



TRANSCRIPT

How You Can Always Be Prepared For Emergency & Appointments

MELANIE PAPWORTH *from* PLAN FOR AWESOME

Tasha: Welcome to the Get Organized HQ podcast. I'm your host, Tasha Lorentz, and I am so excited for today's episode. We are sitting down with Melanie from Plan for Awesome, talking about ways that you can be prepared. Prepared for an emergency, but also prepared for an unexpected appointment to pop up next week.

Thanks so much for tuning into the Get Organized HQ podcast. We are here each week to talk about practical, actionable strategies that you can take, starting today, to live a life of less stress and more peace. So glad you're here. Let's dive into the episode.

Well, today I am sitting down with Melanie from Plan for Awesome, and we are going to talk about how she plans her day, but also how she plans ahead for unexpected things that may pop up all throughout life. So, Melanie, thank you so much for taking the time to sit down with us today.

Melanie: Of course. Thank you so much for having me.

Tasha: Absolutely. So as we kind of just start out, could you kind of walk us through a day in the life of Melanie? Like, what are the things that typically make up your daily routine?

It can be ways that you plan your day. It can be the things that you love to do, that you do every single day.

Melanie: Okay. Well, I wake up around five, usually, and just start getting ready.

So my favorite thing to do when I am getting ready for the day, I pop an AirPods in and I start listening to a podcast or a book on tape or, you know, whatever I'm listening to.

So I get ready. In the middle of me getting ready, I'm waking up my two older kids who are still in the home. I've got one at college. But because they start school earlier and they have, like, a church class in the morning before school every day.

So I wake them up, then run back, finish getting ready, go down, make them breakfast, and get them out the door.

And then I wake up my middle schoolers and help them, you know, do their breakfast, do the lunch thing, all of that.

And then I actually drive to school with my middle schoolers, because right now I'm working at the middle and high school.

And so I'm gone. This is new for me. I'm gone all day. I'm gone for, like, 10 hours a day. And my middle schoolers are the youngest, so my youngest is in seventh grade.

And so that's been definitely a shift- that I'm gone. I'm used to just working from home all the time on my business. But I started, you

know, doing this school thing.

So then we just kind of all get home at the same time, too. So then I'm scrambling to make dinner and do the working outside the home mom thing. So I'm lucky enough to have just got hit with that, where I feel like, how do people do this for their whole lives? Like, working outside the home?

It's so crazy, like, how you get used to being able to just run and start a load of laundry or, oh, I forgot to thaw meat for dinner. I'm going to go get that out. You know, it's just very different.

So when we get home, it's dinner and a million miles a minute of, you know, juggling homework and carpools for different sports, theater, all of that stuff. And I'm usually in bed, you know, 10:30, 11:00, and get up and do it all again the next day.

So that's like, that's my daily right now.

Tasha: Yeah. So I know you said this is a relatively new routine for you. Is there anything that you found that has, like, helped with managing, like, I would call it the chaos of just having things that you need to do outside of the home and inside the home and making sure everything your kids need is taken care of and they're where they need to be.

Like, what have you found that is, like, helping or maybe making it, like, taking the edge off of the craziness.

Melanie: Yes. I've always had a calendar that the whole family can see and utilize, but I just kind of did that whenever. Right. I just kind of fit it into my week before. And now the weekends have totally changed and that is my time.

And I'm more consistent now. Like, every Sunday afternoon when we're all home, that's like the one day that we're all home. I have made it a point to, like, go over the schedule and I make everyone sit there and wait. You know, where before it was like, okay, I'm gonna just kind of talk with this kid and go over their schedule for the week or whatever and whenever it was convenient.

But now having that family day of, you know, like, me getting my brain straight, my kids still aren't stressed out. It's just me. But getting everyone on the same page and making sure everyone knows what they need to do.

And then I'm setting alarms. I'm setting a lot more alarms on my phone, like, just to remind myself, to remind my son, hey, you're bringing Hallie home today or you're, you know, because things change every day depending on what after school activities everyone has.

And so I would say those two things. I use my weekends a lot more intentionally now than I did before, because to me, a weekend was just another day. And I'm utilizing alarms so I don't drop balls.

Tasha: Yeah, absolutely. Alarms can be so helpful as long as you're responding to them and you're seeing, like, I need to do this, and then you take action on it when you see it. That can be really helpful.

And I like what you said, that your kids are not stressed out the way that you are. And I think sometimes that might be important to realize that, like, just because we are stressed does not necessarily mean that it has to be passed on to the rest of our family.

Melanie: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, they notice

for sure, but their brains aren't all jumbled like mine is. You know, they still only care about themselves.

Tasha: Right.

Melanie: They're kids, you know.

Tasha: Right. They're not, like, assuming or putting onto them or projecting that their brains are as jumbled and just, like, getting them what they need. And in some ways, that almost helps you, too. Right.

Because if we start projecting that everyone's brain is jumbled, then we'd really do make everyone's brain jumbled. And, like, that's the last thing we need in this situation.

Melanie: Good point. Yeah, yeah, for sure. For sure.

Tasha: So, right. So what are some of the things that you would say? You really just, like, thrive at that. More run on autopilot for you, whether it be with managing your home or, like, just different things that you're like. Yes, like, even when things are chaotic and stressful, this is something I feel like I have down.

Melanie: I would say definitely dishes, because that's just something that has to happen every day. You know, it just has to happen. So I never. I don't think I've ever gone to bed without starting the dishwasher, like, in my life. You know, it has to be going when I go to bed. That's just a thing.

And so if the rest of the dish, like, if I still have dishes in the sink, fine, but they have to be rinsed and, you know, off counters and all of that. I feel like having just a clean slate in the mornings is really important, and that's always

been important to me. So dishes aren't really an issue for me.

And then I would say, like, more broad. So I talk about emergency preparedness. That's my business and kind of my jam. And so it's always come naturally to me to look ahead, to plan ahead.

So, like, when I get home from Costco, instead of just throwing the goldfish in the pantry, I bag them for school snacks or you know what I mean, stuff like that.

Like, and right or wrong, I leave stuff like that out until I get to it and prepare it, you know. And so it is annoying, you know, for a day or two if sometimes I don't have the time. But that's how I remember to do it so that we're not scrambling every single morning to pack lunches and whatever. I like to have things like that ready to go.

And so I am good about leaving it out on the counter until I can get to that, if that makes sense. I'm good at planning those types of things.

And then when I'm at the grocery store, I'm very much preparedness minded. So I'm always putting extras in my grocery cart. I mean, you remember Covid and toilet paper, right? I've been doing that my whole life.

Like, just, you know, we always have months worth of toilet paper. Are you kidding me? Who doesn't, you know, Like, I didn't realize how not normal that was until Covid because it's just who I am. We've always got a lot of extra. Of just about everything. I'm rarely running out of anything when I'm making dinner, you know, because we just have a lot. So I'm good at keeping a really healthy backstock of stuff.

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Tasha: Yeah. And would you say that, that like routine or maybe even mindset is what you would call it, that you've had, like, has that been helpful transitioning into like, okay, I'm out of the house 10 hours a day now?

Melanie: Absolutely. And I, maybe I don't drive that point home enough that like, that part of emergency preparedness, if you call it that, drop the emergency, it's just preparedness, you know, and it's, it's so helpful for daily life.

I mean, you don't think about throwing a few cans extra. Like some people might think, well, I'm not preparing for the apocalypse. No, I'm preparing for next week, you know, when I thought I'd be able to get to the grocery store. And then I've got a sick kid or, you know, a last minute meeting came up or whatever, whatever it is.

And so, yes, absolutely. Having the backstock has been super helpful because I'm not able to just go to the grocery store when I feel like it or, you know, on a wait. So, yeah, absolutely, that has helped for sure.

Tasha: Yeah, I know. Something Laura and I have chatted about just over the years is people always talk about having an emergency fund. Right. And like putting that word on it makes me so, like, stressed.

Like, I'm like, I can only spend this money, like, if somebody's leg is amputated and, you know, like, just the sky is falling and it has to be like, an emergency. Like, replacing the roof on the house. Like, that's not really an emergency. Right.

And I like what you're saying. Like, we're talking about preparedness. And sure, if there is an emergency, it's going to be really helpful, but

I have switched, and sometimes I call it an unexpected expense fund, because that just kind of takes the pressure off because I think I just get in my own head, like, well, is this, is this truly an emergency? Like, I could think of a more emergency emergency to have.

Melanie: Yes. I love that. Yeah, for sure. I. I totally.

Tasha: But I think it's the same. The same idea as what you're saying, that, like, when we talk about preparedness, it doesn't just have to be, you know, if something terrible happens and there is no toilet paper again.

But it's just like, I love how you said it's preparing for next week. It's preparing for something unexpected coming up and really setting yourself up for success, even in the small inconveniences that can feel really big at the time.

I mean, we all know, like, we're going to have sick kids. Like, it's going to happen. The sky is not falling. Like, it's not fun. It's not what we want. But, like, everyone has sick kids and being prepared for that, thinking ahead. So. So it's not super stressful when that time comes.

Melanie: Exactly. And just like on the sick kids thing every winter, when Costco has, like, their, you know, other medications and stuff on sale, I just get them. No one's sick yet. But I just get.

Because you don't, the last thing you want to do when either you or your kids are sick is go to the store for medicine. Are you kidding me? So I get a new box of NyQuil, you know, and day quill and whatever. Whatever it is. So. So, yeah, exactly. Yep.

Tasha: Yeah. So I like how you mentioned, like,

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the goldfish. Are there other things like that that you do or that you prep ahead?

Like, that's not something I would have really thought of, but I can think that, like, if I did that more often with my produce, I would have a lot less produce going bad.

Like, I know I really should come home and, like, wash any of the berries that I got and get them ready to eat. But no, I, like, stick them in the fridge for four or five days. And don't get around to washing them, like, that kind of thing.

So I love how you just, like, leave it out. It depends on your personality, obviously, like, if that's going to work for you or not. But if you're the type of person who's like, no, I need my counters clear. That's a really good. That's really good life hack. Right there.

Melanie: it is. Because it forces you to do it. Like, I can't go to bed until this is done, or I, you know, whatever. So, yeah, I mean, stuff like goldfish and, you know, things like that.

Other things would be like if. If we get, I don't get them very often, but, like the Costco muffins, I always have them and put them in Ziploc bag before... they go moldy really fast on the counter. Like, really fast.

And so I bag that, like, I cut them in half and bag them because they're just a little too big to have a whole one a lot of times. Like, if you wanted two halves, fine, but I'd rather you not, like, throw half away, you know?

So I always bag them in halves and stick them in the fridge immediately. Like, they just, they never sit in our pantry or counter. They're always just in the fridge or freezer.

Tasha: I'm just curious, how long did they last in the fridge? In the fridge?

Melanie: Like, at least a week, I would say.

Tasha: Okay. And now I'm like, oh, I should go get some Costco muffins. That sounds good.

Melanie: Well, and they do freeze well. And you just pull it, I just pull out of the freezer and put them straight in a lunch or put them into the, you know, in the fridge to thaw out. But so something like that, like, however we eat it, I try to get it as close to that as possible before I put it away.

Produce. Yes. I will leave out the produce. Like the berries that don't have to be refrigerated necessarily. And they go bad real fast on the counter again, so, like, I have to wash them before I go to bed, you know, and just put them, like, in a Tupperware with, you know, paper towel on the bottom or whatever. Like, nothing fancy, but, yeah, kind of keep them fresh.

Trying to think of other things. Meat is a big one for me. I hate it. I hate. I have, like, this love hate because sometimes I wish I could be less of this preparedness mindset and just buy the meat and throw it in the freezer like normal people do. Right. But I can't. I can't do that.

I have to bring it home and have like my schedule clear so that I can bag it and portion it. And chicken's the worst because, you know, I have to cut off every trace of fat or veins or any of that because I can't handle it. And so it takes quite a while.

Tasha: I can imagine.

Melanie: But especially like for our family, I mean, we use like 3 pounds of chicken every

time I cook with chicken, you know, because we have a really large family and they're all teenagers and eating a lot now.

And you know, but anyway, I go as far as to. Well, I mean, I've already got it out. It's already raw, it's already gross. I'm already gonna have to disinfect and sanitize everything.

So I cut it into like bite sized chunks so that I can throw it into whatever I'm doing, you know, So I have different bags that I label like whole sliced and chunks, that's what I call it, chunks.

And I can just grab what I need out of the freezer and I don't have to then let it thaw and cut the fat off and cut it into pieces. I did it when I got home from the store. So those are some examples of things that I just.

Tasha: Yeah, those are great. I love that. What would you say to someone who's like listening in and thinking, I would love to start doing this, but like, that's a big, like, if you're going from I just shove everything into the refrigerator and close the door and make sure that it's in there, to like, this is like a could be a multi hour process, like depending on what you're doing.

Um, so like, how do you make that transition? Like, I think that I could see myself maybe once doing it right, going to the store, getting everything and being like, okay, like, I've carved out my Saturday morning to do all of this. But like getting into a routine of doing that consistently. What advice would you have for that?

Melanie: Don't start with the meat because that's the worst. I mean, it's really nice once you do it. But like, even still, I put it off. I put it off. I put it off. So I would not start there.

I think produce is a good place to start because that's something that's going bad. So I would say that probably because I experienced that too. You know, I'm not perfect at it.

So what's interesting is I'm so not used to putting, shoving things in the fridge that when I do, when I do have to do that, I'm the worst at getting it back out, you know, and going through the process.

Tasha: You got to set an alarm on your phone.

Melanie: Exactly. There you go. And so I would go with, like, your biggest pain point, but also, like, if your produce is going bad, the goldfish aren't going to go bad if you don't bag. Right. And so I would start with probably produce.

The thing with that, though, is maybe that's even too big if you get a lot of fresh vegetables and berries and fruits and stuff like that. I mean, that could be a couple hours right there, depending on how many you get and how often you go to the store and all of that.

So maybe even break it down. Like, I'm just going to do the fruit when I get home from the store, you know, and then add vegetables a couple months later. Once you're seeing the fruits of your labors. But, you know, stuff like that.

Or maybe your biggest pain point, like you're good on then the produce. You go through it. It's not going bad regularly or anything. Doesn't bug you to wash something right before you use it.

Maybe your pain point is mornings and getting school lunches packed. So maybe you're focused on, you know, okay, I'm going to pre bag, snacks for the week every Sunday night or

something like that.

You know, it doesn't even have to be when you're, when you're getting home from the grocery store. So maybe that's your thing. You know, maybe it's just finding, okay, when I get home, that is not the time because it's total chaos usually, and I just need to get everything put away.

But every Tuesday night and Friday night, I'm, you know, I'm kind of preparing for the next few days or whatever. I don't know. Sorry, that wasn't very specific. But, you know, it's just kind of find your biggest pain point, but really try to keep it small. Like I said, maybe not all the fruits. Maybe just the fruits or whatever.

Tasha: Right. That's what I was hearing the most of. Just like pick something and start there and see how it goes.

And my guess is, like, when you started doing this, is it something that you would say has, like, grown and as you kind of had that mindset, you thought of more things. Like, it just kind of. It was like a positive snowball.

Melanie: Yes, totally. And as your life changes, right. Like when my kids were teeny tiny, I just opened the goldfish and pulled them and poured them into a bowl when they asked for them. Right.

Like I was home with them. I, there was no need to have stuff pre bagged other than like when I would run errands with them or whatever. And, and even then there's no time limit on that, so I could pour a bag at that point. Right.

But as they started school, mornings became hectic and we had deadlines and timelines and stuff. So yeah, just kind of evolving.

But it's definitely, I love how you said it's a mindset. It's, it's not a chore. It's a mindset of just how am I going to make my life easier later today or tonight or tomorrow or next week, you know, and it really, it does snowball into everything, you know, for sure it becomes easier.

Tasha: So are there any other things that you would say you do just to keep your family, your home like prepared? Maybe even some of the things that like people would do less often but just like things you try to remember to keep coming back to occasionally? I guess.

Melanie: Yeah. So for that those things are harder for sure because they're not a daily thing. They're not into your normal routine.

So there's actually like, I've made a checklist for myself to do every six months because a lot of like the more serious emergency, now we are going to put the word emergency there, preparedness stuff doesn't require daily attention, you know, as long as you have the mindset for keeping a backstock and things like that.

So things like checking your smoke alarms, testing those and switching out the batteries and doing a little bit of maintenance on your fire extinguishers.

When I say maintenance, it's just making sure they're still in the green, the little pressure gauge and making sure they don't have crazy amounts of dust or oil on them and things, things like that.

Like I'll clean our water filter and I'll rotate anything in our 72 hour kits that has expired or is getting close to an expiration date. So the bigger stuff, I usually have to like block out

a full day or a couple days, you know, of a few hours each day to do that stuff.

So I have found, just putting it on the calendar and having a checklist to go off of, it's just like bang, bang, bang, you know, it's, it's real easy if you go into it knowing what to expect and that. Oh, yep, it's time for our emergency preparedness weekend, you know.

So I actually have that. I'll give you the link to put in the show notes if people are interested, but so that is something that I am good about. I'm not, in fact, this, this past year I waited till November to do it and I usually do it in September.

But like I said, I went back to like a full time work thing and I'm a couple, I was a couple months late but I got it done. And so that kind of stuff I feel like needs, needs some attention on a calendar that can't be built into just like, oh yeah, I'm just going to remember to do all of these things every six months, you know.

So I feel like a checklist and getting it on the calendar, I just call it our preparedness weekend, you know, and the kids, as they've gotten older, they help with it, but I involved them when they were teeny tiny. Like they can sit there and watch you poke the little button on your smoke alarm and hear the sound and cover their ears and you know, it's just kind of been like a thing that my kids know what's going on.

And yes, they have sports on Saturday and they're hanging out with friends while I'm doing the bulk of it. But then on Sunday of that weekend we sit down and we have like our family, I call them chats on like different preparedness topics. So like fires, earthquakes, evacuation and we just kind of go over stuff to

keep it top of mind.

And as they've gotten older it, they're really quick, you know, we don't have to, we don't have to like start from square one again. They've been having these chats their whole lives, you know, every six months-ish.

Tasha: And I was even thinking, like you said last year you wanted to do it in September. You didn't get it to no to it till November. But you still know what you're going to do.

You know that, I mean by November it was eight months ago, that you checked all these things. So like it's kind of the tension of like, you know, it's on your to do list. You know, you need to get it on your calendar and get it done.

But it's also not like some unknown thing of like I haven't checked my smoke alarms ever.

Melanie: Yeah.

Tasha: You know, like even if like your routine changed, right, Your schedule changed, it got harder to get it scheduled in, you still got it done. It was a little bit late.

But because you've been so consistent because you had this routine set up, first of all, it wasn't like a disaster that it was a little bit later than normal because it hadn't been that long since those things had been given attention.

And also I just think it makes the hugest difference to know what you're going to do whenever you do carve out that time. If you have to make the decision of what you're going to do, that is to me I think one of the most stressful things.

So that checklist, like you said, we'll put it in

the show notes, I think is like the thinking is done, you just have to go and do all the things.

Melanie: Yes, for sure. And my checklist, so I will put this caveat in that most people aren't going to have every single thing that's on that list.

If you don't have 72 hour kits, you don't have something to rotate yet and that's fine. Notice I said yet because I hope that one day you will.

But don't let that checklist overwhelm you. Just do the things on it that you have.

You know, everyone, everyone has smoke alarms. It's code. By now, every single home in America has smoke alarms. I don't know about other countries but so start there and make that a priority. That's something that literally takes five minutes and it literally saves lives. So get that done and feel good about it.

And maybe if you have nothing else on that checklist, if you don't even have fire extinguishers, have that be your goal by the next six month, you know, weekend.

We're going to add one thing every six months from this checklist, you know, and I have, I have resources linked for, for anything that, I mean I don't have smoke alarms linked because hopefully homes already have those in them and you just test them.

There's nothing really to link there but you know, I'll have like a blog post on water filtration if you don't have a water filter or you know what I mean? Just different things like that.

So there are resources there for the things that you don't have yet that you're, you know, so

maybe pick one every six months to focus on and like, okay, over this six months we're gonna save money for this more expensive item or I'm gonna put together some basic 72 hour kits or I'm just gonna buy a fire extinguisher over the next six months.

Maybe that's your to do, you know. Don't let that, don't let that list overwhelm you. Just like when you hear I'm doing the goldfish and the Costco muffins and the meat and the produce and all those things. Pick one and do it. And you're, you're better off for it, you know?

And like you said, when you're, when you're doing these things consistently, you can get a little more relaxed and not freak out that it's been eight months, because it's like, okay, but I do this every six months, and we're going to be fine, and no one's going to, you know.

Tasha: Exactly. Yes. So another thing that I ask a lot of our guests on this podcast. So we talk about a lot of, you know, you thrive at preparedness and thinking ahead and having everything ready.

But I also think it's just, like, important, I think, sometimes on the Internet, um, I mean, of course, like, we're going to talk about what we're good at. Like, there is no point in me coming on and telling you all about how I do a terrible job.

I mean, you'll. You'll hear this a bajillion times on this podcast. I am so bad at, like, taking vitamins every day, small tasks every day. Not my jam. So what's the point of me telling you that? Like, I don't have advice of how to do that because I am terrible at it.

Um, but I just think it's important to realize that, like, we all have strengths and

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weaknesses, and nobody is killing it in every area all the time. We all have things that, like, we need to go to someone else and be like, I need your expertise in this. I need what your life hacks are, because it's not what I thrive at.

So I do ask a lot of our guests on this show, like, what are those things for you that you're like, nobody asked me to write a blog post about this. Like, I am not the expert here.

Melanie: Well, so unfortunately, with the whole "I'm really good at throwing extras in my cart and keeping a backstock," I'm really bad about, like, actually making space for all of it.

So we talked about the things that, like, I do prepare. I love this question because this is real. And I will. I've pretty much, like, gotten off Instagram since I started working last fall, but I would show it all the time. Like, guys, if you think. If you think I have this figured out, think again.

I am really good about it when I'm at the store or when I'm making my grocery list or my Target list or whatever, right? But then I get home and it's chaos and all of that.

So I'm really good at doing, like, the lunch snacks and the meat and the produce and all of that. But anything else sits in our hallway, like, for days. And sometimes it just gets thrown in a room somewhere because I don't know where to put it. Like, it doesn't even have a home.

Like, our toilet paper spot is full. But I still got another pack because I was at Target and I just thought, oh, whatever, I'll find, I'll squeeze it in. You can't just squeeze toilet paper in when there isn't a squeezable in, like.

And so, like, I have a really hard time, like,

telling myself no. And it's funny because other people might say that about clothes or, you know, like, fun purchases. My purchases are toilet paper. And I just can't tell myself no.

But seriously, like, I have a problem. Like, my people will use the word. Like, they'll say, like, oh my gosh, you're a hoarder. Jokingly, because I'm not. Like, I'm not a hoarder when you really look at the definition.

But I have too much stuff and it's preparedness related. It's backstock of things. And so I am horrible at knowing my spatial limits in my home and saying, enough is enough. I guess we'll run out of toilet paper if it comes to that. You know what I mean?

So I'm really bad at that. And I just, I tell myself I don't have enough time to like, reorganize my home to make space for all of this stuff. But at the end of the day, I think it's just my home just doesn't have that much space and I just need to like, face the music, you know, so I'm really bad at that.

And then like, toilet bowls. Can we just talk about them for a minute? Like, yes, I'll wipe down...

Tasha: What I'm hearing is everything related to toilet.

Melanie: Okay, I didn't even mean for that to happen, but it did, so that's funny. I'm really good with the toilet paper, really bad at the toilet bowls.

So, like, you know what I'm talking about. I hope you do. If you don't, then I'm really embarrassed right now. But, like, you know, once the ring appears that you can't scrub off the brush anymore, it needs something stronger. Right?

Like a pumice stone.

Once I reach that point, I give up. And our toilets look like that for months. I'm just being real. Like, I will still use the brush every once in a while to get the brushable stuff off. Right. Like, just like film, I guess, if you will.

But once that ring is there, like, I'm waiting months before I will put on the gloves and get the pumice. Because I'm like, what's the point? We're already there. Let's just let her ride.

Because until we get there, it's like, oh, I need to scrub that toilet. But then, I mean, once I'm there, I've lost all motivation, and it'll be months before I bust out the pumice. So. Toilet bowls.

If you come to my house, there's a 50/50 chance you're gonna get something that looks like it hasn't been cleaned in, like, a year. And it's just it is what it is, you know, I got other priorities. I'm keeping humans alive.

Tasha: Yep. And we all, we all have things like that, whether it's toilet bowls or decluttering or dusting or, like, any of the things, like, we all do for real. So, like...

Melanie: Dusting, what is that? I don't even do it anymore.

Tasha: Yes.

Melanie: That used to be my job as a kid. Like, I would do the dust.

Tasha: Really?

Melanie: I would spray the pledge on the, we had, like, a feather duster, but then we had, like, dusting cloths. My kids don't even know those

exist. I've never bought dusting cloths. We use old holy socks, and I have them put the...

Tasha: Yeah.

Melanie: And my kids exactly once a year in the summer when I'm looking for jobs for them to do, you know, I'm like, okay, we're gonna dust guys. Like, other than that. Yes. Decorating for a holiday, you know, I'm like, oh, yeah, this. Yeah, I need to wipe this off.

Right. Dusting. See?

Tasha: And there's some things that are just really hard to dust.

Like, let's just be honest.

Melanie: Yeah. That didn't even cross my mind.

Tasha: Like, dusting the top of a bookcase is fine, but, like, dusting, like, a floral decor piece. Like, how do you even, like,

Melanie: Get your air compressor out?

Tasha: I know. Yeah.

Melanie: Canned air. I don't know. Yeah, that's right.

Tasha: Not a bad idea. I should try it. I should try it and report back.

Melanie: Mine's probably so caked on that it wouldn't even budge. Like, I.

Tasha: I know. I do think it sometimes gets there. Yes.

But I really, like. I think it's important. I don't know, like, what you said about how one of the

things you struggle with is, like, realizing how much space you have or getting things put away.

I think, so often, like, and this goes, like, way deeper even than just, like, what we do in our homes. I think so often our strengths and weaknesses are so intertwined.

Like, what our strength is almost inherently brings another weakness with it. And so kind of realizing that almost every skill or even personality or character trait, like, there's like the really good side of that and then the side that you're like, okay, this is kind of like the extreme other end I want to avoid.

And I don't know, I don't have a magic answer for that, but I think it's one of those things that once you have that in mind, it helps.

Also, even when you look at other people and you're like, well, why are they like that? Oh, well, because, like, they do this thing that I think is really awesome. And this is just kind of the other side of that.

Melanie: Totally, in fact. So I took a, it's a nine month course program with Rachel Nielsen. She has the 3 and 30 podcast. And there's a whole unit on this, like, identifying your strengths, but then the, like, the coordinating weakness to that. And you have to strike a balance.

And you also have to be okay with yourself too. Like, okay, I'm really good at, at keeping a backstock, and I know that that's going to mean a cluttered house sometimes. And so I, like, have to make peace with that almost.

Not to say that I don't work on the clutter and not to say that I just give up and I don't look

for spaces, but not to get so down on yourself when your strength produces a weakness, you know, and so it's kind of like, it's telling and it's like, okay, yeah, so I have this weakness that I need to work on, but it's also telling, like, but I like this strength. And so that weakness is okay. And we can't be perfect either.

You know, it's finding a balance and not totally giving up on, on the weakness part, but also seeing, like, yeah, there's, there's pros and cons to everything, you know, so. For sure.

Tasha: Yeah, I mean, I see it in my own, like, house. I am, I describe myself as very all or nothing. Like, my house is spotless or not.

Like, and I don't see the point of doing, like, cleaning something halfway. I'm like, no, if it can't be clean, like, why am I going to clean it?

And so, like, I just say that to say it happens in all sorts of areas and in all sorts of things. And just having that mindset, I think can just be kind of eye opening, like, to learn about yourself and about the people in your home and maybe why we have the inclinations that we do just based on what we're good at.

Melanie: Yeah, for sure. Totally.

Tasha: Yeah. Well, one last question that I also ask everyone on our podcast is what is one thing that is bringing you less stress and more peace right now?

Melanie: Okay, this is so weird. So I'm really sorry, but it's just, it's, it's the thing that came to mind.

So, my youngest got a concussion last week. It's like the first concussion that we've dealt with. And so there were no screens for him,

which is not a problem for me. But you know, for the kids, like we weren't letting anyone in the house turn on the TV for three days and you know, the lights had to be low and like, no loud noises and stuff. And so we played a lot of games.

My daughter happened to have come home from college to visit that weekend. So we were all home, which was new, you know, because she's been away this year. And we played games.

And this is so embarrassing, but life has gotten so busy that I cannot tell you the last time I've sat down and played a game with any of my kids.

I mean, they're older, they don't, they don't love to do it anymore anyway. But the fact that my 18 year old daughter and my 17 year old son sat down, you know, and played a game with us was huge. And now like I'm like asking them to play a game.

And before, like, I wouldn't have had time, like, are you kidding me? We'll do that later. We'll do that later. We'll do that later. Right?

But I've learned that like, life goes on. Whatever I would have done for that hour or two, it's okay. We're all still breathing, we're all still here. And I feel so much better as a mom, but also like as a human being because I am so productivity driven that I don't take the time to do things like sit down and play a silly game, you know.

And so I know that that's like, probably seems backwards because like, what just playing a game, you're not getting anything done. You're not tackling a project. It's not mindfulness. It's not, you know, it's not any of these like normal answers.

But like, for me, I feel like my soul was needing that. And my kids, like, we all haven't done that in a long time. And so now like, we left our game table out and I'm like, this can't stay out forever, but for now, like, we're just kind of enjoying that. And I'm really enjoying that. And I want to kind of, like, bring that back every Sunday. Let's play games, you know, or something.

Tasha: I think that's a great answer. Yeah, absolutely. And I like how even that kind of holds in balance.

We've been talking about being prepared. We've been talking about, you know, prepping things when you get home from the store, being prepared for next week, but not letting that interfere with, like, relationship building and, like, things that fill your cup.

Melanie: Yeah, for sure.

Tasha: Yeah. Well, Melanie, thank you so much for your time today. We've talked about it a little bit. We'll have that link in the show notes for that checklist. But other than that, where can people go to find more from you online?

Melanie: Just planforawesome.com. That's my website. Yeah, I used to be really active on Instagram. Not so much right now. I mean, I still hop on occasionally, for sure. Um, so planforawesome is my handle there. So either one.

Tasha: Well, we'll leave all those links in the show notes. Thank you again for taking time out of your very busy schedule to chat with us.

Melanie: Of course. Thanks for having me.

Tasha: Well, thank you so much for tuning

in and listening to this episode of the Get Organized HQ podcast. Be sure to check out the show notes, particularly for that checklist from Melanie, of some actions you can take every six months to be prepared.

And I hope you'll tune in next week to hear from our next guest.