

Girls Night #234: The Simplest (and Most Transformative!) New Years Resolution you can Make This Year — with Stephanie May Wilson

0:00:04 - Stephanie

Girls Night began, as many great stories do, right in the heart of Nashville, Tennessee. There I was a born pupil pleaser and rule follower who second-guessed everything, suddenly finding myself in a brand new marriage and a brand new city with \$11 in my bank account. Did I mention I just lost my job? Oh right, I just lost my job. My whole future was up in the air and I had no clue what to do next. The thing that saved my life in that season and in every season since, Girls Nights Girls Nights with my real-life best friends were my lifeline. That year, my friends and I would pool our pizza money, maybe spring for a bottle of Prosecco if we were lucky, and then we would sit together and workshop our lives. Those nights made me feel so much less alone in my experiences, and having a safe space to process and dream gave me more than just a vision for the life I wanted. It filled me up with enough courage and confidence to actually make it happen. Some of the most influential moments of my life have happened at Girls Nights, surrounded by women who have been where I am and have made it to where I want to be, women who get it and get me and who are in my corner. No matter what, those Girls Nights and the collective wisdom of the women who are there have led to some of the best decisions of my life, and that's why I knew I had to get more people in the room. Enter the Girls Night Podcast. The Girls Night Podcast was born out of those experiences. This is a safe place to bring the things you're struggling with, the decisions you don't even know how to begin to make, and the transitions that are just absolutely kicking your butt. It's a safe place to say what you're really thinking, how you're really feeling, how you're actually doing, and what you'll receive here is support, encouragement and connection to other women who actually know how you feel, because they've been there too. You'll also get to hear from women who can help you through this. Each week, I bring on one of the smartest women I know to chat about the topics that are keeping us up at night. We're going to lean on the collective wisdom of women, learning from their insight and experience, so that you not only know what your next step is, but you also have the support to actually take it. After all, Girls Night isn't just about eating pizza and sweatpants with your friends. It's about problem-solving and, with all the big life questions women our age are having to answer all at the exact same time, we need all the help we can get, no matter who you are, where you come from or what decisions you end up making. You're welcome here. You'll walk away from each episode with both comfort and clarity. You'll walk away equipped to take your next step forward and encouraged enough to actually do it. Grab a seat and let's get started. We're so glad you're here. Hey, friends, welcome to Girls Night. I am so, so happy that we get to be here together. Happy 2024. Happy season 19.

This is season 19 of the Girls Night podcast, which is absolutely insane to me. We are on our seventh year of this show. I honestly can't believe how far we've come, how long it's been. It feels like we just started yesterday. It feels like so much has happened and I'm just so honored to get to be here with you and so thrilled that we get to sit here together and start our year

together. We have some really, really exciting things coming this year, and one of them I finally get to tell you about, and I get to tell you about in this episode. It's going to be at the end. I have, I would say, three giant announcements this year just that are going to all happen in the first like three months of 2024. Things that I've been working on for a really long time, that I have been like truly dying to tell you about, and today I get to tell you about the first one. So I'm going to try to keep my cool and keep focused, because there's some other things I wouldn't tell you about first or talk through together first, with this being a whole new year, and then I'll get to my big announcement at the end. So I don't know if you guys have noticed this on social media. I have not been on social. I've been trying to be on social media less, but when I've been on it I have seen a whole bunch of people doing like in for 2024, out for 2024. And I haven't made my full list of what I feel like is in for me and out for me for 2024. So the two things that I'm going to say are out. The very first thing that I'm going to go ahead and say is out for me, and feel free to adopt this as your own, for 2024 is starting your year on January 1st.

I'm really a fan of a do over. I love a makeover, I love a reveal moment. I love like every like a turning point. Everything changed when this moment happens, like the clock struck midnight and everything changed. I love a moment like that. And so I'm really drawn to New Year's Eve Day because it feels like this moment that is offered to us every single year, where we get to transform. The problem is, I am like not in transformation mode on New Year's Eve. Going into New Year's Day, I like to be with my people and having fun on New Year's Eve, and so when the clock strikes midnight, I'm ready to go to bed. I'm not ready to like become a new version of myself, and because I stayed up until midnight this year I stayed up until 12 at 30 just saying, like a miracle, I like I'm totally not ready to bound out of bed first thing on January 1st, ready to either like make resolutions or start enacting my resolutions. And also the weeks leading up to New Year's are Christmas and those weeks feel like they've gotten like progressively more crazy as I've gotten older, and so there's not a part of me that's like sitting back and reflecting over the holidays. This year we do so every year.

My family lives in Denver and Carl's family is primarily based in Indianapolis, although we've lured some of them down to Nashville and actually we've kind of scattered in recent years. But we have two families that we want to spend the holidays with, and so traditionally we spend like the week leading up to Christmas with one family, and then either on Christmas day or the day after Christmas, we switch to the other family, and that's what we did this year. We were with some of the Wilson's not everyone was able to come this year, but with some of the Wilson's the week leading up to Christmas, and we got to do it in Nashville, which was really fun. I can't I don't even know if we've ever done a Christmas in Nashville, because we're always going to travel to be near family, but this year everyone was here with us and that was so fun. So we spent Christmas in Nashville and then then we immediately so we're like prepping for Christmas, then we're celebrating Christmas, and then we had to pack up like the night of Christmas to go to Denver the next day, and so then we took the girls to Denver, traveled to Denver and we spent the next like week with my family and my friends in Denver.

So that's what I was doing leading up to this new year, and so I did not wake up on January 1st like ready to be my new self. I woke up on January 1st ready to go back to bed. All of that to say

I, for me out for 2024, is starting the new year on January 1st. I am rescheduling it if I'm allowed to, and I'm saying that we're allowed to.

And really, as I've been thinking about this for myself, like I think that part of me has been a little bit disappointed with myself that I'm not ready with my reflect, like I'm not either ready to reflect or make resolutions on January 1st, something like that. Like I feel like I'm starting the year on the wrong note by not being in that frame of mind when I wake up first thing on January 1st. I don't know if you've ever heard this quote I don't know if it's a quote or a meme or just an idea in my head, but something about how like how you spend New Year's is how, or like how you spend January 1st is how you're going to spend the new year. Something about that puts like that idea puts so much pressure on me that I just am not in a place to be able to carry after such a crazy season and like on a day where I just really need to take a nap. So I don't really know where this expectation comes from. But for me, there's this really deeply embedded idea that the way that I start the year is the way the year is going to go. And so every year I feel a little bit of, I feel like I kind of start out failing because I'm not ready to kick off a new year in a new way.

The second the clock strikes midnight, and so one of the things that I've been doing for myself is giving myself permission to just change the rules, because really there are no rules. Yes, it's a really nice clean start to see like the whole year change and to have a new start with it, a new start with a new year, but that just doesn't work for me. I'm not ready for that. Then I need some time, some space, to get into a different frame of mind, to be able to figure out where I've been and where I want to go, and so I've started giving myself that space. That's one thing that I want to invite you into as well, if you need that space that we can start over whenever we need to.

And the other thing I've been thinking about is usually, when I exit one year and enter another, I'm not generally looking to start over. I'm usually looking to maybe prune my life a little bit, cut away some things that haven't been serving me as well, add some new things. But it's less of a black and white, it's less of a total transformation, it's more like a tweak, a little more of this, maybe a little less of this. It's usually like a slight change or let's keep going in the same direction. And in that vein, another thing that I've been thinking about when it comes to starting a new year is is January the perfect time to start something new? Anyway, even if you are looking for a giant transformation, is January the moment? Again, it can be, if you love the ceremonial changing of the guards of one year into another, like there's something satisfying to that, to be sure. But I really wonder if this is, if we could just take this pressure off completely and make it so that this isn't a time of year when you have to change, but maybe it's a year where you just, maybe it's a time of year where you just get to rest.

I was thinking about the difference between having our lives follow the calendar versus following the seasons, and I started to think what is happening in the seasons right now? What season are we in? What's happening in nature? And I was thinking about it like In winter, everything gets quiet, some things die, some things fall away, some things tuck up underground and wait till spring. A lot of things pause during the winter and trees. According to one website, I saw trees bulk up on the soil's nutrients and water during the winter months, so they'll have enough energy to grow buds for new leaves and flowers in the spring. So it's a time of rest, it's a time of

gathering, it's a time of refilling, and that's just totally not what I normally think about for January 1st. I think about not filling up my cup, but pouring it out immediately, coming straight out the gate as a new version of myself, whether or not I want to or need to be a new version of myself at all, and so that's just something that I'm thinking about Right now. It's halfway through January and I want to invite you into it with me in case you feel that same internal pressure to become a new version of yourself every time a new year hits One. We don't have to become a new version of ourselves. The old version is just fine.

If you need a moment to kind of stop and reflect and cut away some things and add some new ones, then a changing of a year can be a great time to do that. But it doesn't have to happen between December 31st and January 1st. It can happen on like I don't know. January 15th Sounds like a good day, but just take it a minute to get back in the swing of things after the holidays. That can be the time that you sit down and do some reflecting and do some planning for the year. Reflecting and planning are awesome things to do. They just don't need to happen when the calendar changes. And that's a reminder that I need, and so I wanted to pass it along to you in case you need it too.

And then the other thing is this doesn't need to be a time of transformation for you at all. It can be a time of rest and of refilling and of almost like being a little bit dormant. It can be a time of kind of hibernating. Nothing blooms all year, and you don't have to either. This doesn't have to be the time where you're most efficient, the most self-disciplined, the strongest, the most determined. This can be a time where you rest and refill and soak up nutrients so that you can bloom in the spring. So, anyway, that's just something that I'm thinking about this time of year that I wanted to invite you into as well.

So out for 2024, starting the new year on January 1st. In for 2024, having a refresh whenever you need it and maybe using the winter to rest and refill a little bit, instead of feeling like you need to become a new person. Here's the other thing, as we are making New Year's resolutions which we all know like don't really work, or New Year's intentions are choosing a word for the year or even planning ahead or making plans for the next year. I wanted to share one of the things that I have done in the last handful of years that's made the biggest difference in my life. I would say that this is probably the most revolutionary, life-changing New Year's resolution you can make. It's probably the simplest or the easiest, but also the hardest. I'll get into that in just a second. So my second out for 2024 is trying to do everything on our own. In for 2024 is asking for help Over the last 10 years or so, as I've been going through major transitions and making really big decisions when it comes to getting married or where we're going to live buying houses, starting and really getting some traction in my career, getting pregnant, becoming a mom, like figuring out my finances, all these giant pieces of my life that I've been working on all at the same time.

One of the things I've learned is that strength is improving, that I can do it on my own. It's knowing that I don't have to and then surrounding myself with the very best people, resources and tools possible, especially in the areas of life that I care the most about. Now. This is totally counterintuitive or counter-cultural and really, depending on what your family was like growing

up, this may be totally contrary to the way that you were raised. I think for a lot of us, we feel like we should be able to do things on our own, and I think part of that is because, I mean, for some of us, we've been given those messages outright. The asking for help is weakness. But I think, even if we weren't given those messages as explicitly, it feels like somehow everyone else is managing to do things on their own.

We look around at the people we see on social media and in our lives and the other mom at preschool and the woman we work with or the girls sitting down away from us in class, or whoever the people are that we see the most often, and we have a really generous interpretation, I think, of how they're doing in life. We see them succeed at one thing. I know this is true for me. I see someone succeed at one thing and I just assume that they are succeeding at everything. It is really hard for me to picture ways that people could be dropping the ball when I see them keeping one up so beautifully. I just assume that that's how they're doing everything in their life and that they're doing it all themselves. That just isn't true. Everybody needs help, everyone is struggling, everyone is overwhelmed, everyone has too much on their plate. Everyone has things that they're really good at, and things that they're honestly not good at, and things that they maybe could be good at if they had enough time to really dedicate to them, and things that they hate so much they don't even want to be good at them. Everyone has those things. We just don't see them as much, and so it's hard to imagine that they're there. And so I think when we look around at other people and the way that they're living their lives and the tiny sliver of their lives that we see, we just assume that everything looks as good as the thing that we see. And it's just not the case.

There have been some moments for the last our whole lives really but for the last couple of years, as Carl and I have been trying to figure out life as new parents and adults who are in charge of our house and flossing our teeth and flossing our kids' teeth I'm just kidding, we totally don't floss our kids' teeth. I don't even. Are you supposed to? I hope not, we're definitely not. But we just have so many things that we're balancing and juggling on any given day and every once in a while, Carl and I will look at each other and we'll go how does anyone do this? And the thing that we try to remind each other in that moment is like nobody is. Nobody is doing this well. Everybody is dropping some balls. Nobody is doing every single piece of this well. It's just. It's not possible the standard if we're expecting ourselves to be perfect, if we're expecting ourselves to check every single thing off our list and on time, if we're expecting every single corner of our lives to be clean and in order and put together and organized and punctual and everything like. It's just not possible. And so that's something that I try to remind us often and Carl reminds us often, sort of whoever's the least stressed out in that moment will go. No one's doing all of this, it's just not possible, and that's true. No one is doing it all.

For a while, there was that thing going around that said you have as many hours in the day as Beyonce. Everyone has 24 hours in the day. You have the same number of hours in your day as Beyonce, and I think that the idea behind that was like if this is possible for her, it's possible for you. The problem is that, while sure, we have the same number of hours in the day as Beyonce or any other successful person, they probably have a lot more helpers than we do, and so they've managed to grow their time exponentially. They don't have just their 24 hours, they have

the 12 hours that this assistant gives them and that this publicist gives them and that this chef gives them, and they have this aggregate of all of these different experts time helping them make their lives what it is.

Beyonce is not doing this all by herself Literally nobody is and so I think one of my goals really always, but especially this year and especially today as we're talking about this is to just smash for lack of a less violent word the idea that we're supposed to be doing it all ourselves and that we get extra points for doing it. That way, nobody is doing everything. Nobody is doing everything themselves. If it looks like they're doing everything perfectly, there's absolutely stuff you're not seeing, and the people that are getting the most done are just everyone has help, or everyone should have help, and if you don't have help, you're running yourself out of the ground and you're still not getting it all done, and there's no prize at the end of that path. So for me, out for 2024 and really my whole life, at least for the last decade, and I'm going to carry this forward forever out is feeling like I have to do everything myself, and the idea that you get extra points if you do everything yourself or that everyone else is, because it's just not true, none of it's true, and in is asking for help, and so that's the kind of radical, simple but really difficult New Year's resolution for lack of a better term that I want to invite you into today If it's helpful for you, if you're trying to figure out what can I do moving forward, what can I do to set myself on a different track or to get myself better aligned with where I want to go or to move forward?

I've been trying but I'm feeling kind of stuck. I want to offer the idea that maybe the most powerful thing you can do isn't try harder, but it's ask for help. I have a few questions for you, if you want to. I mean, if you're driving, don't close your eyes. But if you want to close your eyes, I have a few questions to just kind of get your wheels turning about where and how you might ask for some help.

So one question is what area of your life just hasn't been going the way that you want it to? In what area of your life are you having a hard time getting to where you want to go? What area of your life have you done everything you know how to do and it just hasn't made a difference. You're just not getting there. That is a perfect place to ask for some help.

Maybe the game changer this year will be trying harder, or getting a new calendar, or reworking your plan a little bit, or waking up extra early. Maybe that is the ticket, but I know for me, the biggest leaps in my life have come when I've asked for help, and so, if you're feeling stuck in any of those ways, asking for help is an incredible next step and something that you can do right now, today, that will really, I would argue, change everything this year. You'll walk into 2025 so different because you stop trying to do it yourself and you broaden people who maybe know how to do this better than you or maybe they don't even know how to do it better, but they're not you, and so they have a different take on it and they're able to speak into your problem or see elements that you haven't seen before. Again because they're not you, they're not as in it. So those are just a couple of questions to ask yourself. If any of those things are true, if you're feeling like you just cannot get to where you want to go, you've tried everything, you know how to do. This area of your life is not changing or turning or shifting the way you want it to, and you've tried everything ask for help or ask for help again, or ask for help from someone else.

Invest and help. Sometimes help isn't free, but it's worth it, or at least I would ask you if it's worth it. Is breakthrough in this area of your life worth what it would cost to get it? And I mean, the answer for me has always been yes, especially with the areas of my life that are the most important. So here's another version of asking for help that's available to us. Close your eyes again. If you're not driving, what do you hate doing? Is there anything in your life or your relationship or on your calendar that you just really don't want to do but you have to do it? Can you ask for help with that? That's a really, really powerful thing that you can do this here.

My best friend hates doing laundry. She hates it. She hates it. She dreads it Up until it's time to do it. While it's happening, it's like, okay, you know at least the like, you know putting it in and moving it to the dryer and taking it out Part, but then the folding she hates, the putting it away she hates. And then she dreads it all over again when it's time to do it again. And in different seasons of life.

We can all afford different amounts of outside help. We can all afford to delegate differently. Sometimes we can't afford to delegate at all. I think sometimes we can, a little bit Like maybe you have a hundred dollars a month that you can allocate to either help cleaning your house or help picking up groceries or dog walking or, you know, doggie daycare or childcare or something, and and you know, I think traditionally we have this idea of where that money should go. There there are paths that seem more like a given. You know, like maybe we've always maybe growing up, our parents had someone come in to help clean the house, and so hiring a housekeeper is like not out of the realm of possibility for us. But Something we can do this year is look at what's on our plate and if there is something that we're outsourcing or something that we're paying for that Isn't making that big of a difference in our life, my question would be can we reallocate those funds? Can we take that hundred dollars and put it towards something that really would make a difference, a major difference in our quality of life on a Regular basis?

So for my best friends she doesn't dislike Cleaning, like cleaning her house. It's therapeutic for her. She doesn't mind it, it's not a task that she dreads. But again, she hates laundry, and so a question if you're anything like her would be how much does it cost to have someone do your laundry? And now I know it's a weirder thing to outsource, like that's not a thing that everybody does. But if you have a hundred dollars and you get to decide how to spend it, you get to decide how to spend it. That also goes for you know, if you're spending money regularly on something else Maybe you, twice a month, get your nails done Well, that's potentially two hundred dollars a month. What could you buy with that two hundred dollars?

Is there something in your life that you dread that really takes up a huge amount of space or Frustration or causes like arguments in your relationship? Like I mean, laundry can really cause arguments, and is there a way for you to make that easier? Is there someone that you can ask for help to make that easier? And you don't have to know the answer to the question yet. One of the things that I've been practicing in my life is Walking all the way down the road and actually seeing what the options are before you try to make a decision. So if you don't know how much it would cost to outsource your laundry or to ask for help with that, you can't you can't say that it's

not an option, actually finding out what your options are, what they cost, what they would take, and then making decisions from there. But that is something that you can do in 2024 is ask for the help that you need and you can get creative about what that looks like. You get to decide what that looks like, and if there's something in your life that causes you as much frustration as laundry causes my best friend, you can Outsource that. You can, or at least find out what it would cost. Here's another area where you can ask for help and this has been hugely game-changing for me. Is there an area of your life where you want to grow, you want to grow faster than you are and you, like, just genuinely don't know how to do it?

A handful of years ago, I was feeling that way when it came to my work. I was feeling kind of stuck. I was feeling like I had sort of reached the end of what I knew how to do and you know I was reaching for other. I like I was learning. I was listening to podcasts. I was, you know, reading books. I was practicing skills. I was doing all the things I knew how to do, but I wanted to go beyond what I knew how to do, and I just didn't know how to do that. And so the thing that I ended up doing for the first time ever was I reached out and asked someone to coach me. It was someone in my field. It was someone who was like really ahead of me new people I didn't had, experience I didn't have, had skills I didn't have and I Asked her if she would coach me, and it was. I have to say it was not cheap. It was not a small investment, and I went to go work with her in person for several days, and so that cost a lot of time as well. It like it really was an investment, but I got so much out of that weekend with her that was even beyond what was on her website I was able to.

She was able to like take a look at the way that I run my work life in just an everyday way. She found some Inefficiencies. She's like why do you, why don't you just have a template for that? You really rewrite this email every single time you need it. Like that's crazy. Have a template and even something as small as that Someone looking over my shoulder and asking me a question about the way I do my work was enough for me to go oh my gosh, you're right. Like how many areas of my work am I doing this, doing the same thing over and over and over again, when I could just do it Once and save it and have that task be done forever? She was able to introduce me to some people that I that were also able to help me my amazing podcast editor, which shout out to him because he's watching this and editing this. I met because of her and our accountants. My goodness, small business accounting is a world in and of itself and taxes and all the things. It is so confusing and has and caused our family specifically Carl, because I have no idea how to do it so much like anxiety and strife in the spring and then so so being connected with this, that this Accountant was like truly life-changing for us, and it was because of this weekend, and so that's another thing that I just want to throw out.

There is is there an area where you're looking to grow, and grow faster than you are. I would say, reach out to someone who's ahead of you and see if they'll coach you, even if it's a, you know, a paid thing. I think it's maybe even better if it's a paid thing, because I don't know it's more clear what the transaction is. You're not, like you know, stealing their family time or anything you like I don't know. I feel like it's easier for me to Receive what they have to give me when I know that I'm giving something back, if that makes sense.

But you have no idea what ideas or connections or introductions or Inspiration or like you just have no idea what will come from that investment in yourself, from that step forward and Really like there's a lot we can do on our own, but we really only know what we know. We can only go as far as we know how to go, and so it's really helpful to have someone who's been further to like Grab us and like yank us down the road with them, and that's what she was able to do for me. And so if you are looking to grow in any area of your life, it could be fitness, it could be a hobby, it could be work, it could be your faith, it could be like your relationships. It could be any area of your life where you're looking to grow. Investing in some coaching and like getting together with someone who's further down the road from you is a really powerful way to like Catapult yourself forward in a way that's really hard to do on your own. So that's another way that we can ask for help this year. And then the last thing you know we talk about this all the time here on the show is is counseling.

One of the places that we you know most of us spend time Stuck is in our heads. It's in our hearts. It's in our heads in our past. It's walking through life. Nobody gets through unscathed. We all have things that have affected us, that have impacted us, that have hurt us, that have bruised us, that have caused us to like scarred us, so we act differently in the world to you know, prevent that from happening again, and those are really hard things to coach ourselves out of by ourselves, like there's definitely some stuff you can do and you know journaling and reading books and and you know self-talk and all these things are really really great things that you can do for your mental health. But one of the most powerful things for me has been inviting a professional into my head with me and Having their help getting unstuck in some ways, that I've spent my whole life being stuck Again.

You know, depending on your background, depending on your family, depending on you know, your corner of culture, that you live in, the idea of therapy may be totally normal or maybe, like I don't know, like we're pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, figured out, suck it up kind of people. Regardless, this is an option for you. I mean, easy for me to say both my parents are psychologists, so we grew up talking about mental health a lot in my house. But it is, it's an option for you. If there are ways that you operate or things that have hurt you, or Places that you consistently get stuck or ways that you're, you know, constantly compensating for your bird for something or trying to protect yourself that ends up totally sabotaging the progress you're trying to make in your life, those things don't have to be there. They don't have to. You don't have to be stuck, you don't have to stay stuck and you don't have to figure it out by yourself.

My best friend, jess, recently got her license in counseling and she just finished grad school. She's officially a therapist now and watching her go through the process of Education like you know, being educated in this way, getting this degree, has given me just an even further respect for what mental health professionals are able to do like they. You guys know I am the biggest fan of sitting down with a friend over coffee, but there be different, because it's like they know the terrain of inside our heads better than a friend with. They're trained in that way, and so that means that they're going to know. They're gonna know what like obstacles to look out for and how to get around them. They're gonna have tools that we don't have. They're gonna have science we don't have. They're gonna have resources that we don't have, ideas that we don't

have because of the way that they've been trained, because this is, this is their thing. It's like going. It's a. They're doctors, they're going, you're going to a specialist for your brain, and so the things that they're gonna be able to do to help you heal and thrive in your mind are gonna be different from what a friend can do over coffee, and again, I would say we need both.

But if there is an area of your life where you're feeling consistently stuck, therapy is just, I would say, the most powerful thing that you can do for yourself, for your relationships, for your work, for your future, for your kids. I think going to therapy specifically, I can pinpoint in 2018 the year that I spent in therapy every week was like the best gift that I could have given my kids and my kids weren't even they were a twinkle in my eye at that moment, but really, when I think about the best gift that I've given them, like it probably was the therapy I did for myself that year. So that is my last idea for a way that you can ask for help this year. And again, like I said, this is sort of the easiest like to check off New Year's resolution that you could make, but also a really hard one, because it's hard to admit that we need help. It's hard to ask for help.

I'll never forget when I realized that I was really struggling with anxiety and depression in 2018. I remember calling a psychiatrist office because I was like I think I probably need some medicine at this point and I'd really been resistant to that. I thought, you know I should be able to fix this by myself. It took me a long time to get to the point where I was like no, this is happening, this is bad and I need some like medical, chemical help for this. And then the first office I called didn't have space for me. They were not taking new clients, and that is so just discouraging just a kick in the gut when you, when it's taken so long for you to ask for help and then help isn't readily available. And so I just I want to share that, that you may have to try a couple times, you may have to look around a little bit, but it's worth it, it's really really worth it to ask for the help that you need, and I would argue that your whole year, and potentially your whole life, could be different because of it. You do not have to walk through life by yourself any of it, and I hope we don't try, because it's just so much better when we do it together and when we get to pull from the collective wisdom of women and professionals, and we're just able to go so much further, so much faster than they would, than we would be able to if we were trying to go by ourselves. And so that's the invitation I have for you this year. That's not the new thing I'm doing this year. But the thing I'm just continuing to do this year Not, I guess, the flashiest years resolution Just let's keep doing this. But that's, that's what mine is let's keep doing this.

One resource I wanted to share with you that I know I've shared a bunch of times, but I just I need everyone to know that this is available is, if you are looking for help with your mental health, if you're looking for the next step when it comes to counseling or therapy, you can ask around. You can you know Google, you can you know, ask your friends for recommendations. You can ask at your church or your you ask your doctor. I mean, there are a bunch of different places that you can ask for recommendations, but a place that I really love as a great starting point is BetterHelp. We've been talking about faithful counseling for years on the show and faithful counseling is a part of BetterHelp and they've actually just merged. So faithful counseling and BetterHelp same thing. Now, when you get on BetterHelp's website, you can say if you're looking for a therapist that's a person of faith, you can just like check a box that says I'm looking

for a person of faith and it'll direct you to the same place that the faithful counseling website would have.

But the reason that I love them is because it connects you. It's just a really, really easy way to get started. You can do therapy online. You can do it from the comfort of your house, in your pajamas. I actually do virtual counseling and I love it. It's been so powerful and there's something to be said for being in person. But it's like I've gotten so much out of my time with my therapist the last couple of years and we don't meet in person, we meet virtually, so you can do it from your couch. It's easier to schedule that way. You're connected to a really large pool of licensed, like vetted professional mental health professionals, and so there's just this like extra level of vetting that you don't have to do. That's already been done for you. Getting connected with a therapist is super easy and it's fast.

And then also, if you don't like a person you're connected with right away, you can switch by like truly clicking a button, and I love that because I think when we finding the help we need is hard, especially when you need help, it's extra hard to try to find help when you need help, and so it's like trying to find a doctor when you're sick. You're like I wish I did this not for you. I did this not when I was sick. But if you are connected with someone that you don't necessarily like, you can switch really easily instead of having to go through the work all over again. And so I think sometimes we stick with a counselor that isn't the best fit for us, because it's easier than switching or it feels easier than switching in the short term. But I love that. With better help you really can make that switch super easily and so you can find the person that's right for you and best for you, and that's where the best therapy happens, I believe.

And then the other thing is that it's significantly less expensive than in person counseling. Better help is cheaper. And they also have financially available which is just awesome and perks of being a podcaster. We have a promo code that you can use. It'll give you 10% off your first month, and so to get all of that information, if you go to StephanieMayWilson.com/counseling, that's where all the information is about better help and, again, faithful counseling is part of better help. They just sort of rolled up under them and you can, on Better Helps website, you can say you know, I really want to meet with a counselor who's a person of faith. Great, that's all available there. But all that information is on a page on my website, [stephanie may wilson.com/counseling](http://stephanie-may-wilson.com/counseling), and on there is a link for 10% off your first month, and I just I wanted to.

I'm so glad that I get to partner with Better Help, and I'm so. I've been doing it for years and I'm so passionate about it because I know how hard it is to get help when you need it, and I just want every single woman to have access to the help that she needs, and this is like just such an easy way to get started, and so, anyway, that's why I just want to make sure that you guys know that it's an option for you, and it's always an option for you, and I'll just share about it as long as I need to, to make sure that every woman has access to the help that she needs. Life is just too hard and too important and too beautiful to try to go through by ourselves. So let's go through it together and let's ask about what we need, especially this year. So that's really just what I wanted to share with you for this first episode of the year, as we're, you know, kicking things off,

getting into a new year, an invitation to start it slowly, to have this be a time of rest, not of becoming a new version of yourself, but then also like a really easy, powerful way that you can take a big step forward in your life, get the help that you need. This year I'm going to, and I hope that you do too. So before we finish up, though, I wanted to take a second to just give you an update about Girls Night Kind of a state of the union, the Girls Night edition, because we are making some really, really exciting changes around here and I've been dying to tell you about them. But I also want to bring you along in the process of what it's looked like and kind of tell you what's happening and why it's happening.

Because so story, the very first podcast I ever listened to. I loved. I felt like I'm the host and I were best friends, and I instantly became best friends with all of her guests. I just loved it and I was so connected to it and I could have recited every word of her intro paragraph. I could have sung the theme song. I was so invested in this show and one day she changed the music for the show. Now, listen, that should be not a big deal at all, but it kind of was. And all of a sudden it was like my home got redecorated without telling me. And listen, she is under no obligation to give me any sort of heads up before she changes music. This is silly, but also it's not. When something that is really familiar and really important to you becomes less familiar, that's jarring, and so I wanted to avoid that.

I wanted to give you guys just kind of the backstory on what I've been thinking, on what we're changing, why we're changing it, why it's so exciting, because I want you guys to be with me every step of the way. If Girls Night feels like home for you, I love that and I want it to stay that way. So here are a few of the things that we are changing this season and why we're changing them. So, backing up a little bit, I think I said at the beginning of the episode that Girls Night has been around for seven years now. That's crazy.

I'm so proud of this show. I love the episodes that we do, I love the guests that we have and the conversations that we get to have, and I feel like that has stayed consistent throughout the seven years, but something wild happened and changed in my life a couple years ago and took a lot of my time and focus and energy and heart, and that was having my kids. My girls were born in 2020. And I mean it's been the biggest transition of my whole life. I've been texting. I just have less time, less space in my brain, less freedom, less ability to record the podcast, a little bit less creativity than I used to, because it's just my heart is needed someplace else in a way that it wasn't before, and so I still love what we've been doing on the podcast.

I love the episodes and the guests and the topics we've had, but I feel like my ability to do those episodes justice is what has taken a hit. There are so many weeks that I put out an episode that I'm so proud of and don't share about it, like I don't send out an email, I don't talk about it on social media, I don't tell anyone that the episode has happened. I've been really consistent in getting the episodes out, but I just don't talk about them and I feel like I've really done the show a disservice in that way, like I've sort of capped out what we've been able to do at Girls Night because I haven't been able to, because, like, it needs more than I can give it, and that's been the case for the last couple of years. And so, in the vein of asking for help, I am so, so, so excited to be teaming up with some people that I just admire like crazy and they are going to

help us with the show. They're going to be on my team, they're going to be in my corner, they are going to do some of the things that I'm not good at, some of the things that I maybe could be good at but totally don't have time for. They're going to come in and fill some of the gaps that I can't fill so that we really can do Girls Night Justice and, like, take it to the level, take it to the next level.

So my giant announcement is that, starting today, I am joining the that Sounds Fun podcast network that was started by Annie F Downs, who we love around here. She's one of the favorite guests that we've had on. But I'm joining just this incredible, incredible lineup of podcasters who are doing beautiful work, putting so much love and wisdom and kindness and goodness into the world through their words. Some of my friends are already on the network and I'm so excited to be joining them. I basically have a giant podcast crush on everyone who's been on the network for years. They just do such beautiful work and the team behind all these podcasts is just absolutely as wonderful as you would think that they are. They just are total gems, every single one of them. They are so good at their jobs they are so they're just industry leaders in podcasting. They're really fun, kind, good people and I just the first couple of times that I met with them, like I left almost in tears because I was so honored to be in their midst. The podcasts that they have on their roster are like big deal podcasts, really amazing.

So just honored to get to be a part of their ranks, but also so relieved that I was about to step into a season where I don't have to do this by myself. I have a great team behind me. At Girls Night we have Daniel, who's my editor, who's amazing, and Kate, who's my producer, and they help me with so much. But like we're a team of three and they're not full time and I have other things that I'm doing as well, and so like there's just only so much we can do, and so I'm just absolutely thrilled to get to partner with that sounds fun and to have their like muscle behind us and them taking over some of the parts of podcasting and advertising and hosting and stats tracking and all kinds of things that I just like, don't have bandwidth for is going to make it so that we're able to do the things that I'm best at and and it's like really our sweet spot we're going to be able to stay in that sweet spot so much more and I'm just so excited about it. So that is my. I told you I have three really big announcements this year. That is number one is that I'm joining. I'm so honored to be joining the that Sounds Fun podcast network and I just that is a huge example of me asking for and getting some much needed help this year, and I just know that we are all going to benefit so much from their presence in our little corner of the Internet and I'm just so honored to get to be part of fairs.

Another thing that's changing a little bit is you might notice that we have a slightly different direction for the show moving forward, or maybe it's. It's not necessarily a different direction. It's more just of a clarified vision and like a narrowing of focus. I've been part of the podcast world for a long time and there's so many amazing shows and there's shows all over the board. There's a podcast about everything. Is that an all state commercial? So is that anyway?

And there are a lot of shows that are kind of in a similar vein to ours a girls night that are, you know, some of them are like here's how to be better at your faith, or a show that's more of a like feels like a girls night, but it's two girls talking about like a variety of subjects and sort of they're

the. The common theme is that you're just listening to these girls talk about current events or you know whatever they're thinking about. And then there are a lot of shows that are sort of function kind of like talk shows, where they're like someone has a new book coming out. They're going to come around and come on our show and tell us about the book and tell us the backstory, and all of those shows are great. But those that's never been my heart for the show, not for girls night. We've never really cleanly fit into any of those categories and I think that's because that's never been what's helped me the most. I'll tell you so much more about this coming up, but more and more these days I am so interested in talking about decisions, in transitions. Now, I have known this all along. I felt it in my bones, but in the last few years I've really fully understood the way and like research behind this.

Statistically, 80% of our life's most defining moments happen between our 25th and 35th birthdays. How crazy is that? I feel like. Again, we feel that in our bones but we don't talk about it like that. We don't. There's not a name for this season of life. There's. You know, you're kind of a post grad or young adult and then you're a grown up and nobody really talks about how you go from one to the other.

The thing that has helped me the most in this season of my life, when so many things are happening, I'm trying to figure out so many things. I'm going from kind of being a young adult, post grad, to being a full grown adult the thing that's helped me the most is girls nights. Girls nights with my friends have carried me through this defining decade-ish in my life and allowing me to tap into the collective wisdom of women through our group, instead of having to figure it out all on my own, has been life changing. But also having the space, a safe space, to be able to process what I'm thinking and feeling and what I want, and being able to talk that out loud, without judgments. And then also having the support I need to take action the action of need it to take to create a life that I'm both proud of and excited to wake up to each day. Really, the game changing thing for me has been girls nights and so moving forward. Really, it may not feel like anything's changing. It's more. For me, it's a clarity of purpose, it's a filter of like this is what we're, this is what our thing is and this is somebody else's thing, and that's great, but really this is what our thing is.

Our focus at Girls Night is going to be the decisions and transitions that we are all trying to make in this time of our lives. That's going to look like being single and navigating relationships, getting engaged, getting married, pursuing a career, figuring out what you want to do with your life, moving to a new city and then, of course, the enormous transition that I've been going through, most recently becoming a mom and we're going to navigate those decisions and transitions together, one girls night at a time, practically. Here's what this is going to look like. So two episodes a month. We're basically going to be doing what we've always done, and the way that I think about this is kind of like a masterclass. We invite I'm inviting on just the smartest women I know and they're going to walk us through one of the things that keeps us up at night. They are women who have gotten, who have been where we are and gotten to where we want to go, and they're going to walk us through how they did that, how we can do that. They're going to share their expertise and their experience with us and it's just going to make our lives so much better. And I know that that's been the story for me, as I've gotten to interview all the

wonderful guests we've had on for the last seven years. But so the upper part is just going to be exactly the same as it's been.

We have some really like just wildly brilliant women coming on this next season and I'm very nervous to interview them and to talk to them because I admire them so much, but I can't wait for you to hear from them. So two episodes a month will essentially have like a masterclass with the smartest women I know, true experts in their field, women who have been where we are and have gotten to where we want to go, and they're going to teach us what they know so that our journey can be easier and so we can get to where we want to go without getting lost quite so many times along the way. Once a month and this we might need to wiggle this a little bit it might be a little less than that, but it might be sometimes more than that we're going to have I want to have a profile of a woman who is living a beautifully unique life, and I want to hear how she's done it. I know that I'm so inspired by hearing other women's stories, and even if their story looks nothing like mine and even if the way that they've built their life looks totally different from what I want for my life, getting to see a woman take paint beautifully outside the lines in her own life inspires me to do the same, and so that's what we're going to do, hopefully once a month is just bring on a woman who is doing things differently and in a way that's all her own, so that we can hear from her and so we can know. It's hard to be something that you've never seen, and so when we can see more, I think we can be more, and so that's what that. That's what those episodes are going to be about.

And then, once a month, we're going to do this a solo podcast, a girls night, just me and you, and in these episodes I'm laughing because these ones are hard for me. I said this at the beginning, before before we really started recording, but I told my editor who's who's going to be hopefully making this better. It is hard to just be a person on camera, so that's what I'm trying to do. That's what I'm trying to do here is just meet you for coffee, but it is hard. It's hard to just be a person and just be yourself with a camera in your face. So I'm working on it. Hopefully, I'll get significantly better the more I do this, but I really want to do this.

We're going to have a solo podcast, a girls night, a beauty date, basically just me and you, and during that, you know, once a month, I'm going to share with you something that I'm doing or something that I've done, or the back story of a decision that I've made along the way in an effort to create a life that I really love, a life I'm excited about and proud of, a life that looks like me. Like I said, this kind of episode makes me nervous. I feel like I want to get my words out just perfectly, and so I'm tempted to not do them, because it is easier for me to talk to a guest, to interview someone else, to hear their story, than to just like extemporaneously share my own. But I really want to do these episodes once a month because I have some major, major life transitions coming up. I've made some really big decisions lately and I have more that are going to be happening in the next few months, and I am so excited about them and they've been so wild and so big and so crazy and hard and confusing and liberating. I want you guys to come with me on the journey that I'm on, and so that's what these solo episodes are going to be about is updates about what's happening as we're making these decisions and transitions, and then also kind of diving into some of the decisions that I've made, or Carl and I've made, in the past in order to make our lives look like we want them to in order to build lives that we love. So just a

few other things to look out for this new season. At the end of each episode, I want to do a segment called asking for a friend, and this is going to be just a time for me to get to answer the reader and listener questions that I get all the time, that I don't really have a good venue for, and so that's going to be coming up. We'll do it just a really quick Q&A at the end of each episode and I'll let you know how to submit questions for that soon.

Another thing is that we do have new music, and I know it's kind of disorienting when you're like this is not what my show sounds like, but I'm so excited about this music. It was composed by one of my very best friends, amanda Wallace, and her new husband, erin Beaumont. They are musical geniuses. They are truly incredible. I asked for their help, thinking like there's no way, like they're dear friends of mine, but thinking like there's no way they have time for me because they're doing this for just incredible people, and they said yes, and they've been so patient and so kind and like really worked with me to try to capture the vision of what a girl's night sounds like, and so I just am like beyond honored to have their masterpiece kicking off our show each week. So our brand new music is by my best friend, amanda Wallace, and her amazing husband, erin Beaumont. So that's where our new music came from. So I know it's a little weird to be like this doesn't sound like home, but I know that. I just think that this music is going to represent so much better and will just be a really good background.

Okay, last announcement you guys know that for years we've had in my shop our girls night sweatshirts. They say my favorite night is girls night. On them they're super cozy, like you will want to wear nothing else once you get one of these sweatshirts, and I've loved having them. But as I talked about a little bit, a little bit before the holidays, I've had just this vision of like taking that idea to the next level, and so I've officially done it, I've officially gone for it. You can find them in our brand new girls night gift shop. The website is girlsnightgiftshop.com, and in this brand new shop you will find beautiful best friend gifts and matching best friend shirts for your next girls night, girls weekend, girls trip or holiday gathering. They are perfect for taking fun photos when you're together and to be reminded of each other when you're apart. They're like a friendship bracelet, but way cozier. So if you're looking for any of our girls night gear, or if you're looking for matching anything for you and your friends or gifts for your girlfriends really thoughtful, beautiful gifts go to girlsnightgiftshop.com and just keep that in the back of your head girlsnightgiftshop.com. Okay, that's it. You guys.

I love this show. I love this show so much and I'm so excited for where we're going to get to take it this year. I really do feel like I have had just enough time and energy to be able to get episodes out, but not any time or energy to do anything more than that, and that's why I'm so excited for a new year. I'm so excited for the team that I get to join and that sounds fun, and I just feel like we are going to get to do so much good with our girls nights Gather more women, give them more support, give them more encouragement and ideas and tap into more expertise from some incredible women who just are leading the way in a bunch of ways that we could really use some guidance and I just am so excited to do it together.

So make sure you're subscribed. If you're not subscribed to the show yet, make sure you are. We're available anywhere you get your shows. If you haven't left a review, or if you haven't left a

review lately, it would mean so much to me if you would. It just helps out the show so much. It helps new people find girls night and just know what we're about here. I believe you can do a review more than once. So even if you've already left a review, you can do one again, and it would just mean the world to me if you would.

When you're listening to an episode, make sure you take a screenshot of it and share it on Instagram. Tag me. I'm at SMA Wilson. We always, always reshare when people tag us in screenshots. So that's fun. We'd love to see what you're doing, where you are when you're listening. And then, last but not least, if you're listening to an episode that you know would be helpful for someone in your life a friend, a cousin, whoever text the show to them, share it with them. That's how I found my very favorite podcast is through the recommendation of a friend, and I just would be so honored to get to be part of your text thread, to get to be a recommendation for your friends. I'm so grateful for where we've been, I'm so excited about where we're going and I'm so, so happy that we could do this all together.