediately can look at that and you can think like, oh my gosh, like I bet, like this was an overnight thing. And for me and for some people, it is like we saw in the COVID pandemic era that there was a lot of like overnight sensations that popped up through TikTok and stuff. For me, since the very beginning in this 10 year journey, I feel like it has been a very slow drip. Some seasons I was, I had more wind in my sails and I felt like, ooh, there's so much opportunity. I look back and I'm like should have capitalized on that. Instead, I was so hard on myself that I didn't do certain things. But I try not to do that because then it creates the whole regret thing and then you get in your own head about that that's a whole other topic.

But what I will say is that I've learned in my own journey whether I'm trying to sell a product or a brand and they're paying me and I want to see it perform, I want to see it do well and I want people to love the product. I've seen times where those things have flopped. I can't womp, womp, nobody clicked it, nobody. And you see that and you're like ooh, that makes me feel really crappy and I feel like it makes me look bad to the people that believe in me, whether it's my followers or these brands that are investing in me. But the truth is, is like this whole, whether you're an influencer or not or anything, that is self I say self-made but really like anything that God has created you to do, you have to know like it is a marathon and not a sprint. And if you think that, like you're going to have the Eileen Jenner effect, which is, in 10 minutes you sold one million products, or heck, let's say, in 10 minutes you've got 100 people, even, I mean 50 people, even like why are we creating these benchmarks for what success has to be and what it has to look like? And I think sometimes we bottleneck ourselves and we get in the way because of those false and unrealistic expectations that, for some reason, western society and culture has fixated upon.

Because when I go to Switzerland, like, for example, it's one of my favorite places on the planet. When I go there and I walk into one of the most cutest, coziest, beautiful little like shop, like, there's a little shop where it's like they make wool vests and things, I walk in there and I can't help but think, like this is such a small operation here. This is a little mom and pop thing, but they love it and they are so invested in it for the right reasons and while they may not be making a million dollars in sales that's not always the goal I think when you just like, can stay the path and focus on your direction instead of perfection, I believe, like a seed that you put in the soil, it's going to take time before you can harvest. It's going to take seasons where you're going to dry out, seasons where you're not tending to it enough or as much. It's the same thing with like your shop or your product or your dream.

Stevie actually says this analogy way better than me and I'm going to try, but he said this and it's really amazing is he spoke to somebody who's like a wine connoisseur and the analogy was basically like you would think that the wine, you know there's all process when it comes to making wine, getting it to the point where it pours into your glass, and you say cheers the before that, some of the most delicious wine, that those specific grapes they actually have to go through a lot more hardship in order to be able to ripen and make wine, and so they're actually in very hostile environments and they're very, very picky and they're very like. It's really hard and it takes longer, but it ends up producing the most delicious fruit, literally and in your cup, and it's like we need to think about ourselves in that way, we need to think about our dreams that way. And I know I'm blabbing and blabbing on and on, but you're speaking my language right now because you know, stevie and I are in a season right now where I feel the same way as you. Anytime you create something new, you feel so vulnerable, and for us we just wrote, you know, and launched our book *A Real Good Life*, and that's the first, I think, out of all the work we've ever done, it really is the most special piece of work I've ever done, probably the most important, because why it took us five years to actually be able to finally put pen to paper and to bring it to life.

And so many times when you want to throw the towel in or you're like, eh, this is not going anywhere. I have writer's block. You wonder, is this ever going to come to life? We ever going to see the day? And then the day comes. And then you're like wait, I didn't anticipate that I'd be feeling all of this, like anxiety and like I'm worried.

Now, does that mean I made a mistake?

No, I think those that type of jitter is because you care so much about what you've produced that you have a healthy human side of you. That's like what if people don't respond or don't like it or it doesn't reach as many people? But if you can reach one person through something that you can create on this earth, just think about how much good you're adding into the world. There's so much white space for each and every single one of us. And so just imagine I told Stevie if one person ends up reading our book and one person's life is transformed by our message and then one day, when we get to heaven, we get to see that person and they say you know what your book actually changed my life, or it's a big part of the reason I'm here today. I have a feeling when I get to heaven, I would feel like, whoa, this is amazing job well done on earth. You know. Yeah, instead of us thinking larger than life, let's just think really tiny little, bite-sized, and just pace ourselves, you know.

0:26:38 - Stephanie

I love that. I love that so much, and that's something that I thought about a lot when I first started my blog. I thought, you know, if I can like speak into one person's life, if I can help one person, like that's it, and then everything else is just sprinkles.

0:26:57 - Sazan

You know from there, yeah, extra credit, extra credit, yes, totally.

0:27:00 - Stephanie

But it is really easy to. It's easy to like lose sight of that, especially when you're doing something that you care about. That requires a lot of vulnerability and a lot of time, like your book took you five years and you're. I think when we are so vulnerable, we want like extra affirmation in something and so, even if it's like from God, we're like okay, god, like am I on the right path here? And it feels like the only way it's a yes is if you do have the Kylie Jenner effect on something you know. It's like you put something out in the world and it explodes into rainbows.

0:27:37 - Sazan

That is the like, that's the only version of affirmation.

0:27:40 - Stephanie

It's like no, I think it. It doesn't. That doesn't need to happen for something to be right or for something to be good or for you to be called to do something. It really could be one person's life being better for having read your thing or seen your thing. You know, whatever your thing is, one person's life being better is enough.

0:28:03 - Sazan

And you know what's crazy too is like if you look at anyone who is like your idol or just somebody that you look up to. Okay, if you look at Jennifer Aniston before she was Rachel on Friends, you are gonna see that for like a decade she had been really going after this full acting thing and nobody really knew her really that at the time. I think so often we look at people's success stories and the highlight reels of their lives that we actually don't realize that it either. Either they do a really good job at making it seem like things are all perfect and fancy and great and successful, but most of the time, the most success the people who have reached milestones in their dreams and like have had those wow factor effects. It's a lot of like it took them a long time to get there or it took them a bunch of failure to get there, and I think that's what makes those little moments when you do get there that much sweeter. Like if somebody handed me on a platter 10 years ago and said here you can be the host of E-news. Like you can be the Julianne Ransack, here you go. Just imagine what my path would have looked like. I would have never felt the motivation or the fire up my butt to go and pursue something of my own and I definitely wouldn't be living the life that I live today, which it's not an easier life, but I think if we do the hard things now, life does get easier and success will follow. When you are so obedient to the calling that I feel like God has for your life and for me personally.

It's really hard as a believer, but also somebody who genuinely cares about just people in general, like all religion aside, it's just about relationship and so I just care about everyone, and so sometimes that's my double-edged sword is like I care what they think and I wanna serve and I wanna do it well, and am I doing a good enough job? Am I really representing for women? Like what I feel like God wants me to be? Like I can be so hard on myself. And I think what I've learned, if anything, through the process of writing this book and, honestly, launching this book during a war starting out into the world like that, we didn't predict seven months prior when we were marketing the strategy behind this book. I think what I realized was that God has a plan whether or not I'm in the boardroom of my life in that meeting, like he has a plan for my life and

it's just a matter of like do you wanna show up today? Are you gonna walk into the plan, the game plan, and instead of me getting so distracted by looking to my left and my right and some of the numbers sometimes that we get caught up in with other people's success and hustling harder and doing the most? I mean when I was living in Los Angeles at this time I had started building my blog to a point where it had gotten pretty good attention, where I was able to be in the room, same room as, like certain A-list celebrities, I was getting invited to those parties and those things, quote unquote that help you network and build your persona and all the things that LA sometimes brings.

I remember walking into an event and I'm telling you every A-list celebrity is just passing me by and I'm like, oh, oh, my God, that's so and so. And I literally saw, like Kylie Jenner, I said we're talking about her, that's why it's popped up in my head. But like you see, kylie Jenner, and I saw Kendall Jenner and Kim and these people that are just people. And when I walked into this event, with all these celebrities and their fancy dresses and their nice jewelry and all that. I was in that moment where I always wondered what would it feel like to be amongst the elite and to be here, and in a sense, in that moment I was like well, I was invited here, so in a way, I kind of have arrived, I think right.

But when I was in that moment, I felt this emptiness waiting for me there and it was this realization for me, realizing, like, when you think about a good life, or the good life as Kanye West wraps about, that is a life where Western society has really built this fixation on self pursuit, and that you have to chase the next thing and the next thing. You have to hit this milestone. It's very performative, it's success. If you want the big house, the nice cars, the good life is like fancy things and while that's okay to have nice things, what I realized in that moment at that event was that I think I'm missing the real thing. I think a real good life not the one that's advertised to us on billboards and things I think I realized early on like I think a real life is like really like loving where you are right now in your life, like despite not being where you wanna be and also not missing out on what's right in front of you, like the relationships and the friendships and life, actual life. Like was I living life in that season? No, I was just hustling and chasing and trying to build and grow and so I forgot that while there's this cool life out here dangling, I got a small enough taste of that life where I was like I don't want that and I really was glad that God sort of allowed me to get a little peek through that glamorous lifestyle and fantasy land, because when I got there I had realized this feels really empty and I think we all wonder.

Jim Carrey said it best. He said I wish everyone could be rich and famous so that they realized that that's not it and I just feel like for me I've had to check myself over the course of these past 10 years so many times on that in motherhood and being a mom now living back in Texas. That really woke me up. Being a mom saved me. It really did. God used my kids to show me that like this is one childhood that they get and it's like am I gonna show up and am I gonna be here for them? Or am I gonna continue to go, go, go, go and hustle, hustle, hustle, because success?

One of my friends, don Cherie. She said what if success isn't about going higher? Like? What if success is actually about going lower? I mean that totally flips everything we've ever learned in America upside down.

But going lower meaning like reaching out to those people that are in your life, reaching out for the things that are right in front of you. God has given every single person listening to this podcast right now he's given you, stephanie, and me all really a unique toolbox of gifts, of resources, and your toolbox looks different than mine, but it doesn't mean that, like, just because you may have more hammers or screws than yours and mine looks like doesn't mean that our toolbox is not good enough and it's not magical enough to do some amazing things. So just try to appreciate what's in front of you. And so our book, a Real Good Life it really doesn't. It's not gonna teach you anything that you don't already know, but we are going to explore, like, what it means to genuinely and authentically live this life that I'm talking about right now, cause it's a life where I feel like is nowadays just being forgotten about and people are waking up and realizing hold on, this is crazy, like my kids, just my kids grew up right before my eyes, or I was chasing this thing for so long that I missed out on the beautiful friendships in front of me, and I've.

I think there's a few people that we probably all need a text and catch up with, you know, and so I just hope that this message, if it's encouraging anybody, that we would continue to have this conversation, cause I could talk about it all day, every day, and that's why I finally put pen to paper and talked about it in the book. But what a timely message, and I think we need our generation to really hear this, because we're going to miss out on the real thing if we don't.

0:35:58 - Stephanie

Yeah, yeah, talk to me about kind of what it looked. What it's looked like in your day to day life like specifically with like your routines or your life rhythms, to make to like put legs to this Like how. What does it look like to put legs to this in your actual life.

0:36:21 - Sazan

That's such a great question. You know it's a bunch of things and I'll start by saying, like you know a lot, of, a lot of anyone and everyone will share their morning routine with you. Like you can go on Instagram right now as the whole hashtag, you could literally go right. But that, to me, what I've seen and I've read books about, it's like okay, so, like that works for you. But like what does that mean? Like, if I do that exact thing, then I'm going to have a good life.

So there is a little bit of yes, there's the practicality and, like the importance of a morning routine, but I believe there's this big chunk of blank space, it's a canvas, and I believe that what you and I need to do, if you really are like, okay, I want to put legs to this, you have to stop where you are right now. Okay, just like, stop in your life. I mean, if you're driving, don't actually stop. Like, if you, you kind of have to stop where you are in the season of life that you are and you've got to be brutally honest with yourself you need to have that real coming to the end of yourself moment where you start to look at everything that you've done, like if you turn around okay, oh, I'm stopping for the first time, whoa, I've been really going hard on this project and that like really acknowledge, first and foremost, everything that you have up to this point. And then what I want to encourage everybody to do is to visualize, like what does your real good life look like? You know, it's okay that you have vision. God gives us that ability for a reason.

It's like if you had to audit your life today, what are some of the mountains that you can draw and say like, all right, these are probably three big major mountains in my life that I need to conquer because they're getting in the way of this life that I want to live. And so if one of those mountains, for example, for you could be like I'm having a really hard time right now parenting my kids, that's a mountain. What are the other mountains? It's another challenge in your life. So it's something that I do and I sit with myself and I do this exercise. I say, okay, me and Stevie have just been passing each other by, my husband and I in this season of life with three kids, and it doesn't feel good and it doesn't feel right. So I like put that as a mountain. And then I look at like my personal health mountain and I'm like, well, I haven't eaten like crap lately or whatever, and it's not you like nitpicking yourself and being your worst critic, but it's that one hour or so where you can be super real with yourself. You can do whatever you want with that pity party time of yours, but just be real. And when you visualize the life that you want, I believe that you have to tackle some of these mountains before you can actually get to that good that you're visualizing. But it doesn't mean that you can't love your life today and where you are right now.

So for me, I love the idea that in this book we have made it very simple to help people navigate, because life is a that's a broad topic. So we took a 24 hour day span and we're using stories and narratives, but also practical approaches in this book where we take a 24 hour day and we split it up into four phases of the day. So in the morning hour we talk about reflection. In the midday, which is when we're all running around like chickens with our heads cut off, try to get things done, drop kids off at school, pick them up. That hour is for focus. And then we get into the evening hour, which is gather For me I see that as five o'clock like time to turn it off, you know what I mean.

And then you get into your nighttime routine and that is rest and we talk about how all of those things I believe are a fabric of our in our good life it's one good day at a time is, I think, what ultimately helps kind of build your good life.

It's like a good life starts with just that one day and those days become an extension in your good life. So that's where we've kind of really gotten a little bit more str not strategic, that's one of my favorite words but like a little bit more intentional, I guess you can say in this book. Versus when you go on my Instagram and you get little fun videos and things like that, like this book is probably the most valuable piece of content because I really did need to think about it and write it out and actually put it to the test and see like how does this work for me? And I can actually go through the book today and actually feel like it's helping me alongside the current season that I'm in. So you can pick it up at any point and start where you are, and I feel like it's just gonna help you in your journey, as you're cultivating your good life.

0:40:57 - Stephanie

I love, I love the idea of breaking up the day like that. I find that I there are so many tabs open in my brain at any moment and, honestly, on my computer. We were, I was with some friends recently and they saw my desktop and they were like truly shocked, I think appalled, at how

many things are just littered on my computer desktop. And my husband didn't even like blink, he just was like I know, I know, oh, my gosh, you know what?

0:41:32 - Sazan

My friend. My friend did this to me one time that I did that. That was my laptop. You know what he did. He copied every single thing on the desktop and put it into a folder that said like open me and clean up or whatever. So like my desktop looked really clean. But then when I clicked the folder it was the messy desktop again and I was like, oh, you said you were going to help me clean it out and I get what you did. You just put it all into a folder you didn't actually address, shove it under the bed, exactly.

0:42:02 - Stephanie

Yes, you shoved it under the bed. But like that's what my brain is like, because I'm like moving so fast, I have so many things going on, and something that really really helps me is to compartmentalize and to say, like this is what this moment is about, this is what this hour is about, this is what this day is about, and when I can really focus like that, I feel like I'm so much more present for the thing that I'm working on. I get so much more done. I'm such a better, I'm so much better in my relationships.

When, like, my phone is off, I'm with you. You know I'm totally here. But I need that, I really really need that. Otherwise, I can be in a bazillion different places at once and not ever really anywhere. And so I love that idea of, like you said, reflection, focus, gather, right yes, gathering, gathering and rest. And like I feel like I'm going to think about that tonight as I'm going to bed and as my brain is trying to get me to focus on something else, or gather you know, by I'm texting friends before I go to bed or something and to just be like you know what. This is a moment to rest. Tomorrow there will be time to reflect and focus and gather, but right now this is all about rest.

0:43:13 - Sazan

Oh gosh, yeah, that's so good, stephanie. I mean, before I had my kids I was that nighttime owl where I could be editing videos and I love. I find like the hour nighttime hour it feels really I don't know. It's quiet, like my inbox is not beeping, there's not as many text messages coming through. I'm always motivated at night to work sometimes, and then my husband's the opposite. He's like morning, morning early, early before the sun comes up, kind of thing. But I'm not in the morning, good luck. I'm not a little foggy, I've always been that way. But I've found that like when, now that I have kids, they get a lot of my time right between, like I've had to reassess and it's hard because I still love being awake at night, because now it's my me time and time with my husband when our kids go down. But what Stevie and I have learned is like not every single night do I like watch a show with Steve. Like there are nights in marriage where we have our own individual time and so what we do for ourselves is if we're going to get, if it was one of those days. And let's face it, no matter how much you follow all the little tips and advice in this book, you are going to have probably a continuum of days where things are going to go wrong. You did three things right, fifty things went wrong and it's like, if you ever have one of those days or you're having that hard day maybe your kid kept you up all night, like mine last night I

definitely have realized that it's okay to do what I call a power hour. I love power hour and I actually get a lot done.

If you're scattered, like me, stephanie, mentally, what you can do is like set an alarm on your phone for one hour. Maybe it's the hours of like seven to eight PM and it's this time that you're saying, okay, one hour of me trying to get as many things done that I can that I've just put on my to do list that I can actually get done quickly, so my power hour happens. And for some reason, when I hit record on my alarm, something goes off in me where it's like I'm not going to be distracted by Instagram or the tabs on my laptop going on Amazon, like I actually have a list that I keep on my phone all throughout the week and this to do list real talk. It just continues to grow and grow and grow and I'm like, oh my God, how many things that I checked off. None. And the power hour time is the time when I go three days a week.

I usually have a power hour and then I go into that list and I just say I'm going to get as many things done. There's been nights where I have gotten everything done in that one hour because I'm pretty, I can be pretty efficient when I'm focused. I've learned but I don't give myself that that time where it's like, okay, this is one hour ready, set go. And so Stevie does it too, with me on the couch and he'll do his own thing. And sometimes he'll say I'm going to go out and make a fire and have my cigar and do my meat. I'm like you go ahead, boo, okay.

So like in that one hour when the timer goes off, it's done.

Yeah, I could keep going, because then now I have a high.

I'm like, oh no, you have to say that's it, that was my power hour. And I've had to do that because I'm in a season where I have three kids and I'm still growing and I'm still managing a business that I care about and so I have to find the pockets of time that makes sense for me, and this season that one hour it makes sense. So do your power hour, you guys, and when the power hour timer goes off, go and be with your significant other, go and watch that show and guess what? You're going to enjoy that show so much more because you were like I just got so much done in this one hour that I spent in my final evening hour because I needed to do this for myself. And I found that that's been my little recipe for getting things done in this current season, because it's hard. It's hard to just do it during the focus hour of that day and that's okay. You can swap things if you need to throughout your day in a good life.

0:47:05 - Stephanie

I love that so much. I've been doing something similar when it comes to things that I don't want to do or things that I'm like having a hard time getting my butt in the seat to focus on, like really work, especially if I'm writing something, and there are moments where you're really inspired. There are moments where you just have to show up and do it, and I feel like the more I know that I have to just show up and do it, the more I don't really want to, and so setting an alarm and being like I don't have to get this done, this doesn't have to be perfect. I don't have to like actually check anything off the list. If it's like a bigger project, I'll be like I'm going to give this two

hours, or I'm going to give this one hour and I will set my alarm and it's like this will be one hour better by the time I'm done, like in an hour.

0:47:51 - Sazan

This will be one hour better.

0:47:52 - Stephanie

It's not that it's done, but a lot of like. When you add them up, those hours turn into a lot and I love the idea of all the, especially the little things where it's like it kind of eats at you Like I have, like I need. I think I have some cavities that, like they told me last time I went to the dentist, they're like you're going to need to get these filled, sometimes soonish, Right. Like that was like a little too long ago, and so I'm like, okay, yeah, yeah, yeah, make that appointment.

0:48:19 - Sazan

Yes, and I'm like draft those emails and you just mean you have to send them out at that hour, but you can schedule them and just get it done. I hate my inbox, actually, and that's one of the things that sometimes I do in my power hours. I solely get my inbox down to zero every day and that's something that I have to do is in my power hours, so that during the day, that energy should be spent towards being a creator, cause, like I have found that during the day when you actually have good lighting, that's when I need to be actually creating the content and things like that. But it's like really hard if I'm sitting on my couch working on the bit, like on the business you know what I mean Instead of in the business, and so I can get really like. It's like when you work for yourself, you're constantly like going back and forth and then you realize man me as the things that I love, that are in my excitement zone, those things are taking a backseat because right now I'm in my treasurer zone of having to manage my business. I'm having to do the behind the scenes legwork to bring some projects to life, and it's okay to allocate time for those things, but do it when it's convenient.

And sometimes for me, I know I'm not going to shoot content at night, so, like, let me get back to those emails and schedule those emails at night so I can be the creator that I want to be during the day, you know. And so finding those rhythms in your day that makes sense for you is really important. And if anyone listening, there's this dream that's been in your heart and you're like, you know what I've been wanting to do, this whole side thing. I've wanted an Etsy shop or whatever that thing is, you know, see it as, like there's 24 hours in a day and we've got seven days in the week and, while you may have a real right pay the bills job, find, like I would say, like five hours a week where you can like you have your hours, that you thrive in your job, where you're making money, but you should create some hours in your week where you can strive.

Those are the things that like haven't come to life yet. They haven't. They're just kind of in the background. You keep thinking about it when you're driving, you keep talking about it with friends. Put pen to paper and find those five hours a week. Maybe you don't have five hours a week, maybe it's two hours a week. Two hours a week towards watering the seed for something that you're kind of really excited about is a lot better than not watering it at all. And those two hours add up and in six months time you've put in hours, you've put in work, and so just start by

slowly, slowly, every day, finding little pockets of time to fuel the things that are important and to also get the things at hand that just need to get done with a power hour.

0:50:58 - Stephanie

Yep, yep, that's it. I think that that's probably one of my biggest lessons from the last year is just everything takes time and that we, like you, plant a seed. You don't get to eat that fruit right away.

You just don't it takes time and so, like thinking, I've been working backwards a lot, like what do I want to be happening in a year? What do I need to plant today in order to make that happen? And it works with everything. It's with your friendships. Like if a year from now, you want to have really thriving friendships, okay, well then you need to like what do you need to plant now in order to have that in a year? Well, like you probably need to text a friend. Or like get a coffee date on the calendar. Or like it's a small step today, a series of small steps for a year, is going to turn into something really great.

0:51:50 - Sazan

Oh yeah, but it doesn't happen overnight you know, yeah, and for me, I think about, like, for me, my childhood, like I said at the beginning of this episode, I don't know how to ride a bike. It is because, like my mom, she didn't know how to ride a bike. Like, she never like thought, oh, we should teach, I should teach you how to ride a bike. So for me, as a mom, I have found my own like. Sometimes I feel like, oh my gosh, am I doing a good enough job? Like, as mothers, we all like we just do that, and so what I have learned is that I have to cultivate traditions in my home and for my life. And so, for 2024, something that I'm gonna do and I want everybody to do it with me we should have a girls night and do this together. But we should have a power hour like let's make vision boards, like let's really forecast what we want for our good life going into 2024, get a bunch of magazines and go start cutting things up and let's go old school with it and create a vision board mind, body, spirit, health, wellness, what's important to you and really hang that up somewhere that you're gonna be able to go back to it and look at it several times and then, based off that vision board, start making little steps. Like you're saying, like let's start some traditions.

I love a weekly family night. It seems easier said than done when life starts picking up and you get busy and, as you know, when you work for yourself, you're just lucky if you even make dinner some nights and you're not ordering takeout all the time. So, like I know that if I don't plant that seed and say, like we're having family nights every Thursday night, we're all meeting here and we're gonna figure out what we're gonna do, but every Thursday night is a family night in my home. That is a tradition that my kids are going to be able to hopefully then pass down to their kids. And so I think our generation, we're learning from our parents and our parents really were just all trying to make ends meet and for my parents it was survival mode.

You know Like, and so for us now I think that what we wanna do, our generation, it's more about like let's not make some mistakes in the past that we've seen. Like let's really be more intentional, let's not be the generation of distraction. Like let's actually go back to building blocks

and being more handsy with our hand and just putting pen to paper, making scrapbooks Like let's vision past for 2024 and start there, and then start making some traditions along the way and then really sticking to it. Those are the steps. Those are the things weekly dates with your friends, texting friends every week, praying for friends every week, showing up for those who are in your life, cause it's not just about you. Good life is also about gathering and reaching for others and helping others and vice versa. So I think it's important that we really sit with ourselves and dream big about the life that you wanna have, but also just love the life that God has given you today, something we all need to do, and myself included.

0:54:38 - Stephanie

I love it so much. I am so, so glad that we got to talk today. We're, I feel, like cut from the same cloth and I just I'm so excited about all of your work, I'm so excited about your book. We're gonna link to it in the show notes. You guys go pick up a copy, go pick up a copy. And really, Sazan, I'm just I'm so glad that we're friends.

0:55:01 - Sazan

I am too. I feel like you are just the blonde version. I mean, I wish I could be a blonde. Sometimes Blondes have fun. I've always wanted to go blonde, but my eyebrows are too dark. My Middle Eastern skin is like, ah, girl, that ain't gonna work for me. But you're beautiful on the inside and out. Stephanie, I'd love that we've gotten to connect and chat and girls night gang. This has been fun y'all Like. Thanks for having me. Y'all Thanks for being here.

0:55:29 - Stephanie

["Sazan's Amazing"]. You guys, this is Sazan Amazing. I loved her and I love this conversation and I am so happy I got to share it with you. One thing I wanted to mention quickly is I know we talked about a lot in today's episode, and so if you wanna find the links to any of those things, all you have to do is go to my website. It's girlsnightpodcast.com, and for every episode we have a blog with the show notes. All the links will be there for everything we talked about, including all of Suzanne's contact info, so you can follow her, so that y'all can be friends.

The other thing I wanted to mention is that, if you haven't had a chance yet, it would mean so much to me if you would take just a second to leave us a rating and a review on iTunes. We've gotten so many amazing five star reviews from y'all and you've left the sweetest comments. I can't tell you how much it means to me, and also it helps out the podcast more than you can imagine. So if you haven't yet, please take just one quick second to leave a rating and a review. Thanks so much. All right, friends, that's all we have for today, but we'll be back next week with another episode of Girls Night, and you are going to love this next one. I'll see you then.