



TRANSCRIPT

Episode 1: Our Story And How We Got Here

LAURA AND TASHA *from* GET ORGANIZED HQ

Tasha: Welcome to the very first episode of the Get Organized HQ podcast. Laura and I wanted to sit down today and tell you some of the story of how we got here. So, Laura, where did all of this begin?

THE VERY BEGINNING

Laura: Wow, okay, that's a big question. Really, it all began before it really began! Because the whole idea behind Get Organized HQ has always been to help us create homes that are havens. And that origin really started long before GOHQ actually started, many years ago in 2012, when I decided that I should create - at the time, it was blogging. Now things have changed a lot, and blogs are not exactly what they once were, but that's when Get Organized HQ was really born.

BEFORE THE BEGINNING (WHO IS LAURA?)

Tasha: So what did you do before Get Organized HQ, for anyone who doesn't know. I know the answer, but . . .

Laura: What I was doing before I started this business is I was working as an electrical engineer at a company that designed nuclear power plants. So really, I went from designing nuclear power plants to designing planners, and I couldn't be happier.

NUCLEAR POWER AND . . . PLANNERS?

Tasha: That's awesome. So, what's the connection from nuclear power plant? Are they just totally separate? Do you feel like your personality is, somehow, related to the electrical engineering side of you and the home side of you?

Laura: Well, the connection is not super apparent, but I actually think there is a bit of connections. And one of the things, when I was working on designing these nuclear power plants . . . designing a nuclear power plant is this huge, massive undertaking that involves hundreds of thousands, maybe, of engineers and people and many, many years to take from concept to actually having the plant running and producing electricity. And I personally never set foot in an actual nuclear power plant. You know, as an institute.

Tasha: You were designing them but never went in one?

Laura: Correct. There's not that many nuclear power plants, you know, in the world. And so many engineers - I mean, some of the people I worked with had been on site - but many had not been on site. I was actually working on the instrumentation and control system team, and there was a mockup of, not even the one that we were designing, of an old version that I went and saw one time. It was literally a mockup of the control room, kind of a simulation.

SEEING THE IMMEDIATE EFFECT

So the thing is, while I knew that creating clean energy is a good thing to do, and there are tons of people that benefited from our work of having this energy available, I never really got to see it. I didn't get to go to somebody's home and be like, oh, that was because I worked so hard.

And things just took so long. There was so much regulation - as there should be, you know, around nuclear power and things like that - that everything felt like it was moving really slow. And one of the things that I love about what I do now is that we can take something from concept to actually having it in our customers' hands and it makes a difference in their lives right away. And I just love that.

I know because somebody bought Declutter University, and they just organized their bathroom where they get ready every day, and it made a big difference. I just love being able to see that tangible end result and it feels so much more exciting to me and it lights me up so much more to be able to see that end result. So I think that's kind of what I was craving then.

ANALYTICAL THOUGHT

But I will also say that there's a lot of organization and kind of analytical thought that goes into being an engineer. And I think that's part of what drew me to engineering in the first place, is that I love those spreadsheets and the planning and the analytical thought. And I think that can actually be brought to home organization as well, or life organization.

So that's part of it. And I just love learning. The idea of learning and exploring new concepts is something that really applies to anything, this

included.

THE DESIRE FOR HOME

Tasha: So when did you realize that you were really interested in home, and optimizing your home, making your home a place you wanted to be? Where did that desire come from for you?

Laura: So for me, one thing that actually surprises people when I tell them this today (now it won't surprise you), is that when growing up I was incredibly, painfully shy. I literally think I am the shyest person that I had ever met.

Nothing negative happened to me in my life, the rest of my immediate family and the rest of my family were not particularly shy. I was just afraid of the world. And I thought I was an introvert. Turns out I'm more kind of in the middle. I actually love people and being around people. I get energized both, you know, working on projects by myself and with people.

But I was just so afraid of the world. I was so shy I ate lunch every single day of seventh grade by myself, because I was too shy to go up to someone and be like, hey, can I sit with you? You know, it was just that kind of painful, shy awkwardness.

A HAVEN

And the world was and kind of still is a big scary place. And the one place that I felt like myself, that I didn't have to be so worried and so self-conscious and so shy was home. My home was a true haven from the world and was where I felt comfortable.

And I think that's why being shy didn't really, I don't know, if ruin my life is the right word,

Laura and Tasha

but it didn't really affect me as profoundly as it could because I had that home.

And I mean, it's about . . . It's not just about having order and organization, although that is something that really helped. It's also about having people who love you around you, and accept you, and all of those things. But I just think that that's where my heart for home and being home and having that haven from the outside world came from. That was just the place that I love to be, that I felt like myself.

And that's what I wanted for myself and for everyone else as I got older and then had my own home. That's the kind of place that I wanted. And so this love of organization really came from a love of creating a home that's a haven.

BEING YOURSELF

Tasha: Yeah, absolutely. I think a lot of people resonate with just wanting a home where you can just take that deep breath, shed your coat, leave your shoes at the door, be yourself. And it's not a place where you have to be stressed.

I mean, even in a really healthy work or social environment, there's just always a little bit more of, I don't always put my feet up on the coffee table. Even at my good friend's house, it's just not what you do, even if they wouldn't hate you for it. And just wanting that place where you can truly relax and not be thinking, is this socially acceptable, is this okay, type thing?

MANAGING THAT HOME

Laura: And I really think that when my home is a whole big mess, it's harder to relax and feel that. Because instead of feeling like this deep breath of fresh air, I feel like, oh, all these things

I need to do. And even just logistics of not being able to find something, it can cause a lot of frustration.

And that's something that I think as a child I kind of took for granted that my parents took care of managing the home. And it's not something that - they sometimes make it look easy - but it's not always as easy as it sounds.

So I wanted to bring that and talk about, how can we actually do that in a way that's not adding stress to our lives and things like that.

NOT AN ORGANIZED PERSON?

Tasha: Yes. And I feel like that ties in with the fact that sometimes you hear from people. Maybe it's people who are Get Organized HQ followers or maybe even people listening. You've talked to people or said this yourself. That I'm not an organized person. That is something I hear often. And I think we think that an organized person is someone who loves organizing.

Like, both of us right now. I know a lot are listening on podcasts, but if you're watching, we've got our organized shelves with the labels behind us. They're all nice and orderly. And I would say both you and I get some joy out of a project like that, taking it from start to finish.

And I think that what you are sharing is really the heart behind it. And that is the reason why you can be an organized person and not have shelves that look anything like the ones behind us. Because the goal is not to relish in the process of organizing. It is to have a home that is serving you and serving the people in it.

And I almost think even when you're talking about organization, it can get flipped. And we

Laura and Tasha

think that we are the servant of organization and we are the servant of cleaning and all of those things.

WHAT ORGANIZED MEANS

Laura: Yeah, I think that is so true. And I say this a lot. It can look so different for other people. And to be organized, everything just needs to have a home, and you need to know where that is.

So if you have bins like I have behind me with nice labels, that's great. That's organized. If you don't have any labels, that's organized. If you just had stuff sitting on the shelf, it wouldn't have the same Pinterest-y look, but it would still be organized.

And I think that's just a really important thing to keep in mind. And about people who say I'm not organized, here's what's so funny. I think, because people who meet me now (this wouldn't have been true, you know, years ago) know that I run a business called Get Organized HQ. So they probably assume that I'm organized. And that's only half the truth, as you know, Tasha.

ORGANIZING VS. DAY TO DAY

But our listeners may not know. I love organizing projects. So I love organizing things. What I am not so naturally gifted at is the process of tidying up every day and keeping up with it every day. That, to me, just feels mundane and tedious and I would much rather, just give me a closet to organize than be, oh yeah, keep this tidy.

And did you know that you need to clean your house every day if you want to have a clean house? Like wow. That kind of thing. And that

does not come naturally. And if you were to just stop by my house on any random day, sometimes it's clean and sometimes it's not. And I've shared that on Instagram and social media that it looks, sometimes it looks kind of ideal and sometimes it looks more lived in and that's just part of it.

But because we don't have a ton of clutter, because everything does have a home, we're able to live within what works for us, whereas that might not work for someone else. Even for you, you'd probably be stressed out if you were in my home and vice versa.

GOHQ HISTORY

Tasha: So can you walk us through a brief history? And some of this may just be fun trivia, like get Organized HQ wasn't always Get Organized HQ, actually. Can you just kind of give us the highlights of where this started and how we got here?

SUPER SWEET LIFE

Laura: Oh my goodness. Okay. So this started when I first started the blog. It's had several names, but I think the one, the first one was Super Sweet Life. I don't know if anybody remembers those days.

The logo, I had somebody on Etsy design it. It was this watercolor flower and it was kind of blue. It was beautiful. I didn't really have anything to do with organizing, but it was a beautiful logo and it was called Super Sweet Life. And I think the idea was just a sweet life.

And that was kind of the idea behind it. And when I very first started the blog, I just thought I was going to be one of those bloggers who blogged about all sorts of things. So I would do

some recipes and I would do some this or some that. And it quickly became clear to me that if you want to have an online kind of business, one of the things you're going to have to do is talk about the same thing a lot.

NARROWING THE FOCUS

And organizing and creating a stress free home was something that you don't even actually have to be super naturally good at it. You just have to love it enough to be able to talk about it all the time. And that was the thing that I was like, yes, I love this enough. And it just became really natural. And then when I would put out content, that's what people would resonate with. And so it was only a few months before I'd honed in on, we're going to do the organization side of things.

TAKING OFF WITH PRINTABLES

The next thing I should mention is that I think it was 2013 that a blogger, I believe she was called, she's still The Nester. She had this 31 Days in October thing. And this was back when, some of you may remember this, but if you're young, you're probably like, Laura, what are you talking about? They were called linky parties. And so blogs would host these parties where you could link up your own post. So a lot of times they would do a craft project of the week or a meal planning was a big one, like a meal planning Monday.

And this one was, you're going to do something every day for 31 days. I think a lot of people started. If you're going to write a book, you need to work on it every day for 31 days. But it could be anything that you wanted to do. It could be I'm going to run, I'm going to get outside, I'm going to do all manner of things.

And what I picked was that I was going to create a new printable every day for 31 days. And people could even request them. I loved making printables for people. So that really took off. People resonate with that. I did it for about three, I think, three years in a row. One year I had like 3,000 requests. I mean, there was no way. We could only do 31, but I had a whole bunch of requests and we would make a new one every day. So printables are kind of what put me on the map.

Tasha: That kind of tells you which decade this all started.

Laura: Yes. They're not what they once were, but they were more unique then. Just home management printables. That's kind of where the engineering brain comes in a little bit, is figuring out how to display information in a concise way. So that's kind of where that all happened.

NOT A CUPCAKE BLOG

And then, let's see. I don't remember the exact timeline, but Super Sweet Life was kind of vague and I kind of felt like it could be a food blog about sweets. It felt food blog, cupcakes or something. And so I was, well, let's change our name and make it more clear what we're about now.

At the time - this is also going to date me and this business - planning was a huge hobby. It was kind of overtaking scrapbooking in probably 2014ish, 2015. Pinterest was really coming on the scene then, and planning as an actual hobby was taking over the Internet. And I love planners and planning, and I'm a person who would rather spend all their time planning than actually executing the plan, so I'm like, let's make this cool planner.

Laura and Tasha

I HEART PLANNERS

So I got all into planners and I just rebranded to I Heart Planners. Now that was probably a little bit short sighted even then, because that wasn't even the main thing we talked about, was an actual planner. Now we do have a planner even today that we sell. And I love planners, whatever.

But they . . . It wasn't what we were all about. We were all about all sorts of things. So I think that kind of misled people, but I know a lot of people I talked to remember those days.

And I think that was a purple banner. Do you remember that one?

Tasha: Oh, it was multicolored. Remember we had the offset black over the word heart and it was all these . . .

Laura: Oh, yeah. The first iteration was a purple with white. And then the second iteration when you started working for me was a really colorful, multicolored, offset black text. And that was the I Heart planners that most of you, if you remember that era, probably remember that.

Tasha: It's getting further and further away though.

Laura: I know, but I'm surprised at how many people will be like, I remember that. I'm like, really? I mean, Pinterest put us on the map even then.

Tasha: I want to go get on Pinterest and search for I Heart Planners and see what comes up.

Laura: You absolutely can. They're still circulating out there. If you want to see our old design, our old logo, it'll still take you to the

right place if you click on them, I think. Yeah.

So that was kind of that whole era. And let's see, when did you join? Was it 20 . . . ?

Tasha: October of 2018.

BECOMING GET ORGANIZED HQ

Laura: Okay, so you joined into October 2018. That was when we were I Heart planners. And we rebranded in 2020. Was it 20 or 21?

Tasha: I think it was 21. You are testing my memory.

Laura: Yeah, it was 21. We Rebranded in the summer of 21 to Get Organized HQ. And that is where I think we'll be.

Tasha: Here we stand.

Laura: This is where we will stand for a very long time. Because we needed something that encompassed what we were really more all about. Because it wasn't just all about planners.

And so get Organized HQ feels like home to me. It feels like that's what we really should have been all along. But of course, I didn't know that when I started.

And you were very involved in that process when we did that. So we are now Get Organized HQ.

WHO IS TASHA?

Tasha: So for those who are wondering, where did this Tasha girl come from and why is she interviewing Laura on a Get Organized HQ podcast? We have shared this a couple of places before, but I am actually Laura's cousin.

Laura: That's true. A lot of people don't know that. Yes.

Tasha: So all of the references when Laura's like, oh, well, Tasha knows this. Well, yes, I did know she was shy because I was her cousin. But I am actually her 14 year younger cousin. So we did not exactly grow up together, I would not say

Laura: No. When you have that kind of an age difference, even if your family is close, it's not like you really grew up together. Before I hired her, we hadn't really . . . I mean, I think we said hi and greeted each other politely.

Tasha: But we had a wedding.

Laura: Oh, yes, I do remember that.

Tasha: There's a picture of you holding me as an infant.

Laura: Oh, I know. I love that picture. I was literally holding her when she was a few months old. I was 13 or I guess I was 14, you said. Yeah, so we didn't really know each other very well before I hired her.

FUTURE ASTRONAUT?

Tasha: Not at all. And I was trying to figure out what in the world I wanted to do with my life. So I think I've also shared this a couple places, I was going to work for NASA. It is interesting that we were both going to be engineers. You actually succeeded at that. I never went the full on engineering route.

Laura: You didn't go quite so far. But yes. That's interesting.

Tasha: Yes. I took all the math classes that

my high school offered. I was going to work for NASA. I just loved astronauts. That's what I loved. And I wanted to work in Mission Control. Like the fancy room where they talk to the people on the International Space Station. This is what I was going to do.

CALCULUS THWARTS THINGS

And I cried my way through Calculus 2, which I have been told is the hardest. I've been told it actually gets better after Calc 2.

Laura: No, linear algebra is much worse. It sounds easier, but it's actually harder.

Tasha: Okay, well, maybe it's good I stopped,

Laura: So maybe it's good you stopped.

Tasha: I mean, I made it. I passed all of that.

Laura: You just didn't like it.

Tasha: I think I even got an A. That was thanks to the student assistant of that class who walked me through my homework, every night. So I was like, okay, I don't actually know that I want to do that. Also, it was really easy in high school to say I wanted to work for NASA. I mean, I'm a girl from Indiana, okay? And I was in high school, and the whole world is ahead of you, and you can say whatever you want.

REALITY SETS IN

When I was in college and actually happened to be . . . it's literally put your money where your mouth is, right? It was, if I do this, I am locking myself into living in Florida, Texas, or California. That's pretty much, maybe Huntsville, Alabama, maybe Virginia. But, I wanted Mission Control. It was Houston or nothing. And it was hard. And

I was a little hesitant to make that jump and just be, yes, I'm locking myself in, this is what we're doing.

And I had no idea what I wanted to do. I mean, physical therapy was on my mind. Teaching high school calculus was on my mind.

Laura: I thought you didn't like calculus.

Tasha: I really wanted to sit there and solve math problems, and [have] that somehow result in people going to the moon, which is not what engineering is.

But I thought about being an actuary, and I had a friend laugh in my face.

Laura: That was near the top of my own list, actuarial science.

Tasha: And so, the funny thing is, I sound like a total nerd, which is fine.

Laura: I'm a total nerd. You don't come across as one.

Tasha: I am not. I'm not. I'm not at all nerd at all. Yeah, no, I'm very glad that my path did not go that way, because I do not think it actually fit my personality. I just had this weird passion about, honestly, more the history of spaceflight is what fascinated me. And I finally just ended up in this spot where I did not want to put money into school if I didn't know what I was doing.

MARKETING PEOPLE HAVE MORE FUN

So I dropped out. I graduated eighth in my high school class of probably 500. And I dropped out of college because I didn't know what I wanted to do. I was only taking a couple classes at a

community college. I ended up moving in the middle of that semester unexpectedly. And I just quit those classes, and I went and got a job as a bank teller and I worked there for a year.

And I was like, y'all, the marketing people are having way more fun than me. They are over there at their headquarters. I think they got all sorts of free snacks, too. We didn't get free snacks at the branches. So I was like, I'm going to school for marketing. This is what I'm doing. It sounds way more fun, sounded way more like my personality.

RECONNECTING

So, I was enrolled, ready to go. And then along comes my cousin Laura on my Facebook, and she was looking for someone to help with I Heart Planners. And I was like, oh, excellent. Actually, here's what I did. I asked my mom if I should call my cousin Laura, because I didn't know Laura that well. I'm sure I had to ask for your phone number. There's no way I had it.

Laura: Yeah, I mean, like I said, there was huge age difference, so.

Tasha: Exactly. So I called her and I was like, hey, can I have some contracting work maybe? You know, it'd be great to build a resume. Maybe I could do some side projects.

A SURPRISE DIRECTION

And you told me you were going to think about it and you'd call me back. And you called me back that night. I remember I was at my sister's house and you called me back and you were like, I'll hire you 40 hours a week.

And I was like, that . . . that's not what I asked for at all. It was one of those, where it was like,

that's a really awesome offer, but I'm going to school. I was 20. It was, what are you talking about? When I dropped out of college, as I say, I never intended to not go back. It wasn't like I thought I was done. I just didn't want to put money into something I didn't know what I was doing. And I needed a year to kind of get my head on straight and figure out, where are we actually going.

But all of that to say I was like, well, we'll try it. It was October. I was supposed to start in the January semester. And it was the week of orientation that I finally decided, okay, I'll give this a go. I won't go back to school right now, and I'll keep doing this.

A PAST FASCINATION

And so that is kind of how we ended up here. And really, when I think about it, first of all, it's funny you talk about how much Pinterest impacted the beginning of I Heart Planners and Super Sweet Life. Because if you ask my mom, my only hobby in high school was scrolling Pinterest.

Laura: Huh. Is that a fact?

Tasha: Yeah, I didn't have hobbies. I scrolled on Pinterest, which sounds really kind of sad. It was.

Laura: I think it was before there was so much social media, like Instagram and TikTok and things like that. So I guess that's what you did.

Tasha: I mean, Facebook was around, and Pinterest was a little bit different. And it was all these people that you followed, and you'd pin all these craft projects and, I mean, I think the printables and stuff, too.

NOT A REAL JOB?

I think I've told you this before. You'll have to tell me if you remember this, Laura. I was probably in high school, and I knew you had a blog, and I was interested in that world. It wasn't something I ever would have said I wanted to do, because I didn't know. It wasn't something, especially at the time that you would say as a career. If I'd gone to school and been like, I'm gonna grow up and be a blogger, they would be like, that's not a real job. You can't do that.

But I remember getting on your website and I really wanted to get one of your free printables, but I didn't really know how this worked. And I was like, she's gonna notice if I put my name and email address into her website. And that might be really awkward that I'm getting her thing for free and I didn't get your free printable. I wanted to get it, and I was too embarrassed.

Laura: Oh, dear.

THE PINTEREST IDEA

Tasha: And so it's just interesting how it all kind of comes together because I was super interested in the Pinterest perfect idea, right? Of something looking really nice.

I loved the funny quotes. Let's be real. I'm still on Pinterest for all of the memes and funny quotes that are on there. But that was something really intriguing to me. Then it kind of morphed into becoming a part of a space that educates along those lines, how to have the home you want.

And the funny thing is, sometimes it doesn't look like Pinterest. And I'll be honest, for me,

Laura and Tasha

that is hard. I still want it to. I can sit here all day and say, it doesn't have to look like Pinterest. And in the back of my mind, I'm like, but I'd be happier if it did. So that's kind of how we ended up here.

IMMERSED IN DECLUTTERING

And Laura and I were actually even talking before this, about how, for me, I think I have an interesting story of I was kind of immersed in a world of decluttering and organizing and planning and time management starting at age 20. That's all that we really talked about.

I guess 21. Now, I don't remember. Is this a sign of getting old when you don't know how old you were when things happened?

Laura: It's definitely a sign of getting old when you can't remember how old you were.

Tasha: I think I was 21 in 2018. Yeah, I was 21. But when I was 21, I mean, I wasn't married. I hadn't even met my husband whenever I started working for you. I lived by . . . I think I had a roommate at that time. I lived by myself for a little while. And just for forever, I mean, decluttering is drilled into my brain. You can't work on some of this stuff and be around some of it without being declutter, declutter, declutter.

PASSING ON THE SKILL

And there's nothing more motivating to declutter than constantly hearing people tell you how magical it is to declutter. So I think from day one, I kind of started off with, I'm not going to have a ton of extra stuff. I'm going to get rid of things. I'm not going to have the same accumulation of things. And it's a blessing and a skill that I learned almost

unintentionally. That now we kind of pass on to the world.

Laura: Yeah. And I think the earlier you start with decluttering and focusing on that . . . I mean, it's never, ever too late. It's always the right time, but the earlier you start, the more you're going to get to enjoy the benefits of it. And I think, yeah, that's a gift to start thinking about those things. I really think it's something that I think about teaching my kids as well, that a lot of times I think we just overlook some of the basic life skills.

And it's something that I think is important to kind of think about all throughout life.

LESS STUFF MAKES TIDY EASIER

Tasha: And it has made, being decluttered has made it easier to keep my home tidier. And that is the biggest thing I've noticed. I know even a couple of years ago, everything felt stressful. We were just going through a ton of different transitions. It was one of those years where it was, can anything go right? Apparently not. Everything's just going to kind of divert and be difficult.

And what I found is that I wanted my home to be clean. I wanted the dishes done. I would scrub my oven. I was like, well, I know I'm stressed, I'm sitting here scrubbing my oven.

Having less stuff makes it easier to get your home to a reset state, to get your home to a space where you can, like we were talking about, take that deep breath and be okay with where you are.

And I think you have to balance that with not being a perfectionist. Because I think that can also come to a place of, well, I can never

Laura and Tasha

relax because my home is never perfect. But realizing that there's kind of a happy medium. There is getting your home to a place where, yes, this is good enough. And good enough doesn't mean bad. It literally means good enough.

Laura: Yes.

Tasha: I think that is just important to keep in mind.

THAT FATEFUL DAY

But that's how we got here. I don't know. Do you have any different recollection of how we came to be working on this together?

Laura: No, that's pretty much what I recall.

Tasha: What were your thoughts when I called you that fateful day? I wish I knew what day of the week it was. It would be really dramatic to be like, "that fateful Tuesday" when I called you. But I have no idea.

Laura: Probably in our phone records, still.

Tasha: It is probably there because I do not declutter my phone records. There is a thing I should probably declutter. Yes. And my text messages. I have a thing about not decluttering text messages. I'm so scared to declutter the wrong text message.

Laura: Yeah. Interesting. I don't know what fateful day of the week it is, but, yeah, I do remember. I hadn't thought of you particularly.

Tasha: Well, of course not, we didn't know each other that well.

Laura: But when you called and were like, you

know, I might be interested, I kind of thought about it, and I was like, actually, I think you'd be pretty good at this. Let's give it a try. And, yeah, you were great from day one. And now it's been . . . I mean, it's hard to believe it's been six years.

TRANSITIONING TO THE WORK WORLD

Tasha: I guess it worked out. I guess it was okay I didn't go to college. Can I admit that every year of those six years, it's been in the back of my head, but I didn't go to college. I don't know if you knew I struggled that first bit. All my friends were still in college and for me, the fresh start of a new school year . . . I love new school supplies and fresh notebooks and the aspirations of taking beautiful notes. I probably didn't actually do it by week two, but that first couple of years all my friends were still in school.

And we talked about this because I remember I was like, could you grade my blog post I'm writing for you? Because I loved the affirmation of getting a good grade on something. It told me I did it well. And I don't know, maybe that just shows that I'm young or something. But that was a rough transition to a workplace where there are no grades and there's no report cards and there's no degree and it's just keep doing the same thing.

DIFFERENT STRUCTURES

Laura: Well, I will say, you know, I did go to college. I got my bachelor's degree in engineering. And it was a tough transition. Because in school, so you're in school from kindergarten, then you know, you graduate 12th grade and then if you go right into college, like I didn't, I was in college for five years because I had a co-op in there to get some work

Laura and Tasha

experience.

So it's very different. The first thing that's really radically different is that college has these very built in boundaries. You're going for a semester, it is 16 weeks and then you get a good long solid break. I mean even Christmas break is three or four weeks and then you go another 16 weeks and then you get another 12 to 16 weeks off. So everything is just so structured and you have a break and you have a grade and you have a goal.

CANDY ON FRIDAYS!

Then once I started working, I was like, this is what I'm going to do for the rest of my life. I just keep going into work and I maybe, I mean it depends on what job you have. A lot of times you have one to two or three weeks off, you know, a vacation. And I don't get these long breaks and nobody gives me a grade. I got . . . there's not even candy on Fridays.

Tasha: Exactly. We should establish that. Laura. We are running, this is our business. We can have candy Fridays if we want them.

Laura: We should do that. Let's, let's institute that.

But yeah, I think that's a tough, a tough transition. And also one of the reasons why I love working from home is it's not quite as structured. And also in this particular role, no two days are quite exactly alike. So you don't have the monotony of, I'm doing the same thing all the time.

I mean, part of that just depends on your personality and what kind of thing you like. But I totally think that that is something that I think is a struggle for a lot of people.

COLLEGE OR NOT?

And I also think that college is way overrated. It just really is. I don't know. I mean, that's just my personal opinion. I mean, if my kids want to go to college, that's great. And there's some things for which you do need a degree. I couldn't have gone and been an engineer without a degree. Although the degree is just your ticket in the door. They didn't teach me anything I needed to know for my actual job.

So, yes, for some things, you absolutely need a formal education, but there's a lot of things for which you do not need a formal education, and that's totally fine. And you are better off for not having . . . You know, instead of paying to learn all these things, you got paid to learn all these things. Once you get to the real world for certain things, actual experience is more valuable than your paper degrees. So, yeah, I think it's just a thing.

DIFFERENT NEEDS

Tasha: This all kind of comes full circle. We help people declutter and organize their houses and how they do that, it varies. Everyone's house is different. Everyone's needs are different. I mean, people talk a lot about stuff, maybe for their children or for their grandchildren. Or maybe you have stuff in your house because you're caring for an aging parent.

Everyone's life circumstances different. Everyone's season of life is different. The stuff I need in my house right now is very different than the stuff Laura needs in her house right now. I don't have children right now. I don't need the kids' stuff in my house. I mean, I need a little bit for when my nieces and nephews come, but if I ever have children, that will

drastically shift.

WEDDINGS AND DONUT BOARDS

And there are so many ways that comparison is dangerous. I mean, the whole Pinterest perfect idea, I love the idea of it. I love pinning all these things.

I got made fun of when I did get married. My parents would joke, Tasha, you have to get off Pinterest. We can't go on Pinterest anymore. Because every time I go on Pinterest, it was Dad, can you build me a donut wall? That'd be great, please. And he did. He did. I mean, I guess maybe board is a better word, but huge wooden boards with these pegs sticking off of them and they had vinyl on them that said "Donut you know I love you." And we hung donuts on the donut board so people could come by and get them. Which, by the way, I don't think I ever got to get a donut off my own donut board!

Laura: Well, I'm going to buy you a donut.

Tasha: Can we fix weddings? Like, you planned all these things that you love, and then you're so busy because you're the one getting married that you don't get to do any of the things that you love.

Laura: That's so true. Weddings are an interesting thing.

COMPARISON DANGER

Tasha: Yes. But anyway, all of that diversion to say, the whole Pinterest, perfect idea. It's not bad. I'm here for it. I'm still on Pinterest. I still scroll Pinterest. But not letting that comparison, whether it be I didn't go to school and Laura did, or I don't have super labeled

organized cutesy bins in my house and my neighbor does, or whatever it is. It's finding what works for you and your home and the people in your life and what is going to give you less stress and more peace.

And I think it is training ourselves to not call being different from someone else stress. That is just part of life. We're going to be different than people. That's not the kind of stress that we're avoiding. Because if we're chasing peace by being the same as everyone around us, we're never going to know what we need to be like tomorrow.

AN ELDER WHAT?

Laura: Yeah. And on the idea of comparison, being, I think technically I'm an elder millennial . . .

Tasha: You're an elder millennial? Wow.

Laura: Yeah. That's a term that people use so, on the older side of millennials. But, I grew up without social media, without smartphones, without the Internet. And you. By the time you were growing up, there was the Internet. And smartphones and all of this. So just . . .

Tasha: I wanted a Facebook account before I could. I remember being so mad. You had to be 13.

Laura: Facebook was, I think born, was it the year I started or graduated? When I was in college was when Facebook, and it was only available to college students at the time.

Tasha: Are you serious?

Laura: Yes. And Purdue was one. I remember when Purdue was one of the colleges . . .

Tasha: Did you have a MySpace account?

Laura: No, I never had one.

PROS AND CONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

So yeah, so it's very different. And one of the things I think about social media is it's a pro and a con. I have so many resources at my fingertips which are amazing and wonderful, but also at the same time, I'm aware of 52 million things that I won't have, can't have, won't do, can't do. And that makes it harder.

And I mean, recently for me personally, I realized . . . We had these plans to remodel our kitchen and honestly, there is nothing wrong with our kitchen. I mean, there was a couple things that I didn't love. There's a couple broken appliances which I did replace. So now they work. So yay.

And I realized that if I did not have social media, I . . . All that's wrong with them is they're a little bit dated. The house was built 20ish years ago, so it looks 20 years old. But if live in the middle of cornfields in Indiana, I'm only in a few people's houses and most of those are just as dated as mine or more.

So if I didn't have online to look at, maybe there'd be magazines back in the day, but I never really looked at those. I would have no idea that my house was dated. But then I'm looking at all these houses and they have these light, bright white everything. And I'm like, well, that's super modern, I guess. Then I realized, no, honestly, that's not what I want. I'm very happy. Yeah, it looks maybe not as super modern.

ONLINE SHARING

But also being someone who shares online, I think I wanted to be an influencer who's sharing the coolest, greatest, greatest modern things.

Then I realized, nope, I'm just going to share what it's really like. Once I accepted that, I have been so happy. I love this kitchen. It's great. And it doesn't need to always . . . because what are we going to do? Remodel our kitchen every eight years when the trends change? That's not really enough.

Just one small example. I mean, even the bins behind me, I think they're more dated now than they were when I first got them because things change so fast. I'm like, no, I actually really like these and I'm going to keep these until I stop liking them.

So I think there's just something to be said for using it as the tool that it's supposed to be and not feeling like it needs to be like everybody else's or looking a certain way.

I think also because we all have phones in our pocket that we can put stuff out on social media, it makes us feel more worried about what we're putting out there. Is everyone going to think that this is the latest greatest? And realizing that, yeah, it doesn't matter. Honestly, I feel most comfortable in real homes than in ones that look super fancy.

Not to say that you can't feel comfortable there too, but it feels like home.

UPCOMING INTERVIEWS

Tasha: Yeah, absolutely. And coming up in some of the episodes that will be airing on this podcast, I'm sitting down with a variety

Laura and Tasha

of people who, I don't know if you'd call them content creators or influencers or bloggers or whatever the proper word is. That changes every eight years or less too

Laura: Yes, so true.

Tasha: But I'll be sitting down with some of them and just chatting about what they're actual day looks like, what is actually working, what is not. I ask people flat out, what are you not good at? I mean, I try to not say it like that, but that is what I'm asking them, right? What parts of your home are a struggle?

SHARING THE GOOD

Because nobody is killing it at everything all the time. They just aren't. And I don't blame anyone for not going onto social media and telling the world what they're not good at. I mean, what good would it be for me to start posting regularly about swimming? I'm terrible at it. I might be able to save my life. But unless you want to laugh at me, which might be kind of entertaining for a little while, it would be of no benefit to anyone for me to start posting swimming tutorials and to be everyone, I'm horrible at swimming, but here's my best attempt at the breast stroke.

It doesn't make any sense. We're going to share what we're good at. So I am not here to blame anyone or to say that content creators are bad because they're only telling you what they're good at. Well, of course they're only telling you what they're good at. That is what their gift is and they're sharing that gift with the world.

A MEGA PERSON IMAGE?

But I think sometimes it can make us think, we can almost take online content creators and

form them into one mega person in our mind. The person who is amazing at cleaning and exercising and at meal planning and cooking healthy meals for their family, and they're never late to anything, and their house is perfectly organized. And that's 17 different people that you follow.

You know, the one who's really organized is probably not on time to everything. And the one who's on time to everything maybe doesn't have time to cook healthy meals for their family. They're eating boxed Mac and cheese every Tuesday. And that's totally fine for them.

So just realizing the reality we live in. Not fighting against it. We're not going to change it. The Internet's not going anywhere but recognizing it.

FEED BLOCKER HACK

And I will say, not sponsored, but if social media stresses you out, I have had a feed blocker on my social feeds on my computer for four years now. It's just an extension that you put. If you search for feed blocker, if you use Google Chrome, look Chrome feed blocker. Or Firefox feed blocker. That is really hard to say, but look for that and it lets you still use social media.

I want to be on social media. I have family who lives across the country. I want to see the cute pictures of people's kids or their puppies or whatever it is that they're posting. But I don't need to be inundated with everything from everyone. Those feed blockers let you still use the platform and search for what you want. I can still go and be part of the Get Organized HQ Insiders Facebook group. I can get in there and interact with that group, but my feed shows nothing. It literally shows a motivational quote, and that's all that it shows.

And so if that is something that you're like, yes. I feel so stressed by the comparison thing of social media. Feed blockers. That is my pro tip for today.

DECORATING REALITY

Laura: Yeah. I could probably do a whole episode on this, so I won't derail the whole thing. But what you said about in your head, you see these people who maybe they're great. For example, I'm not actually that great at decorating. I like organizing, but decorating is a different thing.

Tasha: You've improved in the last six years that I've been around.

Laura: That's actually very true because I actually decided I wanted to start doing it. I just started, you know, but before, my old house, it looked like we just moved in for four years. It was pretty funny. People would literally come in and be like, you just moved in, because we had nothing. I didn't decorate. I was total minimalist to the point of having nothing on the wall.

Anyway, we've changed that a little bit. So we're coming a long way. Part of that, as a total side note, is ditching what everybody else thinks. I'm like, actually, me and my family need to like it. That's all. And so some of it is really dated and I don't care. So that's a total tangent.

But, you know, I've thought about okay, I follow those people. They're good at decorating, so I imagine they must be good at everything else in their life. That is just not true. And they tell you that social media is a highlight reel, and that is true. As someone who creates content online, it's something that I have thought about a lot.

HOW MUCH TO SHARE?

What Tasha said is exactly right because I've thought about the fact, am I contributing to the problem because I'm showing up with my highlight reel and I'm showing you when I organize something, or I'm posting a picture of us all looking nice in a field of flowers when we got a professional photos? Never mind what happened in the 15 minutes before. Or all of these things. I'm posting the accomplishments now.

I do in my newsletter, occasionally share realistically about some of the struggles that I've had. I remember last year, 2023 was a terrible year for me and I shared about that. I was just like, hey, it was really, really rough. I have some videos about my health struggles which have been really, really rough. So it's not that I never talk about it, but I realized that it wouldn't help anyone if I got on Instagram, for example.

That one I think is hard. Hard because people share multiple times a day. So I feel when I'm watching other Instagrammers that I'm getting a peek into their real life, but I'm really not. It wouldn't help anybody if I just went on and said, okay. I woke up this morning and I felt like I had been run over. I have these allergies that will just not go away. I was so annoyed. And then my child did not want to get out of bed. I don't know what to do about it. I have tried all of these things and I just want everyone to wake up happy. I could share that and then, you know, it would go on and I would share about whatever else annoyed me and about how I had to go film content at Walmart and Target and why don't they just close the stores and let influencers come in and film with no one else around?

You know, I could share all of these things, but it wouldn't help me. I don't know what good that would do me and it wouldn't help anyone who is watching. Occasionally sharing something real with a story or a lesson learned is helpful, but that's why you don't actually want someone to go on and share every thought in their mind or every moment of their day. Even though you might think that that's the solution, it's not.

JUST GLIMPSES

So it's just a little weird that we have so many glimpses into people's lives like this. So just know that it's not a true reality and let's not compare ourselves to. My solution is I've just been on off Instagram for quite a while because I may get back on at some point, but I just didn't have it in me to share just the highlights and didn't want to share the lowlights. And so that's where it left me.

I think that's just something like I said, we could do a whole episode on that because I just think that it's affected us. And I think about it even more as my children are starting to get older because we're still at the age where you are not getting social media accounts and you are not getting smartphones. But I realize that it will not be long until I at least need to get my child a not-so-smartphone. They do need a way to contact people and that opens a whole entire can of worms of how to navigate all of that and just makes me even more thoughtful about what I put out online and how to be part of the solution.

And 100% nobody is telling you that you have to be online or consuming any kind of social media content. I find that a lot of times, you know, you just put your blinders on and do what

you need to do.

And again, it comes back to home. I'm in my home doing the things I need to do in my home and not so worried about what all the other stuff that is going on.

TELL US YOUR IDEAS!

I also want to say this is totally a, kind of taking a tangent here, but I had one other thing I wanted to ask is if people have ideas of what we should talk about on this podcast or you want to hear certain things, email us. And let us know.

Tasha: We may, I may get a form up too, where people can submit questions and things like that. Whether that be specific decluttering questions or organizing questions, things like that, or even suggestions of people that you want to hear from. I mean, I can't guarantee that they'll come talk to me. If you know them, you can go ask them, but of people that you just like to see a peek into their day and what that looks like.

Laura: And we also, this is obviously the first episode of the podcast and we've recorded a few, but they don't all have to follow the same format or anything like that. So if there's, I really want to hear you talk about this or there's something we already talked about and you're like, could you go further on that? We would just love to hear from you. So we know what it is that you'd like to hear about.

A COFFEE . . . ER, COCOA . . . CHAT

And I kind of think every format online, whether it's blogs, emails, reels, YouTube videos, podcasts, they all kind of have their own unique flavor and kind of things that people like to hear

Laura and Tasha

the

about in that kind of format.

I know for me, I think podcasts, I feel like I'm sitting down and having a coffee chat with people.

Tasha: But you don't drink coffee.

Laura: I don't drink coffee. You're right. But still, I still call them coffee chats.

Tasha: She's having a cocoa chat with people.

Laura: Yes. Hot cocoa chat or apple cider is one of my faves for hot beverages. So, yeah. So I feel like it kind of has its own flavors. So we're definitely looking to hear from you all as far as what it is that you want to hear.

REAL LIFE CONNECTIONS

Tasha: For sure. Yes. Well, I think as we kind of wrap up, you talked about being part of the solution. And I think that what we're doing and making our home a place that is welcoming for our family and for anyone who comes into our home. Those real life connections, they do not have to be something you post on Instagram.

You know, the birthday party doesn't have to have the balloon garland, doesn't have to have all of the matching, I don't know what it is these days, Daniel Tiger, Bluey, all of this. It doesn't have to have the plates and the napkins and all of that that matches.

But the environment that we create in our homes, I think that that is probably the biggest steps towards the solution of comparison that we can make. It's actually truly being welcoming, like to the people who live right next door to us.

We didn't really choose who we live next door to. But just as badly as you want to feel accepted, they want to feel accepted. And so those real life connections and making our homes a place where people feel comfortable. And the funny thing is they might feel the most comfortable in a home that's a little less than perfect.

FEELING COMFORTABLE

Laura: That is the truth. I know I do. And especially once I had kids that changed the game. I feel more comfortable in homes that are not quite . . .

Tasha: And with my dogs. I don't want my dog to pee on your beautiful carpet.

Laura: Exactly. So it doesn't always mean what we might think in our heads that it means, but I absolutely think that, I can very confidently say that what the world needs is more in

person connections and just opening up your home. Both Tasha and I do that and love doing that.

Just come on in, let's sit down, let's have a meal, let's talk. Just letting people in.

NOT ALWAYS PERFECT

Tasha: It's not always perfect. It's not. Even though Laura and I both do that a lot, it's not that I'm always a hundred percent comfortable. It's not that I'm always super at ease, it's all going perfect, I'm not at all stressed. But it is still worth it.

Well, thank you so much for listening in to our first inaugural episode of the Get Organized HQ podcast. We have a lot more coming your way.

So excited for you to hear everything we have in store for you and support@getorganizedhq.com I don't think we ever actually said that, but support@getorganizedhq.com is where you can go to email us any ideas you may have for what you want to hear on the podcast.

And we'll also try and get a form up on our podcast page of our website for any content suggestions.

Laura: And you'll definitely need to listen to the next episode because this was the not representative of all the episodes.

UP NEXT: DIANE IN DENMARK

Tasha: Diane in Denmark, actually, if you want a teaser of what's coming next. I sat down and chatted with her about her day and that is also just so cool because, I don't know where all of our listeners are tuning in from, but obviously Laura and I are both in Indiana.

And so hearing about someone's day in Denmark is pretty cool. So definitely listen into that one.

Laura: Yes. And I feel like she says some unexpected things that I would have necessarily thought. You definitely want to listen to that one and keep listening and let us know what you think.

Tasha: Yeah. Thanks for tuning in.

Laura: Thanks.